

183 - Eastern Road (12 & 14), Haywards Heath

Design & Access Statement

February 2025



Image 01 – 12 & 14 Eastern Road, Haywards Heath viewed from no. 12's driveway

Introduction

This statement relates to a Planning Application to extend and adapt what was originally two semi-detached houses in Haywards Heath. The houses were converted into four flats in the 1970's – see 'Planning History' below.

The application site is not in a Conservation area and the buildings are not listed.

Site Context

The site is located in Haywards Heath on the South-Eastern side of Eastern Road and towards its South-Western end where it connects with Franklynn Road.

The pair of semi-detached houses and application site appear on Eastern Road on a historical ordnance survey map from 1937.

In this part of Eastern Road houses typically have external walls finished in brickwork, pebble-dash render and tile-hanging. Pitched roofs are often covered with clay tiles. Porches with pitched roofs and clay tiles are common, with the application site a prime example.

Planning History

The original semi-detached houses were subdivided into four separate one-bedroom flats in the 1970's. Their respective planning applications are listed below:

- 12 Eastern Road Haywards Heath: CU/421/74 'Conversion of existing dwelling into two flats' (approved 27.01.75);
- 14 Eastern Road Haywards Heath: CU/421/74 'Conversion of private dwelling into two flats' (approved 28.11.78);

Use

The application site contains four separate one-bedroom flats in Planning Use Class C3 and will remain so.

Proposals

The applicants wish to extend and adapt both buildings to improve existing spaces whilst increasing the amount of accommodation.

Two 15.4m² rear and side extensions are proposed, i.e. a mirror image of each other, amounting to 30.8m² of new footprint in total.

Existing mono-pitched single storey external sores at the rear of each house, currently of little use to the flats, are proposed to be demolished to enable the proposed extensions. The extensions continue over two storeys, with the existing loft both converted and extended over the proposed new footprint as a continuation of the existing roof with pitch retained as 45°. A modest amount of flat roof is included to enable the roof extension.

'Rear extensions which are not visible from the street and do not negatively impact on neighbouring properties can be expressed in many forms...'

(Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD p131)

Two new dormers are proposed to the front roof slopes to help provide increased areas with sufficient headroom to stand whilst also providing outlook to Eastern Road and beyond and adding visual interest to the front elevation. The new dormers feature pitched roofs with gables and external materials to match the existing roof of the houses, and are influenced by the corresponding first floor windows below, as per the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD:

'Where a clear rhythm of fenestration is established, the position and proportion of dormer windows should respond to existing windows and / or doors.'

(Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD p132)

The proposed extensions enable the two one-bedroom ground floor flats to become two-bedroom flats with all bedrooms double bedrooms (i.e. in excess of 11.5m²). Living accommodation is proposed at the rear of the ground floor plans with large glazed bi-fold doors opening out to the large rear garden. Access into the ground floor flats is relocated from the side of the buildings to the original front entrances off Eastern Road.

The newly-extended first floor flats are proposed to be accessed from the sides of the buildings, with modest lobbies leading up a straight flight of new stairs to first floor level. As with the ground floor flats, two double bedrooms are proposed within the existing main part of the building, with an en suite shower room in one of these. Living accommodation is proposed at the rear of the first floor plan, with recessed balconies to provide a modest amount of private external amenity.

The converted and extended lofts provide new space at second floor level. This is subdivided into a new sitting room at the front of the plan, and a third double bedroom at the rear.

Pre-Application Feedback

A Pre-Application was made in November 2024, with a site meeting attended by Katherine Williams (Senior Planning Officer) on 05 December 2024. The following feedback was subsequently provided on 20 December 2024:

The proposed extensions would include replacing the existing rear lean-to store for a two storey extension which would infill the staggered rear and side elevations. This extension would also facilitate conversion of the roof to additional accommodation which would be served by a recessed rear balconies, rooflights and a front pitched roof dormer windows. The proposed extensions would be create a 2-bed ground floor flat and a 3-bed flat over two floors, within each property.

In principle there is no objection to the proposal, however there are a couple of elements which raise concern. The rear extension would result in a large portion of flat roof to facilitate the proposed loft conversion. Flat roofs are generally not supported above single storey level as they are considered to be of poor design and do not reflect the character and design of pitched roof properties. Due to this I would recommend that the flat roof is reduced as far as possible and obscured from view. I also have concerns regarding the design and appearance of the proposed balconies and its position within the rear gable and would appear uncomfortable with the side roof slopes.

In terms of the impact on the amenities, as the extensions would be the same to both sides of the semi-detached pair the proposal would not result in harm to the occupiers of the flats. However, it is considered that due to the position and height of the proposed rear balconies there would be overlooking to the dwelling and rear garden of No. 13 Dellney Avenue. The separation distance between the properties and that the balconies would be recessed is noted, however given that the second floor level and that balconies would amount to an external amenity space the proposal would result in overlooking and loss of privacy to this neighbour. Moving the balconies to the first floor was suggested which could overcome these concerns, however this would be subject to detail. No. 16 Eastern Road is located to the north of the property and is situated closer to the shared boundary than the dwelling to the south (No. 10 Eastern Road). Given the two storey nature of the extension, along with its depth and proximity to this neighbour there are concerns regarding the potential impact on the amenities of this neighbour through an overbearing impact and loss of light.

The proposal also includes a new parking area to the front of the building. As the building comprises of flats this would need to form part of any application as well as requiring a licence from WSCC. This hardstanding should ensure that surface water drains within the curtilage of the properties to prevent run off onto the highway. I would also suggest that some area of soft landscaping is retained to soften the proposal within the streetscene.

Response to Pre-Application Feedback

Following receipt of the Pre-Application feedback the scheme was revised to relocate the proposed recessed balconies from the rear of the second floor to the rear of the first floor to reduce the extent of overlooking and loss of privacy to number 13 Dellney Avenue. This also enabled provision of a new en suite shower room to the new second floor bedrooms thus improving the accommodation further.

Whilst the comment regarding the relatively modest amount of flat roof was noted and reconsidered, it was ultimately decided that, on balance, it is preferable to retain this part of the proposals as it enables the continuation of the existing rear pitched roof expressed as a hip to gable roof extension that retains the existing 45° pitch. The element of flat roof would not be visible from the streetscene and public realm, and would be largely unseen from neighbours aside from those immediately behind the properties in Dellney Avenue some 50+ metres away. In this context, the modest amount of flat roofing does not seem excessive, harmful to any neighbour's amenity, or to the detriment of the wider local area.

Access

Existing

The site is primarily accessed from the south-eastern side of Eastern Road via a driveway at the front of number 12. The driveway leads along the side of the house to the rear garden. There is also pedestrian access along the side of number 14.

Access into both first floor flats is via the original porch and front door at ground floor level at the front of both buildings. Access into the respective ground floor flats is at the side and towards the rear of each building.

Proposed

Access to the enlarged ground floor flats is reverted to the original porch and front door of both building. Access to the maisonette flats above is via the side of each building and up a straight flight of stairs that is also repeated to access the new second floor. This enables a protected route down through the building that is compliant with current Building Regulations.

Dropped curbs are proposed at the front of the site to enable vehicular parking within the existing front garden. It is anticipated that parking for five cars may be possible.

Amount

Existing GIA

- Existing site area: 727.1m²
- Existing GIA of no. 12/14 Eastern Road: 97.8m²
- Existing GIA of both no. 12 & 14 Eastern Road combined: 195.6m²

Proposed GIA

- Proposed Two-Bed Ground Floor Flat GIA: 67.4m²
- Proposed Three-Bed Maisonette Flat GIA: 108.8m²
- Proposed GIA of both no. 12 & 14 Eastern Road combined: 352.4m²
- GIA increase: 156.8m²
- Percentage increase in GIA: 80.2%

Layout

Please see the following accompanying drawings for existing and proposed internal layouts and site plan:

- 183.EX.02 - Existing Plans and Elevations*
- 183.PL.03 - Proposed Ground and First Floor Plans*
- 183.PL.04 - Proposed Second Floor Plan and Section A-A*
- 183.PL.05 - Proposed Elevations and Section B-B*

Scale

The scale of the proposals reflects the relatively generous size of the site, much of which is currently not in use.

Appearance

Form

Both of the extensions are proposed to have traditional forms with mostly pitched roofs. Where the existing building's roof is proposed to be extended, the pitch will match the existing buildings, i.e. 45°. As a consequence of retaining this pitch and ensuring the extended roof does not increase the overall height of this part of the roof, a modest amount of flat roofing is proposed.

Materiality

The proposed extensions will be constructed with external materials and detailing to match the existing building, e.g. face brickwork at ground floor level; rough pebble-dash render at upper levels, with tiles to match the existing roof.

Biodiversity Net Gain

To provide sufficient Biodiversity Net Gain (i.e. min. 10% uplift), we proposed removing a significant amount of the existing concrete that was previously installed in the rear garden, thus providing a sealed surface. This will be replaced with vegetated garden – please see associated BNG documentation.

Existing Site Images



Image 02 – External side access between no. 12 and the South-Eastern boundary



Image 03 – Rear elevation of no. 12 & 14 viewed from rear of site



Image 04 – Panoramic view of rear garden viewed from South-East corner of site

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Image 05 – Rear Elevation

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Image 06 – No. 14 front elevation

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Image 07 – No. 14 and no. 12 front elevation viewed from Eastern Road