

CLIENT : Dr Ian Caldwell

PROJECT : Proposed Rear Extension, Internal Alterations &
Replacement Side Extension

LOCATION : Merok House Rest Home, New Brighton Road, Emsworth, PO10 7QR

DATE : 18 March 2013

1.0 Background

PWP Architects have been engaged to develop a proposal for the reorganisation of the internal space and an extension to Merok House Rest Home. Merok House is a long established Rest Home in Emsworth, our client has recently purchased the property with the prospect of improving the facilities, and increasing the average room size to meet the Care Quality Commission (CQC) standards.

2.0 Current State

The building is in need of some significant refurbishment and remodelling to bring it up to an acceptable state, with many of the rooms failing to meet the requirements set by the CQC. With the advance of an ageing population, there is a social need for high quality care homes for the elderly. There is also an economic need for larger care homes, with smaller homes (as existing) failing to make commercial sense for proprietors such as our client. At Merok House the site is large enough to warrant an extension, with a large rear garden of almost 33m in length. An extension, along with extensive re-modelling, could enable this care home to deliver on both a social and economic level, and provide much-needed care for an ageing population.

3.0 Local Planning Policy

Policy CS7, Community Support and Inclusion, of the Havant Borough Core Strategy (Local Development Framework 2011) identifies the need for new services for older people, stating that

'4.15 The projected population figures for the borough indicate that the over 60 age group is expected to grow disproportionately within the overall population until 2026. This presents specific challenges in relation to housing, health and care needs.'

'4.17 ... The borough currently has the second largest number of over 60s in Hampshire (28,000 in 2007) or 20% of the population; this is projected to rise to 27% by 2026.'

The 'Housing Provision for Older People in Hampshire' (2009) report concludes that:

(7.33) 'Demand for care home places for older people is projected to grow in Hampshire by around 6,500 places (73%) by 2026, an average of 325 places a year over the 20 year period.'

4.0 Pre-Application Planning Advice

On behalf of our client we have partaken in pre-application discussions with Havant Borough Council, application reference GEN/12/01232. We met with Mrs D Haywood at the site on 6th February 2013 to discuss the application, and received a written response later that month.

The comments made by the Planning Officer were as follows:

- 4.1 Replacement side extension (South) – In the opinion of the Planning Officer the side extension has been *'designed to complement the character and form of the existing building'*.

The Planning Officer raised concerns over the proposed windows to the replacement side extensions south elevation. In response we have removed the first floor bedroom in this location and annotated the drawings to show all windows in this elevation are to be obscured glazing.

- 4.2 Rear extension – The Planning Officer has raised particular concern to the massing of the rear extension and its effect on the properties located on Silvertrees. The original proposal indicated a rear extension extending 22.3m with a 6m ridge height. The Officer has recommend that the depth and height of the extension be reduced, and the extension be single-storey, omitting the rooms in the roof as previously indicated.

In response we have reduced the size of the extension and removed the first floor rooms. The extension as proposed is now 13.5m in length, presenting a reduction of 8.8m (see image 1). We believe the reduction is appropriate to the position of number 8 Silvertrees.

With the removal of the first floor rooms we have also addressed the concerns the Officer raised regarding loss of privacy to the garden of the property to the south.

The ridge height of the revised rear extension has been reduced by 800mm at 5.2m, we have re-positioned the extension so that it is now situated a further meter away from the northern boundary to reduce the impact of the building on the properties to Silverstreet.

4.3 Side extension (North) – The Planning Officer considers enclosing the existing external escape stair as an improvement, with the other proposed extensions in the location ‘*modest in scale*’. However concerns have been raised regarding the bulk of the roof connecting the original building with the rooms in the existing roofspace situated above the kitchen. On our original proposal we had shown an increase in the ridge height of 1.4m to match the ridge height with the existing kitchen extension. We have now reduced the height of the roof in this location to show an increase of just 490mm (*refer to section C on drawing 1400* which would not have an adverse effect on the ‘loss of light’ to the properties on Silvertrees. We have also removed the dormer in this location as advised by the Planning Officer.

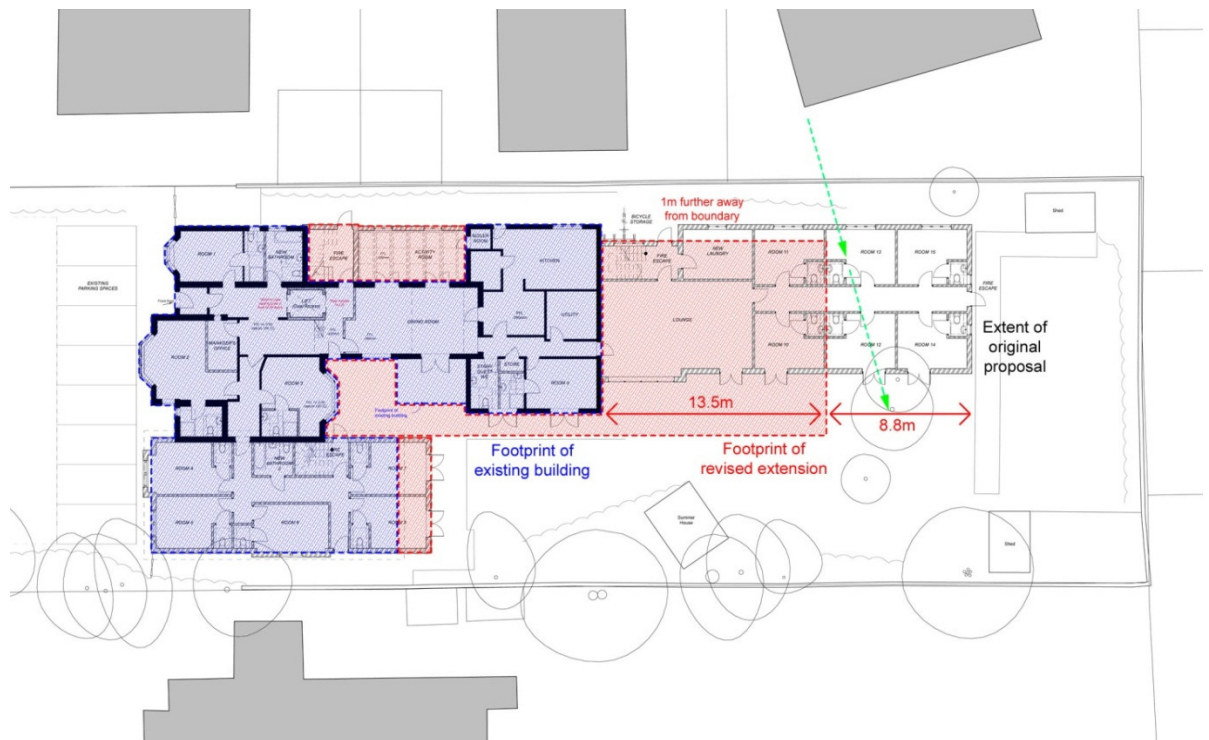


Image 1: Floor Plan of proposal submitted for pre-application enquiry, with footprint of revised plan indicated in red.

4.4 Highway considerations – Our client has appointed the services of a highways specialist to prepare a Travel Plan to accompany the proposal, please see the accompanying document for details. Our client has also provided a current survey of how staff travel to and from work, along with the current staffing levels – both of which are set-out in the tables below.

Means of Transport	Number of Staff
Bike	2
Bus	2
Walk	5
Taxi/Lift	3
Drive	5

Staffing Levels	Day shift	Night shift
Current	5	2
Proposed	6	2

5.0 Horizontal Movement

The original building has been added to over the years, and the existing extensions do little for the ease of movement throughout the building with many changes in level. Our client has recognised that a lift would be beneficial to the residents and has asked us to identify the best place for the lift. Due to a split level across all floors, from the original building to the rear extension, we have positioned the lift in the only position to allow dual access to all habited floors, allowing future residents the choice of all rooms and aspects, regardless of their mobility.

There is also a significant change in level between the first floor of the original building and the extension to the East. Without the addition of a second lift at this point, we would be unable to allow residents level access, we have therefore prepared a scheme for a new East Wing to replace the existing 1970's mansard roofed addition. This new extension will maintain the same floor heights as the original building, to allow for a fully accessible building throughout.

6.0 Proposed Extensions

Our client is keen to improve the facilities available to the residents, and would like all rooms to meet the basic size requirements of the CQC's. The current approach to shoe-horn as many rooms as possible into an existing building has left a collection of oddly shaped small rooms, which do not work well. The preferred approach from our client is to replace the existing East extension with a purpose built addition, allowing the new rooms to meet the care standards and be of better proportions for the arrangement of furniture etc., each having its own WC and washbasin. We have prepared a scheme for a brick built extension more in-keeping with the original Victorian villa (please refer to Architect's drawings).

The current configuration doesn't allow for a central lounge area for the residents, and instead has a scattered approach to social space, which doesn't work well for the residents or the staff. The current plan also has rooms directly off the dining space which, in our opinion, is bad practice. We have instead designed a new accommodation wing to the rear which allows for a collection of purpose built 'garden rooms'.

Reconfiguring the accommodation into the 2 new wings has allowed for the social spaces to be situated around the centre of the building, and removing the single storey extension which houses bedroom 9, allows a much better aspect from the Dining Room, with views into the courtyard.

A separate sitting room has been indicated to the first floor, with an aspect of the street to allow residents to view the 'comings and goings'. The proportions of these large rooms within the original building lend themselves to be one space rather than subdivided into two rooms, as they are at present.

7.0 Fire Escape

Our client has access to the most recent Fire Report, which identifies many areas that require work in order to meet the recommendation, namely the two external fire escapes. The Report states that both of the external escape staircases require structural investigation. The report also identifies that the external stairs should be clad in a fire resistant material.

Rather than clad the existing steel stairs in some form of corrugated sheeting material, our client would rather re-build the stairs so that they can be made to look as though they are part of the main building, and more aesthetically pleasing from Silvertrees (*see image 2*). Incorporating the new escape stairs in the main building allows for the existing central staircase to be removed, which would work well for dementia patients, where negotiating stairs can be hazardous. The new stair-cores can therefore be monitored by the staff, and will provide fully compliant stairs for the staff and able residents to use to move round the building.

8.0 Sanitary Facilities

The existing Home has 4 bathrooms between 18 rooms, with only half the rooms having their own WC.

The proposed home has 33 rooms, all of which have their own WC and washbasin, with 12 of those rooms also incorporating shower facilities. Leaving 21 residents to share 5, much improved modern bathrooms.

9.0 Parking

The current home has 8 parking spaces on the forecourt to the front of the property. The parking spaces are only used by visitors, and to our knowledge, there is never a shortage of spaces. The current home has long-standing staff members, which all live within the local area. Our client is keen to maintain the existing employees and recognises the benefits of advertising vacancies locally to encourage local people to apply. The Home is situated on the main road into Emsworth, within a residential area and on the bus route. We are currently in the process of getting a Green Transport Policy carried out for the site, and this will be available should we submit a full planning application.

By limiting access to the site to one side of the forecourt, two further parking spaces can be provided. We have also shown a cycle store to the rear of the site by the staff entrance.

10.0 Design

10.1 Amount – Merok House currently provides care for 22 residents in 18 rooms.

The building is in need of refurbishment and remodelling in order to address serious internal layout issues. The proposed development would increase the number of rooms to 30, accommodating 30 residents.

The proposed works include a replacement side extension to the south of the original house, a rear single-storey extension, an infill extension to the existing courtyard and a new staircore and infill extension to the north. The overall additional gross floor area equals 475m², distributed over the three floors.

10.2 Materials –

Replacement side extension (south) – The side extension has been designed to complement the style and form of the existing building. The proposed building is to be constructed using a traditional red/orange brick to match the existing building as closely as possible. The windows have been designed in line with the original windows, examples of which are available on the neighbouring property. The large double sash window will enhance the look of the new façade to the street. The roof finish will be slate to match the existing main house.

Rear extension – Red/orange bricks to match the existing building. Plain clay tiles to the roof to match the existing single-storey rear extension.

Courtyard infill – Render finish to walls with slate roof to match existing.

New conservatory – Render wall finish with metal standing seam roof.

Flat roof construction – Single-ply membrane.

11.0 Conclusion

There is a social and economic need for larger care homes which is recognised by the amount of smaller care homes closing over recent years. Our client is committed to improving the standard of the facilities' offered by the home, and a key factor to the home running efficiently is the safety of the residents when moving around independently. Residents value their freedom, however with all the various changes in levels within the current accommodation, moving around can be hazardous. The proposed configuration allows level access to all rooms, and this is achieved through the introduction of the lift and the replacement of the East wing. The introduction of the accommodation wing to the rear allows the central space situated within the original house, to be opened-up to allow for a more central social space for the residents.

12.0 Site Photos



Image 2: View from Silvertrees, showing external fire escape.



Image 3: View from New Brighton Road, showing existing East wing.