



Design & Access Statement

**Summeryards, Colman's Ash Lane,
Kemsing, Kent, TN15 6XD**

May 2023

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1, This Design & Access Statement has been compiled to support the application for the demolition of the existing detached dwelling and outbuildings and the construction of a replacement detached dwelling and outbuilding, along with associated landscaping works at Summeryards, Cotman's Ash Lane, Kemsing, Kent, TN15 6XD.

1.2, This document should be read in conjunction with the topographical survey, ecological information and supporting planning drawings.

1.3, This statement analyses the characteristics of the surrounding area and identifies key design and policy issues that have been considered in preparing the scheme.

1.4, It then concludes with an executive summary of the proposed development.

2.0 SITE LOCATION AND ASSESSMENT

2.1, The application site is not located within a Conservation Area, nor is the building listed or locally listed. There are also no Tree Protection Orders on site. The property is however situated within the Metropolitan Green Belt and Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

2.2, The property sits within a very generous plot of approximately 160m width by 116m in depth. This is notably larger than neighbouring properties. Set back from the road, Summeryards is hidden from public view by existing mature landscaping. There is therefore no immediate context which it relates to, nor is it part of a defined street scene.

2.3, The site currently accommodates a detached, two storey residential dwelling. This is served by a detached garage building, as well as two further garden outbuildings.

2.4, The existing dwelling is of no architectural merit and has a slightly tired appearance. Finished with roof tiles and red brick, it is fairly typical of the surrounding area. Strung out in a line, the building form on site does give it a spread-out appearance.

2.5, Accessed from Cotman's Ash Lane, Summeryards has an existing entrance crossover and access driveway.

2.6, The site currently benefits from an extant planning consent for the construction of a single storey rear extension, Ref: 23/01460/LDCPR.

3.0 EXISTING SITE PHOTOGRAPHS



Photo 1, Photograph looking at the existing house as seen from the rear garden. Note the retaining wall to the front that supports the amenity terrace behind.



Photo 2, Photograph looking towards the side flank elevation of the property as seen from the east.



Photo 3, Photograph looking towards the front of the property.



Photo 4, Photograph looking towards the front of the property.



Photo 5, Photo as seen from the western flank elevation.



Photo 6, Photograph looking towards garage 1.



Photo 7, Photograph looking towards garage 1.



Photo 8, Photograph looking towards garage 2 to the east of the site.

4.0 PROPOSED DESIGN STRATEGY

Amount

4.1, The existing house is a detached, 1.5 storey residential property. This also benefits from a Lawful Development Certificate application, Ref: 23/01460/LDCPR. This confirms that a single storey rear extension can lawfully be constructed on site without the need for planning consent.

4.2, Sevenoaks Green Belt policy GB4, which relates to replacement dwellings in the Green Belt allows for replacement properties of up to 50% compared to the 'original' dwelling. In this instance the 'original' dwelling was extended in the early 60's. As confirmed the site does also benefit from an extant Lawful Development Certificate, Ref: for the extension of the dwelling. In addition to the house and garage, there are two further outbuildings to the east that give the site more of a spread-out nature.

4.3, The existing property, as shown in photos 1 to 5, as well as the Site Layout Plan, sits within a well screened and very large residential curtilage. It is also dated, and in need of attention to bring it up to modern standards and environmental performance.

4.4, Considering this it is proposed to demolish the existing dwelling and outbuildings, and argue Very Special Circumstances for the construction of a replacement dwelling and garage. These are set out below and later in this document.

4.5, As shown in the massing appendix, the existing building along with the single storey rear extension that can be lawfully constructed measures:

- Existing Building Volume: **973.3m³**
- Existing Gross External Area: **345.1m²**
- Existing Building Footprint: **253.0m²**

4.6, In contrast the proposed scheme has been designed so that it has a proposed massing of:

- Proposed Building Volume: **970.6m³ (0.2% Reduction)**
- Proposed Gross External Area: **317.7m² (7.9% Reduction)**
- Proposed Building Footprint: **204.7m² (19.0% Reduction)**

4.7, As such it is clear that the proposals represent a reduction in Volume, Footprint and Gross External Area compared to what is on site and could lawfully be constructed.

Note: As the basement is entirely subterranean, this has been excluded from the calculations above.

4.8, In addition to this the scheme has numerous other material benefits to the openness of the Green Belt as discussed in 6.0, Scale.

4.9, The existing house accommodates 4 no. bedrooms. The proposed scheme also proposes 4 / 5 no. bedrooms.

4.10, Currently there is space to park approximately 2-3no. vehicles to the front of the site. This will remain as existing with the driveway layout only being altered very slightly. Note: these parking areas exclude the existing and proposed garage.

5.0 PROPOSED DESIGN STRATEGY

LAYOUT / LANDSCAPING

5.1, Care has been taken to ensure that the proposed new scheme has been designed in a manner that minimises its impact on what is an attractive garden with mature landscaping and trees. Indeed, no changes are proposed to the boundary landscaping that screens the site.

5.2, The site currently benefits from an existing entrance crossover onto Cotman's Ash Lane in the northwest corner. This is to remain unchanged.

5.3, The existing driveway is also to remain largely unchanged and as a result will have no impact on the trees or landscaping in the immediate vicinity. It is however proposed to adjust the driveway layout slightly, adjacent to the new house. This is however away from the trees to the north, and therefore will have no material impact on these.

5.4, The proposed new dwelling is located largely on top of the existing building footprint. As such the scheme will cause no harm to areas of the site currently free from built form.

5.5, As discussed it is proposed to demolish the existing house, garage and two further outbuildings. This creates a more spread-out appearance on site. In contrast the replacement dwelling and garage are more condensed in the site, with a footprint which is 19% smaller than existing. As such this has a material benefit to the perceived openness of the site.

5.6, To the rear of the replacement dwelling it is proposed to form an amenity terrace, which benefits from steps down to the rear garden. This is much like the existing property.

5.7, This terrace then wraps around to the east and connects with existing hardstanding.

5.8, As discussed in the supporting ecology reports, the proposals will have no material impact on the sites ecological value. Indeed, it is proposed to enhance onsite biodiversity. Further details of onsite enhancements can be found on drawing 5428 PD10 and within the ecology reports.

6.0 PROPOSED DESIGN STRATEGY

SCALE

6.1, As confirmed in 4.0 Scale, the proposed dwelling represents a reduction in Gross External Area, Footprint and Volume in comparison to the existing dwelling on site which has lawful permission for a single storey rear extension. As such it immediately results in an improvement to the openness of the Green Belt.

6.2, With its flat roof the building is some 500mm lower in relation to the existing dwellings ridge line. There is therefore a further notable improvement to the openness of the site as a result.

6.3, This is further enhanced by condensing the footprint of the building onsite by some 19.0%. As discussed, when viewed from the rear of the site, which is the most open aspect, the building is some 1.0m narrower at first floor level than existing. It also removes the two outbuildings to the east, and therefore condenses the perceived spread of development across the site.

6.4, The proposed building is located on top of the existing building footprint, ensuring that there is no spread of built form into currently open areas.

7.0 PROPOSED DESIGN STRATEGY

APPEARANCE

7.1, The existing dwelling is of no architectural merit and has a slightly tired appearance. Finished with roof tiles and red brick, it is fairly typical of the surrounding area.

7.2, As discussed already to the rear of the existing property there is a stone retaining wall that forms the amenity terrace where the land falls away. This varies in height from around 1.4m – 0.7m and stretches the full width of the property. The sense of scale is further emphasised by the existing garage and outbuildings that stretch away to the east.

7.3, In contrast the new dwelling will be contemporary in nature with a flat grass roof and rear facing terrace. The building will be finished with a brick base and metal cladding to the first floor. Finished with full height glazing the property will benefit from views down the garden.

7.4, It should be noted that the site is located within the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and as such consideration on how the building impacts the local landscaping is a material planning consideration. However, contemporary dwellings are still acceptable in an AONB setting, the recent approval at Freeways, Stick Hill, Ref: 22/03432/FUL is an example. Here the officer concluded that there was no observed street scene, which allowed for innovation. The scheme here which they confirmed utilised high-quality materials, along with a green roof, would help blend the property into the landscaping. The site was also highly screened by existing landscaping. These points would all apply to the proposals at Summeryards, and as such the design would be acceptable.

7.5, The ancillary garage, which is to be located on top of the existing detached garage, will replicate the material specification and detailing seen on the main replacement dwelling.

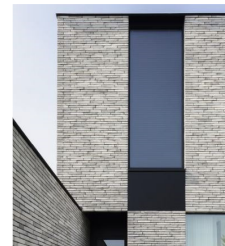
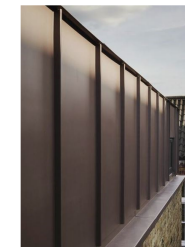


Fig 1, Indicative Materials Palette, including a green roof, light brick work to the base with a metal clad first floor. The windows at the upper level will include a recessed element, in part and full height glazing to both the ground and first floors.

8.0 PROPOSED DESIGN STRATEGY

USE / ACCESS

8.1, The property is currently used for C3 Dwelling House purposes. This will remain unchanged as part of the proposals.

8.2, Entry into the site is via an existing entrance crossover onto Cotman's Ash Lane with a gated access that then leads to an existing driveway. This is to remain unchanged as part of the construction works.

8.3, The driveway itself is again remaining almost entirely unchanged with the only alteration being around the house. Here the driveway is to be enlarged slightly to the south and closer to the replacement dwelling. Importantly the alterations have no effect on the surrounding landscaping or ecology.

8.4, To the front and rear level thresholds are proposed, as required by Building Regulations Approved Document Part M.

9.0 VERY SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

9.1, The principle of the demolition of the existing dwelling and constructing a replacement dwelling is acceptable, however due to the more limited scale of the 'original' dwelling Very Special Circumstances are proposed:

9.2, In relation to the buildings scale and bulk, which is the principal consideration in the Green Belt the Very Special Circumstances are:

- Reduction in Proposed Building Volume: **970.6m³ (0.2% Reduction)**
- Reduction in Proposed Gross External Area: **317.7m² (7.9% Reduction)**
- Reduction in Proposed Building Footprint: **204.7m² (19.0% Reduction)**
- Reduced ridge height of 500mm.
- Very similar ground floor width, but with a reduced width at first floor of approximately 1m.
- Built form located largely on top of existing built form with reduced perceived spread of built form.
- The building sits within a very large, but well screened site, that restricts wider views, as such the dwelling is well hidden in its context.

As such the proposed replacement house and garage represents a reduction in built form in comparison to the existing dwelling (which can be lawfully extended to the rear) and outbuildings. Therefore, in comparison the proposed scheme represents a material improvement to the openness of the Green Belt.

9.3, The scheme will also remove a poor-quality structure and replace this with a much more thermally efficient dwelling.

9.4, The proposals will enhance onsite biodiversity value with the introduction of the sedum grass roof and additional biodiversity enhancements within the site and on the building.

10.0 SUMMARY

10.1, The scheme benefits from a number of Very Special Circumstances which justify the demolition of the existing dwelling and outbuildings and the construction of a replacement detached property and garage.

10.2, Considering its context and the scale of the exiting site, it is felt that there will be no harm to the openness of the Green Belt. Indeed, the proposals will result in an improvement to the openness of the area when compared to the existing dwelling along with its lawful consent for a single storey rear extension.

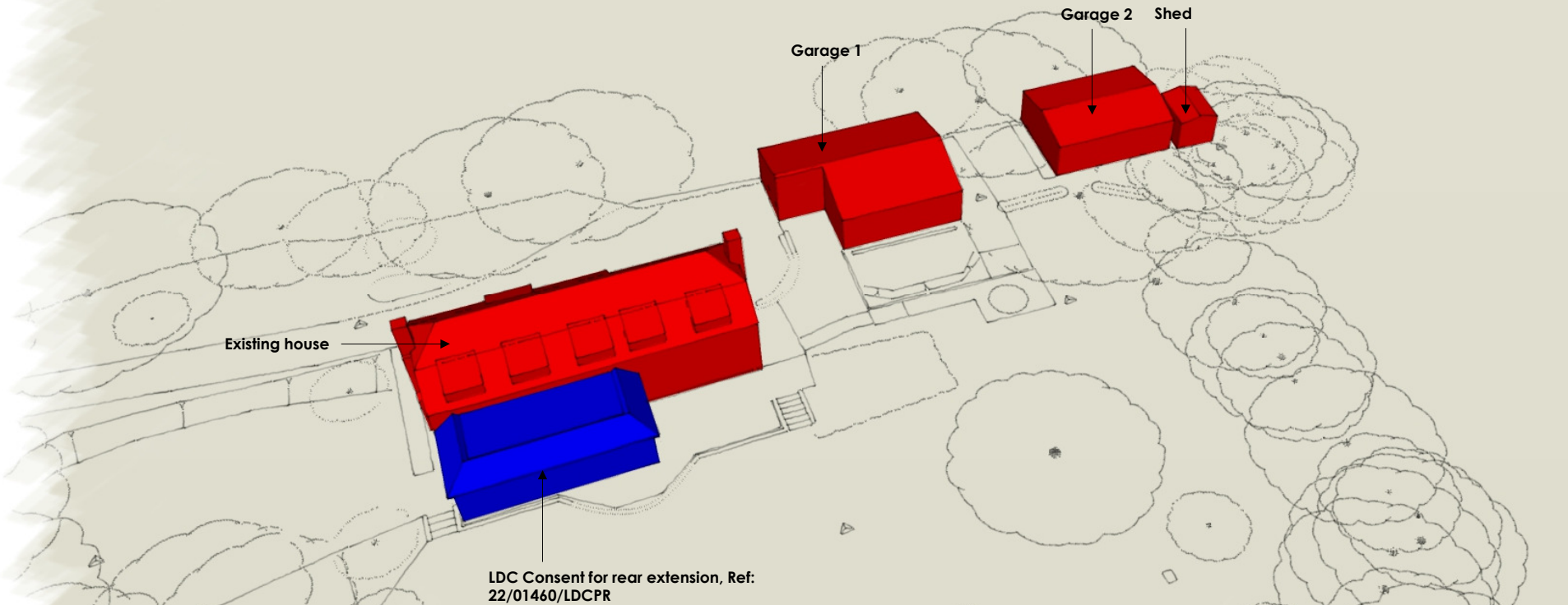
10.3, The scheme will also allow for the construction of a much more sustainable and thermally efficient dwelling that has a number of biodiversity enhancements including the green sedum roof.

10.4, Whilst more modern in form and appearance, the building is in fact constructed with materials commonly found in the wider area, and as such it will sit comfortably with its context. In addition, this is largely screened from view by the mature landscaping, and as such there is not impact on the wider AONB and Green Belt.

APPENDIX A

MASSING STUDY

EXISTING / CONSENTED MASSING



Building Volume

Existing House 521.4m³
LDC Consent 124.4m³

Garage 1 196.5m³
Garage 2 114.7m³
Shed 16.3m³

973.3m³

Gross External Area

Existing House 189.7m²
LDC Consent 37.6m²

Garage 1 66.9m²
Garage 2 43.5m²
Shed 7.4m²

345.1m²

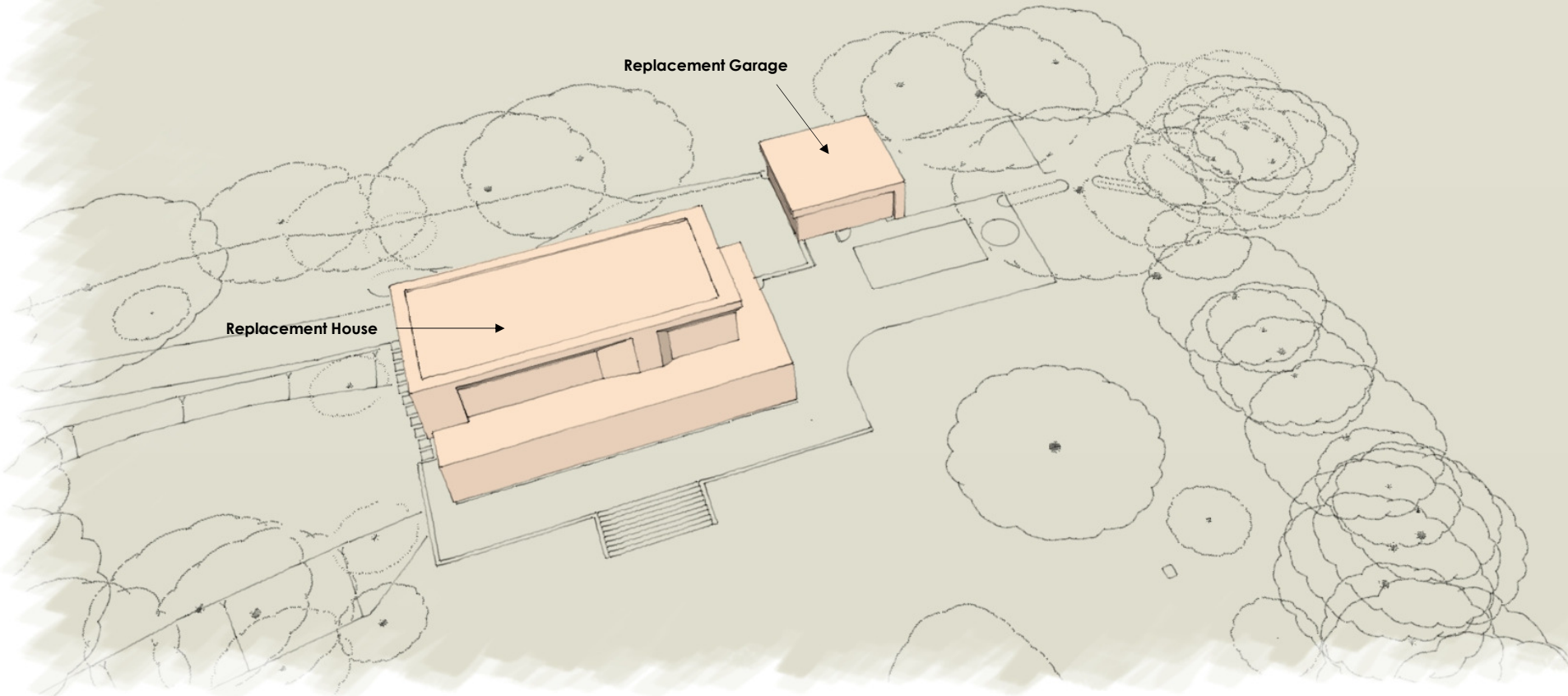
Footprint

Existing House 97.6m²
LDC Consent 37.6m²

Garage 1 66.9m²
Garage 2 43.5m²
Shed 7.4m²

253.0m²

PROPOSED MASSING



Building Volume

Replacement house 856.8m³
Replacement Garage 113.8m³

970.6.0m³

0.2% Reduction

Gross External Area

Replacement house 278.4m²
Replacement Garage 39.3m²

317.7m²

7.9% Reduction

Footprint

Replacement house 165.4m²
Replacement Garage 39.3m²

204.7m²

19.0% Reduction