Proposed Alterations & Extension to Dwelling, At 155, Wilthorpe Road, Redbrook, Barnsley.

This report has been prepared by Simon M Elliott - Dip. URP. of S.E.A. Planning Limited. The purpose of this report is to support the proposed development, as described above, at 155 Wilthorpe Road, Redbrook in Barnsley.

1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this report is to highlight the relevant considerations and the merits of the proposed development, in planning terms. This report is to support the revised planning application, which has been prepared by Garry Greetham Associates for the above-mentioned proposal and is to be considered along with that application. This application is for full planning permission for alterations and a two-storey side extension to the existing dwelling, which represents a revision to the recently granted planning application on this site.

1.2 This report takes account of the current design of 155 Wilthorpe Road and its immediate surroundings. Account has also been taken of the current Barnsley Unitary Development Plan (UDP) Policies and Supplementary Planning Guidance where they are relevant to the proposed development. This report takes account of the recent planning permission and compares the approved plans with those that are now submitted to the Council for consideration.

1.3 This report also takes account of other material planning considerations that are believed to be relevant to the proposed development or may have some influence on the LPA's decisions on this planning application. These include the design of the existing building and the merits of the proposed extension, and the Government's current stance relating to extensions to dwellings, particularly with regard to the emphasis towards allowing more development to be carried out within the curtilage of dwellings under the recently issued 'permitted development' rights.

2. The Site & Surrounding Area

2.1 The site of the proposed development is at number 155 Wilthorpe Road, which is a two-storey dwellinghouse with a detached garage at the rear. The property fronts onto Wilthorpe Road, on the outskirts of Barnsley in the Redbrook area. The dwelling gains pedestrian access to Wilthorpe Road and vehicular access via The Crescent, which is a narrow access road at the rear of a number of the houses along Wilthorpe Road. The front elevation of the dwelling is set back from the highway and is also set down at a slightly lower level than the road.

2.2 The application site itself is comprised solely of number 155 Wilthorpe Road, which is a substantial brick and rendered dwellinghouse with red rosemary tiles on the roofs. This property has a distinctive appearance, and has a number of similar properties on either side. However, a number of the adjacent properties have been altered or extended since they were originally built in a number of different ways.

2.3 The application site is located in what can best be described as a mixed use area in planning terms, with a number of residential properties and commercial buildings being in close proximity to this house. The land to the rear of the site continues to fall away from the site boundary, towards a number of other houses and the tennis club beyond. The main view of the proposed development would be from Wilthorpe Road and it is considered that the development, as now proposed, would sit very well against the design of the existing dwelling and its immediate surroundings.

3. Planning Policy & Other Material Considerations

3.1 This application has been prepared as a revised scheme following the recently granted planning application for a very similar form of development. The previous proposal was for a slightly larger extension than the one now proposed but the applicants feel that the details of that development do not provide them with the appearance that they would like to see and as such they are now seeking permission for this amended scheme.

3.2 The principle of a two-storey side extension has already been accepted by the Council and in my view the main consideration in this case is the appearance of the proposed extension when viewed from Wilthorpe Road. In terms of the design of the proposal and to act as an aid to our consideration of this proposal we prepared a plan to show the previously approved front elevation next to the current one, which is attached for consideration with this report.

3.3 As you will see on the attached plan the proposed extension is very narrow when compared with the existing house at only just over 2.0 metres wide. The neighbouring houses have already been extended in a variety of forms and this proposal will not have a detrimental effect on the character of the wider area. It is considered that the proposed extension represents an acceptable addition to this house as it would not have a materially detrimental effect on the character or visual amenity of this property.

3.4 The appearance of the utility room is very similar for both proposals but the current proposal is set back further than the previous scheme, which gives a greater break between the existing house and the extension at ground floor level. The roof of the utility room is larger and has much better proportions with the walls below than the previously approved scheme. The utility room roof, as approved, appears as a very small part of the extension and would leave only a very small gap between the top of the roof and the brickwork above. This creates an unusual feature with a poor appearance in terms of the design and proportions between the different elements of the extension.

3.5 The proposed extension is very narrow, even for a side extension, and is set in slightly from the boundary line. Because of the width of the extension it is considered that taking the roof through on the same plane as the main roof slope as now proposed represents an acceptable design choice, particularly as the roof slope does not extend all the way down to the eaves level, which is only slightly above the ground floor ceiling level. This is a one-off extension for the applicants and they want it both to look right for their property and also work well and look good internally, which we feel the current proposal will.

3.6 The original plans have now been amended and they propose an extension that I consider will comply with the guidance given in Policy H8E of the UDP and SPG Note 4, which are referred to in more detail below. Obviously the guidance given in the SPG notes is general and obviously does not provide a definitive set of rules for every type of extension. However, one thing is very clear to me and that is the fact that the proposed extension will not result in any harm to any interests of acknowledged importance, which is an important basic consideration in planning terms, with the main consideration being the impact of the extension on the character and visual amenity of the area.

3.7 It is considered that the amendments that have been made to the plans represents a significant improvement in the design and external appearance of the proposed extension, resulting in an extension that is consistent with the appearance and the character of the existing house. This will ensure that the proposed extension will be architecturally consistent with the original dwelling and because of the set back from the front elevation at both ground and first floor levels it will also be viewed as a subservient extension to the original dwelling and not as an intrusive feature when viewed within the street scene.

3.8 In terms of the Planning Policies and Guidance notes that are considered to be relevant to this proposal I wish to highlight the following:
UDP Policy H8E, which relates to Proposals to Extend Dwellings.
Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 4 (SPG 4), which provides more detailed advice on the design and size of House Extensions.

3.6 **Policy H8E** advises that proposals to extend dwellings should:

A) Be of a scale and design which harmonises with the existing building.

B) Not adversely affect the amenity of neighbouring properties.

C) Maintain the character of the street scene, and

D) Not interfere with highway safety.

3.7 **SPG 4** provides more detailed advice on house extensions and includes a section on Design Principles. SPG 4 advises that "It is important that any extension is designed to be in keeping with your property and the character of your neighbourhood. Therefore, before designing the extension, examine the character and details of your house. An extension will tend to be more successful if you follow these guidelines.

Building Form – the extension should not normally be larger than the existing house.

Roof – The roof style, pitch and details should match those of the existing house, particularly where the extension will be prominent within the street scene or extend on parallel lines at a smaller scale.

Materials – Materials should normally be of the same size, colour and texture to the existing house or as close a match as possible. Where materials cannot be exactly matched, a small set-back of the extension from the main wall by at least one course of bricks can avoid the unsightly bonding of old and new.

Details – Windows and doors should generally repeat the proportion and style of the existing dwelling, lining through with existing openings and using matching design details such as heads and sills.

Levels – Where the height of development proposed differs significantly from that in the area, developers may be asked to provide elevation drawings showing the relationship between the proposed and existing development in terms of streetscape.

3.8 There is also a section in SPG 4, which is entitled Side Extensions, which advises that to prevent a terracing effect and to avoid detrimental changes to the character of the street scene, it will sometimes be desirable to provide a setback of at least one metre from the main front wall of the dwelling. All two-storey side extensions should have a pitched roof following the form of the existing roof, which this proposal clearly will.

3.9 It is considered that with the amendments that have been made to the original plans the proposed extension will be viewed as a complementary addition to the existing dwelling. The detailing of the proposed works will fit in very well with the external appearance of the existing building form, as viewed from Wilthorpe Road. The extension is set back from the front wall of the house and the external facing materials will match those on the existing building in all respects. A note to this effect is included on the submitted plans.

3.10 The proposed extension represents a relatively minor addition to the existing house and neither the design nor the size of the proposed extension is architecturally inconsistent with the character of the existing property. As such, this extension would not appear as an intrusive feature in the street scene and should therefore be supported by the Council.

4. Conclusions

4.1 In conclusion it is my opinion that the extension to the dwelling, as now proposed, represents an acceptable form of development along Wilthorpe Road. The extension will not represent an alien form of development and will not stand out as being out of character with this house or its immediate surroundings. The proposed extension will not be materially detrimental to the character or visual amenity of the street scene.

4.2 The existing dwelling is a semi-detached house but because of the boundary treatment along the Wilthorpe Road frontage one does not view all of the houses along this stretch of the road in their entirety and the proposed extension will be viewed as a small addition to one of those houses. The external facing materials will exactly match those on the existing house as tiles on the rear slope of the existing house will be removed and used to tile the front roof slope of the extension so that it will appear as a single entity as soon as it is built. The walls are set back from the front elevation of the existing house and with the use of matching materials the extension will fit in very well with the existing house. It is felt that the proposed development will represent an attractive addition to this property and will not be contrary to any of the Council's UDP Polices or guidelines as outlined above.

4.3 It is clear that this proposal will not be materially detrimental to the character of the area. The access and parking spaces to the property already exists at the rear and the proposed development will not have an adverse impact on the interests of highway safety. As viewed from outside the site the appearance of the dwelling will remain generally as it does at present.

4.4 The construction of the proposed extension represents an acceptable form of development in this location. Therefore, the Council is respectfully requested to grant planning permission for the proposed development, subject to any conditions that are deemed to be necessary, in line with the advice contained in Circular 11/95.