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Design and Access statement Aura House, 2a New Road, Havant.

Resubmission of APP/16/00928



Front view of Aura House – 2a New Road

Aura House is situated on the triangle of land between New Road and West Street, the property is in the ownership of our client Mr. Gary Robinson.

The site's recent planning history comprises a two storey office block extension to the existing building which was granted permission on 10/12/2014 and a small infill section between the existing building and the new two storey section which was granted on 19/10/2015.

A pre-app was submitted for a new extension to the western elevation around the end of April 2016 with a response returned on 6th May 2016. The two main concerns in the pre-app response were regarding the mass of the extension and its effect on the parking levels within the site.

The a previous application on the site was APP/16/00928 for a proposed under croft office extension which was taken to the development management committee on the 8th December 2016, it was

subsequently refused at committee under the planning officers recommendation that its siting, design, size, materials, height, mass and bulk would have a harmful impact and be contrary to policy CS16. We point out later however that the council member's only concern related to parking. The reason for refusal is stated below;

"The proposed Office Extension would by reason of its prominent siting, design, size, materials, height, mass and bulk have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the area, detract from the appearance of the existing main building and represent an overdevelopment of this shallow and constricted site. The proposal would therefore conflict with policy CS16 of the Havant Borough Local Plan (Core Strategy) 2011, the Havant Borough Council Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2011 and the National Planning Policy Framework."

The last application at the site APP/17/00347 was a resubmission and was subsequently refused at committee for the same reasoning as APP/16/00928.

This design and access statement now accompanies a new scheme at the same site, taking into account the reasons for refusal.

This proposal is for the addition of a new two storey extension to the western elevation; at ground and first floor the proposed GIA is approximately 36.6sqm with a usable floor area of 25.5sqm. For this new scheme we are suggesting that the previously proposed double gable roof plane is altered to form a new hipped roof towards the southwestern side of the building running into a gable. This amendment to the roof plane would fall within policy CS16 as it identifies and responds positively to the existing features of local character within the proposed development – it also uses characteristics of the locality to inform the design by using existing steps in ridge heights, a combination of gable and hipped roof forms as well as the existing building lines owing to the tapering nature of the rear boundary of the site. With this new application, we have had to alter the roof line further meaning the hipped roof ridge is lower due to the build line being stepped further back. We also feel that the new scheme does not have a harmful impact on the amenity of neighbours according to the factors set out in CS16 1. e) It also would have the added benefit of further protecting the public realm from noise issues with the train line to the rear by way of further screening from the building – Noise assessments and details for mitigating the risk will be implicated prior to occupation.



Area to be developed on Aura House

Sticking to policy CS16 (as this was the only policy relevant to refusal) the development has been designed to have a positive relationship between the existing and proposed buildings by means of; altering the proposed materials from render to a mix of tile hanging and brick banding (as can be seen in the accompanying plans and visuals), makes provision for the management and maintenance of the development by the uses of undercroft parking allowing access and maintenance to the rear of the building. Streets will not be dominated by vehicular traffic (as stated by the highways development engineer, the scheme meets the HBC standards) and the layout of the scheme is legible in terms of orientation and manoeuvrability due to three access points with this amended scheme allowing the buildings to be linked together at first floor.

One key feature the scheme benefits from is its ability to adapt to the changing needs of the users over the its lifespan of the building. The applicant has always sort to create a place where people want to work within their locality and has expressed concerns to councillors over the lack of job opportunities for young people in particular, within their ward - with many having to travel as far as Southampton to find employment. The site has already proven that it is successful in recruiting local people and businesses and the potential to provide a further office unit can only increase the job opportunities that are available. The business case for this development is solid and is supported by the council's corporate strategy. As well as creating a new opportunity's for a local businesses in a new state of the art office facility which boasts 4G broadband, it also has close links to rail and bus as well as the motorway. Further evidence relating to the business case for the development can be seen in the attached letter from Codepotato Limited who are an existing tenant in Aura House.



APP/16/00928 received no concerns or comments from the public realm or councillors and only minimal concerns from environmental health which can be addressed post approval if needed through conditions. Policy CS16 is a subjective policy and to say the proposal would fall foul of this is, in our opinion, a misjudgement and as such we feel that the development does meet the relevant requirements set out in CS16. Although not on public record as the minutes of the development management committee do not fully reflect the debate, the main reason the majority of councillors wanted to refuse was based on the parking standards – the chair had to bring the hearing back to the point numerous times and as such we feel that the decision was biased and not properly discussed for the recommended reasons. We had one constructive comment regarding the use of materials such as tile hanging and brick banding rather than render and as such we have taken on board this suggestion.

The parking levels on the site are not constraining and turning abilities, which the highways development engineer has signed off on in the previous application and has stated they meet HBC parking standards for the whole site. The parking layout and levels have changed slightly from APP/16/00928 and APP/17/00347 but we feel this still meets technical requirements. We have considered the concern regarding the prominent siting of the proposed extension and acknowledge the pre-planning and advice received from the refusals, as such we have stepped the building line to reflect that of the terraces on New Road and maintains a parking space width for parking levels. We feel that this justifies the prominent, but amended siting of the extension and, owing to the amendment of materials and roof style creates a feature of the development within New Road.

As existing a total number of 8 spaces were sought by highways to be sufficient for Aura house, in our proposed plans we have shown an additional 2 spaces on site (taking the total onsite up to 10) whilst retaining turning facilities to be able to enter and exit in a forward gear. As existing there is capacity for 2 cycles to be stored at the rear of the building, we are proposing a further 9 secure cycle stores to the rear to over compensate as parking was raised as a main issue.

Accompanying the existing and proposed plans with this application is a traffic plan to help demonstrate that whilst New Road is a busy road there are numerous areas to park throughout the day with free on-road parking. The number 23 Stagecoach bus goes straight past the site with a bus stop 2 minutes down the road, Bedhampton train station is also immediately adjacent to the site with trains running from early morning to late at night to a wide range of locations.

Train and bus time tables will be on view for visitors and staff to encourage them to take alternative means of transport, as stated in the previous application at the site.

To conclude we feel this proposal has addressed concerns raised in the previous application

We always try to work as closely with the LPA as possible and welcome suggestions and comments necessary to the application to work towards a positive outcome.

Knight Architectural Design 24/02/2017

Kind Regards,

Tom Peters

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