

# Boyer

## Land at Victoria's Cabaret Club, Harrietsham, Maidstone, Kent

Demolition of existing building and  
erection of 4 nos. of 3 bedroom houses

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### Design and Access Statement Planning Statement

Submitted to Maidstone Borough Council  
on behalf of Heritage Designer Homes Ltd

February 2023



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Project:	Land at Victoria's Cabaret Club, Harrietsham, Maidstone, Kent		
Client:	Heritage Designer Homes Limited		
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# 1. Introduction

This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Boyer and submitted on behalf of Heritage Designer Homes Limited to Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) in relation to the validation requirement for a full planning application for land at Victoria's Cabaret Club, north of Ashford Road, Harrietsham, Maidstone, Kent involving the demolition of the existing building and erection of 4 nos. of 3 bedroom houses and associated infrastructure and landscaping.

The Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure)(England) Order 2015 requires certain types of application for planning permission to be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement. This statement has been prepared in line with relevant national requirements, and in accordance with best practice guidance on the preparation of such statements. Regard has also been paid to MBC's development plan documents.

This Planning, Design and Access Statement comprises the following elements;-

- A description of the proposed development and the site location
- Site Appraisal section examines the physical context, constraints and opportunities associated with the site and its wider setting. The design solution for the site has been based upon a thorough understanding of the site and the surrounding area.
- The Planning Context section considers how the design has evolved from the pre-application response received from MBC.
- The Design Proposals section sets out the principles that have been applied to the proposed development. It describes how the physical characteristics of the scheme have been informed by robust site evaluation. The resulting design principles that emerge are considered under - Use, Amount, Layout, Scale, Appearance and Landscaping.
- The Access Statement explains the approach that has been adopted in relation to accessibility. It describes how residents will gain access to the development from the existing highways network. It also considers advocating low carbon travel modes to combat climate change crisis and details of parking provision.
- The Conclusions section outlines how the proposed development conforms to good design principles.



Plan showing the site location and application boundary

## 2. Proposed Development

The application proposes the construction of 4 (nos.) 3 bedroom houses on the site, designed around a landscaped cul de sac. The site is accessible from Ashford Road which connects Lenham to Harrietsham and links to the M20 as part of the wider network.

The proposed development is considered to represent an appropriate edge development and providing a welcoming feature to the small hamlet that exists between Dickley Lane and Ashford Road. The site has the backdrop of buildings fronting onto Dickley Lane and foreground of the tree lined Ashford Road. The existing cabaret club proposed for demolition as part of the development is of no heritage significance, and therefore its removal will have no negative impact upon the character.

### Advantages of proposed development on this site

Alongside the advantages of providing an accessible and sustainable development, the site also offers the opportunity to -

- Provide much needed smaller family homes that will cater to local needs;
- Create a softer landscaped arrangement that puts landscaping in the foreground and buildings as the background;
- Designed with a considered massing that sensitively blends in with the surrounding built form and tree lined foreground along with high quality materials that will add richness and create a distinctive feel; and
- Provides electric car charging points with every home to advocate use of electric cars to combat the climate crisis; and
- Positively contributes to the streetscene along Ashford Road.

The particulars of the application are summarised as follows -



Proposed house type P01

### USE, LAYOUT AND AMOUNT

The application proposes residential development for the entire site (Use Class C3). This will continue the principle of residential development which surrounds the site and will provide much needed family homes for the local residents in a sustainable location. The site although in previous commercial usage as an entertainment club, is no longer a viable and operating business and hence the use of the land for its current purpose is redundant. Having regard to the location and characteristics of the site, it is considered to be a wholly appropriate location for a considered residential development. The pre-application response from MBC acknowledges the principle of development within this location.

### SCALE AND APPEARANCE

The proposals include 4 nos of 3 bedroom homes designed around a landscaped Cul de Sac. The roof form, eaves and ridge height have been carefully considered such that the proposals blend in with the surrounding built form and the architectural style adds richness. With a tree lined foreground, the proposed homes will sync with its surrounding and create a responsive design approach to the wider setting.

### LANDSCAPING

The proposal will incorporate a comprehensive retention strategy for the neighbour's existing tree and will complement with additional proposed tree planting. Feature trees and pockets of landscaping will collectively add to the tree lined foreground of the proposals. Generous garden sizes have been provided which includes front and back gardens. Garden trees will include a variety of species such that they are climate resilient and create opportunities for biodiversity enhancements through provision of bird and bat boxes.

### ACCESS AND SERVICING

The proposed scheme will continue to use the existing vehicular access from Ashford Road. The internal arrangement has been designed as a pedestrian and cycle priority homezone with appropriate permeable surfacing. Servicing requirements have been incorporated within the design of the scheme including bin and fire vehicle access.



**Key**

- Application Boundary
- Proposed all modes access from Ashford Road



Proposed site layout (details provided in Section 5 of this document)

# 3. Site Appraisal

## A. Setting and Local Character

**Location** -The application site is situated on the north side of the A20/Ashford Road, to the west of Lenham and east of Harrietsham. The site benefits from tree screening to the northern and eastern boundaries and mature hedging to the western boundary. The southern boundary runs parallel with the A20 Ashford Road and is mostly devoid of hedging. The site is directly accessed off Ashford Road with the entrance having good sight lines.

**Site in its wider setting** - The architecture along Ashford Road and Dickley Lane is of varying styles and overall lacks cohesion. This ribbon development along the both sides of the road and on Dickley Lane to the north, comprises of modern two storey houses, chalet bungalows.

Although the wider area contains some reasonable examples of Victorian cottage architecture, however recent interventions in the area and new estates, with unsympathetic fenestrated semi and detached dwellings, reflecting a more recent estate vernacular. The proposals have been inspired by the traditional Victorian cottage architecture with a natural organic colour palette that will create a welcoming entrance and blend into the foreground landscape.

**Local Character** - The immediate street scene on the northern side of Ashford Road includes hedges behind low close boarded fences. There are isolated mature tree groups between the application site and the petrol station to the east. The southern side of Ashford Road is dominated by hedges and mature tree groups which provide glimpses of properties at entrances and between trees.



Aerial map of the site showing its location in proximity to train station and major roads. Site is shown with a red dot, Harrietsham train station is identified with a pink dot, Ashford Road is shown in pink.

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Harrietsham Train Station



Local facilities



Local vernacular and built form

## B. Site Photographs



## C. Understanding of Site

A site appraisal has been prepared to fully appreciate the immediate character and as an aid to develop the brief and the acceptability of the design approach within the local landscape.

The application site is situated on the north side of the A20 on Ashford Road, to the west of Lenham and east of Harrietsham.

Approximately a third of the 0.3 hectare site is covered with the existing single storey structure with a floor area of 880m<sup>2</sup>, that accommodated the Victoria's Cabaret club. Both the front and rear of the site is given over to extensive car parking and storage area which then covers 0.11ha - a major portion of the site. The car parking is linked, along the eastern boundary, with an access road. Of the site area of 0.3ha, 0.23ha is covered by car parking, the existing building and retaining structures.

The cabaret club was originally established in 1972 and was extensively extended in 2008. The building comprises of three older single storey structures under

pitched tiled roofs, connected with a series flat roofs over brick and rendered elevations.

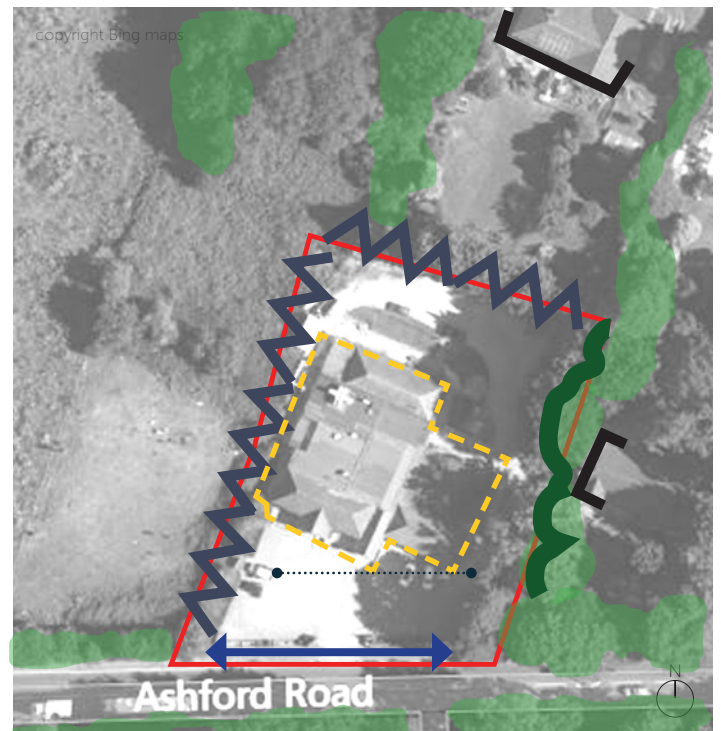
The site is bounded by existing properties - Innisfree to the east, White Pillars to the north on Dirckley Lane and a field to the west.

Following site visit and analysis of its characteristics, the setting of the existing building and the wider landscape setting, a firm understanding of the constraints and opportunities was developed to enable a design to be formulated for five sensitively detached dwellings..

With boundary landscaping incorporated into the scheme and by locating the homezone in the centre of the site in an organic manner, an opportunity to arrange the proposed dwellings fronting onto a central leafy lane and pedestrian area has been created. A full tree survey and Arboricultural report forms part of this application and identifies the condition of the trees within the site and on the boundaries and this has been carefully considered as part of the scheme.



Site in its wider context  
copyright Bing maps



Site characteristics - Opportunities and Constraints

- KEY
- Existing building to be demolished
  - Two neighbouring properties
  - ←→ Ashford Road site frontage - existing hard character to be softened
  - Existing western and northern site boundaries to be softened
  - Foliage outside the site boundary setting the wider visual frame
  - Existing tree canopies carefully considered as part of proposals
  - Proposed building line carefully considered as part of proposals



# 4. Planning Context

## A. Principle of development

The proposals have evolved through engagement with officers at MBC through pre-application enquiry. The comments made as part of this process have led the evolved proposals. The Pre-application report accepted the principle of residential development on this site in line with policies SS1 and DM5.

## B. Pre-application advice

Following the refusal of of Application 21/506206/FUL for five detached dwellings, a Pre-application enquiry was submitted for the proposals outlined in this D&AS. The comments received are set out below and have informed the formal planning application.

### Pre-App 22/2338/PAPL

This current proposal now shows four detached (3-bed) bungalows of the same design and appearance. Each property would have two parking spaces and an integral garage each and the existing access onto the A20 is retained.

The loss of a unit and the single storey nature of the properties would help to create a more spacious development, better suited to its rural location. However, in my view the shown pathways; the hammerhead turning area; and the hardstanding around the parking spaces would be excessive for a development of this scale, and this over engineered layout would still cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area. The reduction of hardstanding would clearly allow for a more landscape-led development and I would also expect to see the majority of the access road to be block paving for example, as opposed to tarmac.

For me, the benefits of losing one unit and making the properties single storey are also partly negated because units on plots 1 and 4 have been noticeably brought closer to Ashford Road. I believe the front building line of the existing building on the site should be better respected by any future development on this site, to better safeguard the visual amenity of the area. Pulling the bungalows back would also allow for a better (100% native) landscape buffer along the site's frontage, that would preferably not be within the garden area of any of the properties. Going further, I am of the view that there needs to be more soft landscaped areas in and around the site that are not part of the domestic gardens; there needs to be more native tree planting within the development; and as set out in the previous planning refusal, the western boundary is particularly sensitive.

On other matters, I consider integral garages to be more suited to suburban developments; and for me, it is poor design to have integral garages and parked cars (for plots 2 and 3) directly in view as you enter the site. I would add that 3-bed properties need only have two independently accessible parking spaces to be policy compliant in parking terms, and garages are additional to these standards. The removal of the garages would further reduce the amount of development on the site.

*Furthermore, I feel that the layout is too uniform and would advise for the plots to be more loose-knit and would suggest some design differences to the bungalows. External materials will also need to be of a high quality and positively respond to local context; a modest variation in the choice of these materials would further help to provide more interest in any future scheme; and high quality boundary treatments should also be used over close boarded fencing.*

*In accordance with Local Plan policy DM5, it is important that any scheme brought forward on this site clearly demonstrates that there is a significant environmental uplift from the current situation. Whilst I do consider it possible to achieve a suitable scheme for four bungalows here, it is my view that if a planning application were to be submitted for this current proposal, it is unlikely to be supported by the local planning authority for the reasons set out above.*

*Following the feedback above further advice was sought and a revised layout submitted.*

### Pre-App 22/503635/PAPL

Furthermore, for me the amended layout is less engineered and more landscape-led; the unsightly parking areas are out of view when entering the site; the layout is less formal, although I wonder if plots 1 and 2 could be more staggered in position; the areas of hardsurfacing are less formal; and I note that the buildings have been further pulled back from the road. With regards to the set back of the units, the buildings on plots 3 and 4 do appear to now respect the existing front building line of the building on site. Any future planning application should make this clear.

The amended layout also appears to show more soft landscaped areas in and around the site that are not part of the domestic gardens, and this is welcomed. I would add that a 100% native landscaping scheme would be expected to be provided; and the treatment of the site's western and southern boundaries, in particular, should be carefully considered.

No elevational drawings have been submitted for consideration. As such, I can only reiterate my previous comments, in that I would advise against integral garages (which appear to have been removed); external materials (including hardsurfacing) will need to be of a high quality and positively respond to local context; a modest variation in the choice of these materials would further help to provide more interest in any future scheme; and high quality boundary treatments should also be used over close boarded fencing.

In accordance with Local Plan policy DM5, it is important that any scheme brought forward on this site clearly demonstrates that there is a significant environmental uplift from the current situation. Subject to full design details, it is my view that if a planning application were to be submitted for this current proposal, it could be supported by the local planning authority.

# 5. Design Proposals

## A. Use, Layout and Amount

This section considers the design proposals in detail. The proposal has evolved with the concept of the design to achieve a sense of place within this site and to create building forms that allow the living areas to extend into the landscape setting, as part of a cohesive whole.

The proposals will be arranged around an informal, landscaped cul-de-sac. The internal circulation route of the layout is gently curving with the placement of the 4 dwellings forging a hierarchy of spaces defined by architecture, enclosure and landscape.

The dwellings are set well back from the site frontage behind mature landscaping, hedging and trees. Once in the site there is a sensation of a tree lined visual experience and the proposed landscaping will significantly add to the green setting. The new trees will enable the landscape quality of the site to be enhanced.

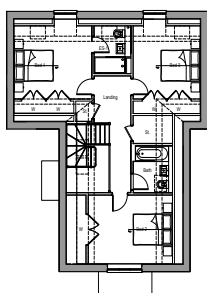
The proposed homes will provide a living experience that will reach out from the principle rooms and will bring the landscape inside.

### SCHEDULE OF ACCOMMODATION

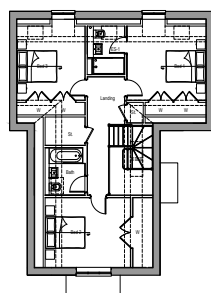
Plot No	Bedrooms	Baths	Total area sq.ft
1	Type 1	3B6P	1,800
2	Type 2	3B6P	1,800
3	Type 3	3B6P	1,800
4	Type 4	3B6P	1,800
<b>Total</b>			<b>7,200</b>

### PROPOSED HOUSETYPES | FLOOR PLANS

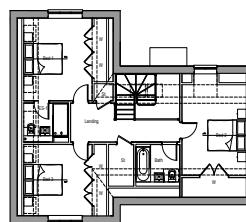
HOUSETYPE 1 | FIRST FLOOR



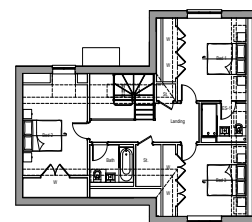
HOUSETYPE 2 | FIRST FLOOR



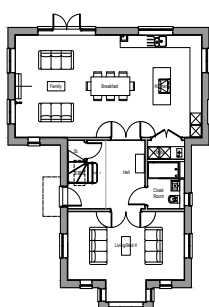
HOUSETYPE 3 | FIRST FLOOR



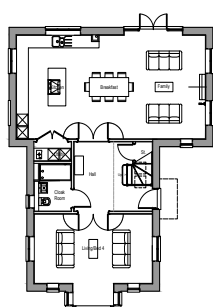
HOUSETYPE 4 | FIRST FLOOR



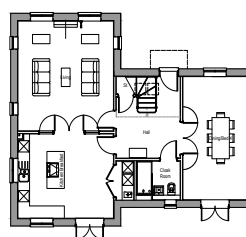
HOUSETYPE 1 | GROUND FLOOR



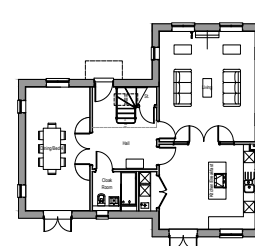
HOUSETYPE 2 | GROUND FLOOR



HOUSETYPE 3 | GROUND FLOOR



HOUSETYPE 4 | GROUND FLOOR





Proposed site layout

Key

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Existing vehicular and pedestrian access retained</li> <li>2 Proposed tarmac entrance.</li> <li>3 Proposed homezone arrangement creating a pedestrian friendly zone, treated with permeable paving</li> <li>4 Proposed trees and landscaping along site boundary</li> <li>5 Proposed feature trees to turning head</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6 Proposed hedge planting along homezone</li> <li>7 Proposed homes - Plots 1-4</li> <li>8 Generous setback from main road with landscaping in foreground</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

## B. Scale and Appearance

The designs have been generated to reflect the features of the wider local vernacular, with the stylistic approach for the new dwellings to reflect the quality of the Victorian expression that would fit appropriately in this location.

This style of architecture responds to its immediate setting, through the adoption of Victorian detailing that would achieve harmony with the surrounding built form and landscape, through proposed colour palette, materials proportions and fenestration details, as expressed by the simplicity of form, tiled roofs, wide eaves with simple exposed rafters and bracketed porches.

The elevations have been designed to reflect chalet style properties with first floor accommodation located within the roofspace. This approach moderates the scale, form and massing of the proposed dwellings. The resulting front facades of the two dwellings facing Ashford Road are not dominated by the car but are instead framed by the proposed landscaping, providing a high quality landscape led scheme design with its own sense of space and expressing an appropriate quality for an edge of development location.



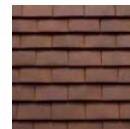
Local materials and vernacular



- Key
- Clay roof tiles
  - Slate roof tiles
  - Facing brick 1
  - Facing brick 2
  - ▲ Contrasting brick for arches/detailing

### MATERIALS

Clay Roof Tiles



Contrasting brick for arches/detailing



Slate Roof Tiles



Facing brick 1



Facing brick 2



HOUSETYPE 1

FRONT



SIDE/REAR



HOUSETYPE 2

FRONT



SIDE/REAR



HOUSETYPE 3

FRONT



SIDE/REAR



HOUSETYPE 4

FRONT



SIDE/REAR



## C. Landscaping

Soft landscaping is an important feature of the local area. The primary layer of the proposed landscape strategy will be careful consideration and retention of the existing trees along the sites eastern boundary. Proposals reinforce and create an environment for these trees to grow and thrive. A tree survey has been carried out for this application.

Proposed landscaping will include new tree planting along the site boundaries as well as feature planting pockets within the site.

A landscape buffer of Laurel hedging is proposed to the northern boundary (White Pillars) which is further reinforced with feature native trees.

Proposed trees will include potential for bird and bat boxes to enhance biodiversity across the site. Proposed shrub and hedge planting will run along the internal street and will assist in settling the building footprint into the surrounding and avoid a hard interface. Hard landscaping will consist of dark coloured tarmac for the immediate entrance. The homezone, including the turning head, will be designed with permeable block paving.



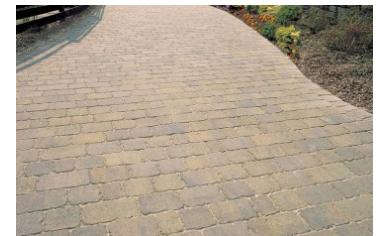
Proposed site layout



Existing neighbouring trees to be safeguarded



Proposed fastigiate tree and hedge planting



Buff and grey block paving



Proposed bird and bat boxes

# 6. Access Statement

## A. Proposed Access

The proposal includes re-use of the existing access from A20/Ashford Road. The change of use is not considered to generate a significant increase in traffic movements over the intensive existing use. Hence the access location should be acceptable for the proposed scheme. This will serve as an all modes access for cars, pedestrians and cyclists.

The proposed development does not include any physical or social barriers to accessibility. The site is physically level and accesses directly to pedestrian and vehicular networks. Access to the building will be in accordance with Part M of the Building Regulations and latest Approved Document B (Fire Safety).

## B. Parking and Servicing

The adopted parking standard contained within Kent Design Guide's Interim Guidance Note 3 of Residential Parking (IGN3) requires each of the 3 bedroom houses to have 2 independently accessible spaces.

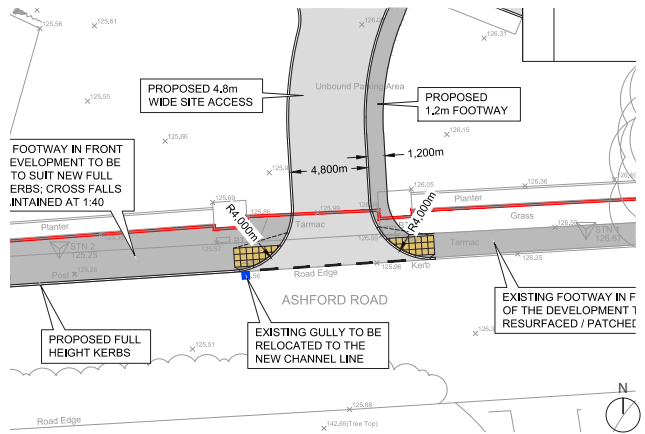
The submitted plans propose 8 independently allocated accessible parking spaces along with cycle storage and electric charging points. The proposal would therefore meet the required parking standards.



Parking Plan

### Key

- Car Parking Space
- Location of cycle storage
- Location of electric charging point



Proposed access

## 7. Conclusion

The site is previously developed land and is in a highly sustainable location within easy reach of local facilities. The existing cabaret club proposed for demolition as part of the development is of no heritage significance, and therefore its removal will have no negative impact upon the character. Alongside the significant opportunity of providing an accessible and sustainable development, the site also offers the opportunity to provide for much needed smaller family homes that will cater to local needs and will meet the Council's housing needs. Pre-application response has established the principle of a residential development on this site.

The appraisal process has identified a clear and justified design and access solution for the site. This has been based upon a thorough appraisal of the site and the surrounding area. It has drawn upon the physical context of the site and the surrounding area. The proposed development is considered to represent an appropriate edge development and providing a welcoming feature to the small hamlet that exists between Dickley Lane and Ashford Road. The site has the backdrop of buildings fronting onto Dickley Lane and foreground of the tree lined Ashford Road.

The proposal will create a softer landscape arrangement that puts landscaping in the foreground and buildings as the background. It has been designed with a considered massing that sensitively blends in with the surrounding built form and tree lined foreground along with high quality materials that will add richness and create a distinctive feel will positively contribute to the street scene along Ashford Road.

In order to combat the climate crisis, the proposals have accommodated the need for electric car charging points with every home to advocate use of electric cars and will provide biodiversity improvements.

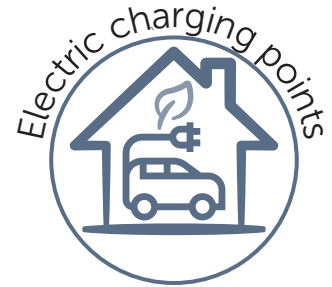
At all stages in the formulation of the proposals, maintaining the character and appearance of the area and protecting the character of the wider setting has been paramount. This has been achieved whilst providing quality family dwellings that are sustainable, landscape led proposal and aesthetically pleasing architectural design. As explained through this statement, the development proposal demonstrably complies with development plan policies and proposes a high quality scheme for this site.



Proposed street elevation (north) of housetype 3



## Development benefits



Proposed street elevation (south) of housetype 2

