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**ERECTION OF DWELLING FOLLOWING DEMOLITION OF GARAGE
THE OLD GARAGE, HARTEST, IP29 4DH.**

PLANNING STATEMENT
Incorporating
LOCAL VALIDATION STATEMENT
&
HERITAGE STATEMENT

Ref 2431
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INTRODUCTION

1. This statement has been produced in support of a planning application proposing the erection of a dwelling on the site of The Old Garage at Hartest.
2. The Old Garage is a single-storey structure located at the northern end of the village green. It has not been used as a commercial garage for some time. The last use of the building was in connection with maintaining cars on a hobby basis.
3. The proposal has been the subject of pre-application discussions with the Council's economic development officer who has provided advice on the pre-submission marketing of the premises necessary to comply with the Council's policy.
4. The proposed dwelling has been carefully and sensitively designed to reflect the form of the existing garage in order to reflect local distinctiveness and to respect its surroundings.
5. The application comprises this statement together with the following documents:
 - Planning Application Form and Certificate;
 - Drawings 4391 01A, 02A, 03A and 04;
 - Design and Access Statement;
 - MSDC Design Expectations Form;
 - Phase I Land Contamination Report;
 - Land Contamination Questionnaire;
 - Ecology survey and report; and,
 - Marketing report.
6. The following statement is in three parts. The first part deals with the Council's local validation requirements for planning applications. The second part is a Heritage Statement. The third part is a planning statement which sets out the relevant planning policies and other material considerations.

LOCAL VALIDATION REQUIREMENTS STATEMENT

Access

7. There is an existing vehicular access to the site which will be utilised by the proposed dwelling.

Affordable Housing

8. The scale of the proposed development is below the Government's threshold for affordable housing contributions as set out at paragraph 64 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Archaeological Statement

9. The Historic Environment Records (HER) confirm that there are no records of archaeological remains on the site. Therefore, it is not necessary to carry out any pre-submission investigation.

Biodiversity Survey and Report

10. The application is accompanied by a separate preliminary ecological survey and report which confirms that the application site does not provide habitat for protected species.

Car Parking

11. The layout plan illustrates that two car parking spaces will be provided. This accords with the Suffolk Parking Guidelines.

Contaminated Land

12. The application site is accompanied by a Phase 1 land contamination report, the recommendations of which may be secured by way of planning conditions.

Design and Access Statement (DAS)

13. The application is accompanied by a separate DAS which explains the design philosophy behind the proposed dwelling.

Drainage

14. The proposed dwelling will be connected to the mains sewer. Surface water drainage will discharge to soakaways.

Flood Risk Assessment

15. The Environment Agency flood maps confirm that the application site is situated within Flood Zone 1 (FZ1) which means that it comprises land which is not at risk of flooding from a river or other watercourse and is suitable for all forms of development.

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Introduction

16. This Heritage Assessment has been produced pursuant to paragraphs 189 and 190 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Paragraph 189 states in part that in determining applications, *"local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a development. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential of that impact on the significance."*
17. This Heritage Assessment has been carried out with reference to the following Historic England (HE) guidance:
- Conservation Principles (2008)
 - Good Practice Advice 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking (2015)
 - Good Practice Advice 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017)
 - Advice Note 12: Statements of Heritage Significance (2019)

18. This Assessment has also been produced in accordance with the requirements for Heritage Assessments as set out within the Council's Local Validation Requirements list.
19. In preparing this Assessment, reference has been made to various documents including the National Heritage List for England (NHLE), The Buildings of England (Suffolk) by Nicholas Pevsner (1961), historic Ordnance Survey plans.

Heritage assets and their significance

20. The application building is not a listed building. However, the application site is within the Hartest conservation area (CA).
21. There are listed buildings nearby. Place Farmhouse opposite the application site and Erica Cottage and Brook House to the south are all listed grade II.
22. Annex 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) defines 'Significance (for heritage policy)' as *"The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site's Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance."*
23. The setting of a heritage asset is defined by Annex 2 of the NPPF as *"The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral."*
24. In this case, the list entries for each of the listed buildings nearby are detailed enough to describe the significance of these heritage assets, the list entries are reproduced below.

Place Farmhouse Grade II GV

A C16-C17 timber-framed and plastered, house with a cross wing at the west 2 storeys. A later wing extends to the west at the west end. The windows are casements and there is a gabled porch (C20) on the front. The roof of the main block and cross wing is tiled, with a good central chimney stack with 3 octagonal shafts with elaborately moulded caps and bases. The roof to the west wing is slate.

Erica Cottage (Listed as 'Isbury') Grade II GV

A C18-C19 timber-framed and plastered house. 2 storeys. 2 window range, 3-light casements. There is 1 old leaded casement on the upper storey. Central 4-panel door. Roof thatched, with a central chimney stack.

Brook House (Formerly listed as Cottage and Butchers Shop occupied by Mr W A R Basham) Grade II GV

A timber-framed and plastered house probably of C17 origin but altered and refaced in the C18 or early C19. The north-west end is slightly raised and may originally have been a separate house or an addition. The front is faced in red brick. One storey and attics. Three window range, casements. At the south east end there is a small C19 butchers shop. Roof thatched, with two dormer windows, and a central chimney stack with attached shafts.

25. The Hartest Conservation Area was designated in 1973. In 2013 the Council produced a Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA). A photograph of the existing garage appears within the chapter of the CAA concerning 'Prevailing and Former Usage', where it states "Relics of earlier ages seem to survive in Hartest: the old garage with its petrol pumps at the north end of the green and nearby an old steam driven engine in a paddock." The CAA contains no further reference to the application site, but the view across The Green looking south from beside the application site is identified as an 'Important Vista'.

Effect of the development on the significance of the heritage assets

26. In order to ensure that the development does not impact negatively on the conservation area or nearby listed buildings, the proposed dwelling has been designed to reflect the design and form of the existing garage. This is particularly evident from the proposed south-west elevation of the dwelling which will be constructed with painted corrugated sheeting and with sash windows evenly distributed across the façade. The proposed dwelling has a footprint very similar to the garage and will be constructed in the same position. Consequently, the proposed dwelling will make the same aesthetic contribution to the conservation area as the existing building.
27. Place Farmhouse, opposite the application site, is set back from the road, and trees along its frontage screen the property from the public highway. Consequently, the

proposed dwelling will have no material impact on the setting or significance of the Place Farmhouse.

28. Erica Cottage and Brook House are closer to the application site. However, in terms of scale and appearance, the only difference between the proposed dwelling and the existing garage is the increase in ridge height from 5.1m to 6.4m. However, the proposed dwelling would still be subservient to the adjacent listed buildings.

29. Paragraphs 195 and 196 of the NPPF set out the considerations when determining applications for development affecting heritage assets.

30. Paragraph 195 of the NPPF states.

"Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium terms through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use."*

31. Paragraph 196 states.

"Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use".

32. The existing garage is not a listed building so the proposed development would not lead to substantial harm to or total loss of a designated heritage asset. The proposed development would cause no harm to the significance of Place Farmhouse and would lead to a very low level of less than substantial harm to the setting of the conservation area and Erica Cottage.

33. There would be benefits arising from the development which would outweigh the less than substantial harm. Firstly, the proposal will provide a modest 3 bedroom family home which would help to sustain local services in Hartest. Secondly, the redevelopment of the site as proposed would improve the amenity of adjoining residents. This is because the current commercial use of the building is unrestricted and, if reactivated, could cause noise and disturbance at unsociable hours. Furthermore, the design of the new dwelling avoids the overlooking issue that exists with the existing windows on the rear of the garage which directly overlook the garden of Erica Cottage.

PLANNING STATEMENT

Planning Policy

34. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (As amended) requires planning decisions to be made in accordance with development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
35. In this case the development plan consists of the Babergh Local Plan (2006) and the Babergh Core Strategy (2014).
36. Hartest Parish Council are preparing a Neighbourhood Plan (NP). The NP has recently been the subject of the Reg 14 Pre-submission Consultation which expired on 15 March 2021. The results of the consultation have not yet been published. The NP is a material consideration although at this stage the document has limited weight.
37. The Council are producing a new Joint Local Plan with Mid Suffolk District Council. The document was recently submitted to the Secretary of State for Independent Examination. Until its post examination adoption, the emerging Local Plan is not part of the development plan.
38. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies and objectives and is a material planning consideration.

Babergh Core Strategy and Babergh Local Plan

39. In this case, the most relevant current development plan policies are as follows.

Babergh Core Strategy	CS1 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development; CS2 – Settlement pattern policy; CS3 – Strategy for growth and development; CS11 – Strategy for development for core and hinterland villages; CS15 – Implementing sustainable development in Babergh;
Babergh Local Plan	EM24 – Retention of employment sites; CN01 – Retaining local distinctiveness; CN06 – Listed buildings; and, CN08 – Conservation areas.

40. The proposal accords with the objectives of the Core Strategy policies. The application site is located within the settlement boundary of a Hinterland village. The proposal represents sustainable development for the reasons set out at paragraphs 54, 55 and 56.

41. Policy EM24 of the Local Plan requires applications for redevelopment of employment sites to demonstrate that their retention for appropriate employment uses has been fully explored. The application site has been the subject of an extensive and lengthy marketing campaign, the parameters of which were agreed with the Council's economic development officer prior to its commencement. The marketing was undertaken by Marshall Buck & Casson commercial agents. A copy of their report is included with this application. The garage has been marketed for 23 months. The only interest coming from developers wishing to convert the site to residential. Consequently, in the absence of any commercial demand for the existing garage, the requirements of policy EM24 are met.

42. Clearly, by proposing a new dwelling that replicates the scale and appearance of the existing building on the site, the development retains local distinctiveness in accordance with policy CN01.

43. The requirements of policies CN06 and CN08 have already been addressed in the Heritage Statement.

44. In summary, the proposal accords with the objectives of all relevant current development plan policies.

Hartest Neighbourhood Plan (HNP)

45. The application site is located outside of but immediately adjacent to the village settlement boundary. The settlement boundary in the HNP differs from that of the Babergh Local Plan.

46. Although the application site may be considered as previously developed (brownfield) land, the proposal does not accord with policies HAR1 and HAR2 because these policies seek to prevent housing outside of the settlement boundary unless the housing is affordable or required in connection with agriculture. Policies HAR1 and HAR2 do not accord with the NPPF. They conflict with paragraphs 77 and 78 of the NPPF and obviate the balancing exercise which the NPPF exhorts. It is therefore likely that these policies will change before the HNP becomes part of the development plan.

47. Policy HAR9 is concerned with protecting important views. One of the 'important views' it identifies is the same 'Important vista' identified in the CAA. As the proposed dwelling is of similar form and appearance as the existing garage, the important view will not be altered.

48. Policy HAR12 concerns heritage assets and includes a range of criteria similar to those included within local plan policies CN01, CN06 and CN08.

49. Policy HAR13 refers to 'Buildings and Features of Local Significance'. These are non-listed buildings which are considered to be of importance locally. The Policy does not refer to the Old Garage as being of importance. The two buildings mentioned in the policy are The Institute and Hartest Stone.

50. Policy HAR19 deals with 'Provision and Retention of Community Services and Facilities'. The Old Garage is listed as a 'valued facility'. The policy states that the loss of valued facilities will only be permitted provided that the premises has been marketed for a period of at least 12 months; and, the site is not needed for any social, community or leisure use. As previously stated, the site has already been marketed for a period of 23 months. The site is not needed for any social, community or leisure use as those are already provided by The Institute building.

Joint Babergh Mid Suffolk Local Plan

51. Policy SP03 of the emerging Local Plan designates Hartest as a 'Hinterland village'. The application site is located outside of but immediately adjacent to the settlement boundary as indicated by the Hartest Inset Plan. Policy LP01 makes provision for small-scale development on sites outside of settlement boundaries.
52. Policy LP13 is concerned with 'safeguarding economic opportunities'. It states that proposals which involve the loss of employment sites will be required to demonstrate that there is no demand for the site by way of a 6 month marketing campaign and, demonstrate overriding environmental benefit that outweighs the benefit of the current employment use. As previously stated, the premises has been the subject of a 23 month marketing campaign. There is no current employment use of the site, however the proposed dwelling would provide environmental benefits as it would result in significant improvements to the amenity of the occupants of the neighbouring property and would prevent an unrestricted industrial use of the building recommencing.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

53. The NPPF provides a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 states that there are three objectives to sustainable development, these being the objectives for development to secure economic, social and environmental gains.
54. In this case, the proposal will fulfil the economic, social and environmental objectives of sustainable development. The proposed dwelling will fulfil the economic objective of sustainable development as the future occupants of the dwelling will provide additional trade and income which will help sustain the viability of local services and facilities in Hartest and adjoining villages. Services and facilities in Hartest include public house, butchers, Hartest Institute, primary school and pre-school,
55. The development will also contribute to the social objective of sustainable development by providing a modest family home. An additional dwelling will also help to support the many local community interest groups in the village.
56. The development fulfils the environmental objective of sustainable development. Hartest is served by bus routes 374 and 715. Route 374 provides 4 services per day between Clare and Bury St Edmunds. Route 715 provides a daily service between Sudbury and

Stanstead. The bus stops are 50m from the application site. Consequently, future residents of the building will not be wholly reliant on the use of the private car for access to essential services and facilities.

CONCLUSIONS

- 57. The garage use of the existing building has long ceased and the site does not provide a valued service to the local community.
- 58. The application site has been the subject of an extensive marketing campaign which has illustrated that there is no demand for the building as commercial premises.
- 59. The proposed dwelling has been carefully and sensitively designed. It's form and appearance reflects the architecture of the existing garage building ensuring that important views within the conservation area are preserved and that the setting of the adjacent listed buildings are respected.
- 60. The redevelopment of the site as proposed will improve the amenity of the occupants of adjoining properties by extinguishing an unrestricted industrial use which could cause nuisance given that the building is in such close proximity.

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