

Design and Access Statement

Single-storey front extension at 4 The Larches, Higham, ME3 7NQ



1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared to support a householder planning application for a single-storey front extension to the existing dwelling at 4 The Larches, Higham, ME3 7NQ. The statement explains the design approach, how the proposal relates to the existing property and surrounding area, and how access and residential amenity have been considered.

2. Site and Context

The application site comprises an existing residential dwelling at 4 The Larches, Higham. The immediate area is residential in character, with neighbouring properties of domestic scale and appearance. The houses within the close are not arranged along a uniform front building line, with variations in siting, set-back and frontage treatment contributing to the established character of the street. The proposal has been designed as a modest addition to the front of the dwelling, responding to the scale, form and appearance of the existing house and the wider street scene.

3. The Proposal

The proposal is for the construction of a single-storey extension to the front of the existing dwelling, projecting 3 metres from the existing front elevation and measuring approximately 4,460 mm in width. The extension will be an addition to the current compact lounge, allowing the revised room to be brought to a scale more consistent with the proportions and accommodation of the rest of the property. The works will be limited in scale and contained within the existing residential curtilage.

4. Design Principles

The design approach is to create a proportionate and sympathetic addition that reads as part of the existing dwelling rather than as an unrelated alteration. The extension will use the same materials, detailing, architectural features and general appearance as the donor property, including compatible wall finishes, roof form, fenestration and external detailing where applicable. Its purpose is to improve the usability and proportion of the existing lounge, creating a room size that better reflects the overall scale of the dwelling while remaining clearly subservient to the donor property. Given the varied building line and frontage arrangement within the close, the proposed front extension would not appear as an incongruous feature or unduly disrupt a consistent street pattern. Careful consideration should be given to the relationship with neighbouring properties, including the position of windows, overall projection, roof height and the visual impact when viewed from the highway and adjoining dwellings.

5. Access and Parking

The proposal does not seek to alter the existing vehicular access arrangements. Any existing driveway, parking provision and pedestrian access to the dwelling should be retained. The entrance arrangement should remain safe, practical and legible for residents and visitors.

6. Residential Amenity

The proposed front extension is single storey and domestic in scale. Subject to the detailed drawings, it is expected to avoid unacceptable impacts on neighbouring amenity, including loss of light, outlook or privacy. The proposal should be designed so that it does not result in an overbearing relationship with adjoining properties.

7. Appearance and Materials

External materials, finishes and features will match those of the existing donor property, including wall materials, roof covering, rainwater goods, windows and doors where relevant. This matching approach will help the extension integrate with the original building and preserve the residential appearance of the property.

8. Landscaping and Boundary Treatment

The proposal is not expected to require significant changes to the wider landscaping of the plot. Any affected front garden, hardstanding or boundary treatment should be reinstated or

adjusted in a manner that maintains the domestic character of the site and the appearance of the street.

9. Sustainability and Construction

The extension should be constructed to current Building Regulations standards, including appropriate insulation, ventilation and energy performance requirements. Where practical, materials should be sourced responsibly and construction impacts managed to minimise disturbance to neighbouring occupiers.

10. Planning Considerations

Gravesham Borough Council identifies material planning considerations including local, strategic and national policy, residential amenity such as privacy, sunlight, overshadowing and overlooking, highways matters including access and pedestrian safety, and the design and appearance of development including layout, height and finishing materials. Gravesham's householder extensions guidance also emphasises that extensions should be well designed, sympathetic to their surroundings and avoid adverse effects on the original house, immediate neighbours, the street scene and the character and appearance of the local area. The proposal has been prepared with these matters in mind and should be read alongside the submitted application drawings.

11. Conclusion

The proposed single-storey front extension at 4 The Larches, Higham, ME3 7NQ represents a modest and appropriate householder development. It will improve the existing compact lounge by creating a more proportionate room that better matches the scale and accommodation of the wider property, while remaining subservient to the donor property, respecting the character of the existing dwelling, protecting neighbouring amenity and maintaining safe access arrangements. Subject to the detailed submitted plans and matching materials, the proposal is considered suitable for planning permission.