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Planning Statement
Design & Access Statement

Proposed Extension to The Elms, Rossett.

The Elms, Darland Lane, Rossett LL12 0BB

February 2021

Ref: 2063
Rev: *

RIBA 

Chartered Practice



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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Hunter Architects & Planners have been appointed to submit a planning application for an extension to The Elms, Rossett.
- 1.2 This statement, which should be read in conjunction with the supporting information submitted with the application, aims to give an appraisal of the planning issues and merits in context with planning and other policies, guidance and material considerations.

2. THE EXISTING BUILDING

- 2.1 Located on the northern side of Darland Lane, the existing building is a detached property on the edge of the village of Rossett. The house abuts Darland Lane to the south, and an access track leading to an agricultural building forms the western boundary, beyond which are residential properties. To the north and east is agricultural land.
- 2.2 The house is accessed from a courtyard at the front of the property, with a garage and covered walkway enclosing the parking courtyard.
- 2.3 The existing dwelling is a building of two halves; the southern half of the building which abuts the road, is an attractive traditional rural dwelling, constructed from brickwork with traditional detailing and window proportions. Over time this building has been extended to the north. The rendered extension does not have the same window proportions and appears 'cramped' in the corner.
- 2.4 The application site lies within Flood Zone C2 and within a Green Barrier and Special Landscape Area. The existing building is not listed, and the site is not within a Conservation Area.

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 A planning history search illustrates there have been no applications on the site since 2004, however the property has been extended previously.

4. USE AND AMOUNT

- 4.1 This planning application is for the proposed internal and external remodelling of the dwelling, and includes:
 - 4.1.1 Single storey front elevation,
 - 4.1.2 Part two storey and part single storey rear extensions,
 - 4.1.3 Demolition of the existing garage and replacement with new garage with gym above.
 - 4.1.4 Amendments to front, side and rear elevations with reconfigured roof over utility, Juliette balcony and the insertion and reconfiguration of windows.
 - 4.1.5 Removal of existing hedging and construction of new boundary wall, amendments to existing access and associated landscaping.
- 4.2 It is suggested that the use of the site is the same as existing and will remain in keeping with and complementary to the vitality and mix within the area and will not have a negative impact on the amenity of the surrounding properties.

5. LAYOUT, SCALE, MASSING & APPEARANCE

5.1 Hunter Architects & Planners are committed to providing high-quality accommodation through robust designs, materials and specifications and this is reflected in these proposals. The proposal is consistent with the relevant current national and local government planning policies.

5.2 The aims:

- Significantly improving the natural and built environment by providing high-quality design and sustainable features in the building
- To create a strong sense of place which local residents feel proud of
- To create an interesting and appropriate relationship with the surrounding context.
- To develop the sense of safety using careful design to eliminate crime

5.3 LAYOUT

5.4 With its proximity to the road, the front elevation of The Elms is a prominent building on Darland Lane, however the existing access position and hedging tends to frame the view of the extensions to the property rather than the attractive brick façade. It is therefore proposed to amend the access point and boundary treatments such that a view of the brick façade and the main entrance to the house is framed on the approach along Darland Lane.

5.5 In addition, the existing garage position creates a constrained parking courtyard, and hides the single storey section of the building, resulting in a cramped feeling to the courtyard and elevations. It is proposed that the garage is relocated further north into the site in order to ease congestion in this area, and to allow the full extent of the west elevation to be seen.

5.6 The position of the garage has been determined by the location of the existing below ground septic tank and the use remains incidental to the main dwelling.

5.7 Internally, changes to the ground floor layout of the property aim to improve the width of the access route into the kitchen, provide a larger utility room, improve the room proportions of the sitting room, and create a ground floor bedroom space with ensuite facilities. At first floor level, the changes aim to improve the bathroom accommodation in the property, by increasing the size of the family bathroom, and by the creation of an additional bedroom with ensuite accommodation.

5.8 SCALE & MASSING

5.9 With regards to the scale and massing of the proposals, the extensions to the building have all been carefully considered to respect the existing building height and roofline, and to maintain the existing hierarchy in terms of the dominant host property and its subservient extensions.

5.10 The proposed garage is wider than the existing structure in order that it will comfortably accommodate two family cars. In addition, the proposed roof is higher than the existing, in order to accommodate a gym above the garage. Despite the increase in size, the proposed garage represents a significant improvement to car parking arrangements, and its position further back into the site reduces its visibility from Darland Lane. We suggest that the additional scale and massing of the garage will not adversely affect the open character of the area, nor will it appear incongruous in its setting due to the presence of an agricultural building to the north of the plot.

5.11 APPEARANCE

5.12 While the brick frontage of the older half of the house forms an attractive elevation, the later extensions have been unsympathetic to the host property. With this in mind, this application seeks to improve the appearance of the whole of the front (west) elevation, by amending the window proportions and positioning, simplifying the roof line, and by giving the extensions a subservient feel. In

addition, two new windows are proposed in the brick façade, of the same size and proportion as the existing first floor window, and located above the ground floor windows.

- 5.13 The new single storey (utility room) extension aims to mask the incongruous roof pitch of the existing single storey utility/ dining area. The roof pitch of the main house is continued downwards on the west elevation, creating a new single storey gable feature on the north elevation.
- 5.14 At the rear of the property (east elevation), a new two storey gable is proposed in order to balance the existing two storey gable.
- 5.15 We feel that the density, scale and amount of accommodation are appropriate for the site, the wider area and that the neighbourhood services can support the amount of development planned. The siting of the extension was informed by the immediate existing context and the dimensions of the site.

6. SUSTAINABILITY

- 6.1 We recognise that sustainability, in all its aspects, will be important to this development in the design and these proposals seek to make a sustainable use of the site and building utilising sensitive and appropriate materials and to try and reduce the servicing and energy requirements, carbon emissions whilst utilising the provision of recycling storage among other things and in accordance with the Government policies.

7. ACCESS & PARKING

- 7.1 It is suggested that the proposed amendments to the vehicle access and parking arrangements will provide more appropriate facilities. The entrance gate way will be widened to facilitate easier maneuvering into the driveway, and the new garage position allows cars to be parked away from the entrance, reducing the visual clutter at the front of the house. It is suggested that the proposals meet the Council's parking standards.

8. ARBORICULTURAL & LANDSCAPING MATTERS

- 8.1 The existing hedging at the front of the property, along the southern boundary with Darland Lane, will be removed, and replaced with a new brick wall.
- 8.2 The new garage requires the removal of a small area of overgrown shrubs at the rear of the existing garage. No existing trees are proposed to be removed, and it is suggested that there are no arboricultural constraints or issues affecting the development. As such it is suggested the proposals accord with Policy EC4 of the UDP

9. WASTE MANAGEMENT

- 9.1 No changes are proposed to the existing refuse collection arrangements for the property. Refuse and recycling bins will be stored at the side of the new garage and will be put out on the appropriate day for collection. Surfaces that containers need to move over to be of smooth continuous finish and free from steps or other obstacles. Any steps shall incorporate a drop kerb.

10. JUSTIFICATION IN RELATION TO POLICIES

- 10.1 The relevant policy considerations for the proposed development are the relevant policies of the Wrexham County Borough Council Unitary Development Plan (UDP), The Supplementary Planning Guidance, as well as the relevant objectives of the revised Planning Policy Wales (PPW).
- 10.2 It is suggested that the relevant UDP Policies are PS2, GDPI, EC1, EC4, EC5, EC12
- 10.3 It is suggested that the relevant supplementary guidance is LPGN 20 House Extensions (21 Space around dwellings)
- 10.4 It is suggested that the proposals are of a design, scale and layout, including the use of materials and landscaping that accords with the character of the site and the area and will make a positive contribution to the appearance of the nearby locality and the host dwelling. The proposals do not materially affect safety and security, the conservation of water and energy resources or the environment, and they utilise existing pedestrian and vehicular access. As such it is suggested the proposals accord with Policy GDPI of the UDP.
- 10.5 In addition, the proposals do not materially detrimentally affect the countryside, landscape character, open space of the quality of the natural environment and can be seen positively in relation to Policy PS2.
- 10.6 The proposals do not change the use of the existing site and as there is an existing long standing dwelling on the site, the proposals can be considered acceptable in principle in relation to Policy EC1 in that the use will maintain the openness of the Green Barrier and does not conflict with the purpose of land within it.
- 10.7 Taking each of the four purposes of the Green Barrier in turn, it is suggested that the proposals do not materially affect the purposes that it serves and therefore are not fundamentally harmful to the Green Barrier.
- 10.8 The proposals are generally not materially wider or taller than the existing dwelling (especially when compared to the PD allowable extensions) and therefore should not be seen in the context of unrestricted sprawl.
- 10.9 The property sits in an isolated location and therefore any extension to the property will not lead to the coalescent of urban areas and villages with other settlements.
- 10.10 The proposals, while having a larger footprint than the existing dwelling the extensions are within the residential curtilage. As such it is suggested that the proposals do not encroach into the countryside.
- 10.11 It is suggested that the proposals would not have a negative material impact on the setting of urban areas and villages.
- 10.12 By improving the existing dwelling to meet the current demands and needs of the housing market, the proposals are making best use of previously developed, brownfield site and as such can be seen in context of urban regeneration. In any case it is suggested the proposals have no negative material impact on urban regeneration and the refusal of such proposals would not encourage the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
- 10.13 The site is located within a Special Landscape Area and it suggested that the proposals represent a high standard of design and landscaping that will not have a material impact on the visual impact of the area from nearby or distant viewpoints and as such can be seen as according to Policy E5.
- 10.14 The Local Planning Guidance Note no. 20 (LPGN 20) relates generally to House Extensions and seeks to ensure proposals reflect and enhance the appearance of the existing property, adjoining properties and their setting in terms of scale, design and materials.

- 10.15 The prime driver for the project was to rectify the issues caused by previous unsympathetic extensions and it is suggested the proposals should be seen in this context rather than necessarily strictly in relation to LPGN 20 and the relevant sections.
- 10.16 While the guidance suggests “*outside settlement limits, any extension should be clearly subsidiary to the existing dwelling, and should not normally exceed one third of the floor area of the original dwelling*” it is suggested that the proposals represent an improvement on the existing dwelling, and still remain subsidiary to the existing dwelling. It is noted the proposals do not refer to “original” just “existing” and as such the proposals should be seen in comparison to the dwelling as whole, including existing extensions and alterations.
- 10.17 Generally it is suggested the proposals do not materially detrimentally affect the parking arrangements, garden size, separation distances, residential amenity, existing trees or landscaping, highways safety or access.
- 10.18 It is suggested that the proposals will not result in increased overlooking into or create and overbearing or overshadowing impact on neighbouring properties. It is suggested that the relationship with the existing properties remains the same as existing.
- 10.19 The dwelling sits a substantial distance away from any neighbouring property and the proposed extensions and garage are located mainly to the opposite sides of the property which only bounds onto open countryside. The two-storey rear extension is located generally more than 15m away from the neighbouring property, Wellfield House, which sits at a slight angle to the host dwelling.
- 10.20 As such it is suggested that the proposals do not have a material impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties by virtue of overlooking, overbearing, overshadowing or loss of privacy.
- 10.21 At first floor, the only extension is a two storey rear extension to the rear of the original dwelling. The rearwards projection is c. 3m and sits generally along the boundary to enable the elevation to be balanced with the previous two storey gable extension. The proposed roof is not higher than the existing dwelling and the materials, pitch, angles generally match those of the existing dwellings.
- 10.22 At ground floor level, the proposals involve a small single storey front extension and single (and two) storey rear extensions.
- 10.23 The front extension seeks to rebalance and improve the overall appearance of the property and while it is appreciated the policies are generally against such extensions, it is suggested the existing dwelling does not represent a typical example assumed by the guidance. It is suggested that the proposals do not detrimentally affect the overall character and appearance of the street scene, does not project a significant amount (especially when compared to the existing design) and are sympathetic to the form, scale proportion and design of the dwelling (which itself is different to neighbouring properties) without affecting the parking facilities.
- 10.24 The rear extension seeks to create a better proportioned sitting room, again rationalising and trying to improve the previous extensions to the property. It is suggested the proposals do not materially alter the existing levels of sunlight, daylight or privacy to adjoining owners.
- 10.25 The site lies within Flood Zone C2. The principle of a dwelling and garage in this location is already established on this site, and the garage would remain ancillary to the main dwelling. It is suggested that the proposals would not therefore result in an adverse impact with regards to its location within Flood Zone C2 and would accord to EC12 of the UDP.

11. CONCLUSIONS

- 11.1 The proposed scheme has been developed to improve the visual appearance of the front of the property, and to address a number of internal issues.
- 11.2 It is suggested that the scheme is a high-quality design that respects the character of the host dwelling. The amenity of neighbouring properties is not affected by the proposals either by overlooking or loss of daylight.
- 11.3 The siting, location and space around the dwelling house conform to all Local Policies and LPGN's and are in keeping with the character of the area. This proposal reflects the aspirations of Wrexham Borough Council's and national Government policies and targets and therefore should be encouraged.