

17 OCT 2011

**Design & Access Statement  
including Planning Statement**

28 SEP 2011

2011/2175

1 Hook Lane Northaw Cuffley Potters Bar Herts EN6 4DA

**1. General Introduction:**

This statement accompanies the application which seeks a modification of the two storey extension previously granted at the property under reference 2010/0436 in order to provide a useable basement general storage area. Whilst the changes are fairly minor because it is creating additional space it was considered to be more than a non-material alteration and full permission is being sought.

**2. Design Principles and Concepts**

The Council have previously granted permission for a two storey side extension to provide an enlarged living room on the ground floor with modifications at first floor to provide an en-suite master bedroom.

The existing main entrance to the property already is accessed by steps and sits approximately 1.2m above ground level. The site slopes considerable from west to east and much of the original dwelling has a void of about 1m in height under the ground floor. This detail was 'followed through' with the permission granted under reference 2010/0436 as the slope of the land levels out towards the eastern boundary. As a consequence the approved extension already has a flank wall 2.5 storeys in height where it faces towards the adjacent property (No.11) and a void beneath the floor.

The application proposal seeks to excavate the existing sloping land by a further 1.4 m (at its maximum) to enlarge the existing void area in order to provide a useable basement area. This will involve the underpinning of the original house wall. There is no intention to reduce the land levels to the eastern side of the dwelling and the visual impact on no.11 will be as below.

Externally there will be no visual alteration to the rear elevation but the side elevation will have an access door with steps leading down to it and the small front corner terrace area will be visible against that approved under 2010/0436.

The main alteration will be to the front elevation where the basement will project in front of the line of the previously approved extension to the line of the principal elevation. This area will be excavated and remaining land held in place by suitable retaining walls and will be roofed over and will provide a small paved terrace area in front of the new window to the enlarged living room. It is anticipated that this terrace will be decorated with planting in pots and ornate planters. This will be the only difference to that as shown on the approved drawings under 2010/0436. From Hook Lane the building will appear exactly as approved with the exception of a small terraced area in front of the extended lounge.

Aesthetically we do not consider that the proposal will have any material effect on the street scene or be contrary to the Council's adopted green Belt and Northaw Common

conservation policies. The proposal does not provide additional living accommodation and has no external windows or light wells that could facilitate its use as habitable rooms and would not therefore be contrary to the council's Green Belt extensions policy. It will provide a general storage area of useable height (2.4m) in place of the existing void that has limited height (1.2m).

In real terms the only difference in this proposal to that previously approved is that the area under the approved extension will be excavated and spoil removed from the site. External the only difference will be that outlined above.

We are not aware if the property lies within a Conservation Area but notwithstanding the alterations would not only be in keeping with the character of the main host dwelling but will preserve and enhance the appearance of the locality generally. It is our contention that the proposal does this and causes no material harm to the structure of the building itself.

It is our contention that the proposal will only be visible when viewed from Hook Lane immediately outside the dwelling and will be barely visible within the street scene.

### 3. Landscape

The site and area generally is well landscaped with trees and hedging within the individual properties and there is a large grassed common area in front of the properties leading down to Firs Wood Close. There are no proposals to change the existing landscaping and fencing, which will be retained. There are no public footpaths running close to the property and as such it is not felt that any addition screening is required but we would prepared to accept a landscaping condition should the council require some screening planting.

### 4. Access

There are no proposals to change the existing access into the main dwelling and the only alterations will be to the vehicle parking areas with the grounds to the property. There is no intention to alter or widen the existing access to Hook Lane. The exiting area in front of the dwelling will continue to be used for off-street parking and there will be no reduction in the level of provision.

### 5. Planning Statement

We are aware of the Council's policies which seek to protect the Green Belt from inappropriate development and to preserve and enhance the visual amenity of the Northaw Common Conservation Area and we are content that our proposal would not be contrary to these established planning policies. There will be very little alteration to the external appearance of the building and would therefore ask that our proposal be favourably viewed.

**James Barron BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI**  
**Planning Associate – Westleigh Design**  
**21 September 2011**