

Design and Access Statement

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Proposal: Rear extension (resubmission with revised offset from neighbour's boundary)

Property: Briary Lane, North Hertfordshire

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by the homeowners, Karen and John Morgan, in support of a pre-planning application for a revised rear extension at our property.

The proposal is a resubmission of a previous scheme, amended to address concerns raised regarding proximity to the neighbouring boundary. The new design sets the extension 1.2 metres away from the boundary, reducing impact.

The property is a semi-detached 1960s home situated on Briary Lane, with a driveway to the side and a generous rear garden backing onto Princes Mews.

2. Site and Context Analysis

Surrounding Buildings

The property sits within a residential street made up of 1960s semi-detached houses, 1960s ex-council houses and some detached houses. These homes typically feature:

- Setbacks behind medium-sized front gardens.
- Side driveways.
- Long rear gardens.

To the rear, the property backs onto Princes Mews, a 1980s development of mews-style houses. A gate at the back of our garden provides access to this estate.

Several houses on Briary Lane, including ours, already have loft conversions, and many have undertaken rear or side extensions to adapt the homes for modern family living.

Street Character

Briary Lane is an established residential street with a mix of long-standing residents and newer families moving in. As households evolve, many properties have been updated with:

- Rear extensions.
- Side extensions.
- Loft conversions.

This has created a varied but harmonious suburban character where modest domestic alterations are common.

Constraints

- The street sits on a gentle hill, but the slope does not materially affect the proposal.
- There are mature trees at the rear of the garden, approximately 20 metres from the house, so they do not constrain the extension.
- The site is not within a conservation area, and there are no Tree Preservation Orders nearby.
- No heritage assets are affected.

Opportunities

- The east-facing garden provides excellent morning light, offering an opportunity to create a bright, open family space.
- The depth of the garden allows for a modest extension without compromising outdoor amenity.
- The existing pattern of extensions in the area supports the principle of domestic enlargement.

3. Design Principles

Layout

The proposal is for a simple, functional rectangular extension at the rear of the house. It will accommodate:

- A new kitchen.
- A small living area.

The existing kitchen will be repurposed as a utility room, improving the overall layout and functionality of the home. The design aims to maximise the connection between the house and the garden, taking advantage of the morning sunlight.

Scale and Massing

The extension has been carefully designed to ensure it does not overpower the neighbouring property or the wider area. Key considerations include:

- A 1.2-metre offset from the neighbour's boundary.
- A footprint proportionate to the size of the house and garden.

This results in a modest, subservient addition that respects the character of the semi-detached pair.

Appearance and Materials

The extension will be constructed using materials that match or complement the existing house.

Schedule of Materials

Foundations

- Standard concrete strip foundations.
- Depth and specification to be confirmed by Building Control following site investigation.

External Walls

- **Construction:** Traditional cavity wall construction.
- **Outer leaf:** Brickwork to match existing house in colour, size, and bond.
- **Inner leaf:** Concrete blockwork.
- **Cavity:** Insulated cavity with appropriate thermal insulation to meet Building Regulations.
- **Damp proofing:** Conventional DPC and DPM as required.

Roof

- **Type:** Flat roof.
- **Covering:** EPDM rubber membrane.
- **Structure:** Timber joists with insulation to Building Regulations standards.
- **Rooflights:** Conventional flat-roof skylights (e.g., double-glazed units with UPVC or aluminium frames).

Windows and Doors

- **Material:**
 - UPVC windows to match existing, **or**
 - Slim-profile black metal (aluminium) frames for sliding doors (final choice subject to supplier).
- **Glazing:** Double-glazed, energy-efficient units.
- **Style:** Sliding or fixed glazed doors to maximise light and garden connection.

Rainwater Goods

- Black UPVC gutters and downpipes to match existing property.

Internal Construction

- Timber stud partitions where required.
- Plasterboard and skim finish.
- Insulation to meet current Building Regulations.

Finishes

- External brickwork to match existing.
- Internal finishes (flooring, plaster, paint) to be selected by homeowner.
- External landscaping to be completed following construction.

Other Elements

- **Insulation:** All walls, roof, and floor to meet or exceed current thermal performance standards.
- **Services:** Existing services extended into the new extension as required.
- **Sustainability:** Provision for installation of an electric vehicle charging point.

Landscaping

Following construction, the rear garden will be re-landscaped to:

- Create additional seating areas.
- Improve usability for family life.
- Introduce planting to enhance privacy and reduce overlooking.

The landscaping will soften the appearance of the extension and improve the overall garden environment.

Sustainability Considerations

As part of future-proofing the home, we intend to install an electric vehicle charging point. The extension will also use modern construction methods and materials that support good thermal performance.

4. Use

Purpose of the Extension

The new space will be used for family living, including:

- Eating.
- Watching TV.
- Providing a secondary seating area.

With three boys (teenagers and younger), the family requires more flexible space that allows for **separation of activities** while still maintaining a connected household environment.

Relationship to Existing Uses

The extension will:

- Create a new kitchen and living space.
- Allow the existing kitchen to become a utility room.
- Retain the dining area.
- Improve the overall flow and functionality of the ground floor.

This represents a natural and modest evolution of the home to meet modern family needs.

5. Access

Site Access

The proposal retains a 1-metre side access along the extension, secured with a gate. An additional entrance will be created at the side of the new utility room, providing a practical space for removing muddy boots and outdoor clothing.

Parking and Driveway

Driveway and Parking Layout

- The existing driveway remains unchanged.
- The property will continue to accommodate two vehicles, as it does at present.
- No alterations are proposed to the front garden, dropped kerb, or parking layout.
- There is no impact on visibility splays, as all works are confined to the rear of the property.

Highway Access

- The proposal does not alter the vehicular or pedestrian access to the site.
- The existing access from Briary Lane remains fully intact and unaffected.
- No works are proposed within the highway boundary.

Pedestrian Access

- A 1-metre side access will be retained along the side of the extension, secured with a gate.
- An additional entrance to the new utility room will provide a practical route for removing muddy boots and outdoor clothing, improving internal circulation without affecting external access.

Impact on Highways

- As the extension is located entirely at the rear of the property and does not alter parking, access, or sightlines, the proposal has no implications for highway safety.
- No increase in traffic generation or on-street parking demand is expected.

Conclusion

This revised proposal represents a carefully considered, modest extension that respects neighbouring properties, enhances the usability of the home, and aligns with the character of Briary Lane. By offsetting the extension from the boundary and using sympathetic materials, the design aims to minimise impact while providing much-needed family space.