



Town & Country Planning Ltd

3 Greenhill Road

Otford

Kent

TN14 5RR

Demolition of existing dwelling, erection of 2 detached, 5 bed dwellings with with associated outbuildings, access and landscaping (Phased Development)

Planning Statement

October 2021

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1. INTRODUCTION

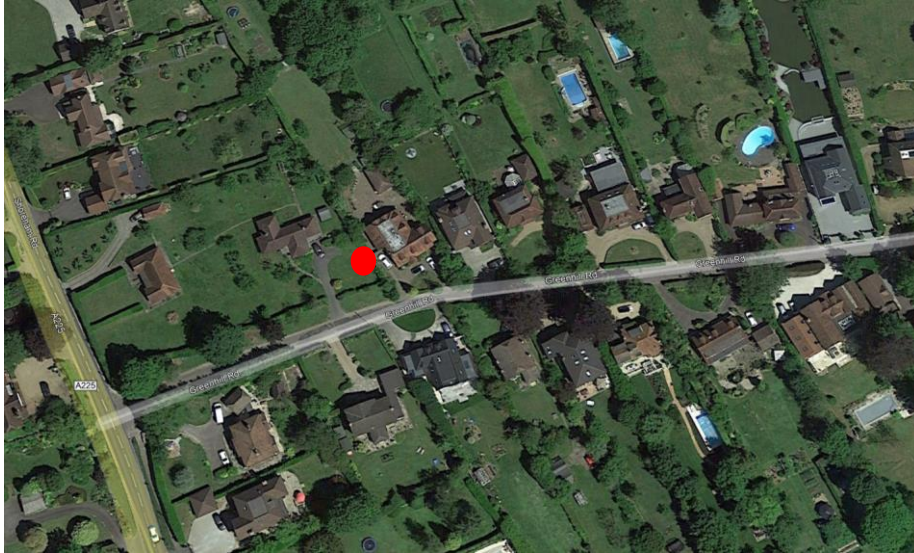
1.1. We have been appointed by Sunbirth (Oxford) Ltd to prepare this planning application for the demolition of the existing dwelling and the erection of 2 x 5 bed detached dwellings with associated outbuildings, access and landscaping.

1.2. This statement should be read in conjunction with the following supporting documentation;

- 21013-E100- Site Location Plan
 - 21013- 200A- Existing Site Layout
 - 21013- P200C- Proposed Site Layout
 - 21013- P201A- Proposed Roof Plan
 - 21013- P301A- Plot 1 Layouts
 - 21013- P302C- Plot 2 Layouts
 - 21013- P400B- Proposed Outbuilding
 - 21013- P500A- Proposed Refuse, Cycle Store and Gate Details
 - 21013- P800- Proposed Street Elevation
 - Design and Access Statement by Studio Hudson
 - Preliminary Ecology survey by Brindle Green
 - Bat Emergence Survey by Brindle Green
 - Arboricultural Impact Assessment by Brindle Green
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2. SITE APPRAISAL

2.1. The site currently comprises the existing dwelling of No.3 Greenhill Road, this is a single storey property with vehicular access. The property is currently set back behind a front boundary hedge, with wrap around gardens. The property lies within the urban confines of Otford, but within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.



Site location

2.2. To the east lie neighbouring dwellings, No.5 and No.7a (Approved pursuant to SE/15/01372/FUL), opposite the site, No.2 and No.4



No.4 and No.7a Greenhill Road

2.3. No.5 has recently received consent for a single storey rear and two storey side extension, including the insertion of side dormer windows (SE/20/01863/HOUSE).

2.4. There have been a number of recent re-developments of plots along Greenhill Road and Shoreham Road. These are generally large, detached dwellings, with wide open frontages and variety in the use of materials. The presence of brick, render, both clay and slate tiles and modern window apertures are commonplace.

Recent housing re-development within Greenhill Road/Shoreham Road



3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

3.1. Nothing relating to this proposal.

4. POLICY FRAMEWORK

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF- July 2021)

4.1. The National Planning Policy Framework ("The Framework") sets out the Government's approach to planning with the presumption in favour of sustainable development lying at the heart of the advice contained therein.

4.2. Paragraph 7 sets out the three dimensions to sustainable development which should be examined as if they are mutually dependent. These are;

- i) to build a "strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation";
- ii) "supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment";
- iii) "Contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment".

4.3. Widening the choice of homes is one of the objectives of pursuing sustainable development, as set out in paragraph 9.

4.4. The framework goes on to establish 12 core principles that underpin the planning system which includes; proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes that the country needs, promoting the vitality of urban areas and protecting the Green Belt around them; the need to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for existing and future occupants and to actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable.

4.5. Paragraph 11 sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development;

For decision-taking this means:

- approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
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- where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date , granting permission unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole

Housing

4.6. Paragraph 69 sets out to support the Governments objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed. This includes small and medium sized sites which can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area. To promote the development of a good mix of sites, local planning authorities should;

- Support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions-giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes;
- Work with developers to encourage the sub-division of large sites where this could help speed up the delivery of homes.
- Planning decision should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes. Planning decisions should promote and support the development of under- utilised land and buildings especially where available sites could be used more effectively.

4.7. Paragraph 60 of the NPPF requires local planning authorities to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed, needs for market and affordable housing, whilst footnote 8 to paragraph 11 is then clear that policies for the supply of housing cannot be considered up to date if the Local Planning Authority cannot show a robust supply of housing land. Paragraph 74 states that local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, or against their local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old. As the Council's current strategic housing policies were adopted in 2011 the later provision applies.

Housing Delivery Test

4.8. Paragraph 76 of the NPPF sets out that to maintain the supply of housing, local planning authorities should monitor progress in building out sites which have permission. Where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that delivery has fallen below 95% of the local authorities housing requirement over the previous three years, the authority should prepare an action plan to assess the cause of under-delivery and identify actions to increase delivery in future years.

Requiring Good Design

4.9. The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people. It is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes.

4.10. Planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles. It is, however, proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.

4.11. Although visual appearance and the architecture of individual buildings are very important factors, securing high quality and inclusive design goes beyond aesthetic considerations. Therefore, planning policies and decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.

4.12. Sevenoaks Core Strategy 2011

- L01- Distribution of Development
 - L07- Development in Rural Settlements
 - SP1- Design of New Development and Conservation
 - SP2- Sustainable Development
 - SP7- Density of Housing Development
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Allocations and Development Management Policies 2015

- EN1- Design Principles
- EN2- Amenity Protection
- EN5- Landscape
- T2- Vehicle Parking

Supplementary Planning Documents

- Residential Extensions (advisory)
 - Otford Village Design Statement
 - Design principles 2a-2e
 - Housing developments 4a-4j
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5. PROPOSAL

- 5.1. Full details of the proposal are provided within the plans that form part of the application.
- 5.2. The proposed re-development will include two detached, two storey properties, both taking vehicular access from Greenhill Road. The proposal includes a phased plot development approach.
- 5.3. The properties are of traditional pitched roof form, but with differentiated elevational features so that they do not read as a pair of dwellings. Plot 1 will be finished in a mixed multistock brickwork, clay tiled roof with a contrasting first floor rendered gabled bay and attached single storey garage.
- 5.4. Plot 2 is a slightly larger property, with a 1.5 storey side garage arrangement and detached garden building. This property will be finished in a traditional yellow, buff brick, double height rendered front gable and slate roof tiles. This property has a more contemporary approach to the proposed glazing, in a modern crittal style.
- 5.5. Both properties will be provided with private off street parking area, screened through the retention of the majority of the existing front boundary hedge. The plots will be separated by hedging, interspersed with specimen trees.
- 5.6. Both properties will benefit from dedicated refuse and cycle stores and low-level sliding entrance gates.



Illustrative street elevation

6. REASONING

6.1. The principle points for consideration are:

- Principle of housing development
- Design and impact on the character of the area
- Landscaping and Arboricultural Impacts
- Biodiversity
- Impact on the amenity of neighbours
- Parking and highway safety
- Housing Need

Principle of housing development

6.2. Core Strategy policy LO1 confirms development will be focused within the built confines of existing settlements. Otford is identified as a settlement for limited development in accordance with policy LO7.

6.3. The preamble to LO7 clarifies that Otford is classified as a Local Service Centre where some modest development would be acceptable subject to local environmental considerations (paragraph 4.5.3)

6.4. Policy SP7 of the Core Strategy states that all new housing will be developed at a density that is consistent with achieving good design and does not compromise the distinctive character of the area in which it is situated.

6.5. Supplementary guidance within the Otford Village Design Statement (OVDS) encourages proposals which are suitable for the available plot size and comparable with the established surrounding properties (policy 4f).

6.6. The proposed development would correspond with the general plot sizes within the surrounding area. Plot widths within the immediate vicinity range from approximately 15-25m across. The proposed scheme would provide two units with frontage widths of 20m and 30m respectively, ensuring the two units do not appear cramped out of keeping with the prevailing pattern and density of development.

6.7. The development lies within the village confines of Otford where there should be no objection to the principle of development and where the most efficient use of land available for housing is encouraged by the NPPF.

Design and impact on the character of the area

6.8. Core Strategy Policy SP1 and ADMP policy EN1 require all new development to be designed to a high quality and respond to the distinctive local character in which it is situated.

6.9. ADMP Policy EN1 provides further detail which should guide the design of new development proposals:

- Development should respond to the scale, height, materials and site coverage of the locality.
- The layout of developments should respect the topography and character of the site incorporating natural features such as hedgerows and trees.
- The design of new buildings and the layout of spaces should be permeable and provide connectivity with neighbouring areas.

6.10. The Otford Village Design Statement provides a useful character appraisal document to highlight the distinctive vernacular character of the village. The OVDS seeks for development proposals to

- Respect local building design, materials, vernacular style and general colouration maintains the natural evolution and character of the village.
- Proposed housing designs should always be in harmony with the character of those in the local proximity.
- Most houses within the village have individual designs or features. To reflect this, all proposed developments should comprise only dwellings which are individually designed or at least have distinguishing individual features, rather than pattern-book or mirror designs.
- The scale of any proposed dwelling must be comparable to the majority of existing homes in the vicinity.

6.11. The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 states that the Local Planning Authority should conserve and enhance Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Designating an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty protects its distinctive character and natural beauty and can include human settlement and development.

6.12. Policy EN5 set out that new development within the AONB will be permitted where the form, scale, materials and design would conserve and enhance the character of the landscape.

6.13. The proposed design has considered the existing scale and design of dwellings within the surrounding street scene. Generally these are two storey properties, a number with accommodation in the roof. Compared with other properties within Greenhill Road and fronting Shoreham Road, the proposal is comparable in terms of height, layout and scale. The proposal follows the established building line of properties to the east in Greenhill Road and ensures there is generous spacing between the proposed plots and neighbours, commensurate with that seen at neighbouring sites.

6.14. The design incorporates a vernacular design form for both properties, but with differential treatment of materials and features, to provide individuality to the buildings. The use of traditional brick, tile, slate and render are common place materials within the village.

6.15. The properties would be set back a generous distances from the road whilst retaining the mature screening and boundary hedging to the front boundary. The scheme proposes the introduction of replacement tree planting to the front and side boundaries. Alongside neighbouring buildings and other recent infill developments, it is not considered the proposal would appear visually prominent or out of character with the prevailing scale of built form in the vicinity.

6.16. The proposed outbuilding to Plot 2 is modest in scale and discretely sited behind the proposed dwelling and as a result would not give rise to any detrimental impact on the wider character of the area.

6.17. The site is not highly visible from the wider landscape, being set at 90 degrees to Shoreham Road, there are no direct views through the site to the wider landscape or vice versa. As such the impact on the wider landscape character of the AONB is limited. The general spacing around the buildings, use of vernacular materials and with the implementation of a strong soft landscaping scheme, will ensure the development is well integrated into the village setting.

6.18. The proposal would accord with the objectives of Local Plan Policies SP1, EN1 and EN5 of the Local Plan.

Landscaping and Arboricultural Impacts

- 6.19. Policy EN1 sets out that the layout of the proposed development should respect the topography and character of the site and sensitively incorporate natural features such as tree and hedges. The proposal should not result in the loss of open spaces or green infrastructure that would have an unacceptable impact on the character of the area.
- 6.20. The proposals result in the loss 9 fruit trees, largely within the central part of the site, in addition a further 4 boundary trees are proposed for removal due to their low amenity value or are decaying/dead. The accompanying arboricultural report sets out fuller details for tree removal.
- 6.21. The proposals include the retention of larger boundary trees, of greater amenity value, which will be protected during construction. The proposals also includes the provision of additional tree planting of a further 14 specimen trees, alongside retention of the existing mature front boundary hedgerow, reinforced with new hedgerows between the plots and to the western boundary with Streathfield.
- 6.22. This will ensure that the overall character of the site is maintained and enhanced with new trees and soft landscaping.
- 6.23. The proposal includes the creation of off street parking for each property with a low level, horizontal sliding entrance gate. These areas will be well screened by the retained front boundary hedge and ensure the landscaping of the plots take account of the generous grass verges and soft landscaped boundaries currently present.
- 6.24. The proposed landscaping scheme ensures the development is in keeping with other residential development in the area and would not have an unacceptable impact on the wider character of the street. This would accord with the objectives of Local Plan Policy EN1.

Biodiversity

- 6.25. The NPPF sets out that developments should minimise impacts on and provide net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures. Core Strategy Policy SP11 sets out that opportunities will be sought for the enhancement of biodiversity through the creation, protection, enhancement, extension and management of sites and through the maintenance and, where possible, enhancement of a green infrastructure network to improve connectivity between habitats.
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6.26. The application is accompanied by a preliminary ecological survey and follow up protected species bat report. This confirms that there are no protected species on site. This has recommended the installation of bat boxes to the properties and the use of low light external lighting scheme. Bat boxes have been accommodated under the eaves of both plots to the SE (front elevation). In addition further ecological enhancements will be provided in boundary hedging and new specimen tree planting.

Impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties

6.27. ADMP policy EN2 requires that, development will be permitted where they would provide adequate residential amenities for existing and future occupiers of the development and would safeguard the amenities of existing and future occupants of nearby properties by ensuring that development does not result in, and is not located in areas where occupiers of the development would be subject to, excessive noise, vibration, odour, air pollution, activity or vehicle movements, overlooking or visual intrusion and where the built form would not result in an unacceptable loss of privacy, or light enjoyed by the occupiers of nearby properties.

6.28. The site adjoins No.5 Greenhill Road to the north and Streatfield (fronting Shoreham Road) to the west, opposite the site is No.2 and 4 Greenhill Road.

No.5 Greenhill Road

6.29. No.5 Greenhill Road is a two storey detached dwelling, which has recently been permitted a two storey side extension, adjacent to the shared boundary, the introduction of two first floor dormer windows to the west roof slope and a single storey rear extension. Whilst these works have not yet commenced, extant permission exists for these improvements.

6.30. The proposed plot 2 would be set back, broadly aligned with the rear corner of No.5, parallel to the drawing room. There are two ground floor, drawing room windows facing west, onto the shared boundary, this room also benefits from a double door openings to the rear. There are also two high level roof lights serving a bedroom on the western roof slope. The proposed plot 2 would be positioned at its narrowest point, 6m from the flank wall of No.5, including intervening hedgerow screening.



Existing boundary with No.5 Greenhill Road, screening ground floor drawing room and first floor roof lights

- 6.31. The proposed garage, closest to the shared boundary is a 1.5 storey structure, with a home office space within the roof, accordingly the height and scale of this element is not overly prominent. The principal two storey flank elevation would sit approximately 10m from the flank wall of No.5, accordingly it is not considered the siting or scale of the proposed building would give rise to unacceptable impact on the outlook from the flank elevation windows at No.5, given both the separation distances involved and intervening screening.
- 6.32. Should No.5 proceed to construct their permitted extension, this would add one further ground floor flank window, to an enlarged breakfast room, but this also benefits from large glazed openings to the rear. At first floor both the Master bedroom and bed 2 would be provided with flank dormer windows.
- 6.33. Due to the siting of the proposed dwelling, the Master bedroom dormer would look onto the flank wall of the proposed Plot 2, however there are no habitable windows in this flank and this would be at a distance of over 10m. Whilst the outlook would change, the Master bedroom is served by two rear window openings and as such, the approved flank elevation dormer is not the sole source of light or outlook to this room. Accordingly it is not considered the impact from the proximity of Plot 2 would be harmful to the amenities of this bedroom.
- 6.34. Bed 2 is positioned further forward in the property, this dormer window would largely overlook the front corner of the garage and the entrance parking area. Accordingly it is not considered the outlook or privacy from this window will be unduly impacted.
- 6.35. The flank elevation openings to plot 2 are either obscure glazed (serving bathrooms) or high level roof lights that would not provide any direct views over the neighbouring
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plot.

Streathfield

6.36. The neighbouring property to the west is a detached single storey dwelling, located approximately 12m from the shared boundary. This property fronts Shoreham Road to the west, with wrap around gardens to all sides.

6.37. This dwelling would have views from the rear towards the flank elevation of Plot 1. However the siting is such that this would not be directly in line with the rear window openings at Streathfield, but obliquely off to the east. As such, it is not considered there would be a detrimental impact on the outlook from the primary window openings to the rear.

6.38. The proposals are such a distance from Streathfield that there is unlikely to be any material overshadowing or loss of light to the primary garden areas or living accommodation.

6.39. The flank elevation facing Streathfield does not include any habitable windows, the first floor en-suite window will be obscure glazed, and the roof light, high level, limiting any views from the master bedroom.

6.40. The views of the proposed dwellings would also be softened through the retention of some of the existing mature trees, but also the planting of a new boundary hedgerow and tree specimens.

No.2 and No.4 Greenhill Road

6.41. The properties to the opposite side of Greenhill Road, would be positioned between 30-40m away from the front elevations of the proposed dwellings. As such whilst the outlook from No.2 and 4 would change, over this distance it is not considered there would be any detrimental impact on the amenities of these dwellings.

6.42. It is considered the siting and relationship to neighbouring properties is acceptable and can be accommodated without detriment to existing or future amenity, in accordance with the requirements of policy EN2.

Parking and highway safety

6.43. AMDP policy T2 states that vehicle parking provision in new residential developments should be made in accordance with the current KCC vehicle parking standards in Interim Guidance Note 3. This would trigger an onsite requirement for 3 vehicle parking spaces.

6.44. The proposal provides three independently accessible spaces for each property accords with the requirements of Policy T2.

Housing Need

6.45. The NPPF is clear at paragraph 59 that to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed. To determine the number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by local housing needs assessments.

6.46. The Sevenoaks Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update (SHMA), which forms part of the Evidence Base to the Draft Sevenoaks District Plan, has revealed a full objectively assessed need for 707 dpa for the plan period 2015-2035.

6.47. Paragraph 60 and 74 of the NPPF requires local planning authorities to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed, needs for market and affordable housing, whilst footnote 8 to paragraph 11 is clear that policies for the supply of housing cannot be considered up to date if the Local Planning Authority cannot show a robust supply of housing land. Paragraph 73 states that local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, or against their local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old.

6.48. As the Council's current strategic policies (Core Strategy) were adopted in 2011 the later provision applies. Accordingly, the housing requirement identified in the SHMA of 708 dpa applies. The Council's most recent Annual Monitoring report indicates that in the year 2018/2019, there were 254 completions, significantly below that of the objectively assessed need.

6.49. The NPPF sets out that to maintain the supply of housing, local planning authorities should monitor progress in building out sites which have permission through the Housing Delivery Test. Where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that delivery has fallen below 95% of the local authorities housing requirement over the previous three years, the authority should prepare an action plan to assess the cause of under-delivery and identify actions to increase delivery in future years.

6.50. The February 2020 Housing Delivery Test results indicate that for the past 3 years, Sevenoaks has only completed 70% of their housing requirement. As a result of the

above shortfall, paragraph 74 (c) and paragraph 75 of the NPPF apply, Sevenoaks must produce an action plan to assess the causes of under delivery and identify actions to increase delivery in future years including a 20% buffer on their objectively assessed need figure to take account of under delivery.

6.51. This Action Plan was produced and published in August 2020 and confirms the Council currently have 2.6 years' worth of housing supply. For the reasons outlined above, the adopted local plan is out of date, is inconsistent with the NPPF and fails to put in place a strategy to meet the full identified housing needs of the District.

6.52. In the absence of an up to date local plan and the Council currently failing via the Housing Delivery Test to demonstrate a robust five-year supply or delivery of housing, in accordance with paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF, the presumption is in favour of granting permission unless:

- the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance (such as the AONB or protected habitats) provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
- any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

6.53. Paragraph 11 does not indicate that permission should only be granted if the balance is moderately against the grant of permission, it is part of a pro-development policy that has the effect of radically tilting the balance in favour of the grant of permission unless the impacts of doing so significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

6.54. No harm has been identified to the AONB or protected habitats and accordingly it is submitted that the presumption in favour of granting permission is engaged.

6.55. The development is CIL liable and the appropriate forms are included within the submission.

7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1. It has been demonstrated that by reason of location, plot size and the existing scale of development in the area, there should be no objection to the principle of residential development on the site.
 - 7.2. The proposed layout, height, scale, detailed design of the building and proposed landscaping ensure the dwelling would respond to the pattern of development within the locality and reinforce the locally distinctive vernacular.
 - 7.3. The proposal would not result in any material harm to neighbouring amenities, which could also be protected through the imposition of appropriate conditions.
 - 7.4. The proposal would provide safe means of access and parking provision in as required by ADMP Policy T2.
 - 7.5. In accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development at paragraph 14 of the NPPF, the development proposal accords with the development plan and should be approved without delay.
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