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CHARTERED TOWN PLANNERS

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DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:-

ERECTION OF A DETACHED 3 BED CHALET BUNGALOW AND PARKING AREA SERVED BY NEW DRIVEWAY.

SITE LOCATION:-

LAND AT THE REAR OF 217 KENTWOOD HILL, TILEHURST, READING RG31 6JD

PLANS AND DOCUMENTS:-

14/40/05 (E) Rev G. Various Scales @ A3 Location Plan, Block Plan, Site Plan, Floorplan, Section.
14/40/06 (E) Rev C. 1:100 @ A3 Floorplans and Elevations.
14/40/07 (E) Rev B. 1:100 @ A3 Proposed Site Section.
FDA0323_TRPP (rev B) 1:250 @ A3 Tree Retention & Protection Plan
accompanying revised Arboricultural Report by Fulford-Dobson Associates Ltd.
Planning Design & Access Statement (this document).
CIL Documentation.
Heads of Terms for S106.
2 Independent Estate Agents Valuations.

1.00 BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

1.01

This statement accompanies a revised application submitted following the withdrawal of application 161905 (Erection of one pair of semi-detached 3 bed dwellings served by extension to existing access.). This withdrawal followed our site visit with Julie Williams (the SW area Team Leader) on 25th October 2016 to discuss elements of the original scheme causing concern.

1.02

At this meeting we were able to address a number of Ms Williams's concerns relating to residential amenity, with a particular emphasis on reducing the potential for disturbance to the HMO frontage building expected to be caused by the numbers of occupants using the proposed new side access.

1.03

Ms Williams concluded that whilst matters concerning TPO tree-protection, screening, access, parking and layout were acceptable there remained a core objection to the principle of having two new households in the back garden of a property already in use as a large HMO. We were advised that a single dwelling would be more acceptable, since the consequent lessening of activity meant that potential conflict would be halved and residential amenity safeguarded.

1.04

In terms of appearance and scale we were advised that something more innovative in design was called for so that the building would appear more appropriate in its garden setting when seen from the main house, adjoining houses and in glimpses from the public street. A design similar to a recently approved scheme in the area was suggested and the proposal now reflects this design approach.

2.00 AMENDMENTS MADE IN RESPONSE TO THE PLANNING OFFICERS ADVICE

2.01

The accompanying scheme informed by Ms Williams's helpful comments has been formulated with the following characteristics:-

- 1) The original pair of semi-detached 3 bed dwellings have been replaced by a single 3-bed dwelling, effectively halving any effect on residential amenity.
- 2) The proposed building is narrower (9.5m compared to 11m) giving greater space between adjoining buildings.
- 3) Side eaves height is lower (2.6m max compared with 4.8m max) resulting in a significantly reduced building height adjoining neighbouring buildings.
- 4) Useable garden area (including 27m² patio at lower level) is greater at 214m².
- 5) The chalet is 5m distant (compared to original 4.4m) from the RPA of the TPO-protected Monterey Cypress.
- 6) Sound reducing technology will be applied to the side elevation of the HMO revealed by removal of the side garage.
- 7) Frontage car and cycle parking, road access and bin stores remain as previously agreed with the Highways Officer. Parking to the new unit complies with Zone 3 requirements.

2.02

We are working proactively with the Borough Council and consider that these seven amendments overcome previous objections and that the scheme now deserves a favourable consideration.

3.00 UPDATED STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF THE DEVELOPMENT

3.01

Garden depth is now a minimum of 16.6m. Useable garden area is 214m² (garden plus patio). The GIA of the property is 130m² so private amenity space is in close accord with policy advice. The rear elevation is now 5m distant from the RPA of the TPO-protected Monterey Cypress and an Arboricultural Report accompanies the application confirming negligible impact.

3.02

This back-garden application site is adjoined on either side by existing development in the form of a detached dormer bungalow to the south at 2 Oak Tree Road and a large permanent outbuilding to the north at the rear of 49 Overdown Road. This relationship is shown more clearly on Plans 1, 2, and 3, following.

3.03

Since the proposal is adjoined to north and south by existing permanent structures it is in essence a rounding off and infilling of the leftover gap between these two buildings. The proposal merely extends the established 'backland' characteristic of the immediate area and makes better use of surplus back garden space in accord with Policy DM11 (copy attached as Appendix 1.). The proposal will not prevent the future development of adjoining land to the north should this ever be identified for development.

3.04

The application site is situated in an area characterised by development of the original generous rear gardens of properties. For example 47 & 49 Overdown Road were formed from the rear gardens of 223-229 Kentwood Hill. The back garden of 49 Overdown Road adjoins the application site giving a continuity of re-development (see Plan 3.). Since the garden of the application site is significantly longer than the adjoining gardens of 219/221 it now represents the final chance to make more efficient use of the underused excess rear garden space in this particular frontage block.



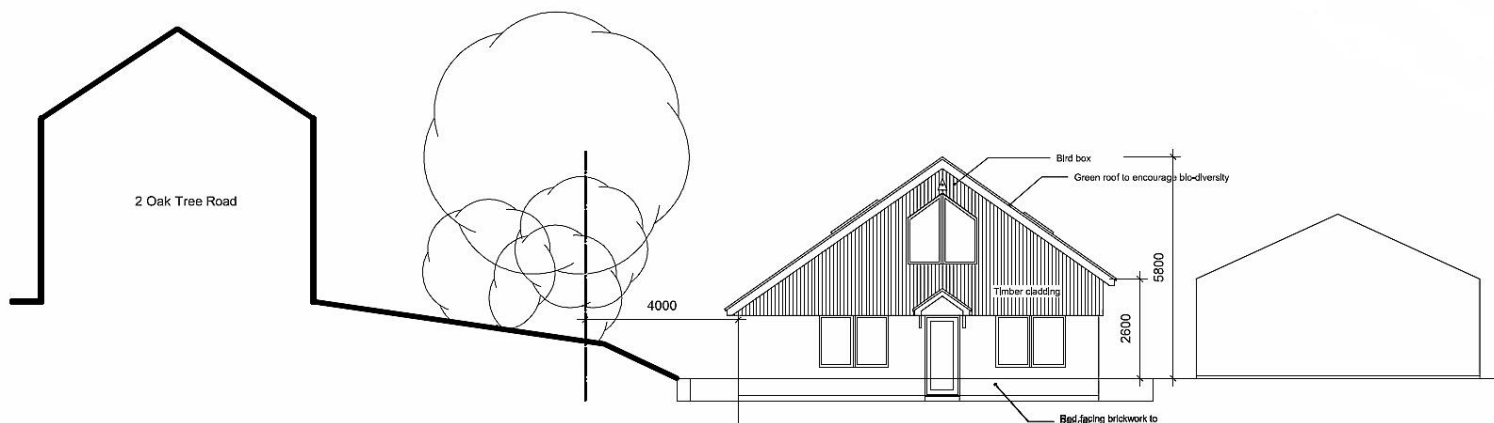
PLAN 1. Location of site in context looking due north. 47-49 Overdown Road are visible north of the site identified by glazed conservatories. No 2, Oak Tree Road adjoins the southwest corner of the site.

3.05

As can be seen from Plan 1. (above) the established pattern of adjacent development features a mixture of brick-built, single and two-storey dwellings under predominantly hipped and tiled roofs. The current scheme includes a 'green roof' to encourage biodiversity. Setting the building into the ground allows a maximum central ridge height above ground of 5.8m. However side eaves height has been significantly reduced to 2.6m adjoining 49 Overdown Road and 1.75m adjoining 2 Oak Tree Road. This results in a significantly reduced building height and impact on adjoining buildings.

3.06

The site is very well screened by boundary trees and hedges. This fact taken with the low roofline of the proposal and the retention of the existing frontage access unaltered means that the proposal will have little demonstrable effect on local character.



PLAN 2. Section across the site showing height of the proposal in relation to 2 Oak Tree Road (left) and the ancillary accommodation to the main house forming part of 49 Overdown Road (right).

3.07

As can be seen from Plan 2 above, and in terms of scale and proportionality, the proposal will not cause any sunlighting or daylighting problems to 2 Oak Tree Road. The 'shed' type outbuilding to 49 Overdown Road cannot be used for normal residential use due to a limiting condition on the certificate of lawfulness that allowed the retention of the building (approval 140391).

4.00 PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

4.01

This statement has been prepared by Tony Thorpe Associates on behalf of the co-applicants Mr Michael Phillips and Mr Graham Widgery. The statement should be read in conjunction with the plans, supporting documents and photographs that have been submitted with the application as listed above.

4.02

The purpose of this statement is to explain "...the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the proposed development and how issues relating to access to the development have been dealt with." (Para 80. DCLG Circular 01/2006). Of necessity it incorporates some elements of the Arboricultural report.

4.03

The site is located within the defined settlement boundary of Reading. In accordance with Policy DM11 (Development of Private Residential Gardens) of the adopted Sites and Detailed Policies Document, together with national policy relating to residential development set out in the NPPF, development should be directed to sustainable sites such as this. Accordingly there is a presumption in favour of residential development.

4.04

Policy DM11 supports new housing development within settlements regardless of whether sites were formerly 'brownfield'. Therefore overall new housing development on backland sites is not precluded in principle so long as significant emphasis is given to compliance with development plan policies and other material considerations. In this case these will be the nine criteria set out in Policy DM11.

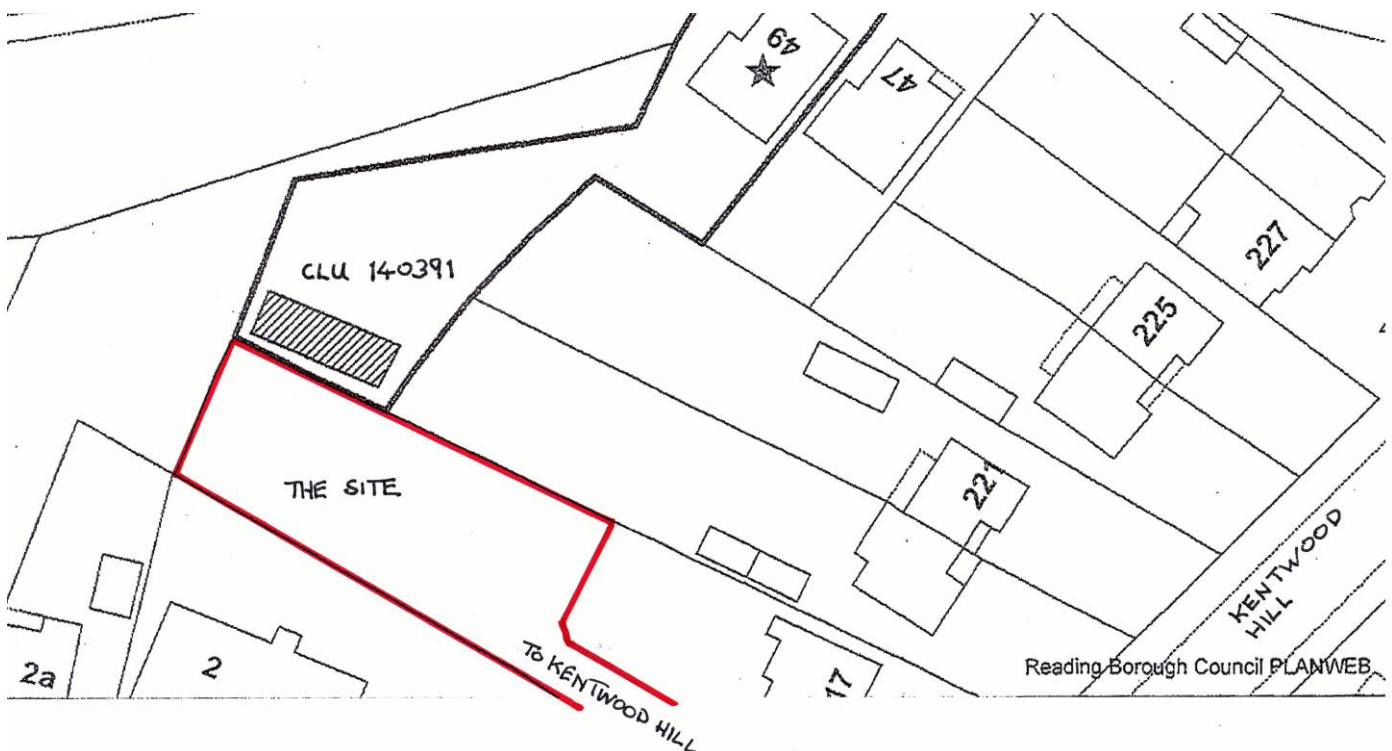
4.05

Tandem development is acceptable in policy terms within the Councils administrative area and we adduce as a precedent a recent approval won by our practice at 74 Northcourt Avenue, Reading RG2 7HQ (RBC ref:- 160255 09/12/2016).

5.00 COMPLIANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF POLICY DM11.

5.01

The application site is adjoined on either side by existing development in the form of a detached dormer bungalow to the south at 2 Oak Tree Road and a large permanent outbuilding to the north at the rear of 49 Overdown Road (please see Plan 3 below).



PLAN 3. The site in relation to the two adjoining permanent buildings 2 Oak Tree Road (south) and the ancillary accommodation to main house rear of 49 Overdown Road (north). It fills the 'gap' between these two buildings.

5.02

Since the proposal is adjoined to north and south by existing permanent structures it is in essence a rounding off and infilling of the leftover gap between these two buildings. The proposal merely extends the established 'backland' characteristic of the immediately adjoining area and makes better use of surplus back garden space in accord with Policy DM11 (copy attached as Appendix 1.).

5.03

The scale, design and massing of the proposed dwelling is complimentary to and makes a positive contribution to the character of the area. It complies with criterion 1) of Policy DM11 in that it relates well to the existing built form and spaces around buildings. With regard to plot to dwelling ratio the proposed site area of 535m² (excluding shared access) is at the higher end of local ratios and is comparable with adjoining and nearby properties fronting adjoining roads (for example:- 2a Oak Tree Road, 47 Overdown Road and 209 Kentwood Hill).

5.04

The proposed density is 18.7 dph which is consistent with the need to maximize the potential of developable land. The boundary of the remaining frontage plot 217 Kentwood Hill is already set by the red line boundary approved under application 150592 (which in effect reserved the remainder of the rear garden for this development).

5.05

DM11 criterion 1) tells us of the importance of a high standard of hard and soft landscaping, particularly at site boundaries. In this case the site boundaries are dense and mature trees, bushes and shrubs. Following recent tidying they will remain largely unaffected by the proposal and be reinforced with additional planting along the northern boundary to ensure that current levels of privacy are maintained. The TPO Monterey Cypress in the west corner of the plot is retained as a feature in the public interest.

5.06

DM11 criterion 1) requires compatibility with general building height, materials, elevational details, arrangement of doors, windows and other architectural features. In this case in response to pre-application advice and the characteristics of the site the proposal is intentionally lower and more compact than the older adjoining dwelling at 2 Oak Tree Road. This is made clear by the submitted SE Elevation/Section (see Plan 2. above). The design accords with the approved example suggested by Ms Williams.

5.07

The lowering of the eaves line either side of the dwelling has been achieved by adopting a pitched rather than the previous flat roof. As related at 3.05 above setting the building into the ground allows a maximum central ridge height above ground of 5.8m. However side eaves height has been considerably reduced to 2.6m adjoining 49 Overdown Road and 1.75m adjoining 2 Oak Tree Road. This results in a significantly reduced building height adjoining neighbouring buildings. We consider that compatibility is self-evident and that the proposal complies with all of the DM11(1) requirements and makes a positive architectural contribution to the character of the area.

5.08

In terms of DM11 criterion 2) we submit that at 535m² (excluding shared access) the site is an adequate size and has a regular square shape and dimensions sufficient to accommodate the proposed dwellings in terms of both setting and space about buildings including amenity space. Garden depth is now a minimum of 16.6m. Useable garden area is 214m² (garden plus patio). The GIA of the property is 130m² so private amenity space is in close accord with policy advice.

5.09

In terms of DM11 criterion 3) the pre-application response of Councils Transport Officer confirmed that the site is located in an area with good public transport links (Kentwood Circle & Tilehurst Railway Station). Parking provision is two spaces serving the proposed dwelling. Three spaces are allocated for the frontage HMO including a combined bin store and cycle store serving the new dwelling and the frontage HMO. Access width is above standard. The proposal is sustainable and will have no effect of the free flow and safety of traffic on the local highway network.

5.10

In terms of DM11 criterion 4) we agree with previous Planning Appeal Decisions (APP/E0345/A/12/2184074) that the policy does not clearly set out what is considered 'unacceptable tandem development'. However it is self-evident from the attached plans that the site adjoins and is compatible with what amounts to 'backland' development that sets a clear precedent for development. Please see also paragraph 4.05 above.

5.11

In terms of DM11 criterion 5) the proposal does not include any public areas. Accordingly there is no need for additional physical security measures. Since the existing single access is retained and surveilled by the existing and proposed dwellings the existing 'defensible space' remains and the proposal is secure by design.

5.12

In terms of DM11 criterion 6) the core principles of the NPPF state that planning should always seek to secure a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupiers. We consider that the proposal make a positive contribution to the quality of life in Reading. Rear garden depth is a minimum of 16.6m and the space between the secondary side elevation and 2 Oak Tree Road will be a minimum of 11m. There can be no 'occupants' of the timber clad 'bungalow' to the rear of 49 Overdown Road since CLU 140391 prohibits residential occupation. Accordingly the proposal complies with the Council's minimum distances between properties relating to maintaining privacy and daylight.

5.13

Following our site visit with Julie Williams we note, in relation to the timber clad 'bungalow' to the rear of 49 Overdown Road, that there are no windows facing the application site.

5.14

In terms of DM11 criterion 7) this is a 3-bed family-sized dwelling located within walking distance of local schools, shops, open space, public transport and amenities. Accordingly the proposal fully accords with this requirement.

5.15

In terms of DM11 criterion 8) the proposal will have no effect on biodiversity and does not lie in any Special Protection Area. There are no buildings on the section of the site to be developed nor habitats of protected species. There are no ponds or evidence of use by protected species therefore no specific mitigation is necessary. Since the existing boundary hedges, shrubs and means of enclosure are to be maintained any existing animal access routes will remain undisturbed and the proposal will not lead to fragmentation of habitat or the green network. Two new bird boxes are shown on the front and rear elevations of the proposal.

5.16

So far as we are aware the site does not lie in an area of archaeological potential. The site is well above the floodplain, is not contaminated or tipped or liable to subsidence due to underground workings.

5.17

In terms of the DM11 final criterion 9) the proposal will not prejudice the satisfactory development of a wider area. In essence it fills the 'gap' between two existing buildings and does not in any way prejudice the satisfactory development of remaining backland to the north.

6.00 PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION.

6.01

In accordance with good practice we can confirm that pre-application consultations have been carried out with the Council (RBC ref:- 150592 on the original application) and again as part of our site visit with Julie Williams (the SW area Team Leader) on 25th October 2016 to discuss elements of the original scheme. Her valuable advice has been used to inform the current proposal.

7.00 TREES AND LANDSCAPING

7.01

A detailed Arboricultural Report by Fulford-Dobson Associates Ltd accompanied by Tree Retention & Protection Plan FDA0323_TRPP (rev B) is enclosed separately. We note that in relation to the withdrawn application Sarah Hanson confirmed on 14th October 2016 that there were no objections subject to normal landscaping and tree protection conditions.

7.02

The Arboricultural Report concludes that the proposal site is not within a Conservation Area or any statutory land-based designations. It lies close to a Green Network and there is one legally protected (TPO) tree within influencing distance of the proposal. Despite initial concerns relating to the original design, the Council's Natural Environment officers have now removed their objections, subject to conditions relating to the pre-commencement submission of an Arboricultural Method Statement.

7.03

The proposal will not result in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats or veteran trees, and as such is not contrary to section 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Whilst the proposal will result in the loss of some low and medium-low quality trees, the better quality trees and hedges are to be retained.

7.04

Furthermore, the new house is proposed to have a green living roof, which will soften its visual impact, help assimilate it into the surrounding landscape, absorb rain water, capture pollutants and atmospheric deposits and provide a habitat for local wildlife. As such, the proposal seeks to maintain the significant existing landscape features, local biodiversity value and adaptability over time (local policies CS7, CS38 and DM17).

7.05

The Arboricultural Report concludes with the following statement:- *"In my opinion, the arboricultural impacts of the proposal are negligible to the immediate and wider landscape and therefore do not warrant any further objection."*

7.06

Details of landscaping and planting will be submitted as part of the landscaping condition. Other than that we consider no further hard or soft structural landscaping is required. 'Personal Preference' internal landscaping will be carried out when the garden areas are laid out.

6.00 ACCESS PRINCIPLES AND SOLUTIONS

6.01

We note that in relation to the withdrawn application for two dwellings (161905) Natalie Lucas confirmed on 14th October 2016 that there are no transport objections in respect of this proposal subject to conditions.

6.02

In connection with the withdrawn 2-dwelling scheme Ms Lucas further advised that the existing dropped crossing from Kentwood Hill should be widened to 4.8m. We would appreciate her advice as to whether this widening remains necessary for the smaller 1-dwelling scheme. For the avoidance of doubt there is ample room to allow the proposed widening (see photo 1 below).



PHOTO 1. Existing access and vehicular crossover to be retained and possibly widened to original width subject to LPA advice.

6.03

The site is located within Zone 3, Secondary Core Area, of the Council's adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD. The development consists of one 3-bed dwellings and provides a parking provision of 2 spaces in front of the new dwelling. The existing approved 3 parking spaces and manoeuvring space for the frontage HMO approved under application 150592 is retained. A covered frontage cycle and bin store is provided to serve both developments accommodating 6no. Cycles in total.

6.04

The site is in a sustainable location with retail, leisure, employment, schools etc. within easy walking/cycling distance. In addition the site is within easy walking distance of bus stops (Kentwood Circle) and the main-line Tilehurst Railway Station delivering direct and frequent services to and from Oxford and Reading Railway Stations, the town centre and other local services. Accordingly the development is sustainable and there is no need for occupiers to own a car. This is borne out by the under-use of the 3 existing HMO parking spaces.

6.05

Given that the proposal is sustainable and will have no demonstrable effect on the safety and the free flow of traffic on the local network no additional access arrangements other than those proposed are considered necessary.

7.00 COMPLIANCE WITH ECOLOGICAL AND CLIMATE CONTROLS

7.01

The proposal will comply with the requirements of the Building Regulations. Therefore we can confirm that the proposed dwelling will accord with the spirit and purpose of local and national policy and incorporate on-site renewable energy and/or an efficient supply of heat, cooling and power.

7.02

There are no buildings on the section of the site to be developed nor habitats of protected species. There are no ponds or evidence of use by protected species therefore no specific mitigation is necessary. Since the existing boundary hedges, shrubs and means of enclosure are to be maintained any existing animal access routes will remain undisturbed and the proposal will not lead to fragmentation of habitat or the green network.

7.03

The current scheme seeks instead to improve local ecological credentials by using an eco-friendly 'green roof' to improve biodiversity. Bird boxes are shown to be provided front and rear as part of the proposal.

7.04

There will be access for the disabled to the ground floor and the small size of the site ensures that the proposal will be disabled friendly. Local topography at the bottom of Kentwood Hill is comparatively level so hand and powered wheelchairs will have no difficulty negotiating the local area and reaching public transport. Materials left over from demolition will be recycled and building materials will be obtained from sustainable sources.

8.00 DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS

8.01

The proposal will attract CIL and the relevant forms accompany this application. The proposal will attract an affordable housing contribution and two independent estate agents valuations together with the necessary heads of terms accompany the application.

9.00 PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

9.01

The NPPF has introduced a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which paragraph 197 advises should be applied in assessing and determining development proposals.

9.02

The NPPF identifies three dimensions to sustainable development:- economic, social and environmental. The policies of the NPPF taken as a whole, constitute the Governments view of what sustainable development in England means in practice for the planning system.

9.03

The provision of new housing in sustainable locations is a clear social benefit which supports strong, vibrant and healthy communities. The NPPF clearly seeks to significantly boost the supply of housing, and as explained above, the application site is considered to be a sustainable location for a new dwelling and thus provides the social benefits that justify a presumption in favour of development.

9.04

In terms of the economic role of planning, sustainable growth is supported, including the provision of infrastructure. The applicant is willing to enter into a CIL agreement with the Council to mitigate the impact of the development on the local infrastructure, services and amenities made necessary by the development and this justifies a presumption in favour of development as does the requirement for an affordable housing contribution.

9.05

Contributing to protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment is fundamental to fulfilling the environmental role of planning. The impact of one new dwelling house on the character and appearance of the area has been assessed as part of the design process and is considered acceptable. As such it is considered that there are no environmental reasons to justify withholding planning permission.

9.06

For the above reasons the proposal is supported by the economic, social and environmental strands of sustainable development as required by the NPPF. Therefore the proposal constitutes sustainable development and benefits from the presumption in favour of development.

10.00 CONCLUSIONS

10.01

Having regard to the relevant development plan policies and other material considerations as detailed above we submit that there are no sound and clear-cut planning reasons to object to the development. It benefits from the NPPF presumption in favour of sustainable development, is informed by pre-application advice from the Council's Officers and therefore deserves support. We look forward to a favourable determination. If you have any queries or require further information please do not hesitate to call.

Anthony J Thorpe BA(Hons) MRTPI DipConsHistEnv(RICS) 24th January 2017

APPENDIXES

Appendix 1. Policy DM11 (Development of Private Residential Gardens) of the adopted Sites and Detailed Policies Document.

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Appendix 1.

DM11: DEVELOPMENT OF PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL GARDENS

Proposals for new residential development that includes land within the curtilage or the former curtilage of private residential gardens will be acceptable where:

- 1) *The proposal makes a positive contribution to the character of the area in terms of:*
 - *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;*
 - *Compatibility with the general building height within the surrounding area;*
 - *The materials and elevational detail. These should be high quality, and where appropriate distinctive and/ or complementary;*
 - *The arrangement of doors, windows and other principal architectural features and their rhythm between buildings.*
- 2) *The application site provides a site of adequate size and dimensions to accommodate the development proposed in terms of the setting and spacing around buildings, amenity space, landscaping and space for access roads and parking;*
- 3) *The proposal includes access, which meets appropriate highway standards;*
- 4) *The proposal does not lead to unacceptable tandem³⁰ development;*
- 5) *The design and layout minimises exposure of existing private boundaries to public areas, and avoids the need for additional physical security measures;*
- 6) *The proposal does not cause a significant detrimental impact to the amenity of adjacent and nearby occupants;*
- 7) *The emphasis is on the provision of family-sized housing;*
- 8) *The development would not have an adverse impact on biodiversity in terms of the fragmentation of blocks of gardens, which as a unit or in association with adjacent open space are deemed to make an important contribution to biodiversity and contribute to the green network; and*
- 9) *The proposal does not prejudice the satisfactory development of a wider area.*

³⁰ 'Tandem development' is used to describe a dwelling built behind another, the rear building having no frontage and being accessed by a private roadway or track alongside the front building.