

M Scott / Architectural Design

Design and Access Statement

For

Loft conversion with rear dormer and two front rooflights, first-floor rear bay window and single-storey side extension, together with associated alterations.

At

20 West Hill, Hitchin, SG5 2HZ.



M Scott Architectural Design Ltd

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the proposed loft conversion, first-floor rear bay window and single-storey side extension at 20 West Hill, Hitchin, SG5 2HZ.
- 1.2. The proposal seeks to improve and extend the existing family dwelling. The works comprise a rear dormer window and two rooflights to the front roof slope at loft level, a new first-floor rear bay window and a single-storey side extension to the rear of the existing garage to facilitate the enlargement and reconfiguration of the kitchen.
- 1.3. At ground-floor level, the proposal reconfigures the existing accommodation to provide an improved open-plan kitchen, living and dining space, together with a new shower room and utility area.
- 1.4. At first-floor level, the proposal introduces a new rear bay window, providing an improved relationship between the internal accommodation and the rear garden.
- 1.5. At loft level, the proposed dormer and rooflights facilitate the conversion of the existing roof space to provide an additional bedroom with ensuite, together with a study and storage.
- 1.6. The proposal would increase the number of bedrooms by one. The existing vehicle and pedestrian access arrangements would remain unchanged.
- 1.7. The proposal has been designed to provide improved and additional family accommodation whilst respecting the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the surrounding residential area, and maintaining an appropriate relationship with neighbouring properties.

2. The Site

- 2.1. No. 20 West Hill is a semi-detached, two-storey dwelling with a pitched roof, situated within an established residential area of Hitchin.



Location Plan

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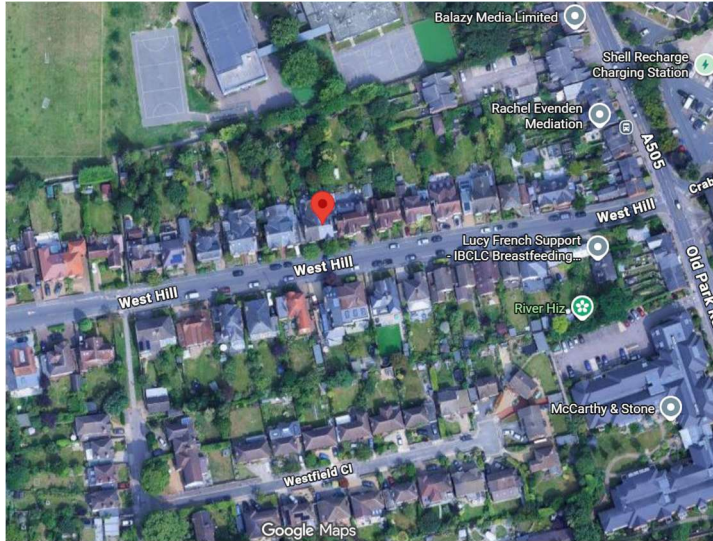
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Google Maps Satellite Image – Site located by red dot

- 2.2. The surrounding area is predominantly residential in character and comprises a mixture of detached and semi-detached dwellings. The properties vary in form and have been subject to a number of alterations and extensions over time. Behind the site is Samuel Lucas School.
- 2.3. The application property comprises the existing dwelling together with its associated rear garden and attached garage. The principal elevation faces West Hill, with the principal private amenity space located to the rear.
- 2.4. The proposed works are located to the rear and side of the property and within the existing roof space. The single-storey side extension is positioned to the rear of the existing garage and is therefore screened from the street by the existing building. The principal street-facing appearance of the dwelling would therefore remain largely unchanged.
- 2.5. The site is not within a Conservation Area and the existing roof slope is understood to be the original roof form.



Front Elevation Site Photograph



Rear Elevation Site Photograph

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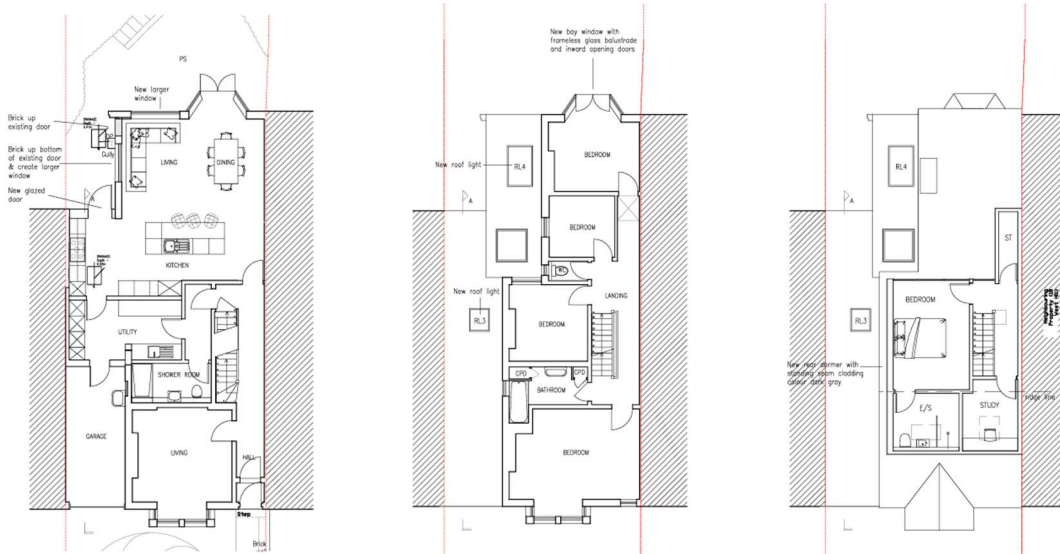
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3. The Proposal

3.1. The proposal comprises a coordinated series of alterations and extensions intended to improve the functionality of the existing dwelling and provide additional family accommodation.



Proposed Floor Plans

3.2. At ground floor level:

- The existing kitchen would be reconfigured to provide a new shower room and utility area. The utility area would extend into the rear of the existing garage, making more effective use of the available floor area. A rooflight would be introduced to the utility area to provide natural daylight to this part of the accommodation.
- The existing laundry, WC and second living space would be reconfigured to create an open-plan kitchen, living and dining area. The kitchen would be extended to the side at the rear of the property, behind the existing garage, to meet the building line of the neighbouring property. A new glazed door would be incorporated within the kitchen to improve the connection between the internal living space and the rear garden.
- The two existing windows serving the laundry and WC areas would be increased in size to improve natural daylight, outlook and views towards the rear garden.
- The existing laundry rear door would be bricked up as part of the internal reconfiguration, allowing the available floor area to be used more effectively and improving the functionality of the proposed open-plan living accommodation.

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Proposed Elevations

3.3. At first floor level:

- A new rear bay window is proposed. The bay would incorporate frameless glass balustrading and inward-opening doors.
- The design of the proposed bay window has been informed by the existing period dormer at ground-floor level. The intention is to replicate the architectural approach and detailing of this existing feature, creating a sympathetic addition to the rear elevation.
- A similar approach has also been adopted at the neighbouring property, No. 22 West Hill, under planning permission reference 22/02519/FPH.

3.4. At loft level:

- A rear dormer is proposed across the principal rear roof slope to facilitate the conversion of the existing roof space. The loft conversion would provide an additional bedroom with ensuite, together with a study and storage space.
- Two rooflights are proposed within the front roof slope. These would be relatively small and positioned within the existing roof plane.
- The rear dormer would occupy most of the main rear roof slope; however, the roof of the existing outrigger would remain unaffected. This ensures that the dormer remains visually subordinate to the overall roof form of the dwelling.
- The dormer would not be visible from the principal front elevation or from the street. Its visibility from other viewpoints would also be limited by the surrounding built form, differences in ground levels, existing vegetation and neighbouring properties.
- The proposed rear dormer falls within permitted development rights. It is nevertheless included within this planning application to allow the proposed works to be considered as part of a comprehensive scheme for the alteration and improvement of the dwelling.

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4. Design Considerations

- 4.1. The design has been developed to improve the functionality of the existing dwelling whilst respecting its scale, proportions and character and the character of the surrounding residential area.
- 4.2. The proposed works are located to the rear and side of the property and within the existing roof form. The single-storey side extension is located behind the existing garage and would therefore have limited visibility from the street. Consequently, the principal street-facing appearance of the dwelling would remain largely unchanged.
- 4.3. The two proposed front rooflights are relatively small and would sit within the existing roofslope. Their scale and positioning would minimise their visual impact upon the front elevation.
- 4.4. The proposed single-storey side extension would provide additional space for the enlarged kitchen whilst allowing the existing dwelling to be reconfigured internally. Located to the rear of the existing garage, the extension would have limited visibility from the street and would follow the established building line of the neighbouring property, providing a logical continuation of the existing built form.
- 4.5. The proposed first-floor rear bay window would be a small and sympathetic addition to the rear elevation. Its design, including the frameless glass balustrade and inward-opening doors, has been informed by the existing period dormer at ground-floor level.
- 4.6. The use of a similar architectural approach at No. 22 West Hill, which benefits from planning permission under reference 22/02519/FPH, provides a relevant example of this type of rear alteration within the immediate locality.
- 4.7. The proposed rear dormer has been designed to remain subordinate to the overall roof form. Although the dormer would extend across most of the principal rear roof slope, it would not extend over the roof of the existing outrigger. A similar approach has also been adopted at No. 22 West Hill, which benefits from planning permission under reference 22/02519/FPH.



No 18 and 22 West Hill photograph - Roof lights



No 22 West Hill photograph – Dormer

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- 4.8. The positioning of the dormer to the rear means that it would have no material impact upon the principal street-facing appearance of the dwelling. Its visibility from other viewpoints would be restricted by existing buildings, vegetation and the differences in levels within the surrounding area.
- 4.9. The larger areas of glazing proposed to the dormer are intended to provide appropriate levels of natural daylight and outlook to the new accommodation. Given the location of the dormer to the rear and its limited visibility, the glazing would not result in harm to the character and appearance of the dwelling or wider locality.
- 4.10. The proposed materials have been selected to complement the existing dwelling and ensure that the new works integrate appropriately with the character and appearance of the property. The proposed materials are as follows:

Element	Proposed Material / Finish
Ground-floor bay window	Painted timber, finished in a colour to match the existing windows and joinery of the dwelling.
First-floor bay window	Painted timber, finished in a colour to match the existing windows and joinery of the dwelling.
Brickwork	New brickwork to match the existing dwelling as closely as practicable in terms of colour, texture, bond and pointing.
Rear dormer	Dark grey standing seam cladding.
Dormer windows	Dark grey aluminium-framed windows.
Rooflights	Dark grey/anthracite frames to complement the existing roof finish.
Glazing / balustrade to first-floor bay	Frameless glass balustrade with clear glazing.

- 4.11. Overall, the proposed alterations would provide a coherent approach to extending and adapting the existing dwelling. The works would retain the principal character of the property whilst allowing it to meet the changing requirements of a modern family home.

5. Neighbouring Amenity

- 5.1. The proposal has been carefully considered in relation to the amenities of neighbouring properties. The key considerations are privacy, outlook, daylight and the potential for overbearing effects.
- 5.2. The proposed front rooflights are small and positioned at a high level within the existing roof slope. They would not result in harmful overlooking or a material loss of privacy to neighbouring properties.
- 5.3. The proposed first-floor bay window would have a relatively limited projection and would be set away from the site boundaries. It would therefore not appear overbearing when viewed from neighbouring properties and would not result in an unacceptable loss of daylight or sunlight.

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- 5.4. The relationship between the proposed bay window and No. 18 West Hill has also been considered. Existing trees and vegetation would substantially obscure views towards the rear garden of No. 18, such that the proposal would not result in harmful overlooking or loss of privacy.
- 5.5. The angled glazing forming part of the proposed bay window would have a relationship with the rear garden of No. 22 West Hill. To ensure that privacy is maintained, the angled section of glazing facing No. 22 could be provided as obscure glazing, if considered necessary by the Local Planning Authority.
- 5.6. The rear dormer would primarily provide views towards the rear garden of the application property. Given its position and orientation, it would not result in an unacceptable loss of privacy to neighbouring properties.
- 5.7. The single-storey side extension is located to the rear of the existing garage and would be limited in scale. Its height and positioning would ensure that it does not result in an unacceptable overbearing impact or loss of daylight to neighbouring occupiers.
- 5.8. The scale and positioning of the proposed works have therefore been designed to avoid unacceptable impacts upon neighbouring occupiers. The proposal would maintain an appropriate level of residential amenity for surrounding properties.

6. Access

- 6.1. No changes are proposed to the existing vehicle or pedestrian access arrangements serving the property.
- 6.2. The existing access to the dwelling and garage would be retained.
- 6.3. The proposal would increase the number of bedrooms by one but would not materially alter the use of the property or the existing access arrangements.
- 6.4. The proposal would therefore have no material impact upon access to the site or the surrounding highway network.



No 20 West Hill photograph – Access arrangements

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7. Conclusion

- 7.1. The proposal seeks to improve the existing family dwelling through a single-storey side extension, a first-floor rear bay window and a loft conversion incorporating a rear dormer and two front rooflights.
- 7.2. The ground-floor works would provide a more functional open-plan kitchen, living and dining space, together with improved utility and shower room accommodation. The alterations would also improve natural daylight and the relationship between the principal living spaces and the rear garden.
- 7.3. The first-floor bay window has been designed as a sympathetic addition to the rear elevation, drawing upon the existing period dormer and a similar approach at the neighbouring property.
- 7.4. The loft conversion would provide an additional bedroom with ensuite, together with study and storage accommodation. The rear dormer would remain subordinate to the overall roof form and would have limited visibility from the public realm.
- 7.5. The single-storey side extension would provide the additional space required for the enlarged kitchen. Located to the rear of the existing garage, the extension would have limited visibility from the street and would integrate appropriately with the existing dwelling and neighbouring built form.
- 7.6. The proposal would not result in an unacceptable impact upon the character and appearance of the dwelling or the wider locality. The scale and positioning of the works have also been carefully considered to maintain the amenities of neighbouring occupiers.
- 7.7. The proposal represents an appropriate and proportionate adaptation of the existing dwelling to provide improved and additional family accommodation whilst respecting the established residential character of West Hill.
- 7.8. Planning permission is therefore respectfully sought.

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