

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

ERECTION OF A SINGLE-STOREY DWELLING

AT

**LAND AT HIGHLANDS,
CHAPEL WOOD ROAD,
NEW ASH GREEN,
KENT
DA3 8HA**

FOR

MRS YOUNG

Job No. SE-1135

July 2021

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This statement supports the full planning application for the erection of a single-storey dwelling, at land at Highlands, Chapel Wood Road, New Ash Green, Kent.

This statement outlines the design proposal for the site and demonstrates how Swann Edwards Architecture Limited has addressed important guidelines from the Local Authority and Government design criteria.

The impacts of the proposed development on the surrounding area and the contribution it will make to New Ash Green have also been considered. New Ash Green already has a well-established community with a range of facilities and services within short distance to the proposed development. In addition, the village benefits from being a short driving distance from Gravesend and Sevenoaks.

2.0 CONTEXT

2.1 SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is located in a built-up residential area within the Green Belt and is situated to the rear of Highlands and to the East of Woodview on Chapel Wood Road.

The site itself has timber fence boundaries to the North, East and West and an exposed block wall to the South abutting the public highway. The site is entered via the existing vehicular access to the South of the site. To the West boundary of the site there is a hedgerow and a range of existing single storey buildings.

To the South of Chapel Wood Road exists a relatively dense housing estate development with a landscape belt between the road and these properties and to the North the development is of a looser grain, however, the built-up rhythm is still prevalent and can be read as part of the street scene. This rhythm consists of dwelling, gap, dwelling, gap etc with the dwellings generally located towards the side boundaries of the properties.

In addition, the property frontages along this side of the road, except for the application site, consist of soft landscaping to one degree or another, either hedgerow or trees.



Figure 1: Aerial View

2.2 PLANNING HISTORY

Planning Applications

19/01371/FUL – Erection of a single-storey dwelling – Refused, Appeal Dismissed;

SE/13/00590/OUT – Proposed bungalow – Refused, Appeal Dismissed;

SE/98/1961 – Conversion of garage to annex – Approved;

SE/92/1251 – Mobile home for use as annex – Refused;

SE/89/1708 – Single storey extension and garage – Approved;

SE/88/0625 – Pair of garage linked bungalows – Appeal Dismissed.

Background

Planning permission was refused for a 2-bed, single-storey dwelling on 03 December 2019 under reference 19/01371/FUL. The application was refused for the following reason:

- 1. The land lies within the Green Belt where strict policies of restraint apply. The proposal would be inappropriate development to the Green Belt, harmful to the maintenance of the character of the Green Belt and its openness. This conflicts with the National Planning Policy Framework.*

The application was subsequently appealed under reference APP/G2245/W/20/3252295 and was dismissed on 30 October 2020.

The Inspector, in their consideration of APP/G2245/W/20/3252295, noted that the site was formerly part of the garden of the neighbouring property known as Highlands, but it is now fenced off from that garden and has its own access from Chapel Wood Road. They further acknowledge that the site falls within the definition of previously developed land given within the glossary to the NPPF.

The main reasons for dismissing the appeal centred around the impact on the Green Belt. The Inspector acknowledged that the site falls within the definition of previously developed land within the NPPF. He noted that there are existing sheds on site and that the footprint of the existing sheds 84m² with a height of 3m. This would be compared to the footprint of the proposed building would be 100m² with a height of 6m. It was considered that the sizes proposed would constitute a significant increase in the scale of the built form on site and that the proposal would be seen from

the footway which runs along the housing area. As such the site would take on a more developed appearance than it currently does which would detract from the current sense of openness and therefore would have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing buildings do. It was considered that this harm would not be outweighed by the Council's lack of five year supply of housing sites. It was therefore considered that the proposal did not comply with paragraph 145 (g) of the NPPF in that it did not form an exception to allowing development in the Green Belt as the redevelopment of this brownfield site would have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development.

It can therefore reasonably be concluded that the dwelling was not refused in principle, but only because it was larger than the existing buildings on site which would cause visual harm to the Green Belt by reasons of the impact on the openness of the area.

2.3 PROPOSAL

Overcoming the reason for refusal

It was noted in the appeal decision that the existing sheds on site would be demolished and replaced with a bungalow. The bungalow would be positioned to the east of the site whereas the sheds are located in the north western corner. It was further noted that the footprint of the existing sheds on site equates to 84m² and that they had a total height of 3m. The reasons for dismissing the appeal were due to the footprint and height of the bungalow being greater than the existing sheds which would make it more readily visible from the public realm. This would cause harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

In view of the Inspectors comments on 19/01371/FUL the scheme has been amended from the previous approval. The proposal will now be positioned on the footprint of the existing sheds. It will have a footprint of 83.6m², which is less than that of the sheds. The bungalow will have a flat roof which will have a total height of 3m. This is directly comparable with the existing sheds. Access to the site will be via the existing access point with no changes to the existing boundary treatments.

Noting the above, the proposal will be in the exact location of the existing structures on site, it will have a slightly smaller footprint and will the same height as the existing buildings. None of the existing screening, formed by the boundary treatments, will be altered as part of the development and the access will remain the same. As such it can be reasonably concluded that the proposal will have no additional visual impact on the Green Belt than the current situation on site. Therefore no impact or harm will be caused to the openness of the Green Belt which was the reason for dismissal in appeal decision APP/G2245/W/20/3252295.

Principle

Paragraph 143 of the NPPF states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. The importance of the protection of the Green Belt is reiterated in Policy LO1 of the Core Strategy. Paragraph 145 of the NPPF states that Local Planning Authorities should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. However it lists a series of exceptions where the construction of new buildings are acceptable. The wording of this paragraph is such that only one of the listed exceptions need to be met in order for development to be deemed appropriate. Applicable to this application is paragraph 145 (g) which is as follows:

145. A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:

- *g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would:*
- *- not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development;*
- or*
- *Not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority.*

The Inspector, in his consideration of the proposal in appeal APP/G2245/W/20/3252295, acknowledged that the site is previously developed land. The proposal comprises of the erection of a dwelling involving the demolition of the existing buildings on site. It therefore constitutes the redevelopment of previously developed land where paragraph 145 (g) of the NPPF applies. The proposal would be for a new dwelling which has a smaller footprint than the existing buildings on site and is of the same height. There are no proposed alterations to the boundary treatments on site or the access arrangement. As such, the proposal will be no more visible than the existing buildings on site and therefore will have no greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development. Therefore the proposal meets an exception to the restriction of development in the Green Belt as set out in paragraph 145 (g) of the NPPF.

The Inspector did not consider that a new dwelling in this location would be unacceptable only that the proposed building would cause harm to the openness of the Green Belt and would therefore be inappropriate. With there being no objection in the appeal history on site to the erection of a dwelling in principle in this location and that the amendments to the scheme now render it compliant with Green Belt policy as set out in the NPPF, it is submitted that the principle of the development is acceptable.

3.0 DESIGN

3.1 USE & AMOUNT

The existing use of the site is C3 garden land and is previously developed land as is acknowledged in the recent appeal decision.

The existing buildings on the site occupy an area of around 84m² and 3m high, comprising of flat and pitched roof buildings.

The proposed building has a footprint of 83.6m² and is single-storey with a flat roof of 3m high.

The application Site has an area of 593m².

The size, layout and accommodation are driven by the desire to provide good quality, modern accommodation for the occupants and users of the building.

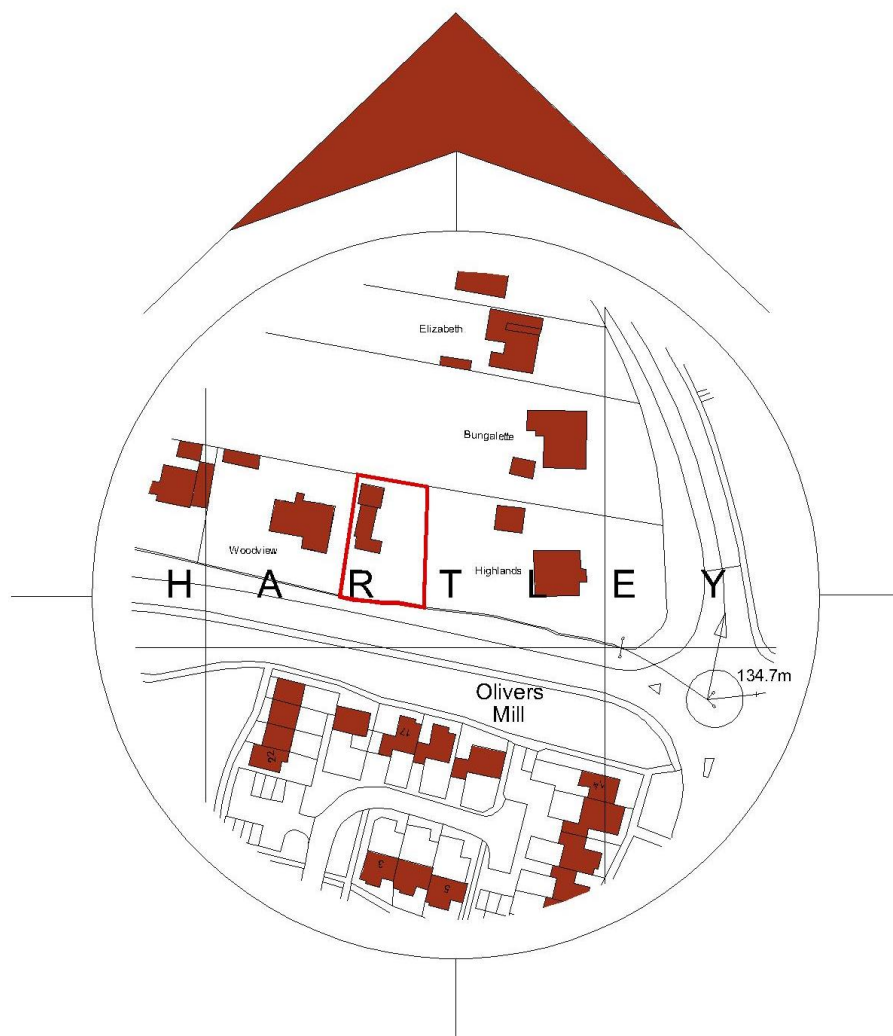


Figure 1: Location Plan

3.2 LAYOUT

The proposed site layout has been informed by the existing situation on site. Noting the Inspectors comments about the previous scheme resulting in the loss of the openess of the Green Belt, the revised scheme now includes the dwelling positioned on the footprint of the existing buildings on site. The footprint and the height of the proposed dwelling will be the same as the existing buildings on site and there will be no alterations to the access. As a result the layout of the site will be largely the same, ie the building will be positioned in the north western corner of the site, the access, parking and turning to the south and the remainder of the land laid to grass to serve as outdoor residential amenity space.



Figure 2: Site Plan

3.3 SCALE

The proposed scale of the building has been informed by the existing buildings that are present on-site. The size and the footprint of the proposal is directly comparable with the existing buildings on site. As such the scale of the dwelling is appropriate in its context.

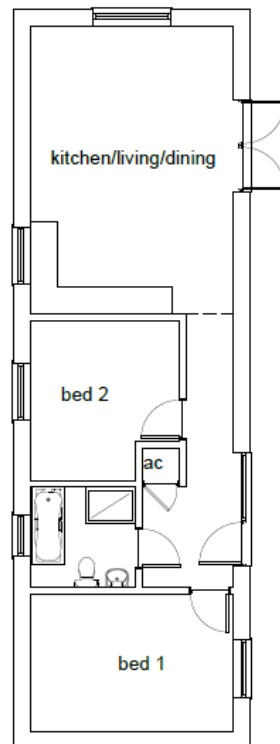


Figure 3: Floor Plan

3.4 LANDSCAPE

The surrounding landscape will remain unaffected by the proposal and the existing boundary treatments will be retained with no proposed amendments. Noting that the scale of the proposal will not change from the existing buildings on site, there will be no increased visual impact resulting from the development on the street scene.

3.5 APPEARANCE

As noted previously the intention is that the dwelling will follow the pattern of development in the area, by mimicking the scale and position of the existing buildings on site. The proposed dwelling is simple in form and reflects the simplicity of the outbuildings it will replace, both in terms of its proportions and overall character.

The finish of external walls and roof are currently unknown at this stage however they are likely to be timber cladding to reflect the existing buildings on site so to reduce the visual impact of the proposal.

3.6 FLOOD RISK

Section 14 of the NPPF requires a sequential approach by directing new development to areas at lowest risk of flooding in the first instance before land at higher risk of flooding is considered.

The application site is located within Flood Zone 1 of the Environment Agency's Flood Maps for Planning and is therefore in a sequentially preferable location, complying with Section 14 of the NPPF.

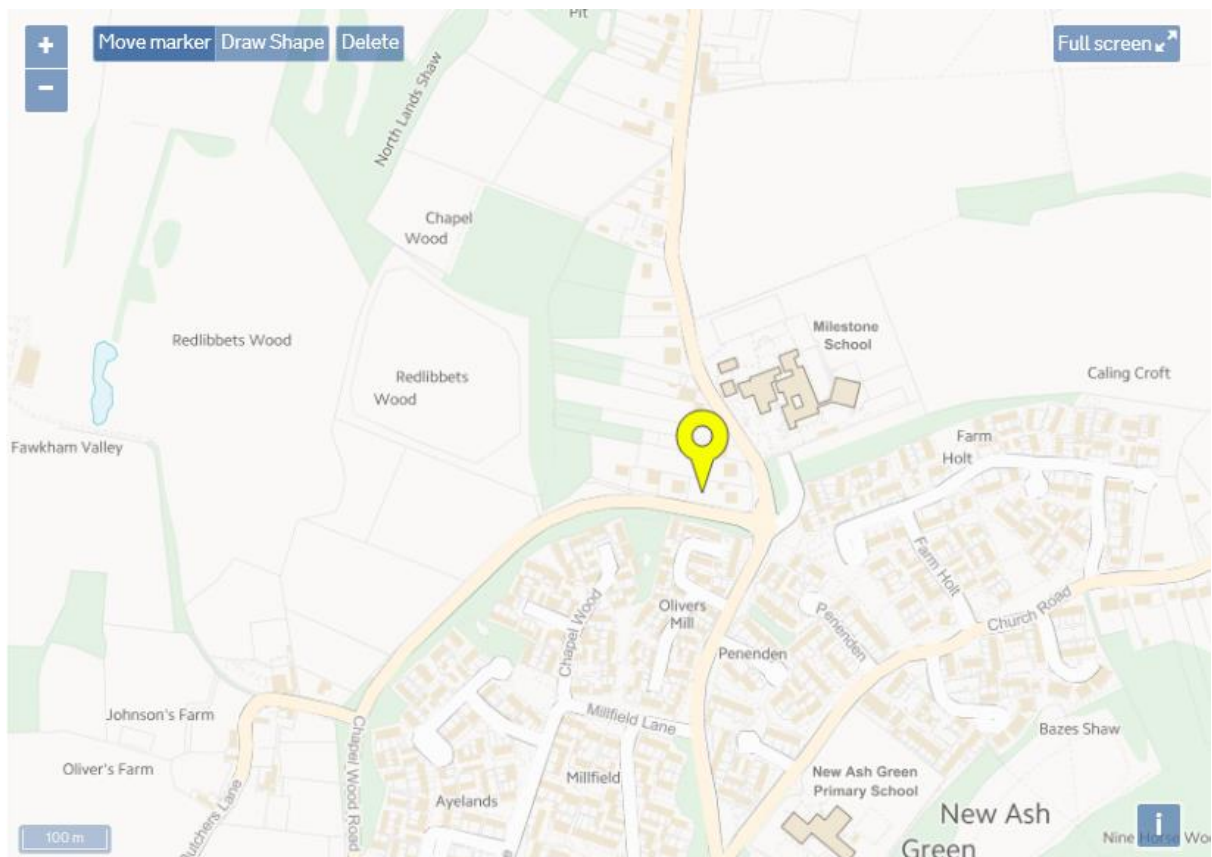


Figure 5: Environment Agency Flood Map

3.7 SECURITY

Security lighting is to be provided to the dwelling which will be dusk to dawn sensor-controlled intruder lighting in line with the Secured by design New Homes 2016 guidance. Consideration is also to be given to fitting an intruder alarm to the new dwelling.

3.8 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATION

The water usage of the dwelling will be in line with Part G of the building regulations. An area is to be provided in the rear garden for the bins required for recycling by the local authority for their roadside collections.

4.0 ACCESS

4.1 SITE ACCESS

The existing site access is to be utilised to serve the new dwelling, this has adequate visibility in both directions and on-site parking and turning facilities will be provided as part of the development.

4.2 INCLUSIVE ACCESS

The topography of the site is generally level and will comply with Part 'M' of the Building Regulations.

A large front door with a level access threshold will allow access to the dwelling whilst all doors, including an outward opening door to the w.c, will allow access throughout the ground floor of the dwellings. There will be no changes in floor level on the ground floor allowing easy wheelchair access throughout. Disabled people will not be segregated from any activity which may occur.

Level access is also to be provided to the rear garden. This allows all to enjoy the external space of the proposal.