

buildservices.co.uk

Project : Oakwood House, West Kingsdown

Project No: 102

Address: Oakwood House, School Lane, West Kingsdown, Sevenoaks. TN15 6AW

Date: 25th January 2021

Author : Ray Smith

SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COUNCIL HOMEOWNERS PLANNING APPLICATION

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT FOR OAKWOOD HOUSE

BUILDSERVICES.CO.UK (SOUTH EAST) LTD trading as buildservices.co.uk
COMPANY NO. 7084114 (ENGLAND & WALES)
Tel : 01737 233660 email : info@buildservices.co.uk
Address : Unit F The Courtyard Business Centre, Dovers Farm, Lonesome Lane,
Reigate, Surrey. RH27QT

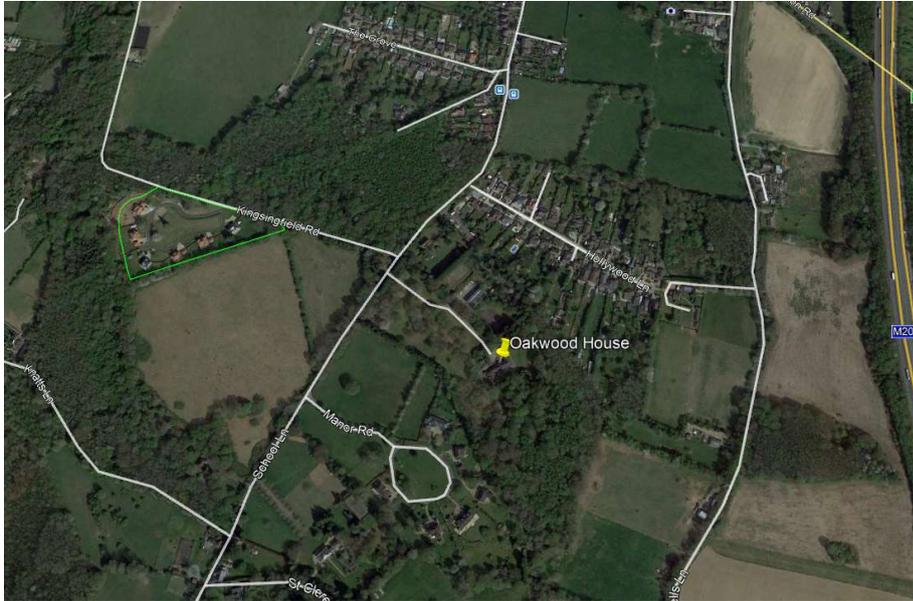


CONTENTS

Description	Page
1. Location	3
2. Surrounding Properties	5
3. Statutory Services	5
4. Sevenoaks Landscape Sensitivity Plan	5
5. Existing Design of Oakwood House	7
6. Design Considerations	10
7. AONB	14
8. Impact of Construction on the Surrounding Environment	15

Location

Oakwood House is a 5 bedroom residential home built in the 1980's in an area of outstanding natural beauty in Sevenoaks. It is located on a substantial plot of land off School Lane in West Kingsdown, Sevenoaks TN15 6AW. (51°19'55.72N 0°15'54.08E)



Picture 1 – Location of Oakwood House

Oakwood House is situated within a plot of land that is approx 17 acres in size. The majority of this land is wooded but Oakwood House is immediately surrounded by large areas of hard landscaping and lawns to the front, rear and sides. Tennis courts and a large steel framed barn are also located within the same plot of land, and are located to the NW of Oakwood House.



Picture 2 - Oakwood House Front Elevation

Oakwood House is set back from School lane by over 200m and is obscured to the public by surrounding trees.



Picture 3 – View of Oakwood House Gate Entrance from School Lane, West Kingsdown.

The building has an electronic security gate off School Lane which leads to Oakwood House by way of a 5m wide private approach road. The existing boundaries surrounding the plot are a mixture of brick wall, fenceline and shrubbery.

The private approach road is tarmacked with kerbs on both sides. Lamp columns every 30m provide safety lighting to Oakwood House. It is assumed that the statutory services follow this route to the building.

An extensive area of lawn and trees can be seen either side of the private approach road leading to Oakwood House.

The barn is located off the private access road to the left and is obscured by mature coniferous trees. The barn benefits from a 500m² concrete hardstanding to the front leading to a private horse arena. The barn is a large steel framed structure finished externally with brickwork and profiled sheeting. It has a footprint of 554m² with rooms on two levels.

The building would appear to have been used for equestrian pursuits and for the storage of vehicles.



Picture 4 – Large barn to the Northwest of Oakwood House

Surrounding Properties

Oakwood House is set within a rural location and has residential homes located to the North, South & West of its current location. See Picture 1. To the East and South East it is predominantly wooded land and fields which back against the M20 Motorway. The M20 Motorway is approx half a kilometre from Oakwood House.

The surrounding properties are mainly residential in nature and are mixed in size and appearance.

The public road leading to these properties and Oakwood House is School Lane. The road has two lanes with trees predominantly either side, but does not provide dedicated street lighting or pedestrian footpath.

Oakwood House is approximately 0.85 kilometres away from West Kingsdown where shops and Schools are located; and is approximately 3.5km away from Heaverham Village.

Statutory Services

Gas, water and electricity are already serving Oakwood House.

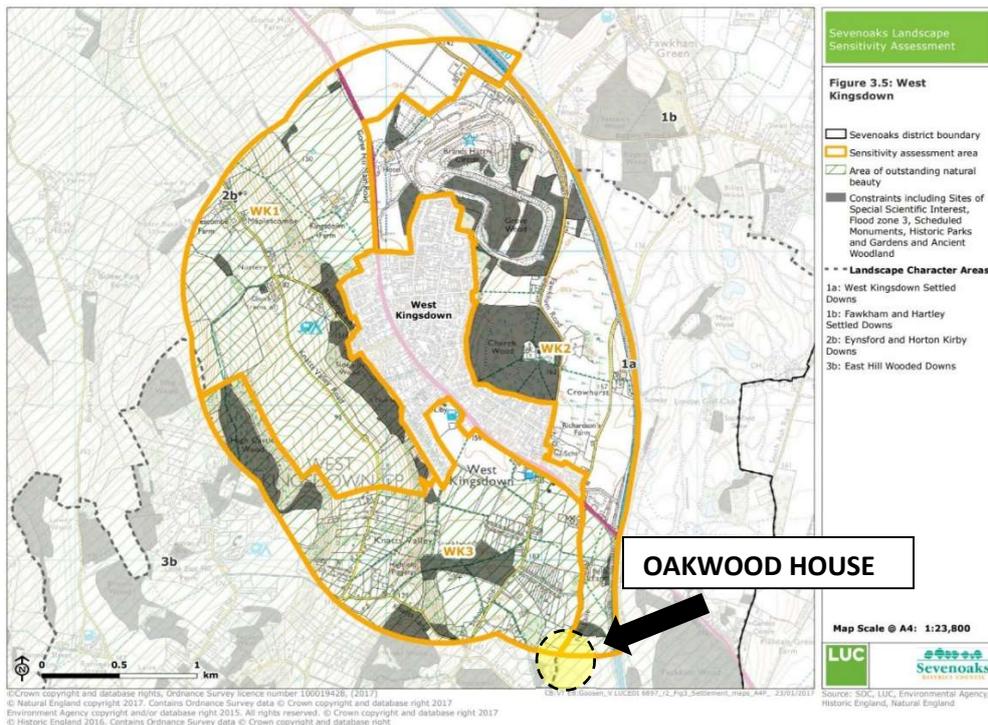
The foul waste is discharged via South East Water foul main located in School Lane.

The property is connected to BT.

No change to the statutory services is being proposed, nor does any modification to the statutory services serving Oakwood House need to be altered.

Sevenoaks Landscape Sensitivity Plan

Oakwood House is located within an AONB within the West Kingsdown catchment area. See Picture 5 below.



Picture 5 – Sevenoaks Landscape Sensitivity Plan – Oakwood House highlighted in yellow circle

An area of outstanding natural beauty (AONB) is a statutory designation stemming from the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, which applies to England and Wales. The intention of an AONB is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the landscape with the designation indicating an area of national importance.

The first statutory Kent Downs AONB Management Plan was adopted in April 2004 and it justifies and details policies for the conservation and enhancement of the Kent Downs AONB.

While the whole of the Management Plan should be considered in respect of planning, the following policies have been considered to be most relevant to this planning application :

Sustainable development (SD)

SD1 The need to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Kent Downs AONB.

SD2 The local character, qualities and distinctiveness of the Kent Downs AONB will be conserved and enhanced in the design, scale, setting and materials of new development, redevelopment and infrastructure and will be pursued through the application of appropriate design guidance.

SD5 Local renewable and sustainable energy initiatives will be pursued where they help to conserve and enhance the natural beauty and landscape character of the AONB and bring environmental, social and economic benefits to local people.

SD7 To retain and improve tranquillity, including the experience of dark skies at night, careful design and the use of new technologies should be used.

SD8 Proposals which negatively impact on the distinctive landform, landscape character, special characteristics and qualities.

SD9 The particular historic and locally distinctive character of rural settlement and buildings of the Kent Downs AONB will be maintained and strengthened. The use of locally-derived materials for restoration and conservation work will be encouraged.

SD10 Positive measures to mitigate the negative impact of infrastructure and growth on the natural beauty and amenity of the AONB will be supported.

Landform and landscape character (LLC)

LLC1 The protection, conservation and enhancement of special characteristics and qualities, natural beauty and landscape character of the Kent Downs AONB.

HCH5 The application of high standards of design sympathetic to cultural heritage within the AONB.

Biodiversity (BD)

BD 5 The protection, conservation and extension of Kent Downs priority and distinctive habitats and species.

Existing Design of Oakwood House

Oakwood House is a two storey building that is 805m² in size. It is a traditionally built structure with a faux Elizabethan appearance (externally on the first floor). The building has white aluminium double glazed external doors & windows with a plain tiled roof. The glazing has a lead Georgian bar appearance. See Picture 2.

Internally the building is modern in appearance with no period features except for a new brickwork fireplace located in the living room. See pictures 6 & 7.

The building is surrounded by a large area of external paving with a brick retaining wall to the rear only. See pictures 8 & 9. The building has external disabled access to the front and rear.

There is lawn either side of the property and to the rear. These areas have trees in close proximity to Oakwood House as shown on existing landscape drawing P-102-004. These trees are native species to the Kent Downs.

Oakwood House comprises the following :

1. 2 Reception Rooms
2. 5 Double Bedrooms & EnSuites
3. Kitchen
4. Utility Room
5. Office / Study
6. Downstairs WC
7. Swimming Pool and Changing Facilities
8. Plant Room
9. Steam Room
10. Sauna
11. Detached Garage to accommodate 3 vehicles

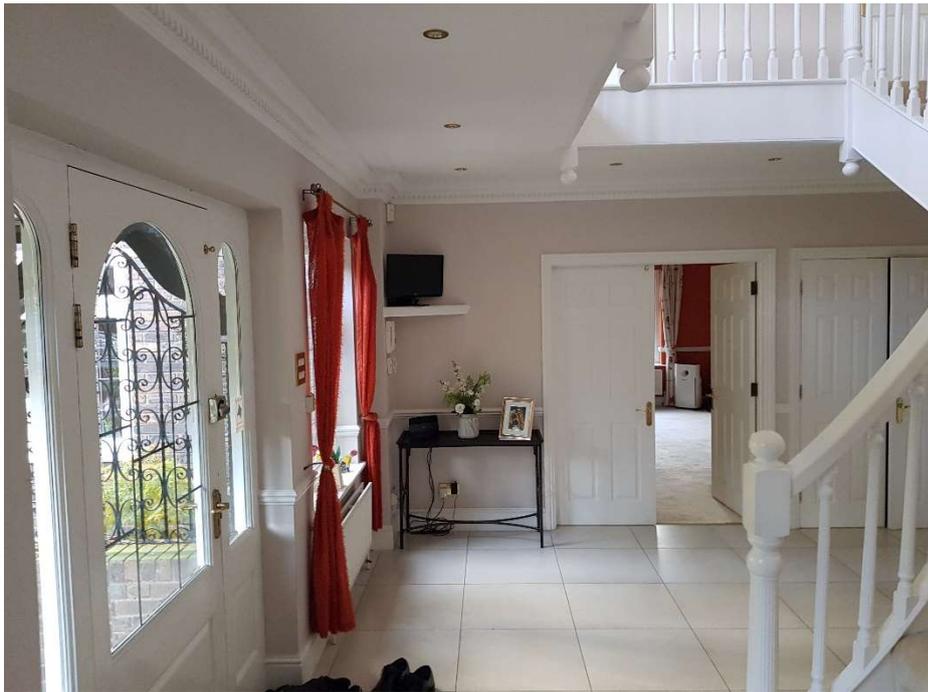
It is not known whether or not the swimming pool was built at the same time as Oakwood House but it is joined by a ground and first floor link structure. This link structure has a substantial heating system to accommodate the existing property and swimming pool. It is this link structure that provides access to the master bedroom and dressing area located above the swimming pool. These rooms have been built within the swimming pool pitched roof with a number of dormers located on both sides. These dormers are finished using plain tiling.

The internal décor of the property is minimalist & modern in appearance. The property has tiled floors leading from the entrance hall to the kitchen and swimming pool. The reception and bedrooms are carpeted, including the first floor corridors.

The colour scheme is white / beige throughout with the notable exception of the Living Room.

The internal doors are white moulded panel doors with matching architraves and skirtings.

Lighting is predominantly GU10 downlighters throughout the entire property.



Picture 6 – Main Entrance Lobby



Picture 7 – Living Room Fireplace



Picture 8 – Hard Landscaping Outside Swimming Pool



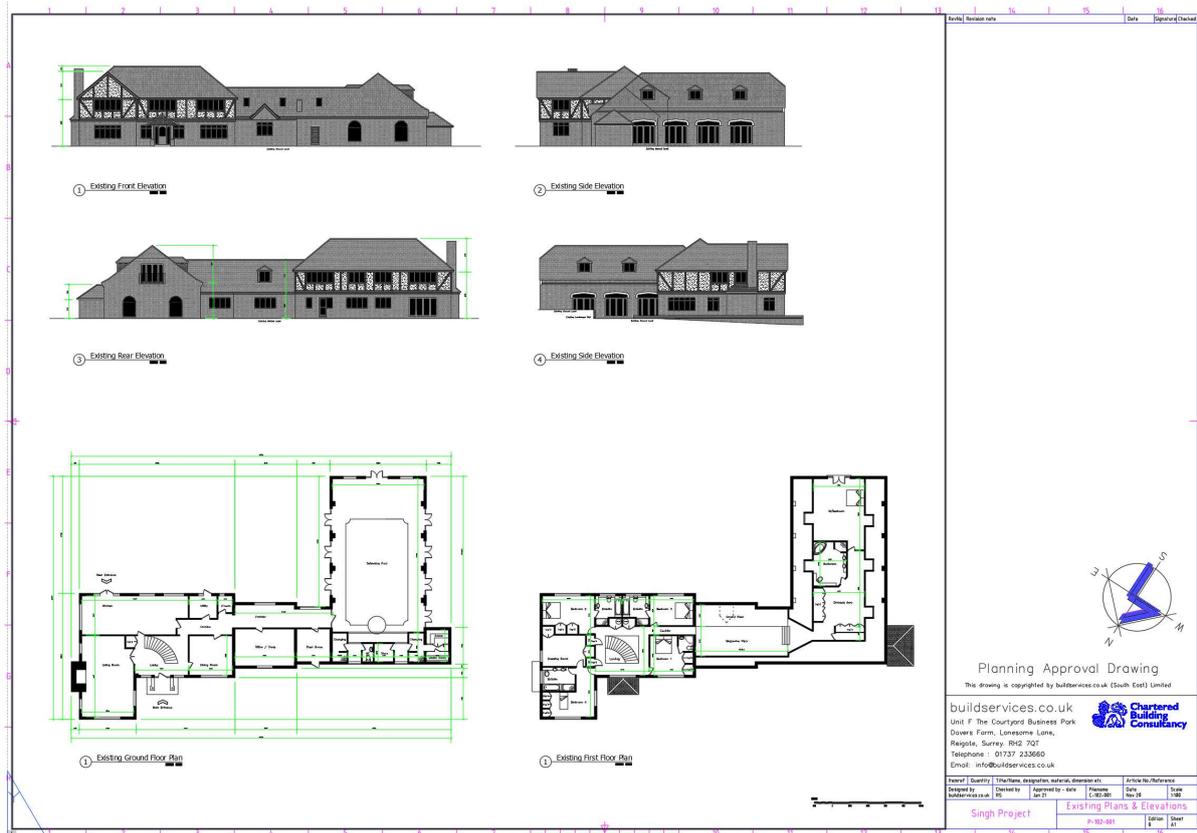
Picture 9 – Hard landscaping complete with retaining wall to rear of building

Design Considerations

Assessing the Existing Design

The agents brief was to expand Oakwood House to make it a home for the applicant and his growing family for the future.

Oakwood House is a substantial property but its current design does not make practical use of the living space provided. See drawing P-102-001 below.



Picture 10 – Existing Plans & Elevations drawing P-102-001

Despite being 805m² in size it only provided 5 double bedrooms and 2 dedicated reception rooms.

An initial design assessment was carried out on Oakwood House by the Applicants design team.

Their findings were as follows :

- The single storey link structure joining the main building to the swimming pool did not appear to have a coherent purpose. It was accepted that the plant room was suited for this location, but the office appeared too big and the mezzanine floor did not serve a meaningful purpose other than for thru access.
- The master bedroom and dressing area was felt to be too big, and the dressing area did not provide sufficient privacy.
- The front entrance lobby does not work well with a spiral staircase. The spiral staircase is within 1.4m of the front door which creates a bottleneck for those trying to access other parts of the house at ground floor level.

- The design of the single storey link structure externally does not seamlessly blend in with the main building. It is stepped back twice with a different roofline and pitch from that of the main building roof. The link pitched roof has 3 velux windows, a dormer window complete with a faux chimney to disguise the plant room extractor.
- The roofline throughout the entire building is disjointed in design. It has different levels & different pitches.
- The property has extensive hard landscaping on all elevations. This is a positive when considering a redesign.
- The property already has an extensive footprint of 519m². The existing landscaping footprint including the garage was 1459m² (without garage 1391m²).
- The external appearance did not seem in character with the surrounding area. No other faux Elizabethan styled properties were found within close proximity of Oakwood House.
- The amount of trees surrounding the property was significant.

Arriving at the Finalised Design

The options to adapt Oakwood House were as follows :

1. Extend beyond the existing property footprint to create the additional bedrooms and reception rooms.
2. Demolish the existing property and rebuild.
3. Remodel the existing property to achieve the design parameters required.

On reviewing the above options it was felt that it would be less impactful on the environment to remodel the existing building.

Remodelling the Existing Building

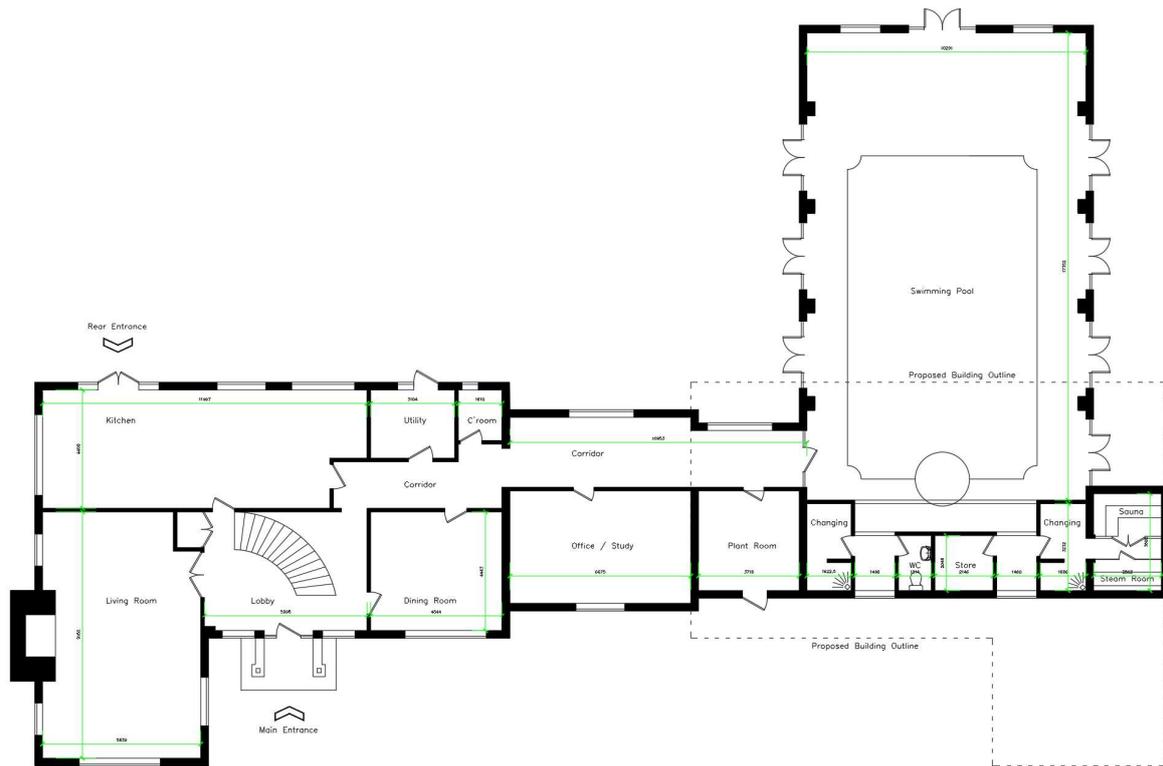
- It was quickly established that the left hand side of the existing building could remain largely intact.
- The swimming pool was a good size and could be retained.
- The link structure failed to deliver practical space and could be demolished and rebuilt.
- The entrance to the building could be changed / repositioned to suit the revised design.
- The second floor above the swimming pool could largely be removed and replaced with a single storey flat roof.
- A new structure matching the retained building in height and width could be built to the right hand side predominantly on the existing building footprint.

In exploring the above strategy, we arrived at a proposed footprint shown in picture 11.

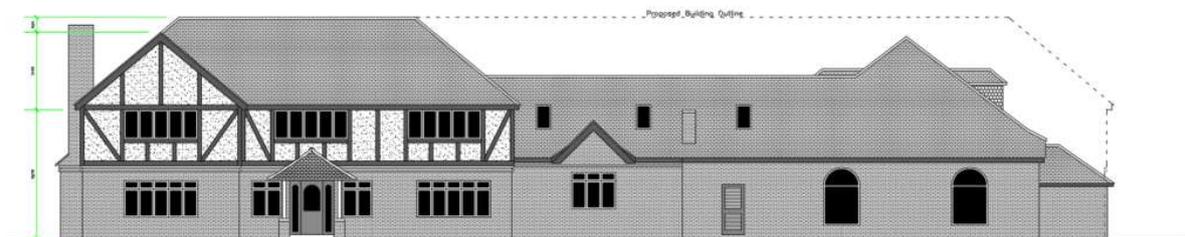
The proposed footprint shown in Picture 11 brought the possibility of creating a symmetrical building design. The retained structure to the left hand side could remain largely intact with a repositioned front entrance.

The new extension being built above the existing swimming pool could match the retained building allowing a symmetrical design to be developed.

The new extension could be built on the existing building footprint & hard landscaped area. This decision dramatically reduces the impact of the build on the surrounding environment.



1 Existing Ground Floor Plan
Scale: 1:100



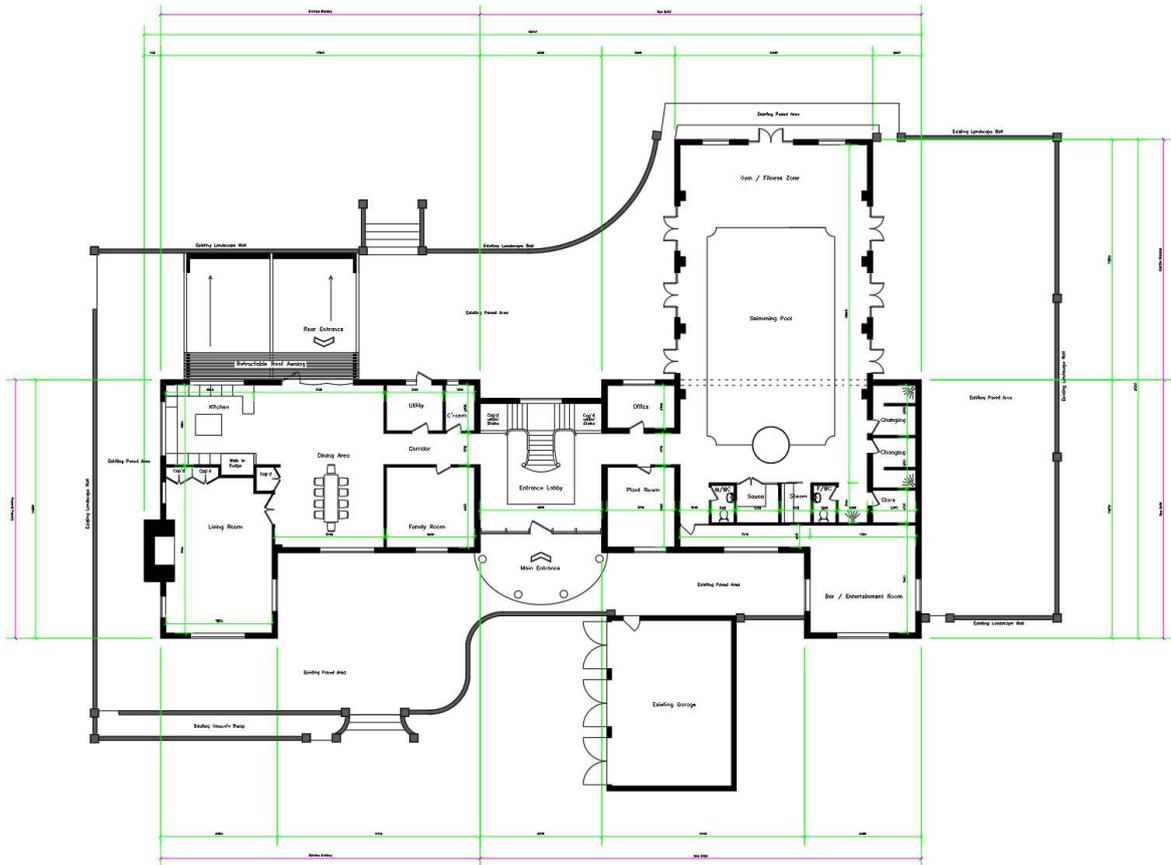
1 Existing Front Elevation
Scale: 1:100

Picture 11 – Showing the zone of the new build against the existing

The faux Elizabethan first floor façade on the existing building did not add any benefit to the surrounding environment, or to the historical significance of the land or any building previously placed upon it. For this reason, it was decided to remove this previous feature and replace it with a plain render appearance. This we felt better reflected surrounding properties, and allowed the build to blend into its surroundings better.

The proposed new footprint now provides 1053m² of accommodation as opposed to the previous 805m². This is an uplift of an additional 248m². This has been achieved whilst only adding a further 72m² to the existing ground floor footprint. 72m² represents a 13.9% uplift on the original footprint.

By pursuing the above strategy, we were able to develop a considered design which blended into the existing footprint of the existing building and hard landscaped area. This led to the proposed plans and elevations shown in drawing P-102-002. See Picture 12



1 Proposed Ground Floor Plan



6 Proposed Front Elevation
Scale: 1:100

Picture 12 – Showing proposed GF Plan & front elevation. Proposed plan also shows existing paved areas and existing boundary walls.

AONB

We mentioned that Oakwood House was located within the West Kingsdown AONB.

On reviewing the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan it was quickly established that remodelling the existing building would be the least impactful approach to protecting the natural environment.

Little impact was observed when considering the SD Policies 1, 2, 8, 9 & 10 as mentioned earlier. No new services are being trenching in to the property. No new infrastructure other than that shown on the plans is being proposed.

SD Policy 5 will allow the extension build to incorporate renewable and sustainable energy initiatives that enhance and conserve the natural beauty of the surrounding land. Although the building is not a new build project, the applicant is keen to consider options that can enhance the extension build.

SD Policy 7 was considered when developing the new glazed front entrance feature. The new front entrance incorporates a 2 storey glazed curtain wall. To reduce the impact of spill light at night the applicant will appoint specialist designers to propose methods of containing from dusk to dawn. This will involve the use of automatic blinds and lights that are programmed to control lighting levels outside the building.

AONB Landform and landscape character (LLC)

LLC Policy 1 has been considered. In order to accommodate the new extension, it will be necessary to remove two trees as indicated on the attached Planning Application. The removal of these trees would not be detrimental to the natural beauty of the surrounding area. We appreciate that the removal of mature trees is never a preferred option; but these trees will be replaced with two semi mature trees of the same species within close proximity to where the trees were removed. The location of these new trees can be agreed with the Local Authority Tree Officer.

It is not felt that the new extension will have any further impact on the significant amount of trees surrounding the existing property.

Biodiversity (BD)

BD Policy 5 - The perimeter of the building already benefits from a landscaped boundary wall. This will prevent small animals and rodents from gaining access to the extension build for the duration of the project. Heras fencing panels will be erected to the perimeter of the build zone preventing access to non-authorized personnel and larger animals.

Since the extension is being built predominantly on hard landscaping (existing paving) it is felt that the impact on the surrounding environment, and any habitats in close proximity will be negligible. Before construction starts a visual survey will be undertaken to ensure that no burrowing animals go undetected or unprotected. If any are found then this will be brought to the attention of the Local Authority so a strategy on their relocation can be agreed.

The protection & conservation of Kent Downs will be considered a priority and its distinctive habitats and species will be protected throughout the duration of the build.

It is also worth noting that any materials or substances used during the build that may be considered harmful to the environment (and any species or habitats surrounding it) will be stored, used and disposed of in accordance with manufacturers guidelines ensuring the highest standards of safety and protection at all times.

Driveway, Approach Road & Vehicle Entrance off School Lane

No change is being made to the existing approach road or the services in close proximity to it. Likewise, no change is being proposed to the existing driveway or the garage.

It is felt that the existing concrete hardstanding in front of the barn can accommodate visiting vehicles both during the build and after.

No change is being proposed to the front boundary vehicle entrance, and nor is any change being proposed on School Lane.

Impact of Construction Activities on the Surrounding Environment

The impact of construction led activities to surrounding properties will be helped by the existing location of Oakwood House. As has been stated previously, Oakwood House is over 200m from School Lane and is immediately surrounded by dense woodland. See Picture 1.

The nearest property to Oakwood House is 80m away to the SW. Oakwood House is not visible to this property (or any other property) due to the dense woodland surrounding it.

Despite this, the applicant will ensure that the appointed builder will minimise the impact of their build in the following ways :

1. No cars or vans involved on the build will be parked on School Lane or any other surrounding street.
2. No materials or skips will be placed on or just off School Lane.
3. Dust will be dampened to minimise any nuisance to surrounding properties.
4. Unnecessary noise will be monitored at all times. There will be no site radios or any other music allowed on site.
5. No materials or site vehicles will operate in close proximity to existing trees or natural habitats without prior Local Authority approval. Tree protection zones will be erected to prevent unauthorised access thus preventing damage to tree roots, canopies and species located close to them.
6. No vehicle will use any lawn or soft landscaping areas to store or dispose of materials.
7. All harmful waste will be disposed of quickly and where necessary be kept secured.
8. All personnel and visitors will be inducted upon arrival to ensure the highest standards of care and workmanship are maintained at all times.
9. No noisy works will start before 7.30am or continue after 5.30pm during weekdays. Work will be between 8am and 1pm on Saturdays. No work will take place on Sundays.
10. All waste water will be desilted prior to being discharged.
11. No task lighting will be used before 7.30am or after 5.30am on weekdays.
12. The existing barn will be used for refuelling and for the storage of all fuels and oils. Fuel and oil will be stored within a fuel bund within the barn or in close proximity to it to prevent leaks.

It is proposed that up to 30 men could be working on this property at any time. It is hoped that the local community could benefit from this work by encouraging them to use local facilities i.e. petrol stations, grocery stores, cafes etc.