

**PLANNING APPLICATION FOR ERECTION OF 2X 3
BEDROOM DETACHED DWELLINGS AND
PROVISION OF ACCESS, PARKING, AND BIN
STORE**

**PLANNING, DESIGN AND ACCESS,
AFFORDABLE HOUSING, AND AIR
QUALITY STATEMENT**

4 COPSE AVENUE, READING, RG4 6LX

ON BEHALF OF MR N PATEL

**TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)
PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004**

Prepared by: Mr. Nick Kirby BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

Pegasus Group

Columbia | Station Road | Bracknell | Berkshire | RG12 1LP

T 01344 207777 | **W** www.pegasusgroup.co.uk

Birmingham | Bracknell | Bristol | Cambridge | Cirencester | East Midlands | Leeds | Liverpool | London | Manchester

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CONTENTS:

Page No:

1.	INTRODUCTION	2
2.	SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION	2
3.	PROPOSAL	3
4.	RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY	4
5.	RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY	6
6.	CONCLUSION	14

APPENDICES:

APPENDIX 1 – DECISION NOTICE

APPENDIX 2 – IMAGES OF HOUSES IN COPSE AVENUE

APPENDIX 3 – IMAGE OF NO. 8 COPSE AVENUE AND NO.1 COPSE END

APPENDIX 4 – IMAGE OF GENEROUS FLANK TO FLANK SEPERATION, COPSE AVENUE

APPENDIX 5 – IMAGES OF MODEST FLANK TO FLANK SEPERATION, COPSE AVENUE

APPENDIX 6 – IMAGE OF MODEST PLOT AND GARDEN SIZES, COPSE AVENUE

APPENDIX 7 – OFFICER DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

APPENDIX 8 – IMAGE OF PARKED DELIVERY VAN, COPSE AVENUE

APPENDIX 9 – PREVIOUS PLANNING STATEMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement is submitted in support of a planning application for the proposed erection of 2 detached dwellings at number 4 Copse Avenue, Reading.
- 1.2 This statement will cover the background to the application and provide the necessary information to enable its determination by officers at the Council. It will summarise the relevant planning policies and assess the proposal in light of these policies. The conclusion reached is that national planning policies and the Development Plan support the grant of permission.
- 1.3 In addition to this planning statement, the application is accompanied by the appropriate planning application forms and ownership certificate, duly signed and completed, and the following plans and documents:
- Layout
 - House Pack
 - Site Location Plan
 - Existing Elevations of Existing Dwelling
 - Existing Dwelling Plans
 - Proposed Elevations of Existing Dwelling
 - Proposed Plans of Existing Dwelling
 - CIL Form
- 1.4 As the application is the first revision of a previous application for development of the same character or description on the same site, by the same applicant, within 12 months of the of the date the application was refused, there is no fee to pay.

2. SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 Number 4 Copse Avenue is a detached chalet bungalow located at the end of a cul-de-sac. The property has an attached single storey garage, and a larger private rear garden located to the west of the property which adjoins residential development in Overton Drive.

- 2.2 The surrounding area is residential, with gardens of the Henley Road properties to the south backing onto the length of the south of the site. The Henley Road properties are a mix of single, 1½ and two storey heights, whilst the Overton Drive properties are 2 to 2½ storeys in both detached and semi-detached layouts.

3. PROPOSAL

- 3.1 Regarding the requirements of Circular 01/2006 in respect of Design and Access Statements, the proposal is described as follows:

Use and Amount

- 3.2 The proposal is the construction of a pair of 3 bedroom detached dwellings.

Layout and Scale

- 3.3 The proposed dwellings would be sited to the west of number 4 and would be oriented in an east-west direction facing towards the existing dwelling. Rear gardens would extend to the west in their current linear arrangement toward Overton Drive.
- 3.4 The development would be 2 storeys in height, and would reflect the scale proportions of the other properties nearby, as depicted in the images above.
- 3.5 Internally, the accommodation has been laid out to maximise the internal space and light afforded, with full length patio doors to maximise daylight into the room, and an open plan layout to maximise internal circulation space, and light into the room. The bathroom window is proposed on the side elevation to provide natural light, whilst being obscurely glazed for privacy purposes to both the host dwelling and the adjacent properties in Copse Avenue.
- 3.6 Externally, the dwellings would benefit from a significant plot size, with long rear gardens to the west. The amenity space would be ample for the proposed dwellings.

Landscaping

- 3.7 The property boundaries would be screened with 1.8m close board fencing which would reflect the use of similar materials elsewhere in the street scene, and the

existing site boundaries, whilst providing security and screening to the private rear garden space. The submitted site plan shows that the siting of the dwellings allows for soft landscaping to be introduced to the front, side and rear garden in the form of select native planting and trees.

Appearance

- 3.8 The character of the area is residential, featuring housing of varying design and appearance. The proposed dwellings utilise materials such as brick and dark tiled roof which is a feature of the surrounding dwellings. Materials can be controlled by condition to ensure they complemented the colour of materials of the adjacent dwellings.

Parking and Access

- 3.9 An altered access in a similar position to the existing which serves 4 copse Avenue will be provided. It will allow suitable access to the new houses, and provide each dwelling will have a total of two car parking spaces. A refuse store is provided to the front, allow collection from the road.

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 There is one previous application on the site, which is very relevant to this proposal. Application 170691 was for the erection of 2x 4 bedroom detached dwellings, access and parking, and was refused on the 19th October 2017. The decision notice can be found at Appendix 1. Application 170691 has progressed to appeal, under appeal reference APP/E0345/W/17/3191047. This current proposed application is a revised version of application 170691, which we believe has addressed the reasons for refusal. These reasons for refusal are:

- 1) *The proposed dwellings by virtue of their design, height, bulk and roof form would appear incongruous and out of keeping with the character of the surrounding area which contains chalet bungalow style dwellings, and would result in a detrimental impact on the existing character of the area. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy CS7 (Design and the Public Realm) of the Reading Borough LDF Core Strategy 2008 and Policy DM11 (Development of Private Residential Gardens) of the Reading Borough LDF Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012.*

- 2) *The cumulative impact of the reduced plot size and garden area shown retained for No 4 Copse Avenue and the proximity of the new development in the form of hardstanding to this existing dwelling is considered to result in a cramped form of development within the site which is not in keeping with the pattern of existing built form and spaces that characterises the surrounding area. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy CS7 (Design and the Public Realm) of the Reading Borough LDF Core Strategy 2008 and Policy DM11 (Development of Private Residential Gardens) of the Reading Borough LDF Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012.*

- 3) *The proposed development does not comply with the Local Planning Authority's standards in respect of servicing and may result in a detrimental impact on highway safety and as a result is in conflict with Policy CS20 of the Reading Borough LDF Core Strategy 2008 and Policy DM12 (Access, Traffic and Highways Related Matters) of the Reading Borough LDF Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012.*

- 4) *The applicant due to the lack of submission of a tree survey has failed to demonstrate that the development would be able to retain existing trees within and directly adjacent to the site without causing them undue harm, risking their loss. The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to Policies CS7 (Design and the Public Realm) and CS38 (Trees, Hedges and Woodlands) of the Reading Borough LDF Core Strategy 2008 and Policy DM11 (Development of Private Residential Gardens) of the Reading Borough LDF Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012.*

- 5) *In the absence of a completed legal agreement to secure an acceptable contribution towards the provision of Affordable Housing, either on- site, off-site elsewhere within the borough or a suitable financial contribution, as appropriate, the proposal fails to contribute adequately to the housing needs of Reading Borough, contrary to policy CS9 (Infrastructure, Services, Resources and Amenities) of the Reading Borough LDF Core Strategy 2008 (Altered 2015), policies DM3 (Infrastructure Planning) and DM6 (Affordable Housing) of the Reading Borough LDF Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012 (Altered 2015) and the Council's Adopted Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document 2013.*

- 4.2 These reasons for refusal will be addressed in the Planning Policy section of this statement.

5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

- 5.1 This section of the statement will focus on the reasons for refusal of the previous application. The previous planning statement supporting the refused application can be found at Appendix 9, to provide responses to specific policies as required, if they are not included below.

Reason for Refusal 1

- 5.2 Policy DM11 requires among other things that proposals make a positive contribution to the character of the area in a number of ways, including 'compatibility with the general building height within the surrounding area'. Copse Avenue is a cul-de-sac comprising approximately 25 dwellings accessed from Micklands Road. To the south west of the site is Overton Drive which features a scheme of large detached modern dwellings of 2 and 2.5 storey height, which backs on to dwellings in Copse Avenue and the application site. Copse Avenue runs south east from Micklands Road and at its southern most point comprises a turning head. Copse End is a small spur accessed from the northern end of the Copse Avenue turning head and development in Copse End is visible from Copse Avenue, and forms part of its streetscene.
- 5.3 The Copse Avenue streetscene comprises dwellings of varying styles and designs. As the Council notes in their reason for refusal, chalet bungalows do exist and many of these have undertaken roof and other extension. These chalet style bungalows are interspersed with two storey houses, without any clear pattern between dwellings of different storey heights, and there are many occasions where two storey houses and chalet bungalows are juxtaposed adjacent to each other and in the same view as part of the character of the area. The roof height and design of dwellings is similarly varied with steeped pitched roofs evident, pitch and flat roof dormers and gable fronted 2 storey dwellings (see Appendix 2).
- 5.4 Given the variance in the streetscene, it is incorrect to conclude as Reason for Refusal 1 appears to, that simply because there are chalet style bungalows in the

area, that two storey development would be harmful and incongruous. Rather, greater consideration needs to be given to the specific circumstances of the proposed development, and its position in the streetscene, which is the approach advocated by Core Strategy Policy CS7 also cited in the reason for refusal.

- 5.5 In this respect Policy CS7 requires consideration among other things of scale including height and massing and requires developments to respond positively to local context, character and distinctiveness. In terms of height and mass, the proposed houses when originally submitted under application xxxx included a steep pitch roof and flat roof dormer windows in the front roofslope which are evident elsewhere in the streetscene. Following concern about the mass of the roofspace from the council, amended plans were submitted removing the dormer, reducing the pitch and height of the roof. The reduction in height of the proposed dwellings from 10.3 metres to 9.6 metres represented a significant 8% reduction in overall height. The removal of the dormer in combination with the half hip roof creates a roof area which is not overly bulky and is in proportion with the host dwelling.
- 5.6 For the current revised application, the height of the proposed dwelling has been reduced further, and accommodation has been removed from the roofspace. The proposed height is now 8.6 metres, and the pitch of the roof has been reduced from 40° to 35°. Roof lights have also been removed. On this basis, the scale of the proposed dwellings is considered acceptable in their own right and would also be similar to the dwellings approved at Copse End. Local distinctiveness would be reinforced for the proposed dwellings by feature bay windows and material choices that can reflect the material palette in the area. It should also be noted, that the dwellings will be heavily screened from the surrounding streetscene by their set back position and existing boundary treatments at the site which will soften their presence.
- 5.7 As for how the dwellings would be viewed in the streetscene, dwellings along the main stretch of Copse Avenue predominantly front the road. Copse End is an established exception to this as the 3 dwellings at Copse End are accessed from the northern end of the turning head, with no direct frontage onto the road. Whilst these dwellings are set back from Copse Avenue, views of number 1 Copse End (the western most plot) at least are clearly available from Copse Avenue, and number 1 Copse End is juxtaposed with number 8 Copse Avenue when viewed

from the turning head in Copse Avenue as shown Appendix 3. As such, although number 1 Copse End is set back from Copse Avenue, it is visible from Copse Avenue, and adds to the visual character of the road that sees two storey dwellings with steep pitched roofs co-exist alongside chalet bungalows without harm.

- 5.8 By comparison, the proposed development will add a spur from the southern end of the turning head at Copse Avenue. A vehicular access already exists in this location to serve the host dwelling, and therefore the altered driveway arrangement to serve the houses will not significantly alter the appearance of the site when viewed from Copse Avenue.
- 5.9 The existing dwelling at number 4 Copse Avenue will remain in its existing position in an altered form, fronting the southern end of the turning head. The two proposed dwellings will have a set back position from the existing host dwelling and will be heavily screened by existing boundary vegetation and a large tree adjacent to the site. Given these factors, the proposals will have limited visibility from Copse Avenue. Where glimpses of the new houses may be visible from Copse Avenue, the dwellings will be read as an extension to Copse Avenue comparable to the new dwellings at Copse End.
- 5.10 On the basis of the above, the proposed dwellings would have a height and mass which is compatible with the general building height in the surrounding area which includes a comparable development at Copse End, as required by policy DM11.

Reason for Refusal 2

- 5.11 This reason for refusal centres on the perceived impact of the reduced plot area on the character of the area. There is no suggestion the garden area for the existing or proposed dwellings would be insufficient to serve occupants with sufficient amenity, or that gardens would be overlooked or suffer from reduced daylight. As such this section of the statement will focus on the perceived crampedness of the development.
- 5.12 It is worth noting that 'crampedness' is not mentioned in any of the policies cited in the reason for refusal. The Council does however specify concern that it is the reduced plot size, garden area and the extent of hardstanding that will not be in

keeping with the pattern of built form and the spaces characterising the surrounding area, matters which are commented on by policies CS7 and DM11 as cited. The previous section of this statement commented on reason for refusal 1, relating to the scale and mass of the proposed dwellings, and this section will consider the layout of the development, in the context of the specific concerns highlighted above.

5.13 Policy DM11 requires among other things that proposals make a positive contribution to the character of the area in a number of way, including:

- The relationship of the existing built form and spaces around buildings within the surrounding area;
- A layout which integrates with the surrounding area with regard to the built up coverage of each plot, building line(s), rhythm of plot frontages, parking areas, and existing pattern of openings and boundary treatments on the site frontage;
- Providing appropriate hard and soft landscaping, particularly at site boundaries. This includes features such as the variety of trees, hardstanding/lawns and hedges, etc

5.14 These principles are broadly consistent with those in Policy CS7 also. Considering these principles in the context of the proposed development, the proposal would be located within the Copse Avenue streetscene, which has been noted to be influenced by the houses in Copse End. This statement has already noted the variation in the streetscene at present, which features dwellings of different styles and sizes juxtaposed in the same view. This includes variation in the separation distances between houses with some featuring generous flank to flank separation (see Appendix 4) and some more modest separation (see Appendix 5). Generally plots are orientated to face the road as you progress south east along the road, with Copse End being an exception to this pattern of development at the northern end of the turning head. The building line is therefore quite loose as you progress south east on Copse Avenue, broadly reflecting the curvature of the road, with Copse End again representing a notable exception to this in the streetscene.

5.15 Gardens are typically provided to the rear for existing plots, although they vary significantly in terms of width and length. There are some houses on the northern side of Copse Avenue which feature gardens which are significantly wider and

deeper than others such as number 11's which is approximately 28 metres wide, and 50 metres long whereas the adjacent neighbour number 12 is approximately 18m wide and 35 metres long. This variation between plots is characteristic of the area and there are many examples of more modest plots and garden sizes such as those on the south side of Copse avenue (see Appendix 6). As such the pattern of development in the area is varied on the main stretch of Copse Avenue, and the proposed development at Copse Avenue appears as a logical extension to the turning head, especially considering the extension already undertaken to form Copse End.

- 5.16 The existing dwelling at Copse Avenue is orientated to provide a frontage onto the turning head, and it sits squarely in view from the turning head. The proposed development would maintain this view which is part of the rhythm of the plot frontages onto Copse Avenue. The existing dwelling features an unusually large garden to the side of the house, none of which is visible from the streetscene and therefore its contribution to the character of the area is limited. The tree on the north-west side of the vehicular access, which is within the ownership of 5 Copse Avenue, also contributes to the character of the site when viewed from Copse Avenue and the proposal does not alter the view of this tree and ensures its retention.
- 5.17 The dwellings would be sited perpendicular to the existing dwelling at number 4 Copse Avenue. This would retain a garden area to the side of the existing dwelling (as per existing) but altered to be 12m wide, and between 17m and 12 metres deep. The new parking area and bin store to the front of number 4 will be visible from Copse Avenue, but sufficient space for soft landscaping exists, to soften its visual appearance. This area is also a parking area at present serving the existing dwelling, so the proposed frontage will not be significantly different from the existing, and would in fact introduce added soft landscaping. The proposed access road, which the Council refer to specifically in their reason for refusal, is in the most part already hard landscaped to provide a driveway and parking area to the front and side of the existing house. Although the proposed parking area serving the new dwellings would represent an extension to the existing gravelled parking/driveway area, this would largely be screened from view from Copse Avenue by existing landscaping and visually would be a less prominent feature in the streetscene than the larger, more formal, access road

serving Copse End. The proposal is to retain and extend the existing gravel area which will visually remain similar to the existing frontage.

- 5.18 The proposed dwellings will be broadly in line with the building line of the adjacent dwellings, including number 5 Copse Avenue, albeit slightly further set back into the site. The position of the new dwellings, and the position of their parking, means they will both be heavily screened by existing boundary landscaping and the existing tree to the front of Copse Avenue, and will have a relatively discrete position in the streetscene. Therefore, whilst the proposed development does reduce the garden area for the existing dwelling, this will not harm the character of the area given the variation garden size in the area, and the position of the existing garden, the majority of which is not visible in the Copse Avenue streetscene.

Reason for Refusal 3

- 5.19 The reason for refusal is not specific about which standards the proposal does not comply with in respect of servicing and highlights that the proposal 'may' cause detriment to highway safety. This section of the statement will highlight that the proposal will not cause harm to highway safety. The Officer's Delegated Application Report accompanying the application (Appendix 7) confirms the council's acceptance that the proposal meets relevant parking standards, provides acceptable cycle storage and that the communal refuse collection facility at the front of the site is acceptable. The only concern raised is that it is suggested that an area should be provided for access and turning for food or home delivery vehicles.
- 5.20 Policy DM12 cited in the reason for refusal relates to access, traffic and highway related matters. Policy DM12 makes no reference to a need for onsite turning to be required for home delivery vehicles, and does not specify what size of development this will be required for. In this instance, the proposed development includes 2 new dwellings net, and therefore represents a small-scale development which would not generate significant demand for domestic delivery vehicles. On site turning for such vehicles is not provided for other residential houses on Copse Avenue in close proximity to the application site, and therefore delivery vehicles currently park on the unrestricted kerbside when making deliveries, or find a safe place to stop on the road (see Appendix 8). This is a pre-existing situation, and

the Council previously presented no accident data to suggest this has had a detrimental impact on road safety at this point of Copse Avenue, where vehicle speeds and trip numbers are very low.

- 5.21 Ultimately home delivery drivers will make the decision where they park to enable delivery. Should they consider insufficient space is available on site to turn the vehicle they are driving (which can vary), they will have the option to do as they do currently when delivering to adjacent sites, to park on the unrestricted kerb either side of the access to the application site. This would allow a car to enter and egress from the application site via its main access point without conflict. The driver would be able to wheel or carry the delivery as necessary to the new houses via a short walk which is not onerous in the context of the varying residential sites they will have experience of delivering to. The appellant is happy to accept a hard landscaping condition if it is felt that a bonded driveway or footpath would facilitate improved pedestrian access.
- 5.22 The fact that the Council accepts the proposed communal refuse collection point at the front of the site is practical, meets relevant standards and would not harm highway safety appears to contradict the suggestion that home deliveries would be detrimental to highway safety. Refuse collection from the communal collection point allows occupants to wheel bins to the collection point, and for a refuse vehicle to park on the road or adjacent kerb in order to collect the refuse bins. This is also the practice adopted at Copse End where no on site for refuse vehicles is provided. Conversely, home delivery vehicles would likely park in a similar position to a refuse truck, and would therefore cause no greater risk to highway safety. In fact, home delivery vehicles are typically much smaller than a refuse collection vehicle, and would therefore have greater opportunity to find a safe position to park on the unrestricted pavement to facilitate deliveries than during refuse collection.
- 5.23 Considering the low volume of delivery vehicles generated by the development, the low speed of traffic especially at the end of Copse Avenue, and the pre-existing situation of refuse and home delivery vehicles serving neighbouring sites without problem, the proposed development is not considered to be harmful to highway safety. As such the proposed development would be consistent with the requirements of policy DM12.

Reason for Refusal 4

- 5.24 The Council's reason for refusal suggests a tree survey was not submitted. To assist the Officers' consideration during this application, Root Protection Areas (RPA) have been calculated in accordance with the requirements of the British Standards 5837 and added to the site layout plan. It should be noted that none of the trees are covered by Tree Preservation Orders or other statutory protection, and some have been subject to heavy pruning as will be visible at the site visit.
- 5.25 T1 is a heavily pruned sycamore tree which is located in the front garden of number 5 Copse Avenue. It is the largest and most prominent tree in proximity to the site. Part of the proposed driveway and refuse collection point is within its RPA albeit this amounts to less than 20% of its calculated RPA which is the limitation provided within BS5837, regarding development within RPA's. Therefore in accordance with BS5837, a bonded driveway could be carried out subject to a detailed methods statement incorporating sensitive construction methods in the RPA, requested by condition, without causing significant harm to T1 if this was deemed necessary. However this is not the proposal, rather the applicant intends to retain the existing gravelled driveway to serve the new houses. This would mean the only part of the proposed development within the RPA of T1 would be part of the proposed refuse store, which could certainly be undertaken without significant harm to the tree's rooting environment. Again sensitive methods could be conditioned if required.
- 5.26 As for other trees on or adjacent to the site, a dense conifer screen exists within number 5 Copse Avenue which is of limited independent arboricultural merit, and plays a negligible role in the character of the area. However as an extremely hardy species, it is considered they would not be significant harmed by the proposed development.
- 5.27 T3 is a multistem tree which has been heavily pruned and is in poor condition. The only limb which remains alive is outside of the applicant's ownership and the proposed development lies outside of its RPA. T4 lies further from the proposed development which will be outside of its RPA. There are other ornamental trees within the site which are of limited quality, and will also be unaffected by the proposed development.

- 5.28 On the basis of the above assessment, it is clear that the proposed development would not cause trees on or adjacent to the site undue harm, and would not impact the landscape character of the area. The plans include indicative planting, albeit the appellant would be willing to provide a soft landscaping scheme by condition to ensure the proposal protects and enhances the landscape character of the area through new planting. The proposal would therefore comply with the principles of policies CS7 and CS38.

Reason for Refusal 5

- 5.29 The above reason for refusal relates solely to the affordable housing contribution that the development is required to provide. Policy DM6 of the Reading Borough LDF Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012 states that “on sites of 1 – 4 dwellings, a financial contribution will be made that will enable the equivalent of 10% of the housing to be provided as affordable housing elsewhere in the Borough”. If this application is permitted an affordable housing contribution in line with policy will be provided, based on valuations for the proposed development and the reduced value of number 4 Copse Avenue.
- 5.30 A legal agreement securing the above will be submitted if the application is favourably received and recommended for approval.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 This statement sets out the presumption in favour of residential development within the NPPF. The site lies within a sustainable location, and delivers market housing suitable for family occupation, and a policy compliant contribution towards affordable housing, which gains significant weight from the NPPF.
- 6.2 The dwellings would not be incongruous in scale in comparison to other dwellings in the area, or when viewed in isolation. The reduced garden area will not be harmful to the pattern of development in the area which is varied, especially given the majority of the existing garden to the side of number 4 is not visible from Copse Avenue, and the presence of Copse End which represents a development comparable development in terms of street layout. Furthermore the new access drive proposed is already a driveway and therefore would not significant change the site’s appearance in the streetscene. Home delivery

vehicles will be able to easily service the site, parking on the existing unrestricted parking areas in close proximity of the site. Not only is this the pre-existing situation, it is the same as the refuse collection strategy for the proposed development which the council accept, and the same as the refuse collection strategy of Copse End which the Council also approved. As for the proposal's impact on trees, the trees at the site are not protected, are of low quality, and considering their RPA, would not be significantly harmed by the proposed development. If approved, an affordable housing contribution will be negotiated based on valuations of the two new dwellings and the existing dwelling.

- 6.3 For the above reasons, the proposed development is considered to be compliant with relevant development plans policies, and gains significant weight from them as well as the NPPF, and therefore it is respectfully requested that the application be permitted.

APPENDIX 1

APPENDIX 2

APPENDIX 3

APPENDIX 4

APPENDIX 5

APPENDIX 6

APPENDIX 7

APPENDIX 8

APPENDIX 9