



DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Proposal

Erection of 4 no. (2 no. pairs) of two-storey, semi-detached dwellings, associated outbuildings and change of use of land utilising existing (improved) vehicular access.

(Following pre-app response re: DC/21/00984)



POUND HILL - STREET SCENE 1/100 (A1)

Site

**Land north of Pound Hill Cottage, Pound Hill,
Great Bricett, Suffolk, IP7 7DN**

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Thomson

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1) This **design & access statement** has been prepared to assist with the determination of this FULL / detailed planning application and is a requirement of Article 4C of the Town & Country General Development Procedure Order 1995, as amended, together with Section 3 of the DCLG Circular 01/2006.
- 1.2) The site is NOT within a designated Conservation Area however is in relatively close proximity to the setting of listed buildings, an ancient monument and non-designated heritage assets.
- 1.3) The aim of this statement is to demonstrate in detail why it is considered that this application is appropriate and worthy of planning permission, taking fullest account of its siting, design, context, setting and policy constraints.
- 1.4) The proposal is for the erection of 4 no. two-storey, 3 bedroom dwellings (2no. pairs of semi detached) and associated out-buildings and change of use of land, utilising the existing (improved) vehicular access.
- 1.5) *STPP* - It is the applicant's intention to RENT the completed properties out at competitive rents for the longer term (see applicant's personal statement attached herein).

2) SITE PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1) DC/20/04026 - *Decision NLU (14. 01. 2021)*
- 2.2) PRE-APP ADVICE (Re: **DC/21/00984**) - Advice was generally supportive (subject to detailed application proposal).

It concluded: "*Based on the submitted information it appears that there is scope for the construction of 4 dwellings on the site, this is contingent on supplying the right level of detail and that the details are acceptable from a heritage perspective*".

- 2.3) The existing access (serving the grazing / amenity land and existing dwellings to the south) is to be improved to 'DM01' standards including improved visibility in both directions.
- 2.4) The density of the proposal, its architectural approach, scale, pattern, siting, materials, landscaping etc. all seek to enhance and harmonise within the existing street scene / pattern of development and address the matters raised in the pre-app response. It is considered the proposal herein accords well with the broadly linear pattern of development, scale, design and density with considerable ecology and landscape enhancements proposed (with negligible losses) with no harm to the nearby non-designated / designated assets.
- 2.5) All FOUR dwellings are to be accessible, efficient, sustainable and available for *rent for the long term*. In addition they benefit from a number of key features rarely seen on modern 'estate' developments.

3.0 THE SITE & ITS SURROUNDINGS.

- 3.1) The proposal site appears on the east side of Pound Hill, Great Bricett just a few hundred metres from the B1078. Current amenity land / grazing it appears as a part of a larger land parcel located between *Pound Hill Cottage* to the south-east and *The Old Vicarage* to the north-east (*both considered non-designated assets*).
- 3.2) The scale of the site has been selected as it effectively mirrors the land area utilised by the farm buildings directly west of the site (on the opposite side of the road) and retains substantial gaps in the street scene to the south and north.

- 3.3) This retains the character of a loose form to the linear development and ensures no loss of amenity to existing dwellings. The large gaps to the north and south reiterate the rural location and despite the intervention proposed ribbon development does not result.
- 3.4) To the east of the site (rear boundary is a wide tree belt / woodland which appears to have been planted in the late 19C. This is wholly unaffected by the proposal and is considered to provide an important buffer to the site whilst preventing longer distance views from the east of any development on the site.
- 3.5) To the west is an operational farm whilst to the south is Great Bricett Hall, St Mary & St Lawrence's Church and the SAM (See HIA report attached).
- 3.6) To the north is *The Old Vicarage* and beyond that an industrial estate and substantial modern residential development predominantly connected (formerly) with the Wattisham Airfield development..
- 3.7) Further south the settlement is clustered around Bricett Green where it is in-depth, containing period and modern development, *principally residential*.
- 3.8) There are PROW to the north and south but not across the site.
- 3.9) The front boundary (west) of the site is defined by the road (Pound Hill) a 30mph classified tarmac road with verges to each side. A paddock fence runs parallel to the street.
- 3.10) The right hand boundary of the site is defined by metal estate railings with an access onto the highway consisting of a concrete apron and track serving the site and adjacent dwellings.
- 3.11) The rear (east) boundary is fenced with paddock fencing to prevent livestock escaping onto the woods

- 3.12) The village has seen recent development notably DC/21/00447; DC/18/01756 & DC/05447 - all for new market housing on multiple 'minor' sites. All are located close to the proposal site herein.
- 3.13) The site is not within an CA, AVRA, SLA or SSSI. It currently consists of grazing / amenity land and is part of a larger land parcel. It benefits from an existing vehicular access directly from the highway (to be improved) suitable of accommodating such a minor intensification.
- 3.14) There are NO trees within the site or that shall be affected within the developable area.
- 3.15) The plot is broadly rectangular in shape measuring average 50m in depth by 75m in width (including the existing access).
- 3.16) Topographically the site relatively level for planning purposes set slightly above road level and falling slightly to the east. The road then falls away to the south down to the river whilst it is almost level along Pound Hill to the north.
- 3.16) The general plot / amenity sizes of dwellings in the area varies greatly. However the new dwellings are modest and for long term rent thus they have commensurate *private* gardens (50% larger than the suggested minimum garden size) but with the added benefit of wider landscaped *communal* grounds and a shared allotment area to promote well-being and self-sufficiency.
- 3.18) The remaining area of overall site frontage (owned by the applicants) is not affected by this proposal and would be retained as valuable visual amenity / open gaps.

4.0 ACCESS / HIGHWAYS.

- 4.1) The site benefits from an existing vehicular access onto Pound Hill (30mph zone) and this is to be improved to take account of the intensification of use to DM01 standards. Surface water shall be discharged via an appropriate channel drain to adjacent soakaway. The proposed visibility splays are 60m minimum to the south and 90m minimum north (improvement on current vis. splays).
No loss of hedgerow is required and therefore the street-scene **will not** change in this regard. Within the site shall be a permeable shingle private driveway and parking areas which shall serve the existing dwelling (Pound Hill Cottage) and the *four* modest new dwellings.
- 4.2) The proposal site is located a few hundred metres off the B1078 thus is readily located for nearby towns and the A14.
- 4.3) There is a wide grass verge each side of the highway adjacent to the site for pedestrian safety.
- 4.4) Turning is to be provided on site for all proposed dwellings and larger vehicles. In addition to secure garaging (with dedicated Electric Vehicle Charging points) a cycle store is to be provided to each dwelling to promote sustainable transport for short local journeys.
- 4.5) There is also ample visitor provision within the development to ensure no 'on-street' parking or urbanising of the frontage results. All shall be virtually unperceivable from public vantage due to the proposed screening and hedging.
- 4.6) It is considered that the site has a close physical and functional relationship with existing development and connectivity to nearby areas.

The village of Great Bricett has a comparatively good range of local amenities and services. However the larger villages / towns of Needham market, Stowmarket, Ipswich and Bury St Edmunds are relatively close at hand *via the A14*. The village benefits from a regular bus service and is conveniently close to the A14 accessed at a choice of locations. Bus stops are located close to the site

- 4.7) The new dwellings will be two-storey, have ramped approach / level access and a disabled-compatible WC at ground floor level. Also, wider doorways, open-plan spaces wherever possible, accessible switches, sockets and devices etc in accordance with the Building Regulations *Approved Documents*.
- 4.8) Siting of garaging (albeit they ensure secure/ convenient covered parking) have all been positioned to reduce the visual impact of parked cars and associated paraphernalia from public vantage with additional hedge screening to the individual plots.
- 4.9) A dedicated communal bin collection point is proposed (see drawing 21/33/05). Each dwelling has a bin store area shown within its curtilage.
- 4.10) The parking areas are sited well away from adjacent / neighbouring amenity and the substantial additional soft-landscaping would further screen parking areas.
- 4.11) Nearest railway station is *Needham Market* (4 Km)

5.0 THE DESIGN SOLUTION

- 5.1) This proposal is a FULL detailed planning application and accordingly is accompanied by a detailed suite of drawings illustrating the design philosophy and imbedded quality in this unique scheme.

- 5.2) The proposal drawings illustrate how the local vernacular (especially that of the The Old Vicarage and Pound Hill / Hall Cottages) has influenced the design of the dwellings and how the local pattern of development in Great Bricett is to be reinforced not diminished by the proposal. Furthermore it was fundamental that the design did not detract or erode the wider setting and that of the listed and non-designated assets locally.
- 5.3) The applicant's brief in this proposal (as a local landowner) was to create a unique development for long term rental (ideally local people) with a distinctly 'philanthropic' *estate cottage* character. Design is very much biased towards quality for the long term and not short term gain as development so often is.
- 5.4) The scale and form of the semi-detached cottages takes substantial influence from the cottages to the south (Pound Hill Cottage / Hall Cottage) of red brickwork and plain tiled roofscapes. However at 1 1/2 story scale it seeks to be intentionally subservient, this is also true of The Old Vicarage to the north, a much larger C19 property of red brick and slate roofs.
- 5.5) The set-back distance of the cottages to the front elevation from the highway replicates that of the cottages to the south also. Similarly as with the existing cottages the outbuildings are sited to the rear and almost impercievable from public vantage with discreet access.
- 5.6) Materials are very traditional and to be of high quality with red facing brickwork (laid Flemish bond) with white cement mortar, clay double-cambered plain tiles to the cottages with natural slate to the outbuildings over matt-black F/E SW boarding.
- 5.7) The cottages shall be appropriately detailed again influenced by the existing cottages to the south the roof form reflects Pound Hill Cottage as also the stone flat lintels and brick arches, joinery form and plinths, chimneys etc.

- 5.8) The dwellings are therefore of modest scale (all 3 bedrooms and of simple plan form with associated out-buildings to make them 'future proof' and avoid cumulative massing / paraphernalia and ensure minimal impact within the street scene. 'Hipped' roof-scapes of natural slate and clay plain tiles shall again reflect vernacular rural structures and adjacent external finishes and do not seek to dominate or be overtly conspicuous. Ample glazing for natural light shall improve sustainability. Low maintenance also being a key factor in desirability and sustainability for the likely RENTAL market for these dwellings.
- 5.9) The linear form of Pound Hill has been respected and reinforced with plots 1-4 following a broad frontage layout / building line directly opposite the farm business / development. New native hedgerows shall reinforce the rural character of the locality and subtly screen the development. There is ample spacing around the dwellings so that none will overbear on its neighbour or impact on the wider landscape. The wider site is well defined by existing boundaries and has established land uses on all sides.
- 5.10) The dwellings shall use traditional materials (see attached schedule) of natural slate clay, clay plain tiles red brickwork and boarding to reflect local distinctiveness with the scale of roof-scapes designed for minimal impact on surrounding amenity and vistas.
- 5.11) Bespoke detailing shall enrich and enhance the site and wider locality for its own architectural merit albeit not seeking to jar or be overtly conspicuous. Artificial lighting of the buildings or the wider site shall be kept to an absolute minimum. The layout seeks a rational which would enhance and reinforce the traditional vernacular *and* later periods of this part of the village yet with something 'of its time'.
- 5.12) These dwellings will provide 'future-proof' accessible and efficient homes with *home-working* a viable possibility (modest study).

Perfectly sited adjacent to *relevant* recreational and employment opportunities and wholly sustainable transport links in a well-served and popular location.

- 5.13) Scale, span, pitches, heights, detailing and materials shall all seek to enhance the location / area, and setting not jar, dominate or introduce inappropriate forms or massing. The dwellings shall form a most interesting composition and be of a most similar density and pattern to its neighbours whilst proposing a transitional height and density into the village.
- 5.14) Neighbouring amenity shall not be affected and the proposal shall not overbear or appear cramped with at substantial separation / gaps between dwellings. The remaining gaps either side of the proposal respect the 'loose' linear pattern. It shall not appear cramped or contrived. The layouts have been designed to ensure generous spaces for interaction, well being and natural light wherever possible.
- 5.15) Appropriate levels of parking, safe vehicular access and adequate private amenity are all indicated as being wholly achievable (including large vehicle and fire-appliance on-site turning)
- 5.16) The site broadly measures 0.38 hectares for the four dwellings which although comparatively generous is appropriate and consistent with surrounding context / established development (this includes the access/ allotment area and communal spaces around buildings.
- 5.17) The proposed massing, materials, detailing, fenestration and roof-forms specifically address and respect surrounding development and thus ensure the appropriateness of this intervention into the established street-scene. The *rural* character shall therefore be reinforced *not eroded* by the development.

- 5.18) The proposal seeks to enhance the appearance and visual amenity of the area whilst providing modern and sustainable, 'accessible' homes (for RENT), making best use of this site and its sustainable location.

6. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1) **FOUL WATER:** To new shared PPTP on site.
- 6.2) **SURFACE WATER:** To new soakaways and water butts with permeable finish driveway/ access
- 6.3) **ARBORICULTURAL SURVEY:** An independent Arboricultural report is not *attached* to this application as the proposal is not removing any trees or native hedgerow. Rather it proposes substantially *increasing* the soft landscaping at the site. All existing trees (to the copse to the east) shall be protected in accordance with BS5387:2012.
- 6.4) **PROTECTED SPECIES:** Again no specific PS report is attached to this application as the site consist *solely* of short grass regular cut and / or used as grazing. The proposal substantially enhances the current status of the site with the proposed soft landscaping scheme. In addition (See drawing 21/33/05) it proposes bat boxes, sparrow boxes, swift boxes, log piles, hedgehog friendly fencing etc.
- 6.5) **HARD / SOFT LANDSCAPING:** The proposed layout and design / specification ensure protection of existing assets for the long term and enhancement of the locality via the specification of suitable hard and soft landscaping (*See Drawing No. 21/33/05 for detail*).
- 6.6) **LISTED BUILDING / HERITAGE STATEMENT:** See attached HIA / report (Messrs Nic Joubert - HAA).

- 6.7) **ARCHAEOLOGY:** The site has no known former historical uses and the applicant is not aware of any requirement for further archaeological appraisal of the site. Therefore, under the requirements of Para 141 of the NPPF a WSI is not submitted with this application. However given its proximity to heritage assets should the SCC require a WSI then it shall be prepared and submitted accordingly for approval but is not considered to warrant refusal in this instance.
- 6.8) **FLOODING:** The site is *not* at risk of flooding as indicated on the enclosed FRA plans.
- 6.9) **CONTAMINATION:** The proposal is for a sensitive end use and thus a Phase I report is submitted with this proposal. This has '*PASSED*' the site as suitable for the proposed residential use.
- 6.10) **PLANNING STATEMENT / POLICY ISSUES:** This proposal has been designed with due regard to all *relevant* Local & National policies & emerging planning policies. Furthermore, it closely follows the principles of information submitted under pre-app re: **DC/21/00984**.

Principle policy issues are considered to be:

The new JLP does not currently carry sufficient weight. Accordingly relevant policies are MSCS focused review (2012); MSCS (2008) MSDLP (1998) and the NPPF.

Namely: FC01, FC01-1, CS01, CS02, CS05, GP01, H13, H14, H15, H16, H17, T09, T10, HB01, H07, NPPF & NPPG.

The site is *not* remote from services nor isolated from other development and has built development on three sides with a woodland backdrop to the rear / east. It benefits from an existing *safe* vehicular access (to be improved) , does *not* affect a conservation area, nor any existing landscape features, does not flood, forms a logical *loose* infilling of an under-used area of amenity land, is ideally suited for local sustainable transport links and the wider village, close to village amenities/ employment, provides a type of housing

rarely constructed within the district, is for modest, highly sustainable dwellings *for long-term rental*, shall substantially enhance the ecological value of the site, and is most compliant with the three strands of sustainability (economic, social and environmental elements).

‘To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. This *presumption in favour of sustainable development* should be seen as the ‘golden thread’ running through both plan-making and decision taking.’

The proposal is considered appropriate and a most ‘sustainable’ development. *Sustainability* being judged in three key areas:

ECONOMIC, SOCIAL & ENVIRONMENTAL

These may be discussed as follows:

Economic:

The proposal would generate considerable short term local employment being constructed by local developers using local suppliers wherever possible. Beyond the construction phase by way of local gardeners/ tradesmen/ handymen/ deliveries / decorators etc.

All four dwellings have modest study/ hobby rooms to ensure home-working is most viable without detriment on the rest of the household.

Secondary employment such as that at local service providers, businesses, public transport links, key services, etc. would also benefit from new ‘modest’ dwellings in the village.

Social:

The site is not in any way 'isolated' or remote and is broadly part of a larger 'cluster' of agricultural, commercial and residential development. Recent development within a few minutes' walk demonstrate the LPA's recent approach to development in this locality. It is readily linked to the core of the village / Wattisham airfield and has most *daily* requirements within a very distance. It is also linked by sustainable transport links to a wide range of services in the wider locality. This is considered as particularly 'socially sustainable' for a village location. In addition, there is easy / quick access to rail links, major road links and a bus service passing the site in both directions with bus stops within a few minutes' walk.

In addition these dwellings are particular suited at those local people looking for RENTAL property. This type of dwellings i.e. smaller / two- storey / rental has a broad, proven and well-documented need across the District. Accordingly as a result perhaps making available *larger* family homes for local people in the process.

Environmental:

The proposal shall utilise renewable technologies such as Air Source Heat Pumps and Solar / PV (see drawing 21/33/05) to minimise the environmental impact of the site. The dwellings have been designed to maximise the benefit of views, natural light and solar efficiency / heating. Their specification will be environmentally sound from heating controls to lighting to potable water usage; built using local trades-people and using local materials suppliers wherever possible.

The dwellings shall exceed the requirements of the current *building regulations* in terms of their thermal efficiency and each dwelling shall have installed an *electric vehicle charging point to promote a greener future*.

All existing soft-landscape features are to be retained and a comprehensive improvement scheme is proposed to enhance biodiversity (Flora & Fauna) at the site including trees and hedging. Rainwater shall be harvested for garden purposes and waste materials shall be responsibly managed during the construction phase and beyond with well-managed recycling. The ease of access to sustainable transport, Electric Vehicle Charging Points and footpath links to services and amenities has already been mentioned above. *Great Bricett Parish Council have laid out extensive Objectives for improvements short/ medium/ long term around the village. The CIL contribution from these dwellings could help most significantly in this regard.*

6.11) **LIGHTING:** External lighting shall be kept to an absolute minimum to avoid light pollution and impacts on ecology. To be PIR activated external lighting *with timer controls* to avoid light pollution in the countryside and neighbour detriment. 'General' lighting of the site (bollards / columns) is not proposed.

6.12) **AVAILABILITY OF SERVICES:** The site is to be easily served by mains water, gas, electric and BT.

6.13) **COMMUNITY CONSULTATION / LIAISON:**

None has been undertaken to date however it is hoped that the quality of the scheme together with the potential for 4 no. small houses for long-term rent will be considered as an enhancement to the current village housing stock. It is hoped that that the scheme before you shall allay any material concerns as to any adverse potential impact on the locality and neighbouring amenity. However, what is to be reiterated is that the highest levels of quality, workmanship and consideration shall be imbedded in this proposal from the outset.

6.14) **CONSTRUCTION METHOD STATEMENT:**

See attached CMS for approval.

7. CONCLUSION

It is considered therefore that the proposal now before you, when judged upon its merits, will be one of **enhancement** to the site and wider locality. It would represent an asset to the local community in regards to housing stock provision and associated demographic diversity.

It is considered that this proposal embodies all that is recognised in the aims and objectives of the relevant Local and National policies.

The site is *not* isolated, within a location which would enhance and maintain the vitality of the nearby rural community and there would be no significant harm to the character and appearance of the countryside. Therefore there are no adverse impacts which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the public benefits in this instance.

It fully addresses the matters raised within the PRE-APP response (DC/21/00984) we respectfully request therefore that your Authority be minded to approve this proposal.