



22<sup>nd</sup> February 2023

Place Directorate  
North Somerset Council

*E-mail only*

Dear Sir/Madam

**FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR DEMOLITION OF EXISTING DWELLING AND ERECTION OF REPLACEMENT DWELLING TOGETHER WITH ANCILLARY WORKS  
WOODRISING, HILLSIDE ROAD, BLEADON, WESTON-SUPER-MARE, BS24 0AA**

I am pleased to enclose a full planning application for the demolition of the existing dwelling and erection of a replacement dwelling together with ancillary works at Woodrising, Hillside Road, Bleadon.

The application is accompanied by the following plans and documents:

- Topographical Survey by Clifton Surveys
- Elevations Survey by Clifton Surveys
- Energy Statement and SAP Specification (Report reference: BA-30) by Thermenergy
- Bat & Bird Scoping Report by Nash Ecology
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Tree Protection Plan by Bosky Trees
- Design and access Statement by Wotton Donoghue Architects
- Site Location Plan (Dwg. No. 1124\_000)
- Existing Block Plan (Dwg. No. 1124\_001)
- Existing Site Layout & Constraints Plan (Dwg. No. 1124\_010)
- Existing North Elevation (Dwg. No. 1124\_020)
- Existing East and West Elevation (Dwg. No. 1124\_021)
- Existing South Elevation (Dwg. No. 1124\_022)
- Existing Garage Elevations (Dwg. No. 1124\_023)
- Existing Site Sections AA & BB (Dwg. No. 1124\_030)
- Existing GIA's (Dwg. No. 1124\_040)
- Proposed Block Plan (Dwg. No. 1124\_101)
- Proposed Site Layout and Constraints Plan (Dwg. No. 1124\_110)
- Proposed Lower Floor Plan (Dwg. No. 1124\_111)
- Proposed Ground Floor Plan (Dwg. No. 1124\_112)
- Proposed First Floor Plan (Dwg. No. 1124\_113)
- Proposed Roof Plan (Dwg. No. 1124\_114)

- Proposed Elevations North and East (Dwg. No. 1124\_130)
- Proposed Elevations South and West (Dwg. No. 1124\_131)

## 1. Background and Site Description

The site comprises of a residential plot extending to 0.12 hectares. The site contains a fire-damaged dwelling known as ‘Woodrising’ together with a detached garage, access lane and associated hardstanding and garden areas.

The site lies in the rural-urban fringe between Weston-Super-Mare and the village of Bleadon. The site forms part of an unnamed hamlet of approximately 30 dwellings clustered around Celtic Way, Hillside Road, and Roman Road. The site lies at the end of the cul-de-sac of Hillside Road.

The site falls from north to south, with the existing dwelling siting on a terrace reasonably centrally within the plot. To the front of the existing dwelling are a driveway and a detached garage. A number of mature trees lie along the eastern and southern boundaries of the site. To the north and west are other dwellings served from Hillside Road.

Despite the site’s topography, the location of the existing property relative to other properties in the hamlet, existing mature planting, and the fall of the land in the wider area, mean that the site and existing structures are not readily visible from any public vantage points other than from Hillside Road to the immediate north-west of the site.

Woodrising was substantially damaged by fire in November 2019 and has subsequently been purchased by the applicant for redevelopment as a dwelling. This application seeks planning permission for demolition of the existing, fire-damaged dwelling, and the erection of a replacement dwellinghouse, together with ancillary works. The scheme has been carefully designed without compromising the surroundings (see Design and Access Statement for further details).

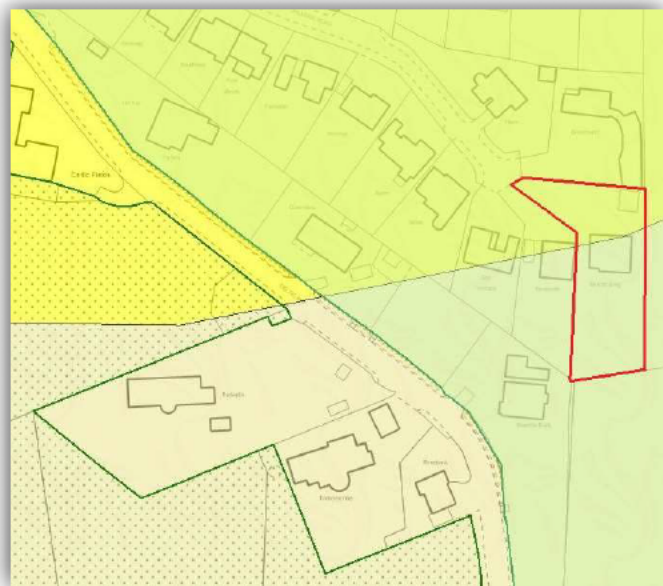
## 2. Planning Policy Constraints

According to North Somerset Council LDP Policies Map, the site has the following designations:

- Outside the settlement boundary of Weston-super-Mare and Bleadon
- Within the ‘North Somerset and Mendip Bats’ Special Area of Conservation (SAC) – Horseshoe Bat Zone B and C
- Within the ‘Mendip Hills’ Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

Other designations identified in the wider area that might be relevant to the design of the development are as follows:

- ‘Bleadon Hill Fields’ Wildlife Site



- Horseshoe Bat Zone B
- Horseshoe Bat Zone C
- Wildlife Sites
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that “where in making any determination under the planning Acts, regard is to be had to the development plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material consideration indicates otherwise”.

The local plan for the area comprises of:

- Core Strategy
- Sites and Policies Plan Part 1: Development Management Policies
- Sites and Policies Plan Part 2: Site Allocations Plan

The following Local Plan policies are identified as being of most relevance:

#### Policy DM8: Nature Conservation

This policy stipulates for SAC Bat Zones that “consultation will identify the potential impact of the proposed development in respect of, for example, bat navigation and foraging habitats and identify appropriate mitigation measures through site design and lighting strategies”

With regard to Wildlife Sites, “planning permission will not normally be granted for development that would result in loss in extent or otherwise have a significant adverse effect [...] unless the harm can be mitigated by appropriate measures”.

#### Policy DM9: Trees and Woodlands

This policy states that “the future growth of tree canopy and roots should be fully accounted for” and seeks development proposals to “demonstrate that the retention, protection and enhancement of tree canopy cover has been considered throughout the design and development process”

The proposals should “provide high quality physical protection of retained trees, which includes working methods” and “include, where practical, the introduction of appropriate new tree planting and woodland creation as an integral part of the design and landscaping of new developments, using native species of local origin wherever possible”

New development should comply with “engineering requirements to accommodate tree planting and future tree growth in relation to building foundation design”.

#### Policy DM11: Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

This policy states that “particular attention will be given to the siting, scale, size, character, design, materials and landscaping of the proposed development, views to and from the AONB, as well as conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage.”

It also acknowledges the importance of dark skies in the AONB that “outdoor lighting schemes will not be permitted in the AONB unless it has been demonstrated that there will be no adverse impact from obtrusive light”.

#### DM37: Residential development in existing residential areas

This policy is aimed to ensure that new dwellings on infill, backland plots, garden land or other sites within predominantly residential areas, are in keeping with the character of the surrounding area.

In particular, “proposals will be permitted provided:

- the siting of the building(s) on the new plot(s) and layout respects the existing street scene;
- the plot sizes of both the new and existing property are in keeping with nearby properties;
- gardens are an appropriate size for both the proposed new and existing dwelling; and
- the design, form, scale and building materials are in keeping with the area;
- parking standards should be met for both the existing and proposed properties;
- it would not harm the street scene and local area. This includes the loss of characteristic boundary features, original estate layout landscaping or visually important trees; and
- the living conditions of the occupiers and adjoining properties would not be prejudiced.”

#### Policy DM44: Replacement dwellings in the countryside

This is a specific policy to ensure that proposals for replacement dwellings in the countryside are designed in the interest of the rural character.

Policy DM44 states that replacement dwellings in the countryside “will be permitted, provided that:

- the dwelling it replaces has an existing lawful permanent residential use; and
- the dwelling has not been abandoned; and
- the dwelling has not been granted planning permission for the conversion from a non-residential building; and
- the dwelling is not a designated or undesignated heritage asset; and
- the replacement dwelling is within the same curtilage, is not out of scale and character with the surrounding area and its design and siting will not harm the character of the area, the living conditions of its own or adjoining occupiers; and
- the replacement dwelling is no more than a 50% increase in the size of the dwelling it replaces, providing that the dwelling itself is not a replacement dwelling”.

### **3. Assessment**

In light of the relevant policies identified above, the key planning considerations of the development proposals are as follows:

#### Principle of Development

The proposed dwelling would replace an existing dwelling on the site which has been fire damaged. The property has been vacant for only a limited time, and only for the period required for the formalities/legalities associated with the fire, insurance and subsequent sale of the land to be completed, and the enclosed scheme for the site’s redevelopment to be developed and finalised. It is clear therefore that the residential use of the land has not been abandoned.

The existing dwelling has a Gross Internal Area (GIA) of 240sq.m. The proposed replacement dwelling would have a GIA of 313sq.m, representing a 30% increase in floorspace, well within the 50% increase in floorspace allowed under Policy DM44.

The principle of the proposed development would, therefore, be fully in accordance with the development plan.

## Biodiversity

A Bat & Bird Scoping Report has been prepared by Nash Ecology to support the application, which was informed by both a desk-based assessment and a field study. This concluded that Woodrising (both the house and the garage) has a negligible likelihood of roosting bats, and that there would be no risk of habitat fragmentation given the development will be restricted to the footprint of the existing dwellinghouse.

Suitable bat foraging and commuting habitat was identified within the adjacent woodland to the east. To prevent any indirect effects on this habitat, a sensitive lighting strategy will be implemented. The re-development of the site will encourage opportunities for ecology enhancement comprising bird boxes.

## Trees and Landscaping

The eastern boundary of the site is heavily populated by mature trees, the canopies of which encroach onto the site. In order to assess the types and the arboricultural significance, a Tree Schedule, Tree Constraints Plan, Arboricultural Impact Assessment, and Tree Protection Plan have been prepared by Bosky Trees.

The tree survey identifies that all trees within or immediately adjacent to the site are of high or moderate quality. Furthermore, the site and its surroundings are also within the remit of Mendip Hills AONB. In response to these constraints the development maintains the existing design of the scheme for the most part utilises the plateau and building footprint and, as a result, the development would not give rise to any tree loss and nor would it encroach into the Root Protection Areas of any trees.

In landscaping strategy for the scheme follows an approach of retaining existing features, together with some enhancement planting in the southern portion of the site.

## Design, Layout and Impact upon the Character of the Area

The existing property, site topography, site context and arboricultural constraints have all been carefully considered in developing the scheme for the replacement dwelling on the site. The footprint and height of the proposed house will be similar to the existing dwelling despite the increase of floorspace, with much of the additional floorspace provided to lower ground floor level.

The contour of the new property will vary from existing, with additional depth added to the rear of the property, however the existing ridge height will be maintained. The mass of the new building will be well-balanced across all elevations, and the siting of the new dwelling will reflect that of the existing property, as will the frontage to Hillside Road.

External materials have been carefully chosen to complement the new build scheme whilst successfully integrating the scheme into its context.

The proposals are also aimed to ensure high energy efficiency performance. An air source heat pump will be installed at the new building. The materials of the external fabric will provide high levels of insulation and air tightness. For further details, see Energy Statement and SAP calculations.

Having regard to the sensitive design of the scheme proposals, together with the lack of wider views of the site (as referenced in Section 1) it is concluded that the proposed development would successfully integrate with the character of the area and, in particular the Mendip Hills AONB, in compliance with Policies DM11 and DM44 of the Local Plan.

#### 4. Conclusions

In accordance with the principles of place-making and the relevant local planning policies, the proposed development has been carefully designed to bring back to use the site without compromising the built environment in Hillside Road, the surroundings green infrastructure, biodiversity and habitats, and the landscape of Mendip Hills AONB.

It is therefore respectfully requested that planning permission be granted to the proposed development.

Should you have any question during the application process, do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

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*Louise Humar*  
*Planning Assistant*