

Design and Access Statement

Proposed Development: Rear Garden Room for Child Therapy Use

Site: 6A Dornmere Lane, PO7 8QH

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement supports a planning application for the construction of a rear garden room at 6A Dornmere Lane, intended for child therapy work. The development will provide a dedicated, safe, and nature-integrated space for professional therapeutic activities, incorporating natural light, sounds, and calming surroundings to support the work conducted by the applicant.

2. Site Context

The site is a residential property located in a non-conservation area with a rear garden currently used as private amenity space. The site is bordered by five mature trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). The applicant has submitted an application to reduce the tree canopy to allow sunlight to reach the proposed building. No neighbouring properties contain trees in their rear gardens, and the site is not within an area at significant risk of flooding.

The garden room will be located at the rear of the property and positioned as close to the boundary fence line as possible, while respecting relevant planning and tree protection considerations.

3. Proposed Development

The proposal involves the erection of a **single-storey garden room outbuilding**, designed for use as a professional child therapy space. Key features include:

Foundations: Ground screw foundations up to 2.5 m depth, minimizing ground disturbance.

Roof: Hipped slate roof with roof lights on the east and west sides to maximize natural daylight.

Glazing: Bi-fold doors to the front, windows to front and rear elevations, and a canopy over the outdoor area.

Internal layout: Hidden cupboard-style or pocket doors to create discreet office and therapy spaces, including 'secret rooms' for children.

Positioning: Located close to the boundary line while avoiding root protection areas of adjacent TPO trees.

Gross Internal Area: 51.58 m²

The garden room will be used solely for work purposes and does not create any new residential accommodation. The development will not increase flood risk, affect parking, or involve hazardous substances.

4. Design Principles

The design has been guided by the following principles:

Functional and safe: The layout supports therapeutic work and children's activities in a controlled environment.

Integration with nature: Use of natural light, tree and water sounds, and careful siting to create a calming environment.

Minimal visual impact: Screening by existing fencing and landscaping, and sensitive positioning near TPO trees.

Flexibility: Internal hidden doors allow adaptive use for both work and children's activities.

5. Access

Pedestrian access: The garden room will be accessed via the existing rear garden pathways.

Vehicular access: No changes to existing parking arrangements are proposed.

Inclusive design: The garden room will be designed to be fully accessible, with level thresholds and clear circulation within the space.

6. Trees and Landscaping

The site includes five mature TPO-protected trees adjacent to the proposed building.

Canopy reduction has been applied for to improve sunlight access while retaining the health and character of the trees.

Landscaping will retain existing greenery where possible, and the garden room is designed to complement the natural surroundings.

7. Planning Considerations

Flood risk: The site is in Flood Zone 1, considered low risk, and the development will not increase flood risk to neighbouring land.

Non-residential use: The garden room is for work purposes only and does not create or affect residential accommodation.

Impact on neighbours: The single-storey design, careful siting, and existing screening minimize visual impact and preserve neighbour amenity.

8. Conclusion

The proposed garden room provides a well-designed, functional space for child therapy work while respecting the character of the property, the surrounding landscape, and the constraints imposed by protected trees. The design demonstrates a sensitive approach to siting, materials, and integration with the existing garden, ensuring minimal visual impact and sustainable, practical use.