

Design and access statement

For single dwelling on land adjacent to Norton Timber Ltd

On behalf of Mr and Mrs T Norton

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Introduction

Mr Norton has lived and worked in the East Kent area all his life. On leaving school he started working for his father in the forestry industry supplying timber to the Kent coal pits, working in woodlands and estates all over the South East. Clearing up aftermath of 1987 hurricane kept the then DV & T Norton Forestry busy for years. In 1995 he and his father started Norton Timber sawmills at the Old Wood Yard on the Goodnestone Park Estate. Following the death of Mr Norton's father in 2000, a decision was made to move Norton Timber to its current location in Shepherdswell. Mr and Mrs Norton have run Norton Timber Ltd from this site for the past 20 years. Over that time the company has undergone changes in direction so as to steer its way through the various economic challenges that have come along. Following a restructuring of the business in 2008, where it was decided to move away from the core business of sawmilling, and expand the oak frame building part of the business, which had previously been wound down from its Goodnestone operation. Resurrecting the designing and building of bespoke oak framed buildings has proven to be a sound decision, all be it at the time a painful one. Over the past 12, years Norton Timber has built a reputation for innovative building design which makes use of modern insulation materials around a skeletal oak frame along with environmentally friendly heating options.

The area where the proposed house will sit is at present being used for the storage of timber and various building materials that Norton Timber has accumulated from past builds. The area highlighted in red would be partitioned from the Norton Timber site and cleared of all Norton Timber materials, the intention is to leave a number of large blackberry bushes that have grown up around the site for wildlife to continue to thrive. It is proposed the new house be placed in the center of the plot as shown in the planning application drawings and create a wildflower meadow surrounding the house with large newly planted heavy standard English oak (*Quercus robur*) between 12 to 14 cm circumference at chest height standing around 3.5mtr's tall, being planted as shown on the landscaping plan to create a park land vista around the house, Mown paths would weave through the wild flower meadow which would enable the current wildlife to remain and flourish unaffected by the build.



Location and background

The proposed site sits to the North East of the Shepherdswell Village and forms part of Norton Timber's works, there have been buildings on Norton Timber's site since the 1950's, it is understood it had been used for drying grass seed and grain. In the mid 1990's, the site had become unsuitable for agricultural usage owing to the size of the modern machinery being unable to enter the buildings. Norton Timber purchased the site in 2000 and have been running their business there ever since.

The site sits at the head of a natural open ended bowl with the ground rising as you look towards the south, the proposed location of the house is below the rim of the bowl on the Southern border thus reducing its visibility from the Shepherdswell direction. One of Norton Timber planning condition when they relocated from Goodnestone Park in 2000 was to plant a hedge running down Mill Lane, this has now grown to around three meters in height and completely screens the proposed house location from the Mill Lane. This hedge is a mecca for wildlife and will be maintain as is. There are at present no trees on the site.

There are twelve properties reaching out from this end of the village, this proposal would make thirteen.



This map shows the location of the proposed house in relation to Shepherdswell Village. Also ringed, in red, are the locations of the twelve properties reaching out from the North East which gives weight to the idea that the proposed site would complete a natural arc of properties on this side of the village.

Access

The proposed access to the site would be from Long Lane, with a driveway running alongside Norton Timber's works, then swinging up to the front of the property.

Exiting the site were shown affords an unimpeded sight line either way onto Long Lane, 95 mtr's towards Waldershare and over 100 mtr's towards Shepherdswell.

The proposed single track drive will comprise of 200mm thick subbase of recycled crushed concrete over woven geotextile, once the house construction works have been completed a coating of porous stone covering will be laid over.

Gates will be set back from the road to enable safe parking off the highway on returning home whilst opening the gates. A turning area in front of the house will enable vehicles to turn around and also to position vehicles to access the electric car charge points that will be mounted on the front of the house.



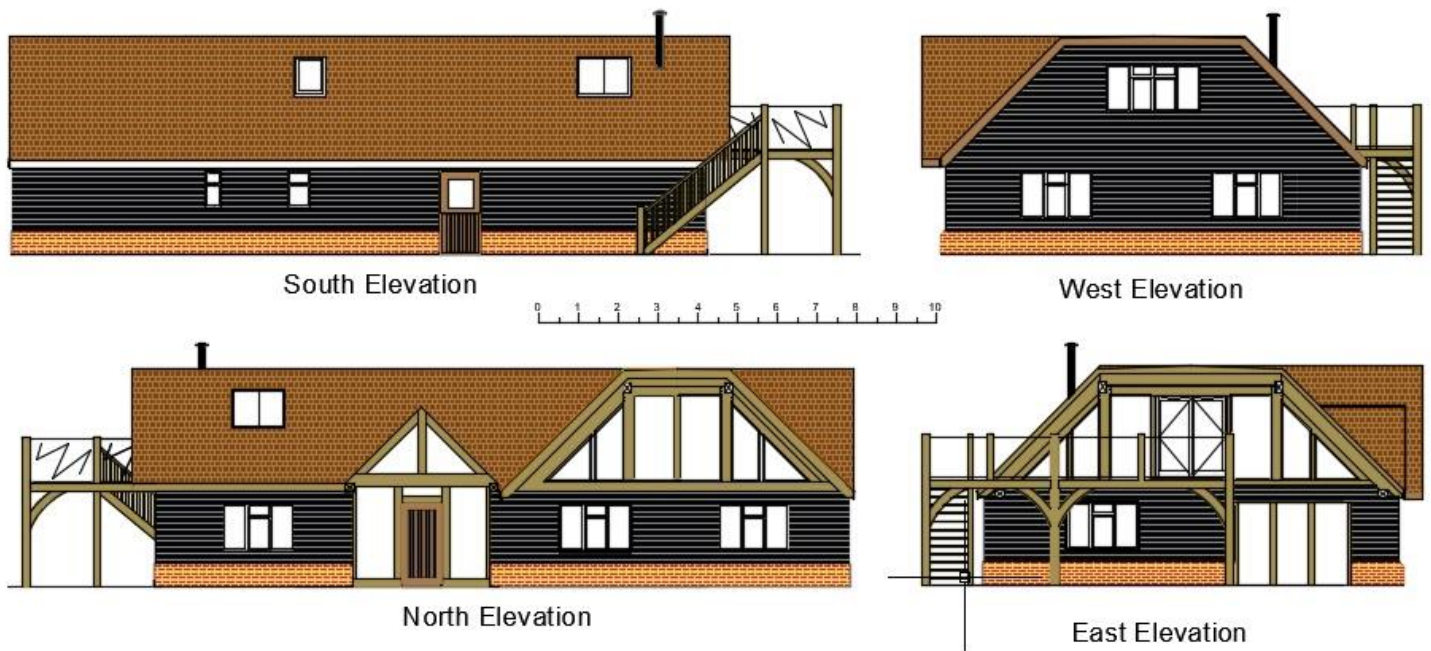
Exit view looking towards Shepherdswell



Exit view looking towards Waldershare Park.

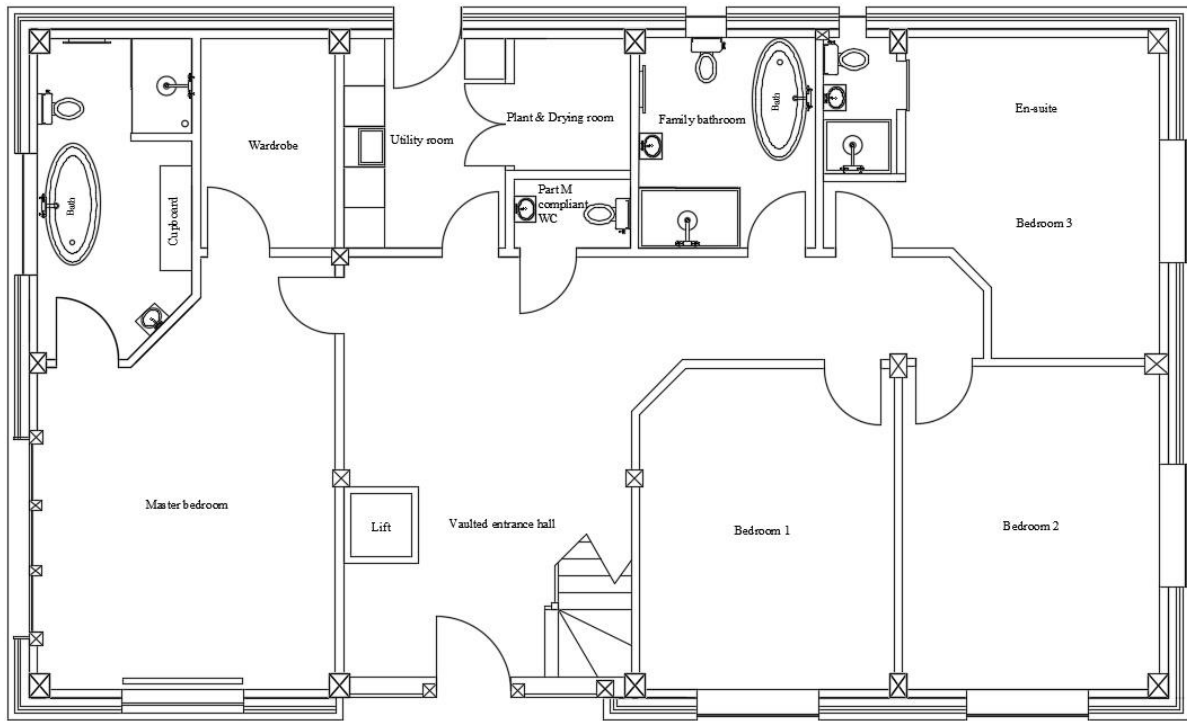
The design

Mr and Mrs Norton are seeking permission to build a Norton Timber designed bespoke oak framed detached house on the aforementioned land. It will also act as a show home for perspective client to view and see what can be achieved. The proposed house is a chalet bungalow design with clipped ridge, by removing the central pitched roof ridge and incorporating flat roof areas it enables a much lower roof line to be obtained over the more traditional fully pitched roof, thus enabling the overall height of the building to be much more compact.

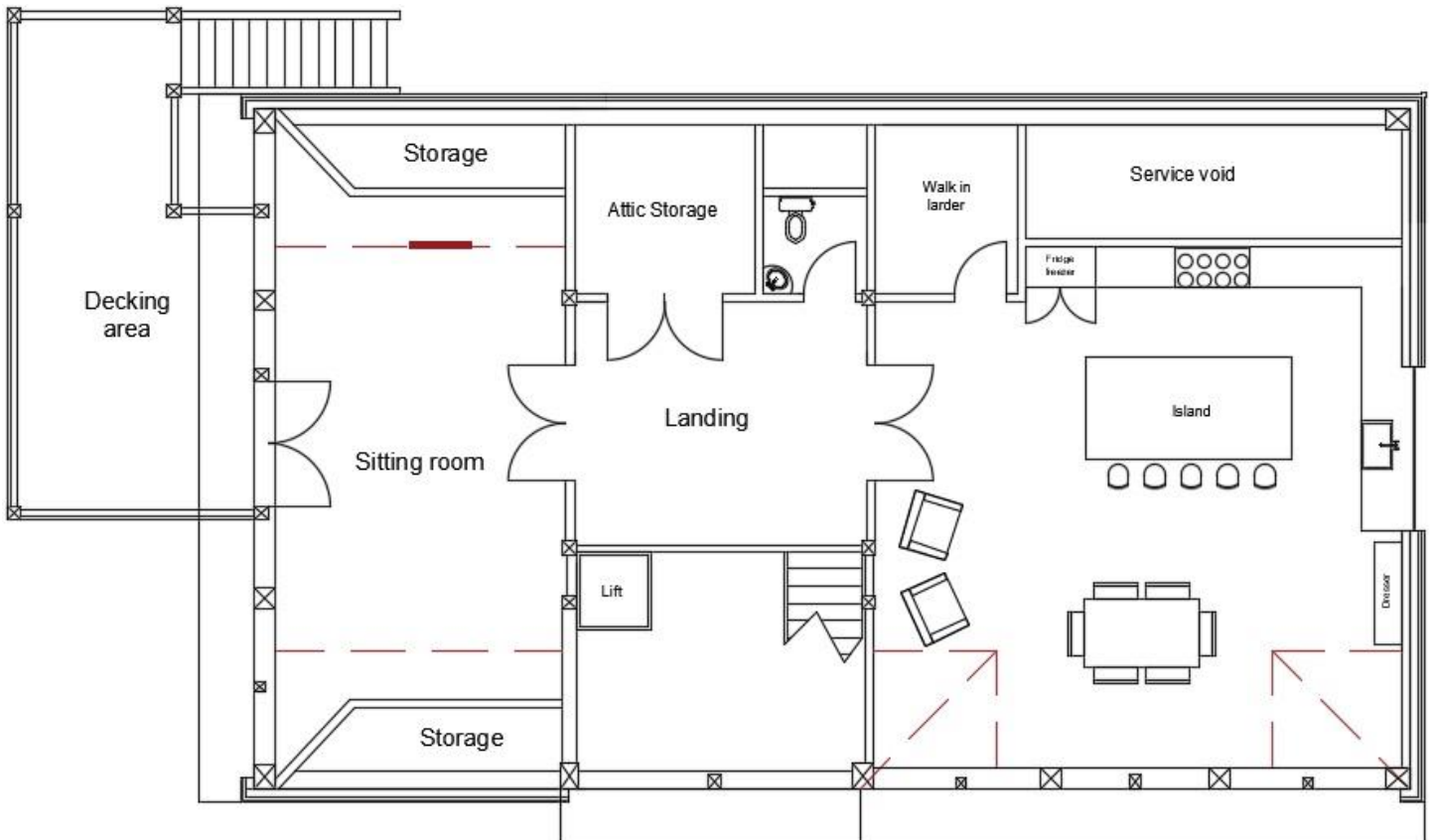


The external elevation would have a 600mm plinth wall and black weather boarding running up to the eaves. Joinery to be painted timber frames with double glazed, low E, Argon fill units. The glazed first floor gables to also have double glazed, low E, Argon fill units direct glazed into the green oak frame. Handmade clay tiles on the roof with single ply rubber membrane over the flat roof areas. Facia and soffits to be kiln dried oak. The raised decking area on the East elevation is positioned so as to catch the sun all day as it arches across the sky.

The internal layout is that of an upside down house with bedrooms, utility room, plantroom, Part M compliant WC and family bathroom. being on the ground floor, with the sitting room and kitchen dining area being on the first floor. This will enable full enjoyment of the views afforded by the elevated position with views over to Waldershare Park where Mr Norton worked for many years alongside his father in the estate woodlands, and across to Pegwell Bay the White Cliffs at Ramsgate.



Ground floor layout.



First floor layout showing decking area.

Relevant Development Plan Policy Core Strategy 2010

The Core Strategy was Adopted in 2010, prior to the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework. The degree of consistency with the Framework depends upon the continued relevance of the policy. CS Policy DM15 seeks to protect the countryside and limit development within it. The Policy itself sets criteria against which development will be assessed, including 'justified by a need to sustain the rural economy or a rural community' and where 'it does not result in the loss of ecological habitat'.

The supporting text to Policy DM15 explains the need to use the countryside prudently and make 'best use of brownfield land and ensuring the countryside is used efficiently' (paragraph 1.50)

CS Policy DM16 addresses landscape character. The supporting text confirms this does not preclude the possibility of development in the right location. The policy gives support to development where 'it can be sited to avoid or reduce the harm' to landscape.

National Planning Policy Framework 2019

The Framework promotes the granting of permission in situations where the policies for determining an application are out of date (defined as including applications for housing where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of housing land) (paragraph 11d). This is the current position in Dover District.

The Government's objective is to significantly boost the supply of new homes and variety of sites is noted as an important factor (paragraph 55). Local planning authorities should take into account the needs of different people in the community, including those people who wish 'to commission or build their own homes' (paragraph 61).

The Self Build and Custom Housing Act 2015 is relevant here, as the dwelling is commissioned by the Applicant who is landowner and future occupier of the dwelling, which will be constructed by persons working for the Applicant. The Applicant has not registered interest on the Councils Self Build Register, as that Register records people who have indicated a need to find land for the construction of their own home, whereas the Applicant owns the land in question already. However, the proposals still meet the requirements of Custom Build housing as defined in the Housing and Planning Act 2016.

Paragraph 68 recognises that small sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement in an area and that at least 10% of allocated sites should be less than 1 hectare. This site would apply.

Paragraph 79 seeks to avoid isolated homes in the countryside. However, the application site is not isolated being located to North East of Shepherdswell Village. More importantly, it sits adjacent to the applicant's business giving an additional security benefit. It is in an area where groups of small numbers of properties are located, some close to one another, others on their own, rather than in one defined close knit arranged settlement.

Conclusion and closing statement.

A great deal of thought has gone into the design of this proposal, by keeping the profile low it will nestle into the site without looking overpowering and out of place, the glazed gables enable a clear line of sight over Norton Timber's yard and workshops. Being granted permission for its construction will give a security presence at Norton Timber, which over the years has seen a number of unwelcome visits, resulting in great expense, and upset. The wish for a business owner to live adjacent to his or her premises is not unusual or unreasonable, and a number of local business owners over the years have sought, and been granted, permission to build their homes next to their premises.

Having been one of the larger businesses in the area over the past two decades, Mr Norton would very much like to live in the village where he has spent a large part of his life and be more involved in the community on a personal level.

Over the twenty years since Mr and Mrs Norton moved their business to Shepherdswell, they have steered the company through a number of challenges, which has resulted in the creation of the highly respected, specialist oak framing company we see today; responsible for some of the highest profile oak frame construction projects in the South East; the most notable being The Old Kent Barn wedding venue situated in Swingfield near Folkestone, which has, more than once, won UK rural wedding venue of the year, this having been designed and built by Norton Timber over the winter of 2010/11. On the other end of the spectrum a highly specialized reconstruction of a Roman Fort guard tower for Park In The Past near Wrexham in 2019.

Having a Norton Timber designed and built oak framed house adjacent to the workshops will enable the company to show prospective clients what can be achieved when combining traditional carpentry skills in timber framing and modern high performance glazing and insulation materials. The granting of this application would create a beautiful home but also an excellent sales tool that would be used to continue building on the company's reputation for innovative design and build for many years to come, helping to cement the company's future in the community.

The landscaping for the proposed development would be light touch, with the aim of creating areas of natural wilderness, along with the planting of heavy standard trees as detailed in the proposed landscaping drawing will create a parkland environment which will enable wildlife to thrive unaffected by the surrounding farmland. A little oasis of nature. To underline the applicant's determination to safeguard the wildlife on the site Mr Sean McMinn of Marsh Environmental has carried out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal on the site; his report is included in the planning application documents. The conclusions of the report will be implemented before and during any future works should the application be successful.

With this design and access statement and the accompanying documents we feel a strong case for this application to be granted has been made and as such respectfully ask that this application be approved.