

## DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Full Planning Application for a  
Residential Development of 4No. Dwellings:  
Station Road,  
Rushden,  
Northants  
NN10 9TP



Prepared by Blueprint Architectural Design, November 2023

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## **Introduction**

This Design and Access statement has been produced in support of a Full Planning Application for the construction of a new residential development of 4No. dwellings. It is submitted by Blueprint Architectural Design on behalf of Mr and Mrs Hughes ('the client') who are the owners of the site in Rushden, Northamptonshire.

This document contains a description of the proposed works and is to be read in conjunction with the following drawings/documents:

- 22-124-01 (latest revision) Existing Site Plan
- 22-124-03 (latest revision) Proposed Floor Plans & Elevations
- 22-124-04 (latest revision) Proposed Site Plan
- 22-124-08 (latest revision) Proposed Street Scene
- 22-124-09 (latest revision) Existing Site Location Plan & Proposed Block Plan
- 22-124-10 (latest revision) Proposed Site Plan (showing site levels/positions of sections)
- 22-124-11 (latest revision) Proposed Street Sections
- 22-124-12 (latest revision) Proposed Vehicle Tracking
- 22-124-13 (latest revision) Proposed Landscaping Plan
- Calculation of Biodiversity Net Gain & Small Sites Metric
- Parking Survey

## **Location**

The site to which this submission relates is situated on Station Road near to the corner of Moor Road in the centre of Rushden and lies outside of the Rushden Conservation Area. It is a predominantly residential neighbourhood but there are a number of small business premises within the vicinity including the Jack & Jill Day Nursery which the development plot was formerly a part of.



*Image 1 – View of the site from Google Earth*



The site was under utilised outdoor play area that was not required by the pre-school nursery when it was purchased by the client. The application site, outlined in red, has an area of approximately 685m<sup>2</sup>, whilst the frontage of the site measures 22.5 metres. The site boundaries are currently demarked by fencing on all sides.



*Image 2 – View of boundary facing Station Road*

### **Planning History**

**13/01168/FUL** - Change of Use from youth centre (sui generis) to children's nursery and after school club (D1) **Permitted 23-08-2013.**

**14/00007/FUL** - Erection of an external canopy to the northern side of the nursery building & make up of external ground level to outside play area). **Permitted 27-02-2014.**

**17/00135/FUL** - Single storey front extension. **Permitted 27-02-2017.**

**NE/21/00145/OUT** – Residential Development for 3 Dwellings including access and amenity. **Refused 26-03-2021.**

**NE/22/00483/FUL** – Two semi-detached 2-storey dwellings including access, parking and amenity space. **Permitted 20-06-2022.**

**NE/23/00176/FUL** – Residential Development of 4No dwellings. **Refused 28-07-2023.**

### **Layout**

It is intended to position the proposed dwellings within the site so that adequate private amenity space can be created to the rear of the properties with parking to the front accessed from Station Road. The front space will also include suitable space for waste/recycling collection and soft landscaping.

### **Amount**

The intention of the applicant is to apply for full planning approval for 4No. 3 storey (2<sup>nd</sup> floor within roof space), 3 bedroom dwellings (2 pairs of semi-detached houses).

The new dwellings would be 3 Bedroom, 5 person houses with generous rear gardens and landscaping to the front parking area. The new dwellings have been designed to meet the Technical Housing Space Standards to ensure the living conditions are suitable and in accordance with the council recommendations.

### **Scale**

We are proposing that the slab height for the new dwelling be approximately 75-250mm above the existing sloping ground level. The ridge height of the new dwellings would be just under 8.7m (which is not much higher than the ridge heights of the existing houses opposite which are 8.2m & 8.5m high) with an eaves height of approximately 4.725m. The ridge and eaves are also lower than the ridge and eaves height of the approved dwellings on the site in application NE/22/00483/FUL - June 2022. The proposed internal area of the dwelling will be approximately 40.8m<sup>2</sup> on the ground floor, 40.8m<sup>2</sup> on the first floor and 19.2m<sup>2</sup> on the second floor.

### **Landscaping**

It is proposed that the area to the front of the new dwellings will be mostly hard standing to allow for parking but will be softened with some low level shrubs. The rear gardens will be mostly lawn with a patio, path and space for bin and bike storage. There are two existing sapling trees which will need to be removed to accommodate the new houses and parking area. Also there is a mature tree on the North-Eastern boundary which will need to be pruned so that the branches are not too close to the houses on Plots 3 & 4. A landscaping scheme & maintenance schedule has been submitted with further details of the proposed plants and introduction of new trees.

### **Access & Parking**

Parking for the new dwellings will be situated to the front of the dwellings. Adequate space has been left behind the parking spaces for vehicles to turn. Tracking diagrams have been submitted to show that all parked vehicles leaving the site can do so in a forward gear at 90° to the Highway. This has maximised visibility while exiting and prevents the driver from straining to look over their shoulder. The proposed means of vehicular access is also more than than 25 metres from the centre line of the adjacent junction to Moor Road.

One parking space has been allocated to each dwelling. This is below the recommended 2 parking spaces for a 3 bedroom dwelling (plus 1 visitor space for 4 dwellings). However, to justify this a Parking Beat Survey has been conducted, the full report has been provided as a separate document. This survey was conducted within the LHA's accepted designated dates on Saturday June 24<sup>th</sup> 2023 and Tuesday June 27<sup>th</sup> 2023.

The survey shows there were 38 on-street spaces in the vicinity on the Saturday and 35 on the Tuesday which corresponds to a stress (occupancy) of 87% and 88% respectively. 29.5 spaces would represent the 90% cut-off that's used as a guide, so the 5 additional parking spaces that are needed to meet the recommended parking provision for the site can be accommodated by available on-street parking spaces.

Over the two days the average of the total available spaces, including the adjacent Station Road public car park, was 51 with 14.5 of those coming from the car park. So, although the on-street parking capacity is already adequate, there is also additional capacity in the car park that could be used. The Planning Inspector when looking at the site in regard of appeal application APP/G2815/W/21/3277115 noted that: *'Any additional car parking requirements for visitors could be accommodated on the adjacent public car park.'*

It is therefore felt that there are enough available nearby off site parking spaces to mitigate the reduced number of on site parking spaces.

### **Appearance**

The external appearance of the proposed houses will be in keeping with the existing houses in the immediate area with Victorian period features such as chimneys, glazing above front doors, sash/bay windows and window sill/lintel details added. The external walls will also be constructed using traditional red brick with a first floor soldier course detail to match the surrounding properties.

**External walls** – Brickwork – Ibstock Leicester Red

**Roof finish** – Tiles – Marley Modern – Smooth Brown

**Windows** – White uPVC Cottage Bar

**Window lintels/sills** – Buff

**Front Door** – Black composite door

**Fascias & Rainwater Goods** – Black uPVC

### **Sustainability & Energy Appraisal**

The new dwelling would be designed in compliance with Part L and Part O of the Building Regulations (as amended) 2022. and the new dwelling will be constructed to meet energy efficiency targets laid out in Part L1.

At technical detailing stage, we would look at renewable energy resources for heating of the dwelling and for provision of hot water in order to achieve this target. As accredited energy assessors, we would also produce the required Energy Performance Certificate. The dwellings would also be subject to an air test and we would specify accredited construction details.

Measures would be incorporated to limit water use to no more than 105 litres per day

The rainwater from the dwelling roofs would be drained to soakaways at the site.

There is ample space to the front of the dwelling for collection of waste and recycling.

### **Disabled Access**

The concept of the design is to promote good disabled access. The access routes to the new dwelling will be designed in compliance with Part M of the Building Regulations, including access to and from the hard-standing areas for wheelchair users wishing to access the property from a parked vehicle. We will propose at full design stage that the design includes a ground floor WC, suitable for wheelchair access. The ground floor interior doors will be 838mm leaf doors, ensuring that wheelchair access can be achieved comfortably.

## Summary

A number of concerns were raised in relation to Application NE/23/00176/FUL which was refused on 28-07-2023. It is felt that this revised application addresses these concerns as follows:

- The proposed dwellings would have very few of the vernacular design details in the surrounding Victorian properties.

**Victorian period features such as chimneys, brick soldier course glazing above front doors, sash/bay windows and window sill/lintel details have been incorporated into the design**

- The scale, height and position of the three storey buildings would mean that they appear dominant in the context of the surrounding area.

**The second floor dormers have been removed so that (other than roof lights) the houses are two storey in appearance. The ridge heights are similar to the houses opposite and are lower than the approved houses on the site in application NE/22/00483/FUL**

- Due to the rectangular areas of hardstanding adjoining both sides of the site, and the lack of screening and landscaping, the site would be open at either side. This would make the buildings more easily visible and prominent within the streetscene;

**Areas of shrub planting and trees have been incorporated into the front parking area to soften their appearance within the streetscene.**

- Good design would ideally seek for the buildings to provide enclosure at the front of the site and for the car parking areas to be ideally located at the rear.

**It is more common for modern houses to have parking to the front to leave adequate amenity space to the rear. Whilst the surrounding Victorian dwellings do not have parking, where modern houses have been introduced a little further down Station Road they have introduced parking to the front.**

- Where parking has to be at the front of homes, screening with robust shrub planting and small trees is normally the best solution to soften the buildings.

**Low level planting has been introduced in front of the parking spaces to screen the parked cars but maintain visibility along the street.**

- The application is reliant on the adjacent public car park to make up for the lack of parking provision

**A parking beat survey has been conducted within the LHA's accepted designated dates which shows that there is sufficient on-street parking provision for 5 additional parking spaces to meet the recommended parking provision for the site. Although not needed, there is no reason why the adjacent car park couldn't also be used.**

- Proposed means of vehicular access shall at no point be less than 25 metres from the centre line of the adjacent junction.

**The vehicular access for the site is more than than 25 metres from the centre line of the adjacent junction to Moor Road.**

- Please note all private drives must meet the highway at 90 degrees. This maximises visibility while exiting and prevents the driver from straining to look over their shoulder.

**Tracking diagrams have been submitted to show that all parked vehicles leaving the site can do so in a forward gear at 90° to the Highway.**

- Failure to provide a 1% Biodiversity Net Gain

**A Biodiversity Calculation/Report has been produced which shows that the proposed development would provide a net gain of 57.21% habitat units.**

We feel that this development should be given consideration for the reasons stated above.

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