



## **Planning, Design and Access Statement**

Erection of four storey building with basement level  
to accommodate 5 self-contained flats  
AT  
1a Orwell Road, Harwich CO12 3LD

Reference:  
1OR-1529-02

Date:  
3 September 2021

1.

### Executive Summary

- a. The subject site consists of a derelict and vacant plot of land that is overgrown with a utilitarian timber fence to its frontage. For this reason, it has been identified as a negative feature within the conservation area and within the setting of a Grade II listed building.
- b. Development of the land for residential purposes would be fully supported by the development plan and national planning policy whilst making a valuable contribution to the District's five-year housing land supply and improving the character and appearance of the conservation area and the setting of the Grade II listed building.
- c. The proposed development can be brought forward in a manner that respects the scale and character of the surrounding built form and complements the existing Grade II listed Georgian terrace along Orwell Street. The scheme would project the living conditions of surrounding occupiers and deliver a high quality living environment for future occupants of the proposed units, particularly given the site's highly sustainable location.
- d. For these reasons, the proposed development is considered to be sustainable development of the kind encouraged by the development plan and national planning policy and that planning permission should be granted.

## 2.

### Introduction

- a. This Supporting Statement has been prepared by Just Planning on behalf of Architorium to support a full planning application enquiry for the erection of a four-storey building containing five self-contained flats at 1a Orwell Road, Harwich.
- b. Following a description of the site and surrounding area, the report sets out an overview of relevant planning policy and outlines the case for the proposed development.
- c. It will be demonstrated that the proposal complies with relevant local and national policies and that planning permission should therefore be granted.

3.

### Site Description & Planning History

- a. The subject site consists of a vacant plot of land rectangular in shape and fronting onto Orwell Road. A timber fence of approximately 1.5m in height occupies the site's frontage. The surrounding area is predominantly residential in character, consisting of a mix of historic and modern development varying between two and four storeys.
- b. The subject site sits adjacent to a terrace of Georgian properties (1-13 Orwell Road) standing at between three and a half storeys and composed of white and rendered finishes with traditional detailing. By virtue of their height and consistency, the terrace makes an imposing contribution upon the street scene along Orwell Road.
- c. According to the Proposals Map, the subject site lies within the development boundary of Dovercourt, a conservation area. The terrace of Georgian properties to the north west of the subject site (1-13 Orwell Road) is statutory grade II listed. The list description reads as follows:

1. *Formerly known as: Banksea House Dovercourt. Terrace of marine residences now mostly flats with attached railings. 1851 to late 1850s. Brick with Roman cement render and Welsh slate Mansard roof over main range, flat roofs over end blocks. PLAN: main range (Nos 1-12) of 3 storeys with attics and basements and NW and SE blocks of 4 storeys with basements. EXTERIOR: the main range consists of 12 houses in handed pairs. The centre of each pair breaks forward slightly forming a regular series of recesses and projections. Each projecting part has 2 segmental-roofed dormers now with mixture of windows, the originals being double-hung sashes with margin glazing and single vertical glazing bar, the upper sash curved. Each party wall is taken above the mansard with long party wall stacks. Plain parapet now pierced with mixture of semicircular and rectangular cut-outs to dormers. Prominent cornice on brackets and pulvinated frieze. Second floor has 2 narrow unsubdivided double-hung sash windows with plaster moulded surrounds. First floor has 2 similar deeper windows with semicircular-headed moulded surround and set in slight recess. Ground floor, as elsewhere in complete complex, has Doric pilasters, entablature and cornice forming base. This treatment is carried round paired, projecting flat-roofed porches each with a semicircular arch-headed window in its flanks. Iron bootscraper beside each front door. Front doors of Nos 1, 2 & 5-9 have 2 vertical panels, Nos 3 & 4*

have 6 raised-and-fielded panels. Others are C20. Elevation of recessed part has 2 similar dormers. Second floor has 2 square double-hung sash windows with margin glazing, central vertical glazing bars and moulded plaster frames. First floor has 2 aedicule pedimented windows with eared, upward-tapering architraves. These have margin glazing and central horizontal glazing bar to each sash. These reach to floor level and each has a projecting balcony on brackets with X-pattern iron railings between rectangular corner piers (formerly with ball finials). Ground floor has tripartite arrangement of central and 2 narrow double-hung sash windows with margin glazing set between pilasters. Similar arrangement to basement but with small panes. Wing walls project between each unit within recessions with pier and wrought-iron railings linking with porches and enclosing basement area. These have adorned 'halberds' as main supports with scroll backstays and minor bars have pronounced spearheads. Stone-paved terrace with granite curbing, fronts Nos 1-12 with remnants of iron railings at northern end. Each unit has stone step from road level and iron coal-shute cover to cellar beneath. The 2 larger end units are taken up to 4 storeys with flat-leaded roofs behind parapets. The pilaster base treatment is carried through and each block has banded giant pilaster and quoin treatment to corners. The south-west facade of The Convent has similar cornice carried through below 4th floor and this is broken and arched over a window of 3rd floor where facade breaks forward slightly. Third floor has 2 square double-hung sash windows with 2 vertical glazing bars and one narrow double-hung sash, all with plaster frames. The second floor has one narrow and 2 wide double-hung sashes with pilasters and straight entablature and floor level sills on consoles enclosing apron panels. First floor has one narrow double-hung sash and 2 with semicircular-headed pediments. Single projecting porch on ground floor. The seaward elevation of The Convent employs similar motifs but with more variety and windows of 2nd and 3rd floors are linked. One half of this facade projects with banded pilasters/quoins and with projecting pilastered canted bay with pilasters and balustrade. The SW elevation of No.13 employs similar motifs with the centre of 3 window range breaking forward slightly and with projecting similar porch and separate terrace/steps. The NE elevation, overlooking Cliff Park is treated as an unbroken range but with The Convent and No.13 breaking forward and surmounted by pediments. General arrangement of facades is similar to SE but with continuous stone balcony at 1st-floor level, supported on pierced brackets and breaking forward at end

*pavilions. This has simple iron handrail (By Coopers of Ipswich). First-floor windows have aedicules with pediments as elsewhere. Ground floor treatment has large frame French windows between pilasters. INTERIORS of Nos 7 & 8 (still single houses) remain substantially intact. Narrow but elegant well staircases with winder corners, continuous curved soffits, continuous hardwood handrails and alternating iron balustrade of oval loops with anthemion motif and foliate sticks. Variety of richly applied cornices of neo-classical patterns including guilloche and egg-and-dart, varied from room to room and unit to unit. Plaster ceiling roses, plaster skirtings and contemporary panelled doors and moulded architraves. Cornice to porch of No.8 has standing leaves. Standard pattern marble fireplaces with shelf on consoles, white on first floor and black to main ground floor room. The interior of The Convent is similar but on a larger scale with staircase bridging over a lower flight to reach 3rd floor. This house has semicircular arches within entrance lobby and on first-floor landing with free-standing lintel with rounded decorations. Attics have soft water cisterns to collect water from roofs. Rear gardens are Bagshaw MP, the only completed part of Dovercourt New Town. This monumental project was designed by WH Lindsey, a London architect. Bagshaw was declared bankrupt in 1859 and the necessary land was broken up. The project as built was loosely based on that part of Lindsey's scheme, but the name of a Dovercourt architect, Horace Darken, appears on sale documents.*

- d. According to the local planning authority's planning register the site has no relevant planning history. The site lies within Flood Zone 1 as per the Environment Agency's flood mapping. The application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment.
- e. On 10 March 2021 and 30 June 2021, the council provided written pre-application advice on the proposal (reference: 20/30244/PREAPP). The council advised that:
  - *The proposal was acceptable in principle;*
  - *The council is supportive of a high-quality reconstruction of the end of the listed terrace, as long as the exterior is an accurate reinstatement of the original;*
  - *The proposed communal outside space is appropriate; and,*

- *Reduced parking provision is likely to be acceptable in this location.*

4.

#### Planning Policy

- a. Planning law states that planning decisions must be taken in accordance with the statutory development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case the relevant parts of the development plan comprise the Section 1 of the Tendring Local Plan 2021 and the saved policies of the Tendring District Local Plan adopted in December 2007. The main development management policies are those in the 2007 plan. The National Planning Policy Framework 2021 ("NPPF") sets out the Government's planning policies for England and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications

##### The Tendring District Local Plan (2007)

- b. The Tendring District Local Plan ("TDLP") was adopted in 2007 and covers the plan period from 1996 until 2011. It is therefore time-bound and was examined and adopted prior to the introduction of the NPPF. As such the policies of the TDLP should only attract weight insofar as they are consistent with the NPPF.
- c. Policy QL1 of the TDLP sets out the spatial strategy for the authority area over the plan period. It states that most new development should be concentrated in the urban areas of Clacton and Harwich, where the access to services and facilities can be maximised.
- d. Policy QL2 seeks to deliver the spatial strategy identified in Policy QL1 through requiring all new development proposals to be located in a manner that reduces reliance on the private car and maximises sustainable transport options.
- e. Policy QL6 relates to urban regeneration areas. It states that permission in such areas will be granted for development that reinforces and/or enhances the function, character and appearance of the area and contributes towards regeneration and renewal. These areas will be a focus for investment in social, economic and transportation infrastructure as well as physical revitalisation.
- f. Policy QL9 sets out design standards in respect of new development. It states that all development should make a positive contribution to the quality of the

local environment and enhance local character. It sets out a series of detailed design criteria.

- g. Policy QL10 requires new development to meet functional needs and that planning permission will only be granted where access to the site is practicable, internal circulation space is acceptable and where provision is made for functional needs including amenity space and vehicle/cycle parking.
- h. Policy QL11 states that all new development should be compatible with surrounding land uses and avoid any materially harmful environmental impacts.
- i. Policy HG3 relates to residential development within defined settlement boundaries. It states that within the defined development boundaries of towns and villages residential development will be permitted provided it satisfies amenity, design, density, environmental, highway, local housing needs and sustainability criteria and can take place without material harm to the character of the local area.
- j. Policy HG4 relates to affordable housing. It states that the Council will expect 40% of new dwellings to be made available in the form of affordable housing to be normally provided on site. In settlements of over 3,000 in population, all housing developments for 15 dwellings or more or comprising a site area of 0.5ha or more should contribute towards affordable housing.
- k. Policy HG9 sets out requirements for amenity space and states that private amenity space should be provided for new dwellings. In respect of flats, each unit should enjoy either 25sqm of space per unit provided communally or a minimum of 50sqm private gardens for ground floor flats or a balcony area of at least 5sqm for units on upper floors.
- l. Policy COM2 requires all development to minimise opportunities for crime and fear of crime.
- m. Policy COM6 sets out the recreational open space requirements for new development. For sites of below 1.5ha in size where existing open space facilities are inadequate to meet the projected needs of future occupiers a financial contribution should be made for the provision of new or improved off-site facilities.
- n. Policy EN17 relates to conservation areas. It states that development within conservation areas must preserve or enhance the character or appearance of



the conservation area and that development will be refused where it harms the character or appearance of a conservation area.

- o. Policy EN23 relates to development within the setting of a listed building and states that proposals for development that would adversely affect the setting of a listed building, including group value and long distance views, will not be permitted.

The National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- p. Chapter 5 of the NPPF sets out that the Government's objective is to "*significantly boost*" the supply of housing. Chapter 9 sets out that the planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of the objectives of minimising reliance on the private car and promoting public and other sustainable transport options.
- q. Chapter 11 of the NPPF relates to making effective use of land and states that planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses. It states that local planning authorities should give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs and that local planning authorities should support the development of under-utilised land and buildings particularly where this would help meet identified needs for housing and where land supply is constrained.
- r. Chapter 12 of the NPPF relates to achieving well-designed places. It states that the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve and that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.
- s. Paragraph 130 states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments, among other things, function well and add to the overall character of the area and are visually attractive, sympathetic to local character and history and establish and maintain a strong sense of place while optimising the potential of the site to sustain and appropriate amount and mix of development.
- t. Chapter 16 of the NPPF relates to conserving and enhancing the historic environment. It states that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.

- u. Paragraph 190 states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. This is irrespective of the level of harm experienced.
- v. Paragraph 200 states that any harm to or loss of the significance of a designated heritage asset from either its alteration or destruction or from development in its setting should require a clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or off Grade II listed buildings should be exceptional.
- w. Paragraph 201 states that where a proposed development would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

5.

## The Case for the Proposed Development

### The Principle of Development

- a. According to the proposals map, the subject site lies within the development boundary of Dovercourt. Policy HG3 of the TDLP states that, within the defined development boundaries of towns and villages, residential development will be permitted provided it satisfies amenity, design, density, environmental, highway, local housing needs and sustainability criteria and can take place without material harm to the character of the local area. As such, the general principle of development can be considered acceptable within this context and particularly in light of the NPPF's advice regarding the need for local planning authorities to give significant weight to using appropriate sites within settlements for development.
- b. Developing the subject site for a residential use would also support the delivery of the TDLP's spatial strategy, dated though it is, by focusing new growth within the urban areas of the District's higher order settlements.
- c. On the above basis, the principle of development is considered to be acceptable in light of development plan policy subject to detailed criteria.

### Scale, Character and Heritage

- d. The subject site lies within a designated conservation area and within the setting of a Grade II listed building (1-13 Orwell Road). The Grade II listed building comprises a terrace of Georgian properties fronting onto Orwell Road. As well as being of merit in and of themselves for the reasons set out in the list description, these buildings make a positive and imposing contribution to the significance of the conservation area by virtue of their scale and consistent designed features, lending them considerable group value.
- e. The conservation area in this case, Dovercourt Conservation Area, covers those parts of the town centre most closely associated with its early development as a seaside resort. 1-13 Orwell Road (referred to as Orwell Terrace) is expressly mentioned in the Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA) as detailing an interesting blend of 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century architecture. The CAA contains the following description of Orwell Terrace and its immediate surroundings:

*The park stands in front of Orwell Terrace which would overlook the park more strongly if it were not for mature trees and a large bank - possibly of building spoil - which is the setting for more mature trees at*

*the seaward end. The Orwell Terrace frontage to the park is now a buttressed brick wall which sits on top of an older brick wall and screens a rather rough grassy lane: only vestiges of the original garden frontages of Orwell Terrace remain. The porch and the basement remains of the property at the seaward end of the terrace, while the blank gable of the next house has been rendered with some rough channelling. **The site of the end property is surrounded by rough boarding and is a significant visual problem in a prominent location like this.** The frontages to Orwell Terrace itself are immensely impressive, with massive and distinctive cast ironwork complementing the stucco elevations. [Emphasis Added]*

- f. The CAA expressly references the subject site as being a negative feature within the Conservation Area. This is a correct assessment since much of the site is overgrown and details a utilitarian frontage to the street, within a prominent location. The NPPF states that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance.
- g. The submitted drawings illustrate the scale and appearance of the proposed development. The new development would continue the strong building line established by the terrace along Orwell Road, introducing an attractive area of amenity space to the rear alongside new cycle parking and bin storage area that would be located in a visually discreet position behind the prevailing building line.
- h. In terms of its overall scale and massing, the proposed building would follow the design cues and precedent set by the listed terrace contributing towards its visual symmetry by replicating the existing dwelling on the north-western end of the terrace. The proposed development would also replicate the detailed design and materials of the terrace, particularly in terms of fenestration and boundary treatment lending itself to a complementary design form that would enhance the appearance of the site in a congruous manner.
- i. Whilst the proposal would obscure the south-eastern end-elevation of the terrace, this is of virtually no significance as it comprises a blank flank wall. It does not enable any particular appreciation of the asset as illustrated by the fact that the heritage baseline information only focuses on the contribution the terrace makes to the surrounding area from its street-facing and seaward facing elevations.

- j. As a result of the sympathetic design and the condition of the current site, it is considered that the proposed development represents a considerable betterment for the local area in heritage and general design terms and that it would entail no harm to the significance of the conservation area or the Grade II listed terrace. If such harm was considered to exist, however, it would be less than significant and would therefore need to be weighed against the benefits of the proposal which are many and varied. These include but are not limited to the delivery of residential development in a sustainable location and enhancing the appearance of a visually detracting site which is a negative feature in the conservation area and within the setting of a Grade II listed building.

#### Neighbouring and Occupier Amenities

- k. The subject site is bounded by existing residential development to the north-west. It is considered that adverse impacts to the living conditions of this neighbouring property can be mitigated through appropriate design. The proposed development would follow the building line and would not extend beyond it to the rear thereby avoiding any materially harmful impact by reason of overlooking, loss of outlook or loss of sunlight and/or daylight.
- l. In terms of the amenity of future occupants, private communal amenity space has been provided to the rear of the property. The site lies within a highly sustainable location which would provide ample access to public open space in any event. The proposed residential units have been designed with adequate openings allowing for appropriate ventilation and good access to daylight.

#### Transport & Highways

- m. The proposed development benefits from an existing frontage along Orwell Road and pedestrian access can be easily achieved from the existing highway network. The site sits within a highly sustainable location within easy walking and cycling distance to a wide variety of services and facilities and public transport options. For this reason, the scheme has been proposed as a parking-free development which thereby contributing towards its sustainability credentials. Cycle parking would be provided to the rear of the site.

## 6.

### Conclusions

- a. The proposed development would bring into use a visually detracting and derelict site within existing development boundaries and in an area that has been prioritised for urban regeneration in line with the Council's spatial strategy. It would do this through the delivery of five high-quality, residential flats and a design approach that would reinforce and contribute towards the significance of the conservation area and Grade II listed terrace whilst making a meaningful contribution to the Council's five-year housing land supply.
- b. The subject site is in a sustainable location, close to all local amenities, and as a result will not incorporate vehicular parking thereby maximising the opportunities available for sustainable travel via walking, cycling and public transport.
- c. For the above reasons it is considered that the proposed development complies with the relevant provisions of development plan policy and the applicant respectfully requests that the Council supports the scheme.



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