



Land at Aurea-Norma, The Dene, Ropley

Planning, Design & Access Statement



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1. Statement of Purpose

- 1.1. The Statement is submitted in support of a Planning Application for the erection of 5 residential dwellings, with associated access, garages, parking and landscaping.
- 1.2. The application is made in Full, with the Statement providing an assessment of the proposals against those policies included within the Development Plan, while cross-referring to the supporting documentation and drawings submitted in support of the Planning Application.
- 1.3. The Planning Application follows a previous Planning Application for nine residential dwellings, Reference 55041, withdrawn in January 2023.



2. The Application Site

- 2.1 Measuring some 0.34ha, inclusive of the access drive, the application site lies within the village of Ropley Dean and consists of the former Woolheads Builders Yard and Aurea Norma, a residential property, and part of the rear garden of rose Cottage.
- 2.2 Lying north of the A31, the site rises from south to north and is accessed via a driveway located between existing residential dwellings. The site largely open with a number of trees on the boundaries, with residential use located to the south, east and west. To the north, the application site is bounded by an open parcel of land, which has previously been identified within the emerging Local Plan for allocation, however, the planning application concerns only the land located within the defined settlement boundary with appropriate access retained for the northern parcel of land.

Figure 1: Site Location Plan



3. Contextual Analysis

3.1 In assessing and analysing the context of any site, it is important to have regard to the townscape and architecture, while responding positively to that which prevails.

3.2 As a bespoke house builder, Orchard Homes is able to avoid the use of standard house types, which in turn allows each development to respond fully to the local context. This section sets out how the proposal has responded.

Pattern of existing development & microclimate

3.3 The prevailing character and density of Ropley is one of medium density, detached residential properties set within their own plots. Ropley Dean in itself is rectangular in nature, having extended northwards from the A31 through the 20th Century between Station Hill and Bighton Hill.

Height, scale, form and elevational treatments

3.5 Whether fronting the A31 or set within small cul-de-sacs, existing residential dwellings are typically formed over two stories, with materials typically being a red facing brick with small examples of flint.

Uses of buildings, land, and Landscape Features

3.6 The predominate land use is residential, with the Watercress Railway line located to the north of the settlement. The A31 dominates the southern fringe of the village, with the east, west and north typified by open fields.

Topography, Views, and Orientation

3.7 There is limited intervisibility between the application site and the public domain, with existing residential development to the south screening the site from the A31 thoroughfare. The land rises gently from north to south, akin to neighbouring properties to the east and west.

Neighbours

3.8 There exists residential properties to the west, east and south of the application, between which the application driveway passes between.

Protected features & existing buildings worthy of retention

3.9 There are no protected features within the application site and the existing property holds no historic or architectural value that could warrant a listing.



- 3.11 There are no listed buildings, or land subject to ecological designation that would affect the development.

Boundary Treatment

- 3.12 The site benefits from existing hedging and trees on its boundaries, which help limit the intervisibility between the application site and the surrounding area.

Water features and flood risk

- 3.13 There are no water features within close proximity to the application site, which lies within Flood Zone 1.

4 Planning History

- 4.1 The application site has been the subject of the recent planning application, lodged in February 2022 and withdrawn in January 2023, ref 55041. The application sought the approval of nine residential dwellings, formed of both detached and semi-detached properties.

Figure 2: Site Layout Planning Application 55041



- 4.2 The proposal attracted a number of concerns raised by the planning authority, primarily emanating from the number of new homes proposed and in the view of the LPA resulting concerns over insufficient amenity space, parking and turning, relationship with trees and architectural detail.
- 4.3 In presenting these concerns, the Case Officer Ms Lisa Gill, advised that *'I consider that the site is more suited to a development of 4/5 dwellings which would allow more spacious plots in keeping with the character of the local area, suitable amenity space, more landscaping, greater parking/turning area, further distance away from the protected trees and greater separation distance between the proposed and existing dwellings'* (Email 26th May 2022).

4.4 Having considered this advice received, the applicant concluded to withdraw the planning application and taking on board this advice, reassess the opportunities and constraints of the site in light of the comments received in respect of the density, built form and the technical aspects of drainage and wastewater treatment, all of which have shaped the proposals as set out within Section 5 following a review of the context once more.

Figure 3: Front elevation Plot 1 and 2, application reference 55041



5 The Proposal

- 5.1. The planning application seeks Full Planning Approval for the *'demolition of the existing residential dwelling and office and the erection of five residential dwelling houses, with associated access, landscaping and parking'*.
- 5.2. The proposal has considered at length the previous planning application and the responses received, reducing the number of dwellings from nine to five, with improved private amenity space, parking and turning.
- 5.3. When entering the site and in comparison to the previous application, the housing has been set back, allowing for improved landscaping at the entrance way and improved separation distances to the houses to the south, east and west.

Figure 4: Site Layout



- 5.4. The greatest change to the previous application concerns the eastern boundary, where previously there was sited five properties, there is now two detached new homes with

extended curtilage. Much of this eastern boundary is taken up by an extended turning area and drainage field to serve the new properties, the latter of which will be laid to grass.

- 5.5. Each property benefits from on plot parking in the form of garaging and parking spaces provided to standard, with the exception of Plot 1 which has two allocated parking spaces to the side of the property. An additional visitor space is provided to serve the development as per the requirements.
- 5.6. In respect of housing mix, the proposal provides for three x 4 bedroom properties and two x 3 bedroom properties, set within a range of house sizes to provide choice in the marketplace, while also reflecting the prevailing character of the locality of detached properties set within their own plots.

Figure 5: Plot 1 front elevation



- 5.7. Measuring 0.34ha and with a proposed 5 dwellings, the scheme would provide for circa 15 dwellings per hectare, which is considered appropriate for the constraints and opportunities presented at the application site, and in line with the previous advice received from the Local Planning Authority.

Figure 6: Plot 5 front elevation



- 5.8. Architecturally, the proposed housing is traditional in its form with the use of facing brick (Plot 1 and 2) and render (Plot 3, 4 and 5) to provide a variety to the palette of materials, with casement windows and either brick or stone headers.
- 5.9. Noting the previous objection to the asymmetrical roof design and flat dormer windows, these have been eradicated with a shallow pitch roof applied to each of the properties, in turn reducing the mass of the new homes, with the architectural approach focusing on the symmetry of the properties and their proportions.
- 5.10. As noted, wastewater will be treated via a mini treatment plant on site, with the required drainage field and separation distances provided. This drainage field will remain in the ownership of the Management Company to be provided as part of the development.
- 5.11. In advance of lodging the planning application, the applicant has liaised with the Parish Council, Ropley Society and neighbouring residents to update and share details of the new proposals following the withdrawal of the previous planning application.

Figure 7: Plot 4 Front Elevation





6 The Development Plan

- 6.1. The Development Plan consists of the Joint Core Strategy (Part 1 Local Plan) adopted in 2014, and the Housing and Employment Allocations (Part 2 Local Plan) adopted in 2016.

Principle of Development

- 6.2. The application site falls within the settlement boundary for Ropley Dean, and therefore the principle of new residential development is supported in such a sustainable location. A review of the previous consultee responses and advice received from East Hampshire District Council at the time, does not point to any in principle objection to the land coming forward for residential use.
- 6.3. In line with Policy CP2 and CP10 of the Joint Core Strategy, the net gain of 4 residential dwellings within Ropley Dean supports the Council's objective of delivering its required number of new homes within a sustainable location, with the mix of sizes of properties providing choice within the local marketplace.

Affordable Housing

- 6.4. Policy CP13 of the Joint Core Strategy has been superseded by the National Planning Policy Framework and its direction to Local Planning Authorities not to seek an affordable housing on sites that are not Major Developments. With 5 dwellings proposed, the development would also fall below the threshold for designated rural areas. As such, no policy position exists to require affordable housing tenure on site.

Biodiversity

- 6.5. The proposal and its layout has been designed around the necessary mitigation to account for the population of slow worms and foraging routes for bats identified at the application site. The previous application proposed to provide for a mitigation zone on the fringe of the rear gardens, with this area now specifically designed around the wider drainage field location. Full details are provided within the accompanying Ecology Report prepared by Peach Ecology.

Employment

- 6.6. As originally submitted as part of the previous Planning Application to address Policy CP4, this application is accompanied by a Commercial Viability Report, which demonstrates that the re-use of the former employment premises for commercial purposes would not be viable. From the conclusions of the previous planning application process in advance of the application being withdrawn, no objection to the Report had been raised, and therefore no conflict with Policy CP4 identified.

Design

- 6.7. As identified within the contextual analysis and in the commentary given on the previous planning application design, the architectural approach in responding to Policy CP29 has been to simplify the architectural design and materials, to those that reflect the prevailing vernacular within Ropley Dean, as well as reducing the scale and mass of the properties themselves. This approach, coupled with the improved amenity space and landscaping responds to the requirements of Policy CP29 of the Joint Core Strategy.

Figure 8: Figure Ground drawing



- 6.8. As shown within Figure 8, an analysis of the surrounding area has been undertaken in determining the plot size and ratio to built form, with the resulting scheme shown to be in keeping with this grain of development, while making more efficient use of the land.

Nutrient Neutrality

- 6.9. Being located within the Itchen River Catchment and with a net gain in residential dwellings, the Local Planning Authority will be required to undertake an Appropriate Assessment of the application in line within the Habitat Regulations.
- 6.10. The following calculations provide for the baseline position, which includes the land area and land uses currently occupying the site, and thereafter, the position in respect of the 5 new properties and the resulting net position.

- 6.11. As existing, the site comprises the existing residential property of Aurea-Norma, with its associated septic tank, associated residential gardens of Aurea-Norma and part of Rose Cottage, as well as the residual area of the former commercial use. To form the baseline position, Natural England’s Calculator has been used to generate the current Nitrate and Phosphate load of the baseline condition, which is set out within Table 1.

Table 1: Baseline position

No. of dwellings	1
Deducible Loading	Yes
Water Usage	120 litres
WWTW	Septic Tank Default
Existing use	Residential Urban Lane (0.19ha) / Commercial (0.15)
Future use	Residential Urban Lane (0.19ha) / Commercial (0.15)*
Phosphate Load	1.46kg
Nitrate Load	11.9kg

*Baseline position does not include change of use, hence the existing and proposed land use are the same

- 6.12. As per the application submission, the proposal includes for a package treatment plant and drainage field located within the red line of the application site. Details of the Klargestar to be used have been provided, which include the efficiency rating for the removal of nitrates and phosphates at the point of treatment.

Table 2: Development proposal

No. of dwellings	5
Deducible Loading	Yes
Water Usage	120 litres
WWTW	Package Treatment Plan
Existing use	Residential Urban Lane (0.19ha) / Commercial (0.15)
Future use	Residential Urban Lane (0.34ha)
Klargester Mg TP/Litre	0.3
Phosphate Load	0.27kg
Klargester Mg TN/Litre	17.9
Nitrate Load	11.41kg

- 6.13. As a result of the removal of the existing use, 1.46kg of phosphate and 11.9kg of nitrate / year load will be lost and replaced with 0.27kg of phosphate and 11.41kg of nitrate / year, resulting in a net improvement of -1.19kg of phosphates and -0.49kg of nitrates.
- 6.14. Two conclusions therefore can be drawn from the assessment of the proposal against the current baseline position; firstly, the proposed development is nutrient neutral in respect of both phosphate and nitrate load, given the net position when comparing the baseline and proposed loads. Secondly, there is a betterment created, which as recently agreed with Natural England and following the implementation with the Somerset Council’s, such



betterment can be utilised elsewhere as 'credits' to offset the nutrient load on other development schemes.

- 6.15. Such a use of credits will be controlled via a Legal Agreement to be drafted with the Local Planning Authority, so as to control the use of the credits generated elsewhere. For the purposes of the AA assessment for this planning application however, the position is neutrality has been achieved and no third party credits is required to offset.



7 Conclusions

- 7.1. The Planning, Design & Access Statement supports the submission of a revised Planning Application on land at Aurea-Norma, following the withdrawal of a nine dwelling proposal earlier in 2023.
- 7.2. The design, scale and massing of the proposal has emanated from a contextual analysis and a review of the opportunities and constraints as they exist, while responding to the advice received from the Local Planning Authority during the previous planning application process.
- 7.3. The result is a proposal for five dwellings of a palette that responds to the local vernacular of brick and render, with a simplified, classical architectural approach and improved plot size over that which went before. This, in combination with a dedicated area for the proposed drainage field, provides for a considered approach with improved green space, while also providing for the ecology mitigation and required off set distances to the protected trees.
- 7.4. Having considered the proposal against the pertinent Policies contained within the Development Plan, it is considered that there is no conflict and as such, we would respectfully ask that the planning application be approved.