

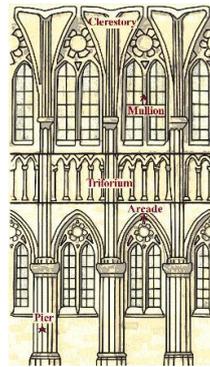
Design & Access Statement

Applicants: Mr & Mrs R Hope

Site Location: 71 Sidney Gardens in Otford, Sevenoaks, Kent TN14 5PX

Development Proposal: Demolition Of Existing Bungalow And
Construction Of A Replacement Dwellinghouse.

Statement Date: 19th November 2021



KEVIN WISE

TOWN PLANNING

TEL: 01622 902902

EMAIL: info@kevinwiseplanning.co.uk

WEBSITE: www.kevinwiseplanning.co.uk



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1.Introduction:

1.1. This Design & Access Statement has been prepared by Kevin Wise BA (Hons) BTP MRTPI. I am the Managing Director of Kevin Wise Town Planning and have worked as a chartered and fully qualified town planner since 1992 within both the public and private sectors. I am a member of the Royal Town Planning Institute and hold a BA (Hons) degree in 'Urban & Regional Town Planning' together with a 'Bachelor Of Town Planning' postgraduate degree.

1.2. The statement has been prepared in association with a planning application seeking detailed planning permission for the "*Demolition Of Existing Bungalow And Construction Of A Replacement Dwellinghouse*" at No. 71 Sidney Gardens, Otford, Sevenoaks Kent. It looks to provide appropriate supporting information relating to the adopted design approach and considerations of the likely visual impacts of the proposed development and examines how the proposed development provides a suitable response to the site and its context and setting and to demonstrate that the development can be adequately accessed by prospective users. It explains the guiding design principles and concepts that have been applied to the proposals and how the interpretation of existing of built form has influenced the design. The statement is intended to help inform and assist statutory consultees and any interested third parties or members of the public in addition to the Local Planning Authority's professional planning staff and elected Members.

2. The Application Site:

2.1. The application site comprises a detached, residential bungalow and its garden/curtilage. The building appears to be of pre-war construction (likely to be late 1930's) and it stands within part of the defined urban confines of the large village of Otford. It is within an established residential area that is located to the south of the historic core of the village and between the A225 (to the west) and the mainline railway (to the east). In terms of physical characteristics, although the site appears relatively level when viewed from its frontage, its rear garden area rises in a northerly direction towards the scarp slopes of the North Downs. The site and the wider village itself are situated within the designated Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Figure 1 below identifies the location of the application site in relation to the historic village centre.



Figure 1.

2.2. The immediate local area has a sub-urban feel and the dwellings within Sidney Gardens are single storey units with common formats but individual characteristics. A range of construction materials is found giving the road a mixed character. Most dwellings in Sidney Gardens appear to be part of a development that extended an original phase of pre-war (1930's) house building along Bubblestone Road, Well Road, The Old Walk and an initial section of Sidney Gardens. The application site lies in this initial 1930s development section. This can be seen in Figure 2 below which is a 1940's aerial photograph showing most of the present-day post war 'loop' of Sidney Gardens not yet built.

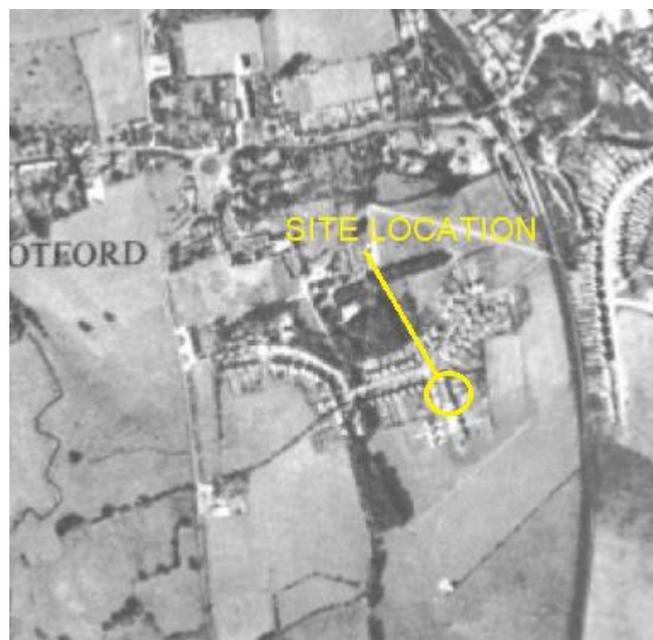


Figure 2.

2.3. No. 71 Sidney Gardens features a hipped roof with a projecting front gable (plain tiled) over pebble dashes elevations. The curtilage plot is a wide and generous one as to be expected for a dwelling of that age but the bungalow itself extends quite fully in terms of its width across the site. The building has no merit in terms of its design, appearance or architecture. Although the bungalow designs within the road are mixed and the wider area is still more mixed in character, the properties include relatively common themes that provide some sense of place and local identity. Common themes of the bungalows within Sidney Gardens include the use of buildings featuring horizontal emphasis that occupy much of the width of their plots and the use of traditional roof forms that include hipped or gabled front projections. Many of the dwellings have undergone significant alteration and extension since their original construction with many units now featuring first floor accommodation with dormers and so chalet bungalows are now not untypical. The neighbouring properties situated immediately either side 71 Sidney Gardens both reflect these common characteristics and so as does the host property itself. However, a near neighbour to the west (No. 75) has been significantly extended and remodelled to display a very contemporary style. Figure 3 below illustrates the current appearance of No. 71 Sidney Gardens.



Figure 3.

3. The Proposed Development:

3.1. The applicants propose to demolish the existing bungalow on site and replace it with a new chalet style dwellinghouse featuring contemporary form and detailing. Although the new dwelling would be contemporary in style, the design has looked to incorporate the key characteristics of the road – namely the use of a traditional roof form and projecting front gables. A mix of render and wood panels are proposed under natural roof slates. Figures 4 & 5 show the proposed front and rear elevations.

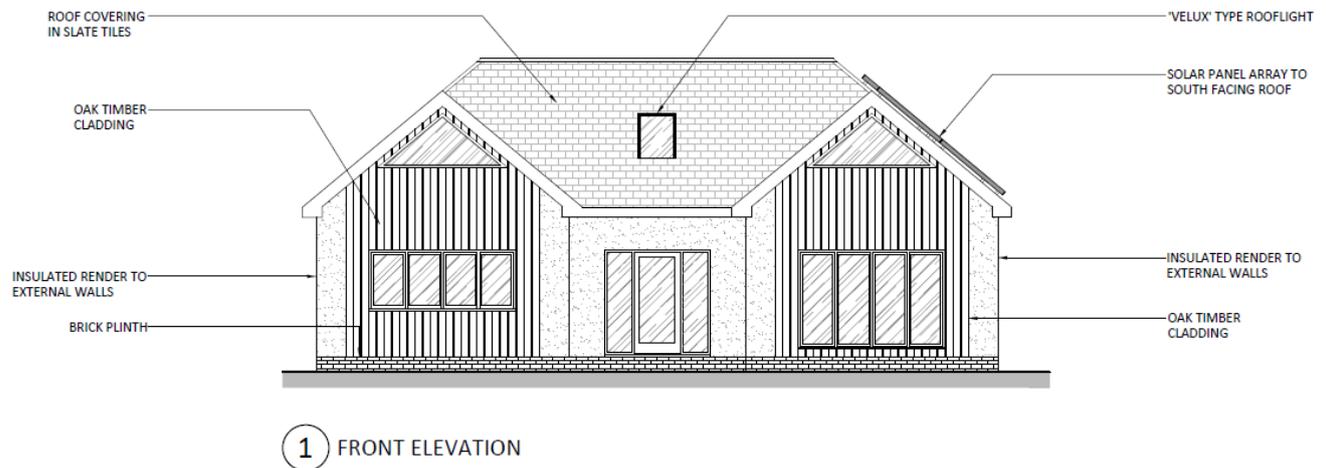


Figure 4.

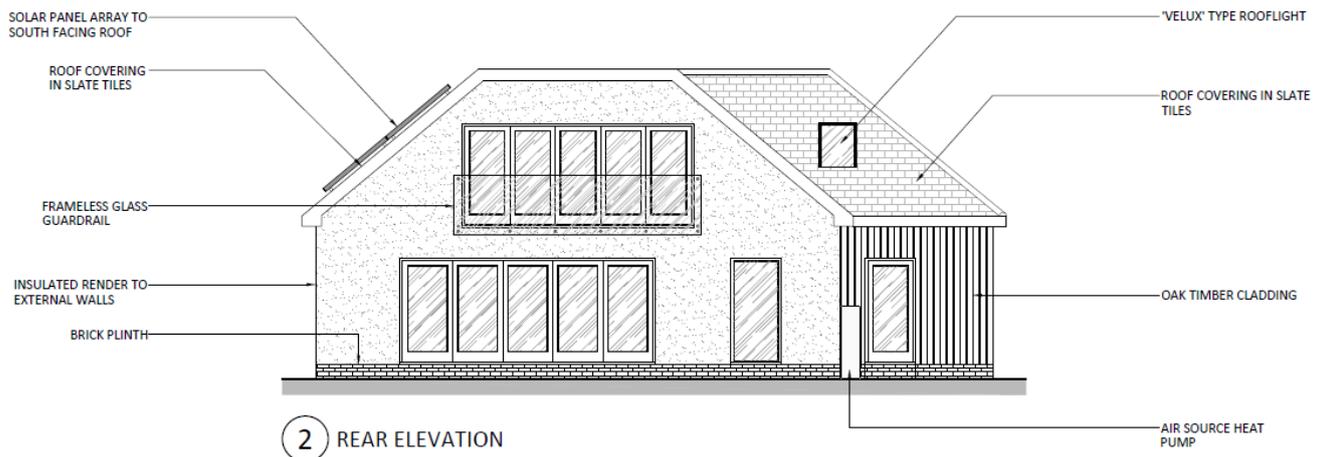


Figure 5.

4. Design & Access Considerations:

4.1. **Response To Context:** Although the village of Otford itself is located within a semi-rural location, the site location is one where there is a distinctly suburban feel and it is very much a residential area. Furthermore, as indicated above, the locale is one that features a wide range of building design and materials and it can be said to be

mixed with no strict uniformity or 'design code' to follow. This mixture in form is exacerbated by the fact that many dwellings have been altered and extended over time since first construction – most notably with loft accommodation provided & the use of dormers as well as some contemporary remodeling. The existence of the common elements of traditional roof form and projecting bays have been respected. As such, the philosophy behind the proposed design was to look to include the common elements/themes found within Sidney Gardens by using a simple, traditional roof form for the front elevation which includes projecting gables. In terms precise detailing and appearance, the materials styling is contemporary like the approach adopted at the near neighbour of No. 75.

4.2. It is considered that with a neighbouring property restyled in a contemporary form and many other properties having been altered with dormer windows, there is no material harm likely to occur with the new house featuring a modern design approach and first floor chalet accommodation. In this mixed locality, it is considered that a pastiche or a strict adherence to traditional design is unnecessary. It is noted that the '*Otford Village Design Statement*' encourages traditional form but in this part of the village away from the historic core such an approach cannot be justified.

4.3. What is important is an adherence to the use of a traditional roof form with hips and gables. Similarly, it was considered that there was a need to continue to display a general horizontal emphasis but broken up with some articulation via the use of projecting elements and panels of timber cladding. The inclusion of these locally observed features and characteristics can be seen clearly in the proposed front elevation above in Figure 4. Since construction materials are mixed within both the local streetscene and wider area, the use of roof slates, render contemporary fenestration, timber boarding panels would be entirely reasonable and of suitable quality. (NB both slates and render are materials found locally on traditional buildings so are not especially contemporary). The rear elevation and the side elevations are not conspicuous or important ones in this streetscene and are of much less importance in terms of a need to display traditional form or repeat common themes. The new dwelling has been designed to achieve a high level of sustainability with solar panels, battery storage, an air source heat pump for heating & hot water, heat recovery, rainwater harvesting, low water taps and WC cisterns and very high levels of insulation.

4.2. Use: The current land use is C3 residential with a single dwellinghouse. This will not change as the proposal is for a direct '*one for one*' replacement dwellinghouse.

4.3. Amount: Since the proposal is for the direct replacement of one dwelling with another there is no issue in terms of the number of units being proposed for the site or the density of the development. There will be additional bulk because the new dwelling would be larger in size than the existing bungalow, but the amount is suitably proportionate in terms of ratio to the size of the plot and the scale of the neighbouring dwellings. It must also be remembered that this is site within the urban village confines.

4.4. Layout: The layout of the site will be largely unchanged by this proposal with the replacement dwellinghouse being sited in the same place as the existing building and with the same orientation and 'build line'. Similarly, the location of access and parking facilities will not change with the site frontage continuing to be used. Figure 6 below shows the existing dwellinghouse. The characteristics of extensive take up of plot width and frontage projections on the bungalows can be clearly seen.



Figure 6.

In addition, Figure 6 illustrates that there is a relatively uniform 'build line' and that the buildings follow a strict adherence of orientation with the properties being perpendicular to the road. These qualities apply for all dwellings with Sidney Gardens, although, the 'build line' is less uniform in other sections of the road where the road curves or is angled.

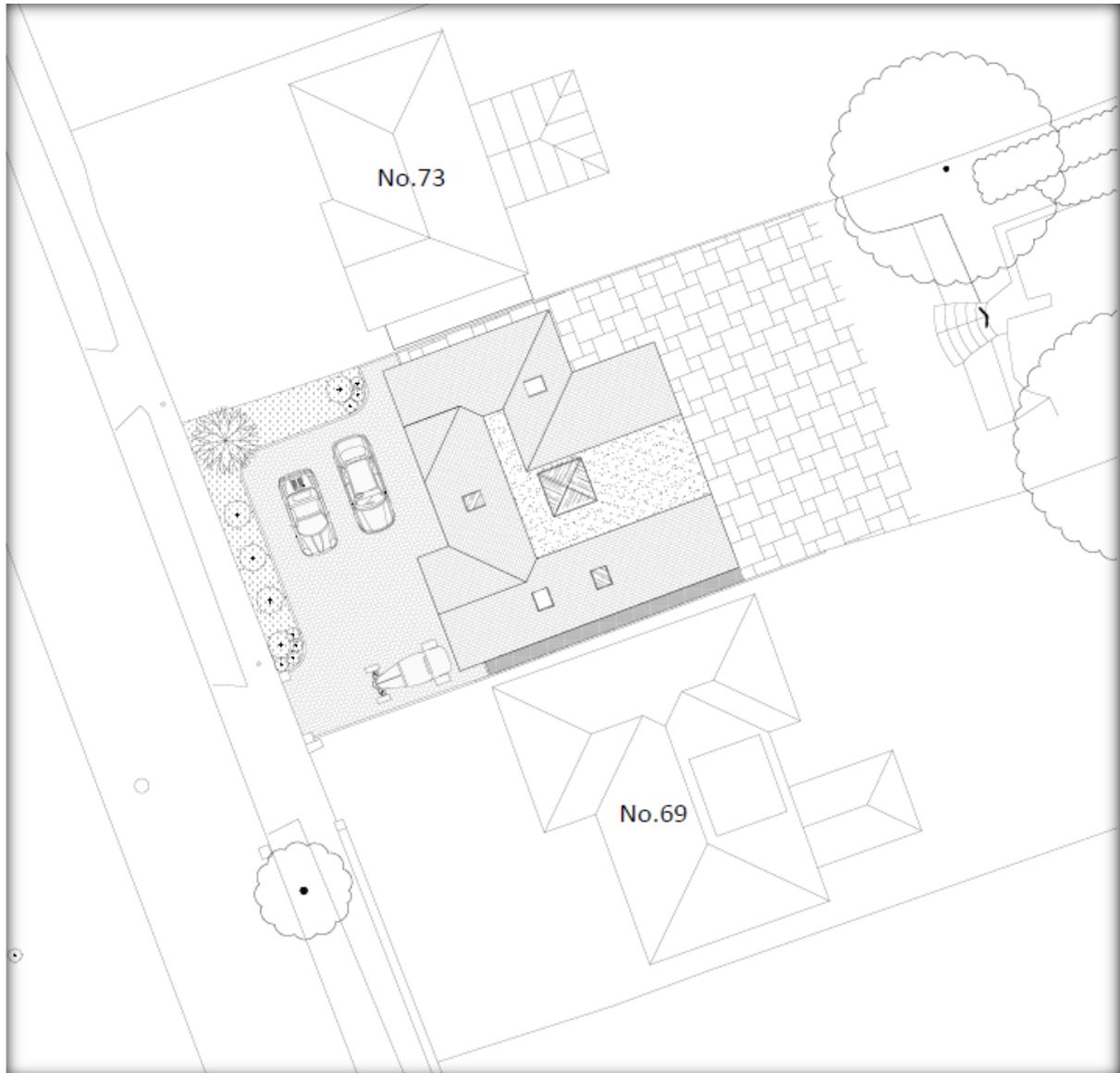


Figure 7.

Figure 7 above shows the proposed siting and layout. This confirms that the development would appropriately respect both the siting of the existing dwellinghouse as well as the general layout characteristics that have been described above. In fact, the spacing between No. 71 and No. 69 is increased. In terms of internal floor layouts, the proposed house seeks to provide an efficient use of passive light within the main living areas/habitable rooms and to avoid any undue overlooking or loss of privacy.

4.5. Scale: The scale of built form on site will be increased because the new dwelling would have a larger footprint and at first floor level there would be a greater extent of roof form. However, these matters are not things that should be considered a cause for any concern because there is no set or uniform house design with the road and the ridge level/ building height of the new house would be the same as its immediate neighbour. (There is also a two-storey dwelling a little to the west). The height of the new dwelling in comparison to its neighbour No. 69 is shown below in Figure 8.



Figure 8.

It is also important to note that, although there would be an increase in bulk at first floor level and to the rear of the site in comparison to the existing building, this is not to any disproportionate degree and the large plot can easily accommodate the proposed dwellinghouse without appearing cramped or overdeveloped. Moreover, this is an area of defined built confines. The proposed scale and likely visual impacts of the building will not be unacceptable.

4.6. Landscaping: No existing vegetation of any significant importance will be adversely affected by these proposals. Due to the location of the site and its current state of being an established and mature domestic garden that no new or additional landscaping would be needed. However, if the council deemed some additional landscaping would be beneficial and required, such improvements can be easily secured through a condition requiring a detailed landscaping scheme.

4.7. Appearance: The relatively simple footprint of the building is being respected and the proposed new dwelling would appear entirely acceptable within the street-scene given the fact that the design suitably considers the common characteristics and themes found in terms of building form, height and design. In addition, a suitably high-quality pallet of materials is proposed, and it is considered that the appearance

of the site would be improved by the replacement of the existing old-fashioned bungalow with this carefully designed new unit. Indeed, the existing building is very much a nondescript and uninteresting one with no architectural merit. By contrast, the proposed new dwelling has been carefully conceived and represents a high quality, architect designed scheme which would be both aesthetically attractive and interesting with a significant extent of well thought out and proportioned articulation and design detailing. This betterment in terms of visual amenity would not simply improve the site itself and the immediate local area but also the wider amenities of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

4.8. Access to the development: Both pedestrian and vehicular access will be obtained via the existing access serving 71 Sidney Gardens. Adequate off-road vehicle parking would be provided and a levelled access into the building would be provided compliant with Part M of the Building Regulations.

5. Conclusion:

5.1. The proposals represent a form of development that is acceptable in terms of both its respect to local context, site layout, form and common architectural themes and would not give rise to any potentially harmful impacts to the visual amenities of the locality. Furthermore, the residential amenities of neighbouring properties will be maintained, and the development will be served with appropriate vehicular and pedestrian access. The development proposed is therefore entirely acceptable in terms of its design and access aspects.