

Planning and Design Statement

Wiseacre, Leicester Lane, Desford, Leicestershire

July 2019

GHM Planning Ltd

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Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning and Design Statement has been prepared on behalf of David Granger Architectural Design Limited in support of the planning application for the extension to Wiseacre, Leicester Lane, Desford.
- 1.2 This statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying documents which include:
 - Plans and drawings prepared by David Granger Architectural Design Limited;
 - Application forms.
- 1.3 This statement describes the application site, the locality and comments on the relevant Development Plan and national policy framework. It then assesses the proposal in terms of visual and residential amenity.

2.0 Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The site is approximately a rectangular parcel of land to the northern side of Leicester Lane and accommodates a single storey bungalow and detached garage. The bungalow is broadly linear in form with subservient projections to the front and rear. To the east is the detached garage. Both buildings are set back from the highway boundary with shared front building lines. Access to the property is relatively central to the plot.
- 2.2 The dwelling comprises extensive accommodation on the ground floor with three bedrooms, two bathrooms, entrance and hall, kitchen, utility room, dining room, two reception rooms and a conservatory. On the upper floor there is a further bedroom and two bathrooms. The garage also provides an extensive footprint.
- 2.3 The area is characterised by a group of dwellings to the north and south of Leicester Lane set within a countryside location. The density of development is higher on the northern side with Wiseacre forming part of a group of buildings with the density reducing towards the east. Buildings on the northern side of the highway are generally set closer to the highway with dwellings on the southern side of a less formal siting.

3.0 Relevant Planning History

- 3.1 There is no relevant history to this site.

4.0 Proposed Development

- 4.1 The application comprises extensions and alterations to the dwelling. The existing footprint would largely be utilised together with extensions to the north of the dwelling to add footprint to the property and to the north-east of the dwelling to incorporate the footprint of the garage into the dwelling. The proposal would add a full first floor and integral garage with accommodation above.

5.0 Planning Policy

- 5.1 In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, an application for planning permission should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan relevant to the assessment of this application is the Hinckley

and Bosworth Local Plan 2006-2026: Core Strategy Adopted 2009 and the Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan 2006 – 2026: Site Allocation and Development Management Policies DPD Adopted July 2016.

- 5.2 There are no relevant policies contained in the Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan 2006-2026 Core Strategy.
- 5.3 Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan 2006 – 2026: Site Allocation and Development Management Policies DPD 2016 Policy DM1 relates to Sustainable Development and reiterates Paragraph 11 of the NPPF. It states planning applications that accord with the policies in the Local Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Borough Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise, taking into account whether: a) Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or b) Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.
- 5.4 Policy DM4 Safeguarding the Countryside and Settlement Separation states in order to protect its intrinsic value, beauty, open character and landscape character, the countryside will first and foremost be safeguarded from unsustainable development. Development in the countryside will be considered sustainable where, amongst other things, b) The proposal involves the change of use, re-use or extension of existing buildings which lead to the enhancement of the immediate setting.
- 5.5 Policy DM10, in relation to Development and Design, states that developments will be permitted providing that the following requirements are met:
- a) It would not have a significant adverse effect on the privacy and amenity of nearby residents and occupiers of adjacent buildings, including matters of lighting, air quality (including odour), noise, vibration and visual intrusion;
 - b) The amenity of occupiers of the proposed development would not be adversely affected by activities in the vicinity of the site;
 - c) It complements or enhances the character of the surrounding area with regard to scale, layout, density, mass, design, materials and architectural features;
 - d) The use and application of building materials respects the materials of existing, adjoining/neighbouring buildings and the local area generally;
 - e) It incorporates a high standard of landscaping where this would add to the quality of the design and siting;
 - f) It maximises opportunities for the conservation of energy and resources through design, layout, orientation and construction in line with Core Strategy Policy 24;
 - g) Where parking is to be provided charging points for electric or low emission vehicles are included where feasible;
 - h) An appropriate Sustainable Drainage Scheme is submitted to and approved by the relevant Authority. Schemes should incorporate wildlife areas, ponds, swales and permeable paving where appropriate;
 - i) It maximises natural surveillance and incorporates the principles of Secured by Design and has considered the incorporation of fire safety measures. In exceptional circumstances where outstanding, innovative design is demonstrated (particularly where high levels of sustainability are an integral feature), applications will be considered favourably, even where this may result in some limited conflict with the above criteria.

- 5.6 Policy DM18 Vehicle Parking Standards states proposals for new development will be required to provide an appropriate level of parking provision justified by an assessment of the site location, type of housing, other modes of transport available (e.g. public transport and cycle provision) and appropriate design.
- 5.7 The NPPF makes clear that applications for planning permission should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise, and in this respect the NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions.
- 5.8 At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. There are three overarching objectives which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives. These are an economic objective, a social objective and an environmental objective. The economic objective seeks to ensure sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places at the right time to support growth. The social objective seeks to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities by ensuring a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of the present and future generations and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment. The environmental objective seeks to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment, including making effective use of land.
- 5.9 So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay or where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.
- 5.10 At paragraph 47 of the NPPF it states planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Decisions on applications should be made as quickly as possible, and within statutory timescales unless a longer period has been agreed by the applicant in writing.
- 5.11 Section 12 seeks to achieve well-designed places. It states the creation of high-quality buildings is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and creates better places in which to live. Planning decisions should ensure that developments will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping, are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting and establish or maintain a strong sense of place using streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit. It also states permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

6.0 Planning Assessment and Justification

- 6.1 The site lies to the east of Desford beyond the settlement boundary and forms part of a group of dwellings within the open countryside. The area is characterised by ribbon development on both sides of the highway set behind grass verges with trees and hedges prevalent on the site boundaries. There is no defining style of development with single storey, barn conversions and prominent two storey dwellings.
- 6.2 The existing dwelling comprises a large single storey dwelling with detached garage. The building occupies a substantial footprint with development filling most of the width of the site with a small space between the dwelling and garage. The building is of no particular architectural or historic merit and the proposal to remodel and extend would lead to an enhancement of the building and street scene.
- 6.3 The existing dwelling comprises ground floor accommodation with further rooms in the attic. The proposal would provide a full two storey dwelling, utilising the existing footprint of the building together with infilling to the rear of the existing kitchen, infilling between the dwelling and garage and extending to the rear of the existing garage. A significant proportion of the additional footprint would be to the rear of the dwelling and therefore not easily open to view from the public realm.
- 6.4 The plot has a substantial width and depth and the extended dwelling would not result in a cramped form of development or the over-development of the site. The extended dwelling would also maintain the pattern of development on the northern side of Leicester Lane where there is an established front building line of properties.
- 6.5 The design of the extended and remodelled dwelling has been carefully considered to maintain the linear form of the dwelling. The additional massing and bulk have been addressed through a horizontal and vertical rhythm and the pattern of openings to wall ratio. Articulation is provided with the two forward projections with the proposed gable providing a largely glazed elevation to reflect its role as the main entrance. Changes in materials add to the verticality to effectively break up the massing of the façade.
- 6.6 The height of the main body of the dwelling has been kept to a minimum with relatively low eaves commencing above the first-floor windows with a traditionally pitched roof. Only two high level rooflights would punctuate the front roof slope resulting in an uncluttered elevation. The garage wing has been designed with substantially lower eaves and ridge heights to provide a subservient element. Again, the massing has been effectively broken up with the verticality of the fenestration and small-scale dormer windows.
- 6.7 Although the resultant dwelling would be larger than the existing, the dwelling would remain set well back into the site. With additional landscaping and existing landscaping on adjacent sites, the enlarged dwelling would not be unduly visible on the approach to the site from the east or west, only coming fully into view as the plot commences. The dwellings to each side effectively bookend the dwelling and prevent clear views. The use of forward projections and low eaves, together with the subservient wing, reduce the apparent massing and visual impact of the dwelling. The building does not occupy a prominent location and would not be visually dominant.
- 6.8 The proposal would not therefore impact upon the intrinsic value or beauty of the countryside or its open character and would therefore comply with Policy DM4 of the Site Allocation and Development Management Policies DPD. Furthermore, the proposal would complement the character of the surrounding area which is characterised by a mix of dwelling types and styles regarding massing, layout,

design, materials and architectural features. As such, the proposal also complies with Policy DM10 of the Site Allocation and Development Management Policies DPD.

- 6.9 The enlarged dwelling would be set well off the boundary to the west with the neighbouring property, Stud Farm, also set off that boundary. This separation distance would ensure there would be no undue adverse impact on the amenities of that property. To the north there is open countryside. To the east the proposed dwelling would again allow a space to the boundary and would present a low blank gable to that elevation in order to ensure there would be no undue harmful impact on the occupier of the neighbouring property. To the south, the highway intervenes, and the neighbouring property is set well back from the highway. As such, the proposal complies with Policy DM10 of the Site Allocation and Development Management Policies DPD.
- 6.10 The proposal would be served by a re-positioned access with large areas of hardstanding to the front and the proposed enlarged garage. As such, adequate access and parking would be provided, and the proposal would comply with Policy DM18 of the Site Allocation and Development Management Policies DPD.

7 Conclusions

- 7.1 As demonstrated above, the principle of development is acceptable as the proposal relates to the extension and remodelling of the existing dwelling. The existing dwelling is of limited architectural or historic merit and does not enhance the site or surroundings. The proposed enlargement would result in a more cohesive appearance with the additional massing effectively broken up through the vertical and horizontal rhythm, low eaves and subservient wing. The linear form of the site and surrounding pattern of development would be maintained, and the proposal would result in a satisfactory visual impact, in accordance with the above policies and guidance. The proposal would be acceptable in terms of residential amenity and parking provision. As such, it is considered the proposal should be approved.