



# Echo Cottage, John King Shipyard Emsworth PO10 7AY

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Supporting Planning, Design and Access Statement

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared in support of the planning application for the proposed removal of existing brick steps, replacement with retractable timber steps and enlargement to existing balcony.
- 1.2 This statement considers the planning and design merits of the application, including national policy, local policy and the previously refused planning applications. This statement supports the completed forms and drawings that together forms the application.
- 1.3 Section 2 considers the site and its surroundings.
- 1.4 Section 3 considers the recent planning history, development adjacent to the site that has a bearing on consideration of this application.
- 1.5 Section 4 is a description of the proposal and its design rationale
- 1.6 Section 5 deals with the planning policy context including the National Planning Policy Framework, this section also covers local policy and supplementary guidance.
- 1.7 Section 6 is an assessment of the planning merits and conclusion.

## **2. The Context -The Site and Surroundings**

### **Site Context**

- 2.1 The site is Echo Cottage, the former office of the King John shipyard. It is one of the last remaining original buildings within the immediate area that form the built edge to the harbour.
- 2.2 The cottage sits amongst more recent development, which is now a dense residential neighbourhood, having been the former shipyard area that served the harbour. The cottage is lower in scale and has a softer more vernacular character than the more recent developments.

### **Site Description**

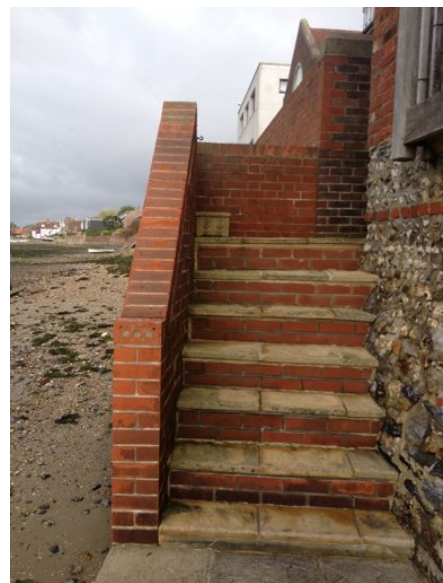
- 2.3 The application site is within the Emsworth Conservation Area where a higher standard of design consideration is required and proposals should preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area.
- 2.4 The application site is located on the waterfront with the whole southern elevation hard edged to the high tide line. It has no private outdoor amenity space on the southern side of the dwelling.

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- 2.5 Adjacent to the application site are the redeveloped buildings 1-4 John King Shipyard an imposing terrace of three storeys with rear gardens adjacent to the waterside edge. To the east is 8 Stanley Road this dwelling has a private garden to the south.
- 2.6 The property is tightly surrounded by built development and the area north of the dwelling is mostly paved for parking and is subject to shading most of the day. The approach to the dwelling is through the hard paved parking courtyard for 1-4 John King shipyard.
- 2.7 To the south of the property is the harbour and at low tide a small area of beach that has public access during times of low tide.



Existing balcony and steps



Existing steps –side view

Existing Bin and steps



Existing Balcony precedent



### **3. Planning History**

- 3.1 The recent relevant planning history of the adjacent site is set out below.
- 3.2 The planning application 04/6321/002 was refused planning permission on 14/4/2005.
- 3.3 The application was recommended for approval by officers in the committee report written by the case officer, and supported by the head of planning; this was despite the fact that there were objections regarding precedent and conflict with users of the public footpath. Despite the officer assessment that: on balance the proposal will be of benefit to the amenity of the area, and the positive recommendation of approval, the application was refused by the committee for the following reason:
- “The proposed development would adversely affect character and appearance of Emsworth conservation area by reason of its location and design and would set an undesirable precedent, contrary to the provisions of policies UB3, E10, E11 and E16 of the Hampshire County Structure Plan 1996-2011 (review); policies 1(a), 1(b) and 1(e), 5(a), 8(c) and 8 (d) of the Emsworth Town Centre Plan 198; and D4, L1 and HE2 of the Havant Borough District-Wide Local Plan 1996-2011.”
- 3.4 The applicability of this decision to the current proposal is considered in section 6 below.

## **4. Design and Environmental Considerations**

### **The Proposal**

- 4.1 The proposal is for the removal of existing brick steps, replacement with retractable timber steps and enlargement to existing balcony.
- 4.2 The proposal comprises two parts,
  - The first is the redesign of the balcony to create a platform for sitting with retractable integral steps
  - The second part is removal of the permanent brick steps structure

### **Design and Rationale**

- 4.3 The rationale for the application is two-fold. Firstly it is the intention of the owner to improve the visual appearance of the harbour front by the removal of the permanent brick built steps that protrude into the high tide line. This will allow the area to be free to any permanent diversion to the footpath to be replaced with a temporary set of steps that would be used in conjunction with launching a canoe for personal use from the property.
- 4.4 The second reason is based upon the need to create some useable private outdoor space, consistent with neighbouring properties, to make better use of the living accommodation of Echo Cottage.
- 4.5 The design solution is seen as a sustainable solution to the problems of a lack of useable amenity space and local character. In this regard the proposal is compliant with the wider sustainability aspirations of the NPPF.

### **Design Assessment**

- 4.6 The proposal must be considered an enhancement to the conservation area as it removes much repaired permanent engineering brick steps with treads finished in concrete paviers. This structure is not a traditional feature of the conservation area and is not built of materials sympathetic to the heritage asset. In addition the removal of existing brick steps allows the brick and flint wall to be viewed for most of the time when the timber steps are retracted, and this would be seen in glimpsed views when the steps are lowered. The conservation officer supported the removal of the brick steps in the previous application and considered this as “important”. This view was endorsed by the planning policy/ urban design officer.
- 4.7 The removal of the permanent brick steps structure will allow free movement along the beach. The balcony is of sufficient height to allow pedestrians to walk freely underneath the structure. The litter bin and council brick steps (shown in the photos

on page 3) have more of an impact on the desire line than this proposal, but do demonstrate that structures on the shoreline have been found to be acceptable to the Council.

- 4.8 The proposal also improves security for the occupants, as the retracted steps when secured would prevent egress on to the beach. The area has been subject to some anti-social behaviour with the existing path and steps providing a get away route.
- 4.9 The design has been carefully developed by a skilled architect who is sensitive to the design characteristics of the materials and style consistent with conservation area. This approach is also supported in the Chichester Harbour AONB design guide for new dwellings and extensions, which shows a balcony structure finished in timber shown on page 10 under the heading “particularly appropriate materials”.
- 4.10 The design also follows the style of the more traditional timber steps further west along the beach (photo below), which are a more sensitive approach than the exiting solid brick steps.



## 5. Planning Policy Context:

- 5.1 Havant Borough Council adopted its Core Strategy on March 2011. This mostly replaces the District wide Local Plan and the Hampshire County Structure Plan on which the previous reason for refusal relied. The Core Strategy will guide the growth until 2026. The more detailed plan for development management is currently in preparation.
- 5.2 The Core Strategy contains a number of policies: CS11, CS12 and CS16

### National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.3 The National Planning Framework has made it clear that a presumption in favour of sustainable development is the basis for every decision. In addition the NPPF confirms that the positive approach to development management. Given the sustainability and the benefits that accrue to the area this should be considered in favour of this application.

### Local Development Plan

- 5.4 The relevant Development Plan now in force is the Core Strategy
- 5.5 The relevant policies are considered below in the table.

| Policy                                                              | Response                                                                                                                                                              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Core Strategy - (March 2011)</b>                                 |                                                                                                                                                                       |
| CS11 Protecting and Enhancing the Special Environment               | This proposal is for Protecting and Enhancing the Special Environment and Heritage of Havant Borough, as described above the proposal enhances the conservation area. |
| CS12 Chichester Harbour AONB                                        | The proposal supports the Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) as it meets the guidelines adopted to enhance the area.                        |
| CS16 High Quality Design                                            | This proposal meets this objective in particular enhancing the conservation area and AONB.                                                                            |
| <b>Supplementary Guidance</b>                                       |                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Chichester Harbour AONB Management Plan                             | This proposal is in compliance with this policy as it improves the quality and appearance of the waterfront                                                           |
| Chichester Harbour AONB guidelines for new dwellings and extensions | This proposal supports the aims of this guidance and are finished in materials described as particularly appropriate.                                                 |

- 5.6 The policies that were relied upon in the previous planning refusal in the District-wide local plan have not been 'saved' and are therefore no longer applicable.

**National Planning Policy Framework (2012)**

- 5.7 The NPPF is guidance that supports the development plans policies and is a material consideration in determining planning applications.
- 5.8 The NPPF at its heart has a presumption in favour of sustainable development, and in this regard those proposals in accordance with the development plan should be approved.

## **6. Analysis of Planning Issues**

### **Principle of Development**

- 6.1 The Council's officers have confirmed that the principle of a replacement balcony is an acceptable form of development in their committee report assessment in 2004. In addition there was positive support for the removal of the brick steps.
- 6.2 The failure of the previous application, as set out in the refusal notice, was on issues of design and precedent these are considered separately below.
- 6.3 The previous design solution was rejected on the basis of its adverse affect on the character and appearance of the conservation area by reason of its location and design. However, this reason is spurious as the building already has a small timber balcony of very similar design and neighbouring dwellings also have similar timber balconies. The location is fixed due to the existing opening, so it is impossible to change the location without changing the exterior openings to the building.
- 6.4 Given that the proposal is of the design quality supported in the Chichester Harbour AONB design guide this reason for refusal can no longer apply.
- 6.5 Precedent. The previous officer assessment confirmed that introduction of a balcony would not set a precedent as there is already a balcony of similar style on the neighbouring property, and in a more prominent location on the second floor. This reason for refusal could not be sustained.
- 6.6 It is clear that the proposal is in line with planning policy and its implementation would enhance the conservation area.
- 6.7 Since the 2004 decision there has been significant change in planning policy. Most notably the change in approach to development as introduced by the NPPF. Given the policies of the Core Strategy are not yet updated to reflect the NPPF, it therefore takes precedent in decision-making.
- 6.8 This assessment has shown the proposal is consistent with planning policy, will enhance the conservation area, is sustainable, will improve the living condition of the occupants and assist with potential anti-social behaviour issues.

### **Conclusion**

- 6.9 The report has explored the policy considerations both nationally and locally and has considered the previous reason for refusal. This application demonstrated that the proposal is in compliance with the existing adopted policies and overall will result in a benefit for the CHC AONB area and support the enhancement of Emsworth Conservation Area.

- 6.10 On the basis of the above submissions the applicant kindly requests that planning permission be granted in accordance with NPPF guidance that proposals consistent with planning policy should be approved without delay.