

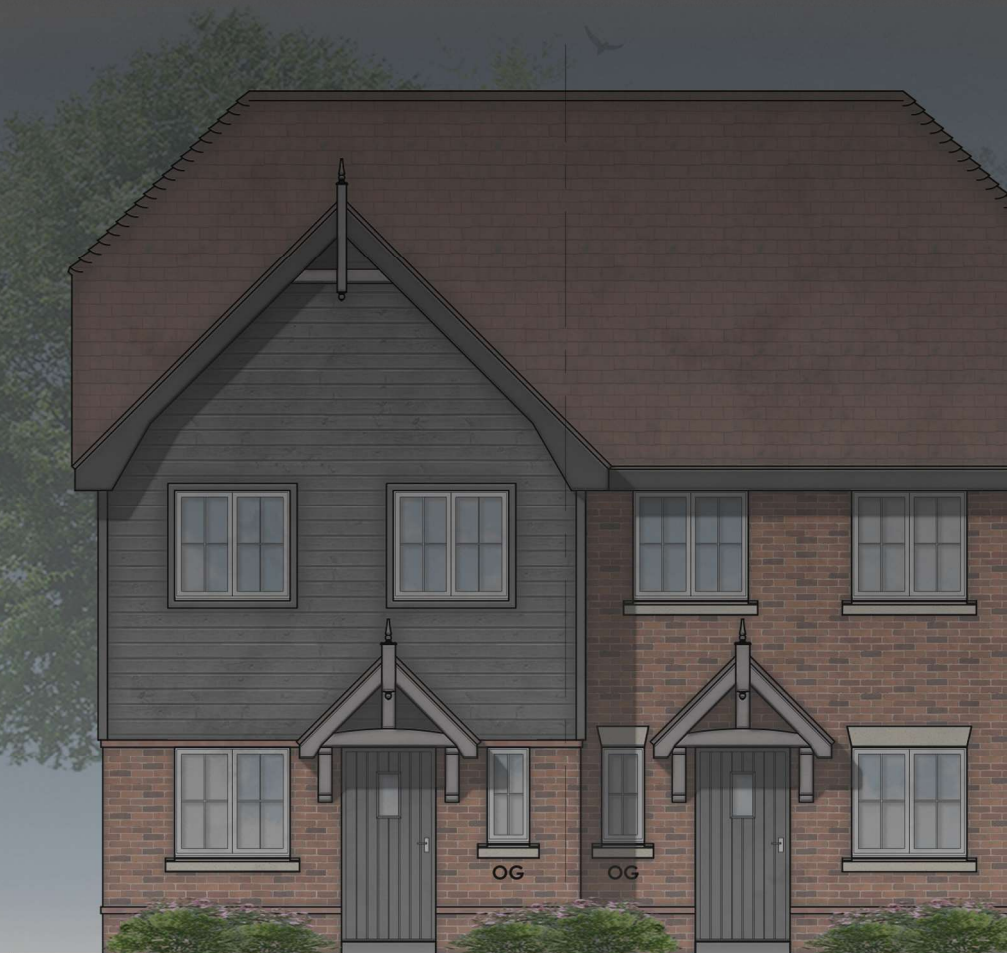
Design & Access Statement

(including Heritage Statement)

Proposal for the erection of 7No. dwelling
houses

Canterburys
Darby Green Road
Blackwater
Hampshire
GU17 0DT

18 December 2023



1.0 INTRODUCTION

This statement has been prepared by Arktec Ltd to accompany the full planning application submission on behalf of our client (the applicant) for the erection of 7No. dwelling houses on land known as Canterburys, Darby Green Road in Blackwater.

It is prepared in the context of the Hart Local Plan (Strategy and Sites) 2032 adopted 30th April 2020 and the Saved Policies from the Hart Local Plan (Replacement) 1996-2006 (updated 1st May 2020), it explains that the proposal has;

- Had regard to relevant detailed design policies.
- Considered the character of the local area and the application site.
- Carefully analysed the site and its surroundings to identify constraints, opportunities and design themes.
- Produced a design which is complementary to the site and its environment, and delivers a highly desirable living environment for the future residents.

The application site is located within the Hawley residential settlement boundary and is also located within the Darby Green Yateley Conservation Area, and is conveniently located a short walk from where local conveniences can be enjoyed.

2.0 EXISTING USE

The site is currently unused land, and therefore offers an opportunity to make more effective and efficient use of the land especially given the sites prominent position within the local 'residential settlement boundary'.

The application site was previously occupied by a former public house building, but is now a vacant redundant site set within private grounds of 0.158ha (0.39 acres).

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

The site currently benefits from the lawful commencement of the previously approved planning application reference 15/01563/FUL which consisted of the demolition of the previous Public House and the erection of a large two storey veterinary practice, which included cycle / bin stores and associated parking and landscaping.

Reference: **15/01563/FUL**

Location: Canterburys, Darby Green Road, Blackwater, GU17 0DT

Description: Demolition of public house and erection of a two storey veterinary practice, to include cycle and bin store and associated parking and landscaping.

Decision: **APPROVED** 10 August 2015

The previously approved veterinary building appeared rather bulky in built form incorporating a very large floor area of 745m², with the scheme incorporating vast amounts of hardstanding within the site to accommodate the commercial parking requirements therefore offering little opportunity for soft landscaping.

Due to circumstances changing for the owner of the site and given the sites position within this local settlement area it is considered that the re-use of this site for residential purposes would be more in keeping with the surrounding area which we trust would be welcomed by the neighbouring properties and the Council.

4.0 PROPOSAL

With the above in mind, it is proposed to provide 7No. new build dwellings on the land in question.

It is considered that the principle of development on this site which is located within the designated settlement area is considered acceptable by the Council, and therefore subject to normal design and planning criteria should be considered favourably by the Local Authority.

4.1 DESIGN

The site lies within an area where there is a variety in the age, form, design and detailing of the existing dwellings and buildings.

The building design and architectural style of the proposed dwellings have derived from the character of the surrounding area and is considered to be of a style in fitting with this location.

The design has ensured a blend in style with the surrounding properties, ensuring that the eaves and ridge heights are comparable with other property in the local area, whilst respecting the immediate neighbouring properties.

4.2 USE

The site is generous in scale with a total area of 0.39 acres, therefore offers the opportunity to comfortably accommodate the proposed dwellings that are considered to be acceptable in scale, form and siting with the context of the local area, creating no adverse effect on the neighbouring properties, nor the site itself.

4.3 AMOUNT

The proposed dwellings shall each incorporate two bedrooms and have been designed to be two storey in height with a sympathetic room-in-roof design to accommodate home office accommodation to suit modern living demand.

Due to the low number of dwellings being proposed it is not considered for a housing mix to be provided for the scheme, however it is considered for such two bedroom homes to be in demand for this area, and therefore welcomed.

4.4 SCALE

The scale of the proposed dwellings has been carefully considered to ensure that the dwellings are in keeping with the character and appearance of the local area.

The proposed dwellings have been designed to;

- Avoid overlooking to sensitive private rooms and gardens.
- Retain separation from boundaries and retain private gardens.
- Be of a scale to reflect local character.
- Achieve a high standard of architectural quality and living accommodation.

The proposed height of the dwellings has been designed to ensure that the proposals are in keeping with the local building skyline maintaining an appropriate balance in height in relation to its surroundings.

4.5 NATIONALLY DESCRIBED SPACE STANDARDS

In accordance with the requirements of local policy, the proposed scheme is designed to conform with the Nationally Described Space Standards as set out by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

4.6 LAYOUT

Our design has had careful consideration with regards to its surroundings, in particular eliminating any potential overlooking issues, therefore it is considered that the proposal would cause no loss of amenity to any adjoining residential uses in compliance with local policy.

It is considered that the proposed relationship with the surrounding neighbouring property is acceptable in building separation distances, exceeding both local and national design criteria guidance.

It should be noted that the glazing to the first floor flank side elevation windows that serve bathroom accommodation will be obscure glazed to eliminate any privacy concerns.

Due to the generous separating distances between the proposed dwellings and the neighbouring properties, it is apparent that the proposal would cause no adverse impact on the daylight and sunlight to the neighbouring properties in accordance with BRE guidance.

The proposals put forward have been well considered to ensure that the proposed dwellings integrate well within this area, respecting the neighbouring properties and the site itself, and given the shape and size of this unique plot the proposed tandem development respects the surrounding built form.

Figure A below demonstrates how the proposed dwellings would comfortably sit in context with the neighbouring properties and the character of the local area.



It is considered for the proposals to sit well within the confines of the site, respecting the neighbouring properties and the character of the local area.

Layout Comparison (Against Previously Approved Veterinary Building)

Figure B below shows the 'previously approved' large two storey veterinary building (application reference 15/01563/FUL) which consisted of a vast spread in built form and hardstanding across the entire site.

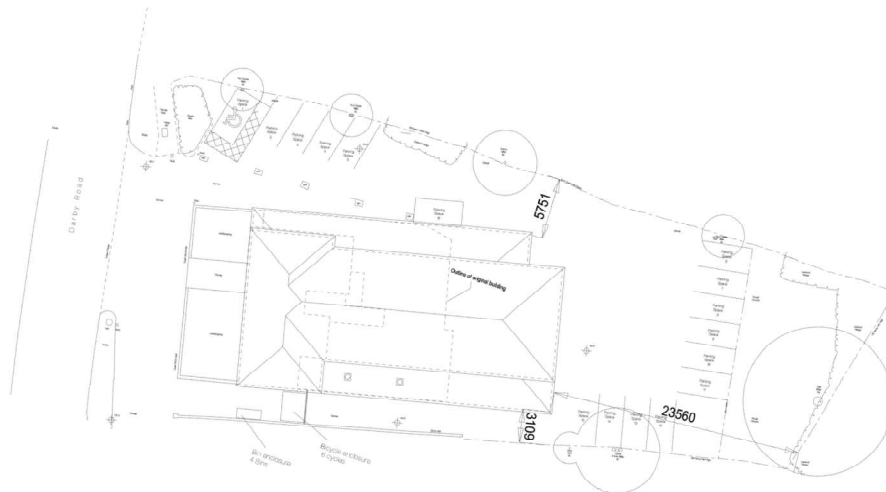


Figure C below shows how the new proposals would have a more appealing landscape feel by providing the opportunity for considerable areas of soft landscaping, providing a scheme that would sit better within the wider landscape.



4.7 CHARACTER APPEARANCE

The external elevations of the proposals will consist of traditional materials to match local vernacular.

The appearance has been dominated by the need to blend in with the adjacent properties and the local area, and in our opinion will certainly enhance the surrounding area and street scene, and of course the site itself.

The most influential local character is taken from the other properties within close proximity and in particular the architectural styles found within this conservation area, where the local character is rather mixed in architectural style.

The nearby housing is generally two storey in height with a varied mix of materials used within their facades.

Our design proposals incorporate the characteristics of the local area, by incorporating traditional brick elevations (with subtle stone detailing) with areas of weatherboard cladding, with traditional plain clay tiled roofs, all of which being reflective of this local area.

The proposed materials shall be 'high quality' to provide a soft material palette to enhance the aesthetics of this site.

4.8 ACCESS & PARKING STRATEGY

With regards to access, the proposal would be served by a similar access off Darby Green Road and designed to incorporate sufficient parking and vehicular turning to serve the proposed dwellings.

Our proposals incorporate two dedicated parking spaces (per dwelling) with provision for an electric vehicle charging point serving the properties in accordance with local policy.

The provision of cycle storage will be provided (2No. bikes per dwelling), which will be located within a garden shed.

4.9 REFUSE STRATEGY

Waste and recycling bins will be stored on a dedicated area of hard standing within the curtilage of the plots and on collection days brought to the dedicated bin collection point (ready for collection).

4.10 LANDSCAPING

Careful consideration has been given with regards to the proposed landscaping of the site to ensure that our proposal enhances the site frontage and street scene.

The proposed landscaping scheme will ensure that there is a softness approach to the design, which will enhance the overall aesthetics of the site, whilst still reinforcing the dwelling boundaries.

The proposed gardens will provide a generous area of private amenity space in accordance with associated design standards and requirements.

Given the vast amount of expanse hardstanding that was previously approved as part of the veterinary practice scheme, it is considered that the proposals put forward would be welcomed, creating a much greener feel to the site.

4.11 ARBORICULTURE

Our proposals are in accordance with advice given by the project arboriculture consultant, and therefore it is considered that our proposal will not be detrimental to any of the retained trees.

Please refer to accompanying tree report prepared by specialists.

4.12 FLOOD RISK

The application site lies within 'flood zone 1' an area that is considered 'low probability' of flooding, and the proposal will incorporate SUDS methodology, by disposing of as much storm water drainage on site as possible.

Any shallow infiltration available will be utilised through the provision of permeable driveways and surface water run-off will be collected and dispersed via soakaways located on site at a depth determined by the best percolation rate available.

4.13 DRAINAGE STRATEGY ASSESSMENT (FOUL SEWAGE & SURFACE WATER)

The application site currently incorporates an existing workable foul and surface water drainage system and therefore we intend to connect into the existing foul network, and incorporate a new surface water drainage strategy (SUDS) to suit the site proposals.

4.14 UTILITIES ASSESSMENT

The application site currently has incoming services (gas, electric, water & BT) feeding from the mains supply along Darby Green Road, and it is intended for the proposed dwellings to obtain the required services in a similar manner from the existing mains supply.

4.15 AFFORDABLE HOUSING STATEMENT

Due to the low number of units proposed falling below the Councils local policy affordable housing threshold requirement, the dwellings will be for private sale and therefore no affordable housing provision will be required in connection with this application.

4.16 SANG MITIGATION

It is considered that the application put forward meets the Council's current SANG allocation criteria, and therefore we can confirm the applicant's acceptance to enter into a legal agreement during the course of the application process to secure the required allocation.

4.17 SUSTAINABILITY

The application drawings have considered the necessary sustainability measures required both during the design and construction stages of the project, and particular attention has been drawn to the following sustainable aspects:

- Energy consumption.
- On-site renewable energy generation.
- Electric vehicle charging points.
- Water management.
- Flood risk management.
- Waste, recycling and composting facilities.
- Air noise and light pollution.
- Responsibly sourced and recycled materials.
- Site waste management.
- Pollution.

The proposed dwellings have been designed to maximise the use of well insulated materials within its construction and it is intended that the development will utilise energy efficient appliances and incorporate water saving devices (where possible).

In conclusion, the proposal has been designed to ensure that sustainability is maximised throughout the construction of the project and that once complete, the design remains sustainable for future occupiers.

Our proposal provides a sustainable development in both design and construction terms.

5.0 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Framework is a material consideration which should be given considerable weight in the determination of this application.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system only to the extent that it is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so. It provides a framework within which local people and their accountable Councils can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans, which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities.

As stated within the NPPF, development that is sustainable should go ahead, without delay. A presumption in favour of sustainable development that is the basis for every plan, and every decision.

Sustainable Development

The NPPF identifies three dimensions to 'sustainable development':

- An economic role;
- A social role; and
- An environmental role.

By way of its construction the development would help support economic growth and would generate employment during its build (sub-contractors and material supply chain), as well as its future servicing once occupied, and therefore we are of the opinion that modest weight should be given to this factor in favour of the scheme.

In terms of social, the development would help to contribute towards the housing needs of the local people in the area, as well as improving the supply of housing in the District by making a modest contribution to the housing supply, this social benefit carries considerable weight in favour of the scheme.

As part of the social and economic benefits, and matters relating to the location of development, the site has had historic use resulting in an existing impact on built form which would of course generate general activity leaving and entering the site.

The proposal would not result in any significant environmental harm. There would be no adverse impact on the local area and due to the site location being within the residential settlement boundary there would be the option of using sustainable travel modes. This would help to minimise carbon emissions.

The proposed development would provide 7No. new build dwellings in an accessible location for housing growth which would make a small but meaningful contribution towards the maintenance of the current land supply which is a clear benefit which should be given weight.

The Government has made clear its view that house building plays an important role in promoting economic growth. In economic terms, the scheme would provide construction jobs and some local investment during its build out. Albeit that these jobs and investment would be transitory, this is a matter to which moderate weight should be afforded.

The NPPF places considerable emphasis on sustainable development with its 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.

Our proposals conform with the Governments national planning policies and in our opinion make more effective and efficient use of the land by way of sustainable development.

6.0 PLANNING POLICY & OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATION

For the purposes of considering this application, the Development Plan is the Hart Local Plan (Strategy and Sites) 2032 adopted 30th April 2020 and the Saved Policies from the Hart Local Plan (Replacement) 1996-2006 (updated 1st May 2020),

Given the publication of the Framework in March 2012 (and subsequent revisions including the latest updates) the weight to be attached to the local policies relied upon by the Local Authority should be balanced in accordance with their consistency with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Principle of Development

The NPPF does state that the planning system should encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed, provided that it is not of high environmental value.

It is considered that such development is a priority of the Council, and therefore we trust that this application proposal meets such requirements.

Consideration has been given to both the national and local planning policies to ensure that the proposals put forward are considered acceptable.

7.0 HERITAGE SUMMARY

In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, section 16, it is considered that the application site has no assets of heritage importance including those of archaeological interest, therefore the potential impact of the proposal would have no detrimental effect on the historic environment. This design and access statement covers all other heritage matters in relation to the Darby Green Yateley Conservation Area.

8.0 SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

This application site provides the opportunity to provide new build dwelling houses within this settlement area, with proposals that are considered in keeping with neighbouring properties and the character of this desirable living area.

The site consists of a generous plot with ample space for the proposed dwellings that would have no adverse impact on its neighbours.

When viewed from all viewpoints, the proposed dwellings appear a logical form of development that respects and follows the existing building pattern and character of the local area, therefore it is considered that the new homes would make a positive contribution to the character of this desirable residential area, having a high architectural quality and a traditional design which reflects local character in terms of scale, density, layout and access.

Given the sites opportunity it is considered that the proposals will create an opportunity for residential development to uplift the site with a sympathetic design, respecting the character of the local area.

On conclusion, it is considered that the proposed dwellings would preserve the character and appearance of this area in compliance with both local and national planning policy.

The proposal will provide additional housing and will result in a more efficient and effective use of the land.

We respectfully trust that the Local Authority finds the proposal acceptable, and we look forward to having the opportunity of working pro-actively with the Council to provide sustainable homes on the application site.