PLANNING STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF
APPLICATION FOR THE EXTENSION TO
FAWLER COTTAGE, FAWLER, KINGSTON LISLE, OXON

Prepared by
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Our Reference: ADM.LPC.2752

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 LPC (Trull) Ltd have been instructed by Mr and Mrs B Topliss to prepare a Planning Statement in support of their application to alter and extend Fawler Cottage, Fawler, the scheme having been prepared by Roger Baker, Architects. In preparation for this Statement, the property was inspected from which was ascertained that there has been very little invested in it for many years prior to its recent acquisition by the applicants.

1.2 There are recently completed houses in the immediate vicinity of Fawler Cottage that are replacement dwellings, however, the applicants do not wish to follow that approach for this building. Rather they wish to retain the cottage and extend it to form a family sized property, virtually on the same footprint, by raising the walls slightly and adding a pitched roof. The single storey flat roofed extension projecting beyond the front wall of the property will be removed and the earlier flat roofed extension behind it replaced with a thatched roofed ‘one and half’ storey extension, stepped down and back from the existing building to make it subservient to the original. The rear extension will follow the same wall length and position on the north west side as the existing but will be slightly closer to the south west boundary to compensate in floor area for the removal of the single storey extension at the front. The increased width has the advantage of providing a better-proportioned addition.

1.3 The existing dwelling has two first floor bedrooms but no upstairs WC facilities, these proposal add a third bedroom, with first floor bathroom accommodation. The aim is to create a modest sized family home from a dwelling that has been empty for some time and does not provide modern facilities. It has been suggested by the Planning Officer that the additional accommodation should be separated from the host dwelling by means of a single storey link. However, such a proposal would necessitate a second staircase and the result would not provide satisfactory family
accommodation, due in particular to the separation of bedrooms which is especially disadvantageous when young children or aged relatives are involved. Such alterations would be mean that the dwelling would be more likely to provide a second home or weekend cottage that would not benefit the local community to the same extent as the family home proposed.

1.4 This Statement will look at the planning policy context, which stems principally from the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011 and the Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document before commenting in more detail regarding the proposed scheme.

2.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 The policies and proposals section of the Local Plan has a section entitled ‘Design’. This says that good design should be the aim of everyone involved in the development process and will be encouraged everywhere. It adds that good design not only improves the quality of the environment but it can help to provide public acceptance of new development. The section continues by saying the proposals should be based on a thorough assessment of the surrounding built and natural environment and the defining characteristics of the local area, including local building traditions and materials and adds that although the Council will seek to promote local distinctiveness, this does not mean that new design should simply mimic their surroundings.

2.2 Policy DC1 states that development will be permitted provided that it is of a high quality and inclusive design such that the layout, scale mass, height, detailing, materials used and its relationship to adjoining buildings and open space do not adversely affect those attributes that make a positive contribution to the character of the locality. Development should also take into account local distinctiveness and character either in a modern or a traditional interpretation. This policy has been taken into account in the design of the scheme by extending to the side of the cottage with a subordinate, set-back, thatched addition, to replace the
existing single storey flat roofed projection forward of the host building. To the rear, the proposed extension will follow a similar building line to the existing structure but will have a plain clay tiled roof, again lower than the host building, to demonstrate that it is a later addition to the property, thereby manifesting the evolution of the building. The detailed requirements of the policy are all complied with and the extended building would make a positive contribution to the character of the locality with the gable end of the proposed rear extension incorporating a modern interpretation of a bay window.

2.3 Policy DC9 of the Local Plan seeks to ensure that any development proposals are acceptable not only in themselves but in relation to any neighbours. It says that development will not be permitted if it would unacceptably harm the amenities of neighbouring properties and the wider environment in terms of loss of privacy, daylight or sunlight; dominance or visual intrusion, noise or vibration; smell or other omissions; pollution or contamination and external lighting. The proposed extension to the dwelling will not cause any unacceptable harm to the amenities of neighbours and will not be dominant or visually intrusive. The side extension will be seen from the road fronting the property, where it will be viewed as being lower and set back slightly from the original dwelling, rather than the forward projecting, flat roofed extension that exists at the moment. The side elevation will also be seen from the public footpath to the south east, beyond the existing boundary hedge but the extensions will not be so unusual or out of place that they would be visually harmful for users of the footpath. Rather, it would form part of the mix of old and new development that any walkers will view as they approach this part of Fawler.

2.4 The Housing section of the Local Plan refers specifically to extensions to dwellings and Policy H24 states that extensions will be permitted provided that a number of requirements are met. The main requirement against which this proposal should be considered is (ii) which says that the scale,
massing and positioning of the proposal should not result in a dwelling of
design and appearance that would cause demonstrable harm to the
character and appearance of its surroundings. From my assessment of
the proposal, its siting and location, I am of the opinion that the design and
appearance of the resulting dwelling would not cause demonstrable harm
to the character and appearance of its surroundings. Rather, it would
comprise a sensitive addition to an existing dwelling that would be wholly
in keeping with its surroundings, with the added benefit of providing family
sized accommodation in an attractive setting. As has been previously
stated, there would be no harm to the amenities or neighbouring
properties and no overlooking or overshadowing with there being
adequate off street parking and garden space remaining. Thereby
complying with other requirements of the policy.

2.5 The other policy guidance that has been followed is the Vale of White
Horse District Council’s Residential Design Guide Supplementary
Planning Document and, particularly, the advice contained within Section
4.6. This states that a well-designed extension can enhance the
appearance of a property and this is the approach that has been followed
in this instance. The Guide adds that elevations should be in keeping with
the shape, scale, properties and character of the existing dwelling and that
extensions should be subordinate with a lower ridgeline, the approach that
has been followed. It adds that matching materials should be utilised and
that two-storey side extensions should be set back from the main dwelling,
all matters that have been incorporated in this proposal. It also comments
that a contrasting approach in design terms needs to be justified, the
reasoning for the clay tile and modern south west gable being explained
earlier within this Statement.

2.6 In view of the above, the applicants consider that the proposal conforms
with the Development Plan policies regarding extensions to dwellings and
also with design guidance that has been formulated and adopted by the
Council. There will be a welcome change to the appearance of the
property by the removal of the very unattractive but sizeable flat roofed extensions, that project some 4.5m to the front of the dwelling, along its width and some 7m to the rear and their replacement with a subservient thatched side extension and a pitched roof rear extension would represent an enhancement to the appearance of the property, as well as to the general area.

3.0 DESIGN CONCEPTS

3.1 The proposed extension has been designed in order to enlarge the building from its two bedroom form in order to provide three bedrooms and improved bathroom facilities. This has been achieved by using a similar building footprint to the existing structure, the loss of the forward projection being compensated by the slight increase in the width of the side extension and rear projection, the latter extending no further than the existing building, except for the bay windows. As has been previously stated, the extension has sought to conform with the policies of the Local Plan and the Council's Residential Design Guide with subservience in scale and appearance, matching design for the setback side extension and a slightly different approach for the addition to the rear. The end result will be an extended dwelling that will make a positive contribution to the site and its surroundings.

3.2 Although there is no need for a Design and Access Statement as the building is not Listed and the site is not within the Conservation Area, the following aspects normally included within a Design and Access Statement are addressed briefly below.

Use

3.3 The existing use is residential, a use that will not change as a result of the proposed extension.
**Amount**

3.4 The application proposes to change the property from a two bedroom to a three bedroom dwelling with facilities normally required for modern day living. Bathroom accommodation will be provided on the first floor, instead of the occupants having to use a ground floor bathroom, with other rooms incorporated that would be typical of a three bedroom house.

**Layout**

3.5 There will be minimal change to the building layout, the main difference being the removal of the forward projection compensating for this loss by a side projection of 1.2m and the rear extension projecting by some 7.0m towards the adjoining field, on virtually the same footprint as the existing building.

**Scale**

3.6 The scale of the proposed extensions will be 'one and a half' storey, but set lower than the original house by approximately 0.3m. The side extension will be some 4.4m in width, with its span being 5m, (a little less than the existing house), whilst the rear extension will project exactly the same distance as the single storey extension but is a little wider at 4.7m when measured externally. The main change in scale will be the height, where the walls of the rear extension will be raised by 0.6m to the eaves of the roof, the roof space to be utilised to form approximately half of the first floor room heights.

**Appearance**

3.7 The proposed side extension will be subservient in scale to the host building with the roof height lower than the main house and the extension set back from the front elevation of the original building. The thatched roof will be continued down to form a traditional covered porch for the proposed front door. The fenestration will be simple, following the form
and proportions of the existing and set in rendered walls which will give similar appearance to the existing.

3.8 The proposed rear extension will have a hipped roof, thereby reducing its mass, and will be of plain clay tiles with hipped roof dormers inserted in both pitches. An external brick chimney stack is proposed on the south east elevation. The walls under the tiled roof will have three courses of bricks as a string course to improve proportions and provide visual interest. The south west elevation will be predominately glazed, with a two storey oak framed bay window to take advantage of the views towards the White Horse Hill.

3.9 New windows will be inserted within the existing building, as shown on the drawings, these have been carefully positioned to retain the building’s character. The proposed works, when considered as a entirety with the existing cottage, will create an attractive dwelling that would be well mannered and harmonious with its setting.

**Landscaping**

3.10 No landscaping details are submitted as part of the application as there are sufficient trees and hedgerow in close proximity to the house to ensure that the impact of the proposed extension is softened.

**Access**

3.11 There are no proposals to alter the existing vehicular and pedestrian accesses.

**4.0 CONCLUSIONS**

4.1 The proposed extensions respect and harmonise with the character and appearance of the existing building and will replace very unattractive flat roofed additions that make no positive contribution towards the building or the area in which it is located. The proposed extension will turn the
property into a three bedroom family home suitable for modern day living, in a way that will not cause harm to the environment, the amenities of the area or the amenities of the occupiers of any nearby dwellings.

4.2 The extensions have been designed to conform with the Council's policies and requirements in both the Local Plan and the Residential Design Guide and, in such circumstances, I trust that planning permission will be granted, subject to the imposition of any appropriate conditions.