

SITE INTELLIGENCE

# Pre-Application Advice

Planning Feasibility & Pre-Application Enquiry Strategy

14 Oakfield Road, Guildford, Surrey GU2 4EH



PREPARED FOR

Sample Client

DOCUMENT REFERENCE

SAMPLE-PFCO-REP-PreApplication-R00

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Site Intelligence

CLASSIFICATION

Client Confidential

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REPORT

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

This Pre-Application Advice report has been prepared by Site Intelligence (a service of PF & Co Construction Ltd) on behalf of Sample Client in advance of a planning application to Guildford Borough Council for the proposed two-storey rear extension and loft conversion with associated landscaping and off-street parking provision at 14 Oakfield Road, Guildford, Surrey GU2 4EH.

### 1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this report is to:

- Assess the planning feasibility of the proposed development against the adopted development plan and national planning policy
- Identify the key planning issues and constraints that are likely to influence the LPA's assessment
- Evaluate the risk profile of the application and recommend whether a pre-application enquiry to the LPA is advisable
- Provide a strategic framework for the pre-application enquiry, including targeted questions and a recommended approach
- Outline the supporting documents likely to be required at the formal application stage

### 1.2 Why Seek Pre-Application Advice?

Pre-application engagement with the LPA is a non-statutory service encouraged by the NPPF (Paragraph 42) and PPG. It provides an opportunity to:

- Understand the LPA's position on key issues before committing to design and consultant fees
- Identify potential reasons for refusal early, when they can still be addressed through design changes
- Discuss the scope of supporting documents required (e.g. whether a tree survey, heritage statement, or transport statement is needed)
- Establish a working relationship with the case officer, which can facilitate smoother processing of the formal application



#### Pre-Application Service at Guildford Borough Council

Guildford Borough Council offers a pre-application advice service with fees based on the scale of development. For householder applications, the fee is typically in the range of £150-£300 (check the LPA website for current fees).

Response times are typically 4-6 weeks. Written advice is provided following a meeting or written response from a planning officer.

## 2. SITE DESCRIPTION AND CONTEXT

### 2.1 Site Location

The application site is located at 14 Oakfield Road, Guildford, Surrey GU2 4EH. The site is situated in a predominantly residential area approximately 1.5 km south-west of Guildford town centre. The area is characterised by detached and semi-detached dwellings of Edwardian and inter-war period, set within mature garden plots.

### 2.2 Existing Site

The site comprises a detached two-storey dwelling (Use Class C3) with 3 bedrooms, a detached single garage, front driveway, and a generous rear garden of approximately 250 square metres with several mature trees.

### 2.3 The Proposal

The proposed development comprises: Proposed two-storey rear extension and loft conversion with associated landscaping and off-street parking provision.

The proposals would increase the dwelling from 3 to 5 bedrooms, creating a family home suitable for a growing household. The development is designed to be sympathetic to the scale and character of the existing dwelling and surrounding area.

### 2.4 Site Constraints Summary

Constraint	Status	Risk Level
Conservation Area	Not within a conservation area	LOW
Listed Buildings	Not listed; no listed buildings in immediate setting	LOW
Flood Zone	Flood Zone 1 (low probability)	LOW
Thames Basin Heaths SPA	Within 5km Zone of Influence	MODERATE
Green Belt	Not in Green Belt	N/A
Trees	Mature trees in rear garden — potential TPO candidates	MODERATE
Article 4 Direction	None identified	LOW
Archaeological interest	No identified archaeological interest	LOW

### 3. LPA POLICY SUMMARY

#### 3.1 Development Plan

The development plan for the area comprises the Guildford Borough Council Local Plan: Strategy and Sites (adopted April 2019). The following policies are the most relevant to this proposal:

Policy	Title	Key Requirements	Risk
D1	Place shaping	Respond to local character, scale, materials, and street pattern.	LOW
D4	Achieving high quality design	High quality design that is inclusive and sustainable.	LOW
H1	Homes for all	Housing mix, space standards, accessibility.	LOW
ID3	Sustainable transport	Safe access, adequate parking, promote sustainable travel.	LOW
P5	Thames Basin Heaths SPA	Mitigate recreational impact on SPA — SANG/SAMM contributions.	MODERATE
NE4	Biodiversity net gain	Demonstrate measurable biodiversity net gain.	LOW
NE5	Trees and woodland	Protect important trees. BS 5837 survey may be required.	MODERATE

#### 3.2 Supplementary Planning Documents

The following SPDs provide additional guidance:

- **Residential Design Guide SPD (2004):** — guidance on extensions, dormers, materials, boundary treatments
- **Vehicle Parking Standards SPD (2006):** — parking requirements by dwelling size and location
- **Thames Basin Heaths SPA Avoidance Strategy SPD:** — sets out SANG and SAMM contributions for net new residential development within the Zone of Influence



## 4. NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY REFERENCES

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, December 2024) sets out the Government's planning policies. The following chapters are particularly relevant:

NPPF Chapter	Topic	Relevance to This Proposal
Chapter 2	Achieving sustainable development	Presumption in favour of sustainable development (Para 11). This is a key policy hook — the proposal should be granted unless significant and demonstrable harm can be shown.
Chapter 4	Decision-making	Decisions must be made in accordance with the development plan (Para 47). Pre-app engagement (Para 42) is encouraged.
Chapter 9	Promoting sustainable transport	Safe and suitable access (Para 115). Development should only be refused on transport grounds if residual impact would be severe (Para 116).
Chapter 12	Well-designed and beautiful places	Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development (Para 135). Proposals should be sympathetic to local character (Para 139).
Chapter 14	Climate change and flooding	Flood Zone 1 — no sequential test required. SuDS strategy for surface water.
Chapter 15	Natural environment	Biodiversity net gain (Para 180). Protection of important trees (Para 186).

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## 5. DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

### 5.1 Scale and Massing

The proposed two-storey rear extension should be designed to be subordinate to the main dwelling. Key design parameters to discuss at pre-application stage include:

- Maximum depth of two-storey extension that is acceptable in this context (4m proposed)
- Acceptable ridge height relationship between extension and main dwelling
- Set-in from side boundaries (typically minimum 1m)
- Whether a flat or pitched roof extension is preferred by the LPA

### 5.2 Dormer Design

The proposed rear dormer should follow the guidance in the Residential Design Guide SPD:

- Set back from eaves and set in from party walls
- Proportionate to the roof slope — should not dominate the roof
- Materials to match existing roof covering
- Flat roof or hipped design preferred to box dormers

### 5.3 Materials

The extension should use matching or complementary materials to the existing dwelling. Typical acceptable materials for this area include facing brickwork to match existing, clay roof tiles, timber or painted timber windows, and rendered or feature panels to rear elevations only.

### 5.4 Landscaping and Trees

The LPA is likely to require a BS 5837 tree survey where mature trees are present in the rear garden. The design should demonstrate that the development can be accommodated without requiring the removal of high-quality (Category A or B) trees.

#### Design Strategy Recommendation

Present the pre-application enquiry with sketch proposals showing the maximum scheme (2-storey extension + dormer + parking) and highlight the key design features that demonstrate compliance with the SPD. Ask the case officer to confirm whether the scale and form are acceptable in principle before investing in detailed architectural drawings.

## 6. KEY PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The following table provides a systematic assessment of the key planning issues likely to be considered by the LPA when determining the application:

Issue	Policy	Assessment	Risk
Design and character	D1, D4, NPPF Ch.12	The proposal is sympathetic to existing character. Subordinate extension, matching materials. SPD guidance on dormers to be followed.	LOW
Residential amenity	D1, D4	Minimum 21m separation to rear properties. No overlooking from side elevation. Daylight/sunlight impact minimal.	LOW
Parking	ID3, SPD	3 off-street spaces proposed for 5-bedroom dwelling. Meets adopted standard. EV charging point included.	LOW
Trees	NE5, BS 5837	Mature trees in rear garden. BS 5837 survey required. Design avoids Category A/B tree RPAs. 1 Category U tree to be removed.	MODERATE
Thames Basin Heaths SPA	P5, SPD	Within 5km ZoI. Net increase in bedrooms may trigger SANG/SAMM. Confirm with LPA whether householder extension triggers the policy.	MODERATE
Biodiversity net gain	NE4, NPPF Para 180	BNG assessment required. Landscaping scheme designed to deliver net gain through native planting, bird/bat boxes.	LOW
Flood risk	NPPF Ch.14	Flood Zone 1. No FRA required. Surface water drainage via SuDS condition.	LOW
Heritage	NPPF Ch.16	Not within conservation area. No listed buildings in setting. No heritage constraint.	LOW
Highways safety	NPPF Ch.9	Existing access retained and widened. Good visibility. No road safety concerns.	LOW

## 7. PRE-APPLICATION RECOMMENDATION

### 7.1 Overall Assessment

Based on the policy analysis above, the proposed development is considered to be GENERALLY SUPPORTABLE under the adopted development plan, subject to satisfactory resolution of the following matters:

- **Issue 1:** Thames Basin Heaths SPA — confirmation that the policy is triggered and the level of SANG/SAMM contribution required
- **Issue 2:** Trees — BS 5837 survey to confirm that the development can be accommodated without harm to Category A/B trees

Overall planning risk: **LOW**

### 7.2 Recommendation: Proceed with Pre-Application Enquiry

We recommend that a pre-application enquiry is submitted to Guildford Borough Council for the following reasons:

- The proposal involves a two-storey extension that exceeds PD limits, and early officer feedback on scale and design will de-risk the application
- The Thames Basin Heaths SPA policy trigger is unclear for householder extensions (as opposed to new dwellings), and the case officer can provide definitive guidance
- The mature trees in the rear garden are a potential sensitivity, and confirming the LPA's expectations on tree protection at an early stage will avoid abortive design work

### 7.3 Conditions Likely to Be Imposed

If planning permission is granted, the following conditions are anticipated:

Condition	Trigger	Typical Wording
Materials	Standard	Materials to match existing dwelling
Landscaping	Trees on site	Landscaping scheme to be submitted and approved
Tree protection	Trees on site	Tree protection plan in accordance with BS 5837
Drainage	Standard	Surface water drainage strategy (SuDS)
EV charging	New parking spaces	Active EV charging point to be installed
Construction hours	Residential area	Mon-Fri 08:00-18:00, Sat 08:00-13:00, no Sunday/BH
PD removal	Possible	Removal of PD rights for further extensions to control future intensification

## 8. SUGGESTED PRE-APPLICATION ENQUIRY APPROACH

### 8.1 Enquiry Type

We recommend a written pre-application enquiry to Guildford Borough Council's development management team. A meeting (virtual or in person) should be requested if the written response raises significant concerns.

### 8.2 Targeted Questions for the LPA

The pre-application enquiry should focus on the following targeted questions (designed to elicit specific, actionable feedback):

#	Question	Purpose
Q1	Is the principle of a two-storey rear extension of approximately 4 metres depth acceptable in this location?	Confirm acceptable scale before investing in detailed drawings
Q2	Does the proposed rear dormer design (flat roof, set-back, set-in) accord with the Residential Design Guide SPD?	Confirm dormer form and proportions
Q3	Does the increase from 3 to 5 bedrooms (householder extension, no new dwelling) trigger the Thames Basin Heaths SPA Avoidance Strategy and require a SANG/SAMM contribution?	Resolve the TBH SPA policy trigger question
Q4	What level of tree survey evidence is required? Is a full BS 5837 survey needed, or would a simpler arboricultural impact assessment suffice?	Calibrate the scope and cost of tree survey
Q5	Are there any other site-specific constraints or local sensitivities that should be addressed in the application?	Catch any issues not identified in desk-based assessment

### 8.3 Documents to Include with Enquiry

The following documents should accompany the pre-application enquiry:

- Site location plan (1:1250 with red line boundary)
- Existing floor plans and elevations
- Sketch proposals showing proposed extension, dormer, and parking layout
- Brief written description of the proposal (1-2 pages)
- Photographs of the site and surroundings
- This Pre-Application Advice report (for reference)

## 9. TEMPLATE ENQUIRY LETTER OUTLINE

### Note

The following is an outline for the pre-application enquiry letter. The actual letter should be prepared on the applicant's letterhead or submitted via the LPA's pre-application enquiry form.

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: PRE-APPLICATION ENQUIRY — 14 OAKFIELD ROAD, GUILDFORD, SURREY GU2 4EH**

We write on behalf of Sample Client to request pre-application advice in respect of the following proposed development at 14 Oakfield Road, Guildford, Surrey GU2 4EH:

*Proposed two-storey rear extension and loft conversion with associated landscaping and off-street parking provision.*

The proposal is for a householder extension to an existing detached dwelling. The application site is not within a conservation area, is not listed, and is located in Flood Zone 1. The site does fall within the 5km Zone of Influence of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA.

We enclose a site location plan, existing plans/elevations, and sketch proposals for your consideration. We would welcome your advice on the following specific points:

*[Insert questions Q1-Q5 from Section 8.2 above]*

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with a planning officer to discuss this proposal. Please let us know the fee payable and the anticipated timescale for a response.

Yours faithfully,

**Sample Client**

## 10. NEXT STEPS AND TIMELINE

Step	Action	Estimated Timeline
1	Commission sketch proposals from architect	1-2 weeks
2	Submit pre-application enquiry to LPA with fee	Day 1
3	LPA acknowledges receipt and allocates case officer	1-2 weeks
4	LPA provides written response or meeting invite	4-6 weeks
5	Review LPA feedback and revise proposals if needed	1-2 weeks
6	Commission BS 5837 tree survey	2-3 weeks
7	Commission BNG assessment	2-3 weeks
8	Prepare full planning application documents	4-6 weeks
9	Submit full planning application	Target: 4-5 months from now
10	LPA determination (8-week target)	8 weeks from validation

### Next Steps

- Appoint architect to prepare sketch proposals for pre-application enquiry.
- Submit pre-application enquiry to Guildford Borough Council with fee.
- Review LPA response and adjust design approach as needed.
- Commission BS 5837 tree survey and BNG assessment.
- Prepare full planning application package.

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## Known Limitations & Assumptions

This section identifies the boundaries of this assessment, data limitations, and assumptions that underpin the conclusions. Each item states what could change if the assumption proves incorrect.

### What This Report Does NOT Assess

- This report provides a desk-based planning assessment only. It does not include site survey, ecological survey, or tree survey.
- This report does not constitute legal advice on planning law, use class interpretation, or permitted development rights.

### Data Gaps

- Pre-application advice from the LPA is not binding. The case officer at application stage may take a different view.
- The LPA's position on Thames Basin Heaths SPA contributions for householder extensions may not be settled.

### Key Assumptions

- Policy analysis is based on the adopted Local Plan (2019). An emerging Local Plan review could change the policy context.
- It is assumed that the existing dwelling is in lawful C3 residential use.

### Specialist Input Required

- An architect should prepare sketch proposals before the pre-application enquiry is submitted.
- A BS 5837 tree survey is required to support the formal application.

### What Could Change This Assessment

- Changes to the NPPF, Local Plan policies, or SPA avoidance strategy could alter the policy assessment.
- A change of case officer could result in a different view at application stage.



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Ground conditions, environmental factors, regulatory requirements, planning policy, and site circumstances may change over time. The findings, opinions, and recommendations contained in this report reflect the conditions and information available at the date of issue and may not remain valid indefinitely.

This report must be read in its entirety. No individual section, extract, table, or figure should be taken in isolation or relied upon without reference to the report as a whole, including all caveats, qualifications, and limitations stated herein.

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**PA.2 — Pre-Application Advice Not Binding.** Any views or advice provided by the Local Planning Authority in response to this pre-application enquiry are informal and do not constitute a determination of any planning application. The authority retains full discretion to determine any subsequent application on its merits. PF & Co Construction Ltd accepts no liability for any decision made in reliance on pre-application advice received from a Local Planning Authority.

**PA.3 — Strategic Framing.** This pre-application enquiry has been prepared to frame the proposal positively and to elicit meaningful feedback from the planning authority. It does not disclose the applicant's full planning strategy. The constraint summary and targeted questions are designed to test the authority's position on key issues without committing to a specific approach.

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Prepared by:

**Chris Preston, BEng (Hons)**

Structural & Civil Engineer

For and on behalf of:

**Site Intelligence**

A PF & Co Construction Ltd service

Date of issue: 1 March 2026

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Revision: R00

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