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From: Matt Taylor
Sent: 25/06/2019 10:53:24
To: Scott Houston
Cc: James Sopp; Bob Dray; Derek Carnegie
Subject: 19/00806/HOUSE - 24 Donnington Square, Newbury
Attachments: S Houston - 24 Donnington Sq.pdf; 2929-02F Block Plan.pdf

Dear Scott,

On behalf of Gareth and Lenny Davies, further to the western area Planning Committee on 12th June, you will be aware that this item was deferred, mostly due to an opinion prepared by HDA on behalf of the objecting neighbour Ms Hawkins. Due to the late submission of this information, neither the applicant nor the majority of the Members had seen it prior to the committee and therefore, understandably, the item was deferred to allow time for this information to be considered and for the applicant to respond as appropriate.

Conservation and Heritage

The letter from HDA is limited in providing any real analysis of the proposal and is instead an opinion commissioned from a negative standpoint. This also contradicted the more detailed feedback prepared by the Council's own impartial Conservation Officer (Dennis Greenway), who is the most relevant and local expert. We are pleased to note that the consultation response from the Conservation Officer has now been provided on the Council's website and, in summary, confirms:

"I would agree...that the balance is tipping towards greater acceptability in design terms, since there is some variety in the design of the extensions to this part of Donnington Square referred to in my original comments, and with a not a strict duality between the pairs of houses here, including numbers 24 and 25" 08/05/19

And most recently;

"Notwithstanding any other Development Control Case Officer considerations, I confirm the comments made in my 08/05/2019 e-mail, that the balance in building conservation terms favours the (amended) proposals". 22/05/19

Notwithstanding this, some Members raised concerns during the committee that the applicant had not commissioned their own Heritage Statement and therefore we are now pleased to provide an unrepentant statement from James Weir Historic Buildings Consultant. James is a well-respected and highly qualified heritage specialist, being a Guardian, Trustee and Casework Committee member of the 'Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings'; a heritage consultant acting for Bournemouth Borough Council; as Heritage and Conservation Officer for Bournemouth Civic Society and an experienced private Heritage Consultant.

We are certain that you will find this statement to be a detailed, interesting and, moreover, a correct and well-reasoned analysis of the Conservation Area, the host building and the proposed extension. In conclusion, James states that *"the proposed extension appears to be complementary with both the existing building and the general architectural context of the Conservation Area..... We would therefore conclude that the proposal preserves the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, and will result in no discernible harm on the significance of No. 24 as a non-designated heritage asset on the strength of its relatively unaltered form and, as a building which encapsulates the defining architectural interest of the Conservation Area, a positive contributor to it."*

Dimensions

The other main issue which arose during the planning committee was the misunderstanding from both the Newbury Society and Ms Hawkins that the proposed extension was larger than the approved and constructed extension at No.25 (the other half of the semi-detached pair). Indeed, as worded, both of the objections suggested that if the proposed extension was no larger than the existing extension at No.25, there would be no objection.

We explained to Committee Members that this was in fact an error made by the objecting parties and in fact the proposed extension was, overall, much smaller than the extension at No.25. For clarity and the avoidance of doubt, we are pleased to provide an amended site plan which shows the neighbouring property in full, with measurements annotated on both extensions for ease of comparison. In summary, the measurements compare as follows:

	PROPOSED EXTENSION (No.24)	EXISTING EXTENSION (No.25)
Width	3.6m	3.7m
Depth	7.1m	9.0m

We trust that this provides the Planning Committee with clarity regarding these matters and politely ask that you add this email, along with the attachments to the online application file as the earliest opportunity.

In the interim, we intend to circulate an email to Members in advance of the committee to summarise these findings for the avoidance of any doubt.

Kind Regards

Matt Taylor

BA(Hons) PG-Dip MRTPI

Senior Principal Planner

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1901/C/24 Donnington Sq

West Berkshire District Council
Market Street
Newbury
Berks.
RG14 5LD

For the attention of Mr S Houston

19 June 2019

By Email

Dear Sirs,

Re: 19/00806/HOUSE, 24 Donnington Square, Newbury, Berks RG14 1PJ

Following the Planning Committee's decision at its most recent meeting on 12 June 2019 to defer determination of the above application, I have been instructed by Mr G Davies of 24 Donnington Square to provide an independent heritage review of the proposals and the relevant application documentation. This is in response to concerns raised by Members that the application was not supported by a specific Heritage Statement.

Summary of Experience

I have been working in the heritage sector for 15 years, the early years of which were spent in the area of building surveying in private practice and, subsequently, the National Trust. During these years, I completed a Postgraduate Diploma in Surveying, and took a Masters degree from Somerville College, Oxford. In 2010 I began practising as an independent Historic Buildings Consultant and completed a Postgraduate Certificate in Architectural History through the Department of Continuing Education at the University of Oxford. In 2011, I gained full professional membership of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation; was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts; and commenced a doctorate in Architectural History at Kellogg College, Oxford, in which I am in the latter stages of writing the final thesis.

Since 2010, I have worked exclusively with historic buildings and landscapes, with the work broadly encompassing building/condition surveys, Historic Building Appraisals, Heritage Statements, and general consultancy on the historic environment. A significant part of my work involves scrutinising and assessing the heritage elements of planning applications, which I encounter in various ways: as a Guardian, Trustee and Casework Committee member of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings; a heritage consultant acting for Bournemouth Borough Council; as Heritage and Conservation

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Officer for Bournemouth Civic Society; and through general consultancy providing pre- and post-, application advice to building owners or other relevant parties.

Designations

The property is situated in the Donnington Square Conservation Area, and is not statutorily listed. However, owing to its positive contribution to the Conservation Area and among its original defining buildings, the property is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (2018).

Policies

The conclusions of this report are underpinned by the relevant sections of national policy contained within the NPPF, particularly paragraphs 184, 189-190, 192-196, and 200.

The following policies in the West Berkshire Core Strategy are considered particularly relevant to this application:

CS 14 – Design Principles

CS19 – Historic Environment and Landscape Character

Donnington Square - Development

Donnington Square is a planned development of detached and semi-detached houses approximately 1km northwest of the centre of Newbury, arranged in a crescent around a central space. The latter was originally open, but has now also been developed.

The land for the development originally formed part of a common field called 'Claypit Field' which, at the time of the Speen parish enclosure was allotted to Mr John Payton (Berkshire Record Office [BRO] D/ENM1/E36). The Enclosure Map of 1780 confirms both that the current extent of the Square is broadly coterminous with Payton's allotment, and that it was at this time undeveloped. By 1797, the former common field was further divided, to provide a total of 14 parcels of land (BRO D/EX1379/73/1-5).

The land for the development was purchased in 1848 by Jere Bunny (1788-1854), a solicitor in Newbury and partner in the 'Newbury Bank' with Samuel Toomer (1736-1817) and Samuel Slocock (1747-1831), founded in 1791. In 1851, Jere Bunny sold part of the land (12-15 Donnington Square) to John Dyne, a local builder (BRO D/EX198/2/1), and the remainder to his son, Henry Bunny (1822-1891), who was town clerk at the time. In 1853 Henry Bunny then sold on his parcel, seemingly along with the other which had already been sold by Jere Bunny, for a considerable sum to another builder, Richard Shaw. In the ensuing scandal, in which it appears that he had forged ownership documents, Henry Bunny fled for New Zealand and was disinherited. In the ensuing legal disputes between the remaining parties, the majority of the site came into the possession of Edward Brice Bunny (1785-1867), who by that time was also a partner in the Newbury Bank.

The first buildings on the Square are therefore likely to date from the 1850s, almost certainly after the legal wrangling had concluded. Berkshire Record Office has a watercolour of the 'Proposed Development of Donnington Square' by the architect, William Ford Poulton (1822-1901), dated c. 1855, which suggests both that this architect

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might have had some involvement in the designs of the houses, and that building was beginning at this time. In the 1861 Census, 13 dwellings are recorded on the Square, indicating that the majority had been built by this time.



Figure 1. Extract from 1st edition 6-inch OS (1877)



Figure 2. Extract from 2nd edition 25-inch OS (1898)



Figure 3. Extract from 3rd edition 25-inch OS (1910)

By the time of the 1st edition of the Ordnance Survey, surveyed in this area in 1877 and published in 1883 (Figure 1), the development comprising mostly semi-detached

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dwellings extended around the developed square in a somewhat piecemeal fashion, with at least three vacant plots. It seems that the plot of the current Nos. 22/23, which has been described in the application documentation as having originally had a dwelling which burned down in 1851, fitted the pattern of this piecemeal development of the Square resulting in occasional vacant plots; we were not able to find any evidence of a building on this site at this time, nor of one having been destroyed by fire.

Subsequent maps illustrate that little had changed on the site by 1898, and by 1910 the only significant development was the construction of Olney Lodge (between Nos. 9 and 10) on the southwest side of the Square, and also the beginning of infill development within the square itself (Figures 2 and 3).



Figure 4. Extract from 4th edition 25-inch OS (1932)

By 1932, development is limited to further encroachment upon the central square and various extensions, including side extensions to Nos 11 and 12 and to No. 25, adjoining the application site (Figure 4). Subsequent editions of the Ordnance Survey, surveyed in the period 1930-45, indicate that the smaller dwellings occupying Nos 6a-6b, 17, 22-23 were constructed during this period. The complementary style of these buildings suggests that their construction was broadly contemporary, whilst Nos. 17 and 22-23 share a set-back building line.

In 2007, the early-twentieth-century, two-storey side extension to No. 25 was demolished and replaced with the current, much larger, extension.

Donnington Square - Significance

Donnington Square was designated a Conservation Area in March 1971 and is therefore understood to have special architectural and/or historic interest. Its **architectural interest** lies broadly in its eclectic mix of styles, a trait typical of speculative estates where development proceeded piecemeal under different owners and builders/architects. Whilst all the original buildings broadly conform to typical mid-nineteenth-century neo-classical type, there are some broad categories which bear similar characteristics, including being three-storeyed, and having gabled or shallow-hipped slated roofs, rendered external walls, and timber sash windows.

Nos 24/25, along with Nos 5-6 and 20-21 present prominent gable-ends to the street frontage, with lean-to entrance wings and broadly symmetrical plan-forms. Other

dwellings reflect this gable-prominent form, but are either detached (Nos 2 and 30), or have central entrances (Nos 3-4), or eschew symmetry altogether (Nos 26-27).

A second type comprises the slightly more ornate, Italianate villas with prominent turrets (Nos 8-9, 12-19), whilst a third is illustrated by the box-like form typical of the early- to mid-nineteenth century descendants of Georgian domestic architecture (Nos 7, 28-9).

Exceptions to these broad neo-classical types have already been mentioned and date from a later period. Olney Lodge, constructed in the period 1898x1910, is more typical of Victorian Gothic suburban architecture with stone mullioned windows and quoins, exposed brick walls, and clay-tiled roofs, although it maintains conjunctive cues in the form of a turret and prominent front-facing gable. Finally, the mid-twentieth-century buildings, such as Nos 22-23, are generally two-storey brick structures with hipped, tiled roofs, and casement windows.

Although the insertion of these later buildings and the development of the central square has to some extent impacted upon the character of the Conservation Area, it is for the greater part intact and well-preserved. Alterations to buildings have been generally limited to modest side and rear extensions in complementary styles.

The **historical interest** of Donnington Square can be broadly described in two particular areas. First, and as shown by nineteenth-century maps of the locality, the development was unique in the locality at the time in introducing what was effectively a planned residential estate on the prevailing Georgian/Regency type in the fields between Newbury and Donnington, themselves characterised on the one hand by a dense, medieval burgh plot pattern and, on the other, a small irregular, medieval village which developed along the thoroughfares between Donnington Castle and Priory.

Secondly, the development has associative value in its connection with prominent nineteenth-century local personalities in the form of the Bunny family. As well as being involved with the Newbury Bank, Jere Bunny had been Mayor in 1836 and his brother Edward Brice Bunny (1785-1867) was a JP. Henry Bunny, as well as being town clerk in 1849-53, rose to some prominence in New Zealand, where he was an MP, Secretary and Treasurer of Wellington Province and the province's last superintendent before it was abolished in 1876.

Proposals and Impact Assessment

The proposal encompasses a three-storey extension on the west side of the building, along with a new porch surrounding the existing entrance door. In assessing these proposals, we have taken into account the representation provided by Christina Duckett of Hankinson Duckett Associates (HDA) and the comments of Debra Inston, Principal Conservation and Design Officer, West Berkshire Council.

Scale The front (south) elevation of the proposed extension is set back from the building line of the existing frontage. On the rear (north) elevation, only the ground-floor of the extension extends northwards to the existing rear building line, whilst the upper floors are recessed on this elevation. The three-storey height matches that of the existing wing, whilst the roof has a shallow pitch which culminates in a slightly lesser height than the current lean-to roof.

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Cumulatively, not only does this result in a lesser footprint and mass than the existing lean-to wing, it also serves to demarcate the extension as a later addition to the structure.

The west side of No. 24 is characterised by a considerable gap between the west flank wall and the property boundary. The full extent of the extension and associated landscaping in the form of a retaining wall does not reach the property boundary and therefore cannot reasonably be said to be an overdevelopment of the plot. The experience of the extension at No. 25 demonstrates how, though an extension can be taken closer to the property boundary, this does not adversely affect appreciation of the spacing between the dwellings, which is, of course, desirable to maintain for aesthetic reasons. Similarly, the distance between the extension and the front elevations of Nos 22-23, which are set back 25 metres from the roadside, means that any modest addition will have little discernible visual impact upon this open aspect (Figure 5). In this context, it seems unreasonable to suggest that the proposed extension could be said to 'dominate' No. 23. Moreover, the extension does not dominate the existing building.



Figure 5. Existing view between Nos. 22-23 (left) and No. 24 (right) (Image: Google)

Style The extension is designed in a complementary style that continues many of the features of the existing building, including a slate roof, sash windows, rendered external walls, plinth and plat band. In general design, then, the extension appears to be appropriate to the general context of the Conservation Area and to the design of the existing building.

Some concern has been raised that the proposed hipped roof form would 'detract from the silhouette of the building and would present incongruous horizontal ridge and eaves lines on the principal elevation of the building' (HDA letter, p. 3). First, the use of hipped roofs is demonstrably not incongruous with the prevailing architecture of the square: whilst some buildings have this as their predominant roof form, others, such as No. 26, employ it in an analogous context, i.e. to cover a set-back section of building (Figure 6). One could rather conclude that the interplay between gable and hipped roof forms is a defining element of the character of the buildings

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around the square. Secondly, the use of a hipped roof on this extension should serve to lessen its mass and visual impact, particularly on views towards the building from the square.



Figure 6. No. 26 Donnington Square showing (original) hipped roof over set-back entrance/stair wing (Image: Google)

Views At present, the frontal view of the semi-detached pair forming Nos 24/5 is not balanced owing to the 2007/8 three-storey extension to No. 25 on the site of the earlier extension which had been built in the period 1910x1932. Although gradual accretion of extensions on one building should not *per se* permit matching examples to be added to another in an ever-increasing escalation of overall building mass, in this case the lack of balance is obvious and veers considerably from the original aesthetic. A corresponding mass will restore some measure of symmetry to the building.

The proposed extension is not an exact copy of the extension to No. 25: the roof presents a hip to the street frontage, whilst the second floor has only one window as opposed to two (though the fenestration is otherwise similar). The overall architecture of the original buildings around the square is not one of homogenous terracing with strictly-applied symmetry, such as one might find in Georgian and regency developments, but is rather varied in conception and reflective of a lesser insistence upon symmetry that developed in the mid- to late-Victorian period. Therefore the subtle differences to the extension in this case are, owing to the broad agreement of its mass and position, considered to be acceptable and appropriate to the general spirit of the square, where consciously-designed architectural variety is evidenced throughout.

Owing to the location of No. 24, the extension is hidden from any views into the Conservation Area from the B4494 and, similarly, appears to be all but totally obscured from view from No. 36 owing to the tree screening on the latter's boundary. The main viewpoint from which the extension will be experienced is from the southwest on Donnington Square, where the building's prominence is emphasised by the open space in front of Nos 22-23

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(Figure 7). For reasons already stated, primarily to do with the subservient scale of the extension and the complementary design, it is not felt that the extension will impact negatively upon any aesthetic appreciation of the buildings from this viewpoint, but merely take its visual place alongside the multifarious roof-forms and wall lines which characterise the prevailing built form from this direction.



Figure 7. View towards No. 24 (centre) from the southwest (Image: Google)

Conclusion

In conclusion, the proposed extension appears to be complementary with both the existing building and the general architectural context of the Conservation Area. The pattern of development of the latter has historically been restricted to side- and rear-extensions as adaptations to changing occupancy patterns and affluence and this proposal fits within this defining pattern.

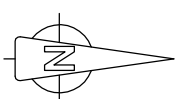
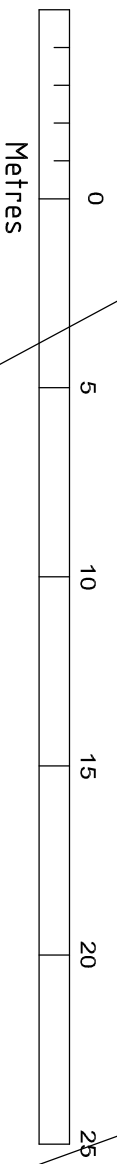
The architectural interest of the Conservation Area has been found to lie in the variety of the building designs, which are nonetheless united in a neo-classical template and with specific shared details such as prominent gables, shallow subsidiary hips etc. Insofar that the extension does not go against this general pattern, and is of a subservient scale, it cannot reasonably be said to impact negatively upon the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

We would therefore conclude that the proposal preserves the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, and will result in no discernible harm on the significance of No. 24 as a non-designated heritage asset on the strength of its relatively unaltered form and, as a building which encapsulates the defining architectural interest of the Conservation Area, a positive contributor to it.

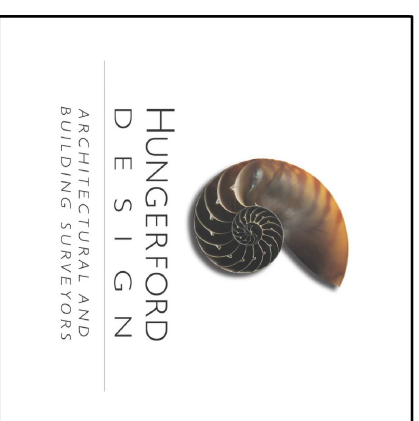
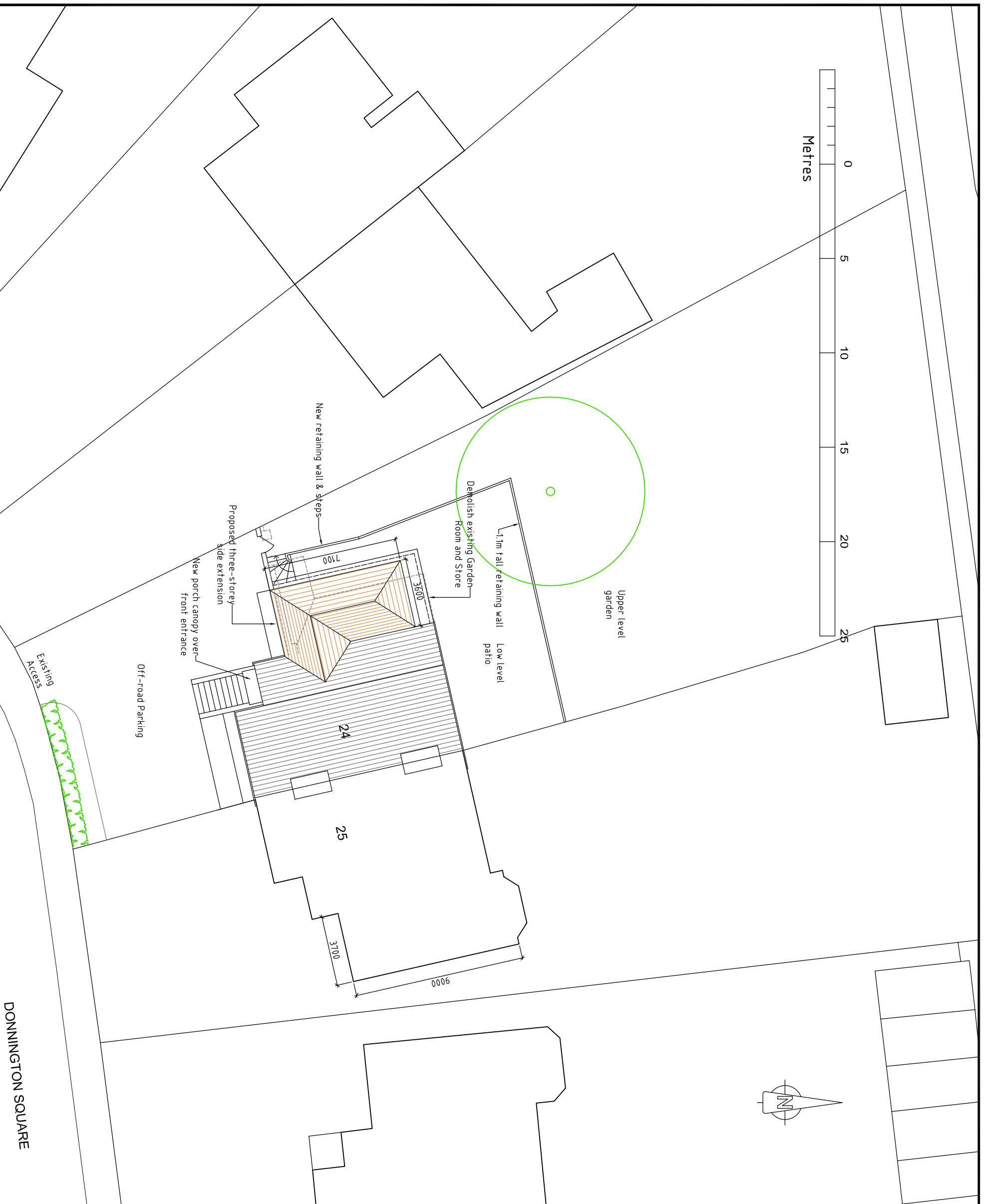
Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J Weir'.

James Weir MA (Oxon) PgDipSurv PgCertArchHist FRSA IHBC



NOTES
 All levels, dimensions and construction details to be checked on-site by the contractors before work commences. All construction details to comply with the latest Building Regulations, British Standard Specifications and Codes of Practice.



**CHILTON HOUSE, CHARNHAM LANE
 HUNGERFORD, BERKSHIRE, RG17 0EY
 TEL :- 01488-683424 FAX :- 01488-683500**

DRAWING TITLE
Proposed Side Extension
24 Donnington Square
Newbury, Berks, RG14 1PJ
for Mr & Mrs G. Davies

SCALE	DATE	DRAWN BY	APPROVED BY
1:200	June 2019	JS	

DRAWING NUMBER	REV
2929-02F	F
CAD REFERENCE	
Block Plan	A3

DONNINGTON SQUARE