

# Aubrey Technical Services

## Architectural Design Consultants

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### DESIGN and ACCESS STATEMENT to SUPPORT PLANNING APPLICATION May 2021

#### **Demolition of garage/hobby room building and erection of a pair of two bedroom semi-detached dwellings rear of:**

#### **1 - 9 South Hill Road Hemel Hempstead Herts HP1 1JB**

**1 South Hill Road** is a two bedroom detached chalet bungalow with a semi basement workshop built on the western edge of a large corner plot in the late 1950's. A detached double garage accessed from Cotterells Hill, with a hobby/guest bedroom above was built on the lower eastern side of the plot in the mid 1970's and the garden between levelled. The adjacent property, No. 7 South Hill Road, was acquired by the family and part of its garden and the rear of No. 9 were integrated into the garden of No.1. The property was built as a self build project for a young family and has been in the same family ever since. It has undergone little change in the past 50 years.



Google aerial photograph with No.1 on the corner and the two storey garage/guest bedroom/hobby room building off Cotterells Hill just to the left of centre

**Proposal:** To remove the two storey garage/hobby room building and erect a pair of two bedroom semi-detached dwellings of generally similar proportions to the adjacent properties, 1a and 1b Cotterells Hill, with stepped ground levels in keeping with the natural gradient of the hill.

The proposal will incorporate part of the rear gardens of No.1 and No.7 with new retaining walls as required to support the remaining higher-level gardens.

It is proposed to widen the existing double width crossover and drive to provide a total of three parking spaces between the new houses.



Photograph of detached garage and hobby room to be demolished to make way for the proposed dwellings

### **Design Objectives:**

- To make the best use of the available residential land.
- To provide a pair of desirable two-bedroom houses with off street parking and private rear garden.
- To maintain the quality of the original house and street scene with adequate amenity.
- To improve vehicle parking for No 1 by providing parking space in South Hill Road.

### **How the Design Objectives have been achieved for the proposed semi-detached houses:**

- Access to the proposed (1C and 1D Cotterells Hill) is by the existing vehicular and pedestrian access and crossover which is to be widened as shown.
- A total of three off street parking spaces are proposed for the two new dwellings.
- Permit parking is available locally.
- Private rear garden access is provided for both proposed houses.
- Recycling and bin storage areas are provided for each proposed house.
- A cycle shed is provided for each proposed house.

#### **Amenity:**

- An average 9.5m deep south facing private rear garden is provided for each of the proposed houses, 1c and 1d, with approximately 57 and 48 sq.metres area respectively, more than adequate for modern two bedroom properties.

#### **Materials:**

- Stock brickwork to blend with the surrounding properties.
- Grey interlocking concrete slates or plain tiles to be agreed.
- White uPVC windows
- Permeable pavers or resin bonded gravel drives

#### **Access:**

- Vehicular and pedestrian access is by alterations to the existing crossover.
- Level access to the front doors of both proposed houses, 1c and 1d, is to Approved Document Part M.
- Front doors to have low threshold to Approved Document M.
- Front and all ground floor doors to have a clear opening width of 775mm. as required by Approved Document M.
- Ground floor WCs to Approved Document M.
- The town centre with its shops and bus routes is approximately 300m walking distance.

#### **Water Conservation, Energy Efficiency and Conservation:**

- All wc's to be fitted with dual flush cisterns to conserve water.
- Parking areas to be in permeable pavers or resin bonded gravel to replenish water table and avoid run off.
- 'Fabric first approach' with insulation to meet or exceed current building regulations.
- Electric heating including under floor and smart controls.
- Electric vehicle charging points provided for each proposed house.

### **Landscaping/Biodiversity:**

- Some overgrown hedging and trees are to be removed with others cut back to allow for the widened access and avoid conflict with the highway footpath.
- Much of the mature hedging in the garden of 1 South Hill Road to be retained.
- Much of the currently overgrown area rear of the existing potting shed is to be laid to lawns.
- New planting beds are incorporated in the retaining wall of proposed No. 1d to soften the effect of the wall at the change of levels.
- At least four new trees (species to be agreed) are proposed two in each for the back gardens of Nos 1c and 1d.

### **How the Design Objectives have been achieved for the host property - 1 South Hill Road:**

- Access to the private rear garden will be provided by new steps adjacent to the lower-level back door.
- The existing location for the recycling and bins is retained but privacy improved by the proposed fence and gate to Cotterells Hill.
- The property benefits from the Parking Permit Scheme with spaces available locally.
- In addition, an off-street parking space is proposed in the front garden in permeable materials and with a slight reduction in the height of adjacent walls to provide the pedestrian visibility sight lines.
- The reduced rear garden will still average over 10m in depth and 12m in width providing over 120 square metre of private rear garden.
- The nearest flank wall of the proposed dwellings is over 12m from No.1 at its closest point and due to the difference in ground levels will appear like a single storey building rather than two storey, so will not appear overly dominant from No.1
- Due to the orientation the proposal will not cause shadowing of the garden other than early morning at some times of year.
- Cycle storage is available in the basement workshop accessed via the new side gate and lower ground floor back door.



Photograph showing rear of detached garage/potting shed with first floor guest bedroom/hobby room over, to be demolished to make way for the proposed dwellings. No.1b Cotterells Hill to the RH side.

### **Conclusion:**

We believe our clients proposal provides two attractive semi-detached houses without causing any significant loss of amenity to the existing or adjacent dwellings.

We believe the current proposal represents 'good design' as it achieves the following:

1. Maintains and enhances the good functional layout of No 1 South Hill Road by providing easy back garden access, bin storage and an off street parking space.
2. Allows the development of a pair of modest family homes in an established sustainable residential area.
3. Provides rear garden access and off street parking for both proposed houses.
4. Provides usable private rear gardens and access for both proposed properties.
5. The proportions, elevations and materials are Sympathetic to the traditional style of the adjacent dwellings and Cotterells Hill generally.

In summary we feel our client's proposals will provide two fine new small homes, sympathetically designed, to complement their setting in a sustainable area.