

# DESIGN STATEMENT

## 7A LITTLEHAVEN LANE, ROFFEY, HORSHAM RH12 4JF

Details: Construction of a new first floor for residential use  
1 self-contained dwelling above the existing commercial premises.

Planning History: Application DC/24/0314. Withdrawn  
Pre Application Report. Application.PE/24/0125. Pre Application Report

This Design Statement has been prepared in support of a revised planning application taking account of the comments received in the Pre Application response, Ref: PE/24/0125, issued by Bethan Tinning on the 8th October 2024.

The pre-application was to discuss the key concerns raised as part of the earlier planning application, namely the overbearing impact on neighbouring amenity and neighbouring amenity.

We have reviewed the extensive planning history related to the site in connection with residential development on the site, many of which were refused due to concerns relating to the loss of employment on the site, the impact on neighbouring amenity, the standard of accommodation for future occupant, and matters relating to water neutrality.

However, having been advised that these considerations would remain relevant to any future applications we believe the current application will demonstrate that we have endeavoured to address these concerns in the overall design of the development.

### The Site.

The site is bounded by residential properties on all sides and has direct access from Littlehaven Lane.

The site comprises of a single storey commercial building built in the early 1980's, located to the far west corner of the plot with a secure yard area located to the front and southern end of the building.



The Site

Image extracted from Google Earth

Outline Proposal.

The application entails the formation of a second storey to the building to create a new dwelling on the site.

The new dwelling will be created by the formation of a new first floor consistent with the rear eaves level and contained within the footprint of existing building, with the exception of a small two storey extension to the front of the building to create a separate entrance area to the residential unit.

The ground floor would be retained as a commercial unit with the intention of the owner / applicant to continue to operate their business, DJQ Builders, from the site and occupy the first floor residential unit.

However, Legal separation of the two units will allow future for occupation or ownership of either of the units.

### Principle of Development

*The site is within the built-up area of Horsham where the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) would support the principle of new residential development (through Policy 3).*

*The scheme would allow for retention of a ground floor commercial use and this would be welcomed. It would be necessary as part of any formal submission to include details which demonstrate the presence of ground floor commercial would not adversely impact upon living conditions within the first-floor dwelling, as although the submission indicates the dwelling would be occupied by the owner this link would not be secured through the planning process.*

### **Principle of Development**

The intention of the proposal is to retain the existing ground floor area and a portion of the external yard area for commercial use and form a new first floor for residential occupancy.

To ensure the retention of the commercial unit does not adversely impact upon the living conditions within the first floor dwelling, and suitable amenities are provided in terms of external space, the proposals include a dedicated and separate access to the dwelling together with a newly formed garden area accessed directly from the dwelling.

The new first floor structure will be constructed with materials and using details that will fully comply with Building Standards regarding noise and vibrations. However, the applicant will also seek to include within the deeds of the commercial unit some restrictions as to noise / operational constraints to ensure the occupation of the residential unit is not adversely affected by the commercial unit.

Likewise, security gates at the entrance to the site will provide both pedestrian and vehicle access to the site with dedicated parking spaces for the commercial unit and new dwelling to ensure full separation of the two units. The dwelling will have garage space at the first floor level provided by a specialist car lift.

The legal separation outlined above will be put in place following a successful application to ensure the commercial unit and new dwelling can be separately owned and operated.

### Character and Appearance

*Policy 32 of the HDPF states that good design is a key element in sustainable development and seeks to ensure that development promotes a high standard of urban design, architecture, and landscape. Policy 33 of the HDPF states that development proposals should make efficient use of land, integrate effectively with the character of the surrounding area, use high quality and appropriate materials, retain landscaping where feasible (and mitigate loss if necessary) and ensure no conflict with the character of the surrounding town or landscape.*

*The existing building has a functional low-key appearance and is of a scale which does not appear unduly prominent in views from adjoining properties and land. The proposal would introduce a mansard-style roof form which would inevitably result in a more visible building. While the proportions would not reflect a traditional mansard roof, featuring as it does a considerable area of flat roof more akin to a crown roof, it is not considered this would inevitably result in any adverse visual impact.*

*It is though acknowledged that the site features a number of constraints and that the formation of additional height inevitably leads to impacts on surrounding properties and land, as considered further below.*

The following design proposals endeavour to address the requirements set out in Policy's 32 and 33 of the HDPF.

The existing property consists of a brick built single storey commercial unit with little architectural merit located in the northwest corner of the site.

The large mono pitched roof slopes from the front to the rear of the building with a section of tile hanging, approximately 1.5M, on the front elevation to deal with the increased height from the roof slope.

The proposal is to construct the new first floor at the level of the rear eaves.

Whilst we accept the formation of the new first floor structure will initially have a visual impact on the surrounding properties, we feel this is inevitable when dealing with the site constraints but the design approach taken, that incorporates a 'hybrid' mansard roof design, has tried to minimise this impact and maintain the privacy of the neighbouring properties.

This is also helped by forming the new first floor at the level of the rear eaves, which in turns lifts the new roof line by approximately 2M above the existing level of the roof line on the front elevation.

This type of roof design also minimises the loss of useable floor space area within the residential unit.

The finishes to the elevations of the mansard roof would be tile hung to replicate the finishes found on a number of properties in the local area.

Taking full account of maintaining the privacy of the adjoining neighbours, especially to the rear of the site in Perth Way, no new windows have been included on the rear elevation. However, to avoid loss of amenities to the new dwelling there will be windows on the remaining elevations and a small, recessed terrace on the southern elevation. These will be metal clad 'pop out' type dormer windows with a small, pitched gable detail.

The positions of the windows on the north elevations have been located to face the public spaces in Innes Road, again to minimize the impact of overlooking directly on to the neighbouring properties.

The 'hybrid' design of the mansard roof does create a larger flat roof, which will be slightly recessed below the ridgeline of the tiled hung elevations. This again reduces the visual impact of a large flat

# DESIGN STATEMENT

7A LITTLEHAVEN LANE, ROFFEY, HORSHAM RH12 4JF



roof but offers the opportunity to install a number of roof lights to serve the internal areas of the dwelling, as well as installing solar panel arrays.

The remaining areas will be used to increase the biodiversity of the site by installing areas of sedum roof, which will in turn improve the visual appearance of the roof.

A small extension to the front of the building will be added alongside the existing commercial entrance to create a direct and separate access to the residential unit.

The treatment of the existing ground floor elevation will be to render the existing brickwork and replace the existing doors and windows with composite / metal framed units and new roller shutters to the workshop and garage.

## Amenity

Policy 33 of the HDPF states that permission will be granted for development that does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of the occupiers/users of nearby properties and land.

The proposal relates to a constrained backland site with the existing building sited in close proximity to shared boundaries with neighbouring properties on Innes Road, Perth Way, and Crawley Road. These factors result in a site which is sensitive to any increase in height and bulk beyond that which currently exists. It is considered that the roof pitch coupled with the presence of new window openings would be likely to have an unacceptable impact on amenity for occupants of adjoining properties.

It is acknowledged that future occupants would have access to limited amenity space, this is considered to address previous concerns relating to lack of amenity space. There is sufficient car parking and commercial related space on site.

While right to light has been acknowledged with the 25-degree angle from the centre of the lowest window of neighbouring buildings, it is considered that this is not the main concern with the proposal. The first-floor extension would result in a more dominant and prominent building which would be readily visible from neighbouring properties and land. The increase in height, bulk and massing and the relationship with surrounding properties is such that the resulting building would appear visually overbearing and have an unacceptable impact on neighbouring amenity.

It is not apparent that the existing building can be retained and extended (upward) in a manner which could be acceptable and address the above impact. It is therefore advised that the development potential of the existing building is likely to be limited.

Proposed developments of this nature on 'backland' sites will always face design constraints, here, the main concern is the building's location near shared boundaries with neighbouring properties on Innes Road and Perth Way.

A 'right to light' assessment confirms the proposed ridge heights comply with the accepted 25-degree rule measured from neighbouring windows. However, while the design recognises and addresses potential impacts due to site constraints, it aims to minimise effects from the increased height and bulk of the new first floor.

In the current application, the reduced roof overhang increases the gap between the boundary and the mansard elevation, lessening visual impact.

The concerns of privacy and overlooking of the neighbouring properties was an important factor and this has been addressed by omitting any first floor windows to the rear elevations and having the remaining windows located in positions that either face public spaces on Innes Road or are considered a sufficient distance from the boundary of the properties in Crawley Road and Littlehaven Lane.

# DESIGN STATEMENT

7A LITTLEHAVEN LANE, ROFFEY, HORSHAM RH12 4JF



The amenities for occupants of the proposed dwelling include;

- A separated entrance to the dwelling on the front elevation.
- A small, recessed terrace area accessed from the kitchen/dining area.
- A specialist car lift within the garage area will provide parking / storage for two vehicles
- A privately accessed fenced garden area formed in the southwest corner of the site.
- Dedicated marked parking bays for the occupants use.

The legal separation will be put in place following a successful application to ensure the commercial unit and new dwelling can be separately owned and operated.

## Highways

*Policy 40 of the HDPF deals with sustainable transport and seeks new developments to provide safe and suitable access for all vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists, horses riders, public transport, and the delivery of goods. Policy 41 which relates to parking requires adequate parking and facilities to be provided within developments to meet the needs of anticipated users.*

*The application site falls within Zone 3 of West Sussex Parking Standards, which has a minimum of 1.8 parking spaces per (3-bed) dwelling. From the location plan, the existing access into the site would be retained. There is also 4x spaces for commercial/visitors parking and 2x residential parking bays proposed. This would be considered sufficient for the site and would meet WSCC guidance, but this would be subject to comment during consultation with WSCC Highways if an application is submitted.*

The site falls within Zone 3 of West Sussex Parking Standards and as such will have 2 parking spaces linked directly to the dwelling.

Secure gates at the entrance will allow 24hr access to both the commercial unit and the proposed dwelling for vehicles and pedestrian access.

## Water Neutrality

The application site falls within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone as defined by Natural England and which includes supplies from groundwater abstraction which cannot, with certainty, demonstrate no adverse impacts upon the defined Arun Valley SAC, SPA and Ramsar sites. A recently received advice note from Natural England advises that planning applications will be required to demonstrate, with sufficient certainty, that they will not contribute to an existing adverse effect. The advice note advises that one way of achieving this is through water neutrality, whereby new development does not result in a greater demand / usage of water than currently exists.

In order to demonstrate water neutrality, a strategy (in the form of a Water Neutrality Statement) would need to be prepared and submitted as part of any planning application. It is acknowledged that the previous withdrawn application did provide a water neutrality statement, however, insufficient information was provided to demonstrate that the proposal would be water neutral.

A water neutrality assessment has been commissioned which will demonstrate that keeping the existing ground floor commercial unit and adding a new three-bedroom residential unit upstairs will not significantly affect water usage.

This will be accomplished through the implementation of a rainwater harvesting system and a grey water system serving both units.

## Conclusion

We accept there may still be some concerns over the proposed scheme and the potential impact it may have on neighbouring amenity; however we trust the amendments made to the design helps mitigate the potential harm and that the application will be acceptable.