

# Land adjacent to 38 Briar Road, St Albans

## DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

July 2024

### Introduction

The existing site is located within a residential street in St Albans of a mixture of semi detached and detached houses, most of which have been extended or modernised over the years. It is not located within the Conservation Area. The existing garden to 38 Briar Road is large and the proposal here is to sub divided to garden and space to the side of the house to create a new building plot for a detached dwelling by also demolishing 38 Briar Road's existing side extension. The new site created is approximately 515m square in area. The existing 1960s semi detached house is located on a corner plot with the rear garden extending down Ardens Way. It already has a side extension approximately 3.8m wide which will be removed.

There are a variety of different styles of house on the road, but they are generally of brick with concrete tiled roofs. The development over the years has resulted in a road where there is not a specific architectural character, but rather a good mixture of designs and styles.

### Design

The proposal here is to demolish the existing side extension to 38 Briar Road (which also has a single storey rear extension) and return the house to a three bedroom semi, sub divide the existing rear garden, and by so doing create a new building plot for a detached three bedroom house. The existing crossover would be retained from Briar Road and a new pedestrian crossover created from Ardens Way to access the front door façade.

The side elevation of the new house facing Briar Road will line with the existing front elevation of the current house. Bearing in mind that this is a new corner plot building, there is no absolute building line to match with at this part of the plot, but to reduce the visual impact of the new house on that corner of Briar Road and Ardens Way, the front two storey is set back from the ground floor with the two storey element between 4-5m from the front boundary. This is a similar condition as at 21 Ardens Way opposite and 2 Springwood Walk on the corner at the end of the road. In this case, the single storey element on the corner is 3-4m from the front boundary as is proposed here. The two storey rear projection does not infringe the 45 degree line from the rear most habitable room ground floor window to 38 Briar Road and all the first floor windows facing that house are of obscured glazing.

The new building will have a finished floor level to match 38 Briar Road which means that it will be set lower relative to the pavement level on Ardens Way (which is raised) by approximately 500mm. With the cat slide style roof design

of the new house and this set down from the road, the bulk and mass of the new building will be reduced with the ridge height also lower than the existing house on Briar Road by one meter. The proposed street scene demonstrates this well.

The existing close boarded fence will also be retained to the side boundary to Ardens Way up to the new house. From that point, a lower new hedge will replace the fence for the frontage of the new dwelling. The more two storey design of the new house from the elevation to 38 Briar Road also makes the house relate well to the existing two storey façade of the houses on that frontage.

In terms of design, the new house will be built of a quality grey / brown facing brick with feature areas of oak composite cladding with a grey Eternit slate tiled roof. The windows will be grey UPVC with an oak front door. The attention to detail and the use of quality materials will make this new house a positive addition to the street scene of this area.

The new detached house will be accessed from the existing crossover from Briar Road and shared with that house. Both properties will have the provision for two cars on a block paved driveway. The existing semi detached house will return to a three bedroom property with a garden of 80msq which will be the same as the new detached dwelling. These are the acceptable areas of amenity space required for houses of this size.

The new house will also be fitted with eight solar panels on the west elevation roof and incorporate an air source heat pump which is now a requirement for building control for new build houses.

Bin and recycling storage areas are included to the side of the house adjacent to the rear patio area.

## Access

The existing vehicular crossover is retained from Briar Road which will serve both properties and give combined parking for four cars.

To the front, new low soft landscaping has been added adjacent to the house. A new tree has finally been added to the rear garden area on the boundary to 38 Briar Road with the two existing trees in the garden retained.

## Conclusion

It is a planning policy to encourage the creation of new additional dwelling units in the area where there is scope to do so, and this is a case in point. The overall impact of the new dwelling will not be adverse to the street with its low profile design and will in fact improve the visual amenity of the road. It will be a quality building in terms of both design and materials used, and its size and bulk in keeping with the other houses on the road. Its rear projection into the garden is acceptable in terms of the 45 degree lines and it is set away from the boundaries to the neighbouring property by one meter. It provides for the acceptable car parking requirements of two cars, and has an amenity area of 80msq which is needed for both the three bedroom dwellings. In terms of height, it is lower than the adjacent houses and there is precedent locally for houses on corner plots in the same proximity to boundaries. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable and will be a positive improvement to the visual amenity of the area as well as providing an additional housing unit which is always in demand.