

# **DESIGN&PLANNING STATEMENT**

**ERECTION OF DETACHED TWO STOREY DWELLING,  
FOLLOWING THE DEMOLITION OF THE EXISTING OUTBUILDINGS  
AT LAND ADJACENT NO. 6 GUILDOWN AVENUE,  
GUILDFORD,  
GU2 4HB**

**20 December 2023**



— PLANNING & DESIGN —

**Architecture and Planning**

33 Gateways/Guildford/ GU12LF

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## 1. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL

This Statement is submitted in support of a full planning application for the erection of a detached two storey dwelling following the demolition of the existing outbuildings at land adjacent no. 6 Guildown Avenue, Guildford.

This application follows a number of applications which have been made recently granting permission to erect detached dwellings within the area. The nearest to the current application site being at land to rear of nos. 6 and 10 Guildown Avenue. The current application site is a logical location for another detached dwelling and would clearly assimilate into the pattern of development within the immediate area.

This Planning Statement should be read in conjunction with the submitted drawings. The remainder of this Statement is set out under the following headings:

1. Introduction and Summary of Proposal
2. Environmental Impact Assessment Statement
3. Application Site and Location
4. Planning History
5. Application Proposal
6. Planning Policy and Consideration
7. Conclusion

We consider the material planning considerations in favour of such a proposal would include the following:

- The site is situated in a sustainable location within the defined urban area of Guildford. As confirmed within the officer report for application ref. 23/P/00497 for land to rear of no. 6 Guildown Avenue, the principle of development in this case is acceptable under Policy H1.
- The proposal would comprise a sustainable location in terms of access to facilities and services and help sustain inclusive, mixed communities.
- The proposal would affect part of the holding which is regarded to be 'brownfield' land.
- The proposal seeks to make effective use of the site whilst fully respecting the character and setting of the site's built up location.
- The site is not considered to make any significant contribution to the character of the area. Although the proposal would result in the introduction of residential development, it would improve the appearance of the site, which is visually well contained.
- There is no policy objection to the loss of the existing outbuilding and surplus / unused outdoor amenity space.
- There is an accepted need for more housing in the Borough, including within existing settlements. The proposal would make a useful and proportionate contribution to local housing requirements and would be in accordance with the Council's Spatial Strategy.
- The site would be developed with a high-quality development, providing a family home which would be in-keeping with the surroundings.
- The proposal safeguards the amenity and privacy of nearby residential occupiers, with satisfactory separation distances and relationships being achieved.
- There are no technical objections to the proposal, such as in relation to trees, infrastructure and that satisfactory existing vehicular access can be achieved without material harm highway safety.

In our view, the proposal has significant merit. This Statement will demonstrate the proposal would be in accordance with the NPPF and the Development Plan for the area. Further, it is contended the Council should support this type of 'windfall' proposal in seeking to achieve its housing targets whilst fully respecting the character, appearance and setting of the locality.

## **2. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT STATEMENT**

In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (2017 No. 571) Part 2 4(3), the development scheme has been 'self-screened' to ascertain whether the proposed development comprises a project subject to EIA Regulations 2017.

The proposed development does not comprise of development within Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations 2017. The development could be considered to comprise of development contained within Schedule 2 Column 1 10B development contained namely Infrastructure Projects and "Urban Development Projects, including the construction of shopping centres and car parks, sports stadiums, leisure centres and multiplex cinemas". However, the development does not meet the applicable thresholds and criteria within Column 2 of Schedule 2 as amended within The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (2017 No. 571):

- (i) The development includes more than 1 hectare of urban development which is not dwelling house development; or*
- (ii) The development includes more than 150 dwellings; or*
- (iii) The overall area of the development exceeds 5 hectares.*

The application would represent a modest development, involving the erection of a detached dwelling. The proposal would therefore fall well within the above thresholds. The proposal is considered not to result in a significant effect upon the environment and does not meet criteria contained within Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations 2017 or result in a variation/amendment to a previous EIA development nor taken in conjunction with other development is it likely to have a significant environmental effect.

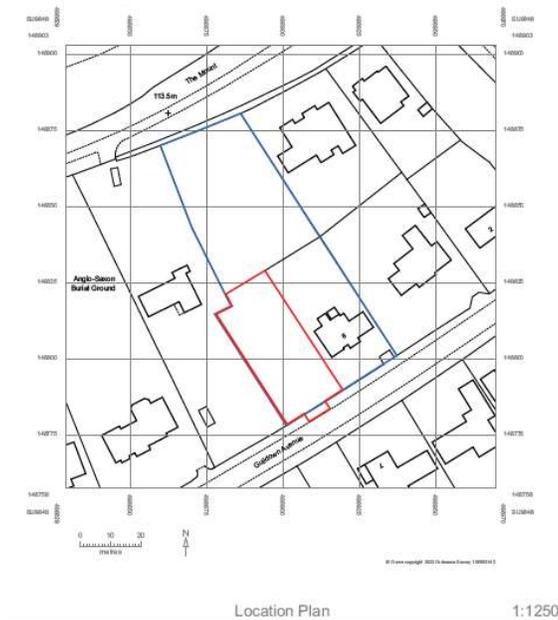
On this basis, the proposal would not represent EIA development in accordance with the Regulations 2017.

## **3. APPLICATION SITE AND LOCATION**

The application site is located on the North side of Guildown Avenue. The locality comprises a variety of property types and sizes, however, many are notably relatively large and detached; the area is residential in character. The site is located within the developed area of Guildford in a highly sustainable location.

No. 6 is set back slightly from Guildown Avenue. The site is essentially flat and features close boarded timber fencing around its boundaries. The nearest residential properties would be no. 6 which is located to the immediate east and no. 8 which is further separated and located to the northwest. The property at no. 6 Guildown Avenue has recently been subject to various minor alterations.

This application seeks to make best use of the site whilst retaining its character. The mapping extract below illustrates the location of the site.



Vehicular access is taken from the south of the site.

The property is currently occupied by a detached outbuilding. The remainder of the land comprises areas of hardstanding and lawn. The site itself is void of any shrubs or trees.

The application site lies within the 400m – 5km buffer zone of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area.

#### 4. PLANNING HISTORY

There is no planning history directly related to the application site. However, as set out above, this application follows other proposals for detached dwellings that have been granted full planning permission within the immediate area.

At land to the rear of no. 6 Guildown Avenue, planning permission was granted on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2023 for the erection of a single dwellinghouse with associate landscaping and external swimming pool.

The Officer Report confirmed that the site is located within the Guildford Urban Area which is a sustainable location for new housing. It went on to state that Policy H1 of the Local Plan: Strategy and sites 2015-2034 seeks to deliver a wide variety of high quality homes that provide all tenures, types and sizes of housing to meet the needs and demands of different people within the community. The principle of the development is therefore acceptable.

In terms of the character and appearance, the Officer Report noted that there are a number of new dwellings on The Mount (linear development to the rear of the application site) which have been built in recent years in what were formerly the rear gardens of properties in Guildown Avenue. The design of these dwellings varies from modern ‘Huf Haus’ design to more traditional forms of design, with brick elevations below pitched roofs. In that instance, it was found that the introduction of a ‘modernist’ dwelling would add to the variety of dwelling types and designs in the area.

As such, it is clear that the subdivision of a plot to provide a suitably designed, detached two storey dwelling represented an acceptable form of development.

#### 4. APPLICATION PROPOSAL - DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

##### *Amount and Layout*

The application proposes the erection of a detached 5-bedroom dwelling following the demolition of the existing outbuildings on site. The replacement building would be positioned to the centre of the site, allowing the development to maintain a separation with the site's eastern and western boundaries. It would be sited near to the footprint of the outbuildings, as shown on by the dashed line. The proposed layout is shown below:



The layout drawing also shows the separation distance to the neighbouring properties together with the private off-street parking and a rear garden.

In terms of internal layout, the dwelling will include main living accommodation at ground floor, including kitchen / breakfast room at the rear, overlooking the garden. At first floor each unit will include the bedrooms and bathrooms. There is also additional accommodation providing a family play room. It is submitted that the house provides good quality accommodation which suits the needs of modern day living. The layout of the ground, first and second floors are shown below.



### Design and Appearance

The design of the new dwelling will take the form of two storey which reflects the character of the immediate surrounding area. It would look similar in appearance to the dwelling at no. 6, which has recently been renovated. The dwellings will be accessed from the south elevation, via main front doors. The roof would feature gable ends as shown in the drawing extracts below.



The windows proposed on the side elevations at first floor level would serve bathrooms and therefore be obscure glazed and fixed shut.

In terms of design of the two side elevations, this has been designed to provide greater articulation and interest and to avoid a blank flank elevation. This will also reduce the perceived bulk of the

building when viewed from the neighbouring properties. Overall, the design will provide an attractive building which respond to the immediate environment.

#### *Materials*

The dwellings will be constructed with timber cladding under a slate tiled roof. The other external materials are listed on the proposed elevation drawings.

#### *Landscaping*

The parking area and garden around the new dwelling will be landscaped, as detailed on the submitted plans.

#### *Access*

The existing vehicular access to the site will be retained to serve the additional unit. Therefore, the access remains as existing, with additional car parking spaces provided, together with sufficient turning space for existing and future occupants who will utilise the area.

### **5. PLANNING POLICY AND CONSIDERATION**

Section 70 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 both require that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The relevant Development Plan for Guildford Borough Council comprises the following relevant documents:

- The Local Plan: Strategy and Sites (2015-2034) (Adopted 2019),
- The Local Plan: Development Management Policies (Adopted 2023), and,
- Saved policies from the Guildford Local Plan 2003.

The National Planning Policy Framework (2023) is a material consideration alongside its Planning Policy Guidance as well as Supplementary Planning Documents with the most applicable to this scheme being Climate Change, Sustainable Design, Construction and Energy SPD, Vehicle Parking Standards SPD, and the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area SPD.

The Plan and its policies are regarded as up-to-date in terms of paragraph 11 of the NPPF.

Policy S1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development

Policy H1: Homes for all

Policy P4: Flooding, flood risk and groundwater protection zones

Policy D1: Place shaping

Policy D2 Climate Change, sustainable design, construction and energy

Policy ID3: Sustainable transport for new developments.

Policy ID4: Green and blue infrastructure

Policy P5: Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area

Guildford Borough Local Plan 2003 (as saved by CLG Direction 24 September 2007):

G1: General Standards of Development

G5: Design Code

H4: Housing in urban areas

Supplementary planning documents:

Residential Design SPG 2004 Climate Change, Sustainable Design, Construction and Energy SPD 2020  
Vehicle Parking Standards SPD 2006  
Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Avoidance Strategy 2017

#### *Planning Policy Constraints*

The application site is subject to the following planning constraints:

- Urban area of Guildford
- 400m to 5km buffer zones of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA

#### *Central Government Planning Policy Guidance*

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was first introduced in March 2012 and replaced planning policy statements (PPSs) and planning policy guidance notes (PPGs). The NPPF sets out national planning policy to be taken into account by Councils when preparing new local plans and when taking decisions on planning applications.

The NPPF has recently been updated with a revised version being published on September 2023. This has replaced the NPPF 2012. There continues to be a strong presumption in favour of sustainable development and at paragraph 3 it advises the Framework should be read as a whole.

Paragraph 7 states the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 states achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives (economic, social and environmental), which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives). However, paragraph 9 states these are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Decisions should also take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.

Paragraph 12 states the following:

*‘The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan...permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.’*

The most relevant sections of the NPPF in relation to this proposal are 5 (Delivering a sufficient supply of homes); 9 (Promoting sustainable transport); 11 (Making effective use of land); 12 (Achieving well-designed places); 14 (Meeting the challenge of climate change) and 15 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment).

Chapter 5 of the NPPF deals with delivering a sufficient supply of homes. In particular, paragraph 60 states that to support the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed.

Paragraph 62 states that within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies.

Paragraph 63 states that the provision of affordable housing should not be sought for residential developments which are not 'major developments', other than in designated rural areas (where policies may set a lower threshold of 5 units or fewer). The development proposes one residential unit only.

The Glossary at Annex 2 to the NPPF provides a definition for 'major development'. For housing, this is development where 10 or more homes will be provided, or the site has an area of 0.5 ha or more (the 1,000 sqm threshold only applies to non-residential development). As the site is under 0.5 ha it therefore does not comprise such a development.

In addition to the requirement of providing specific and deliverable housing sites over the plan period, it states at paragraph 69 that small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing needs of an area and are often built out relatively quickly.

Chapter 9 deals with promoting sustainable transport. The main policy aim is to focus development on locations which are or can be made sustainable, such as through limiting and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. It also advises that developments should provide safe and secure layouts and suitable access, and that development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe. We consider that having regards to the location of the site within the urban area of Guildford, the proposal would comply.

Chapter 11 of the NPPF at paragraph 119 emphasises that planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes, and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment. The proposal is considered to meet this balance of objectives.

Paragraph 125 goes on to state that where there is an existing or anticipated shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs, decisions should avoid homes being built at low densities, and ensure developments make optimal use of each site.

Chapter 12 deals with the requirement for good design, which it notes is a key aspect of sustainable development. We believe the proposal would comply in a number of respects, such as that it would optimize the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount of development in keeping with its surroundings. We are confident that the layout and design details of the proposal would be visually attractive, be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment, and would make a positive contribution to the locality.

We consider the current site, consisting of an outbuilding and large areas of hardstanding, contributes little to the quality of the wider area, with any impacts upon the nature conservation interests of the site either being avoided or mitigated through a package of measures presented as part of the application.

Therefore, we believe the adopted Local Plan including the 'retained' policies and the NPPF 2023 form the basis of decision making in the case of this proposal.

#### *Principle of Development*

Paragraphs 8 and 11 of the NPPF 2023 are reflective of Policy S1 of the adopted Local Plan. We consider the proposal complies with the three main objectives set out under paragraph 8 of the NPPF 2023 for the following reasons:

- The proposed housing would fulfil a positive economic role by providing both temporary and permanent economic benefits during construction of one dwelling and the benefits a new household would have on supporting local employment, services and facilities.
- The proposed housing would support a strong, secure, vibrant and healthy community, by providing an appropriate housing mix; and by creating a high-quality built environment. The occupiers of the house could easily integrate into the local community.
- The proposal would make a positive contribution to the identified need for more housing within the Borough.
- The proposal would contribute to protecting and enhancing the natural and built and environment. The proposal would represent a high-quality development sympathetic to its surroundings.

Planning Policy H9 'Conversion and Sub-division' of the adopted Local Plan indicates that within settlements, the sub-division of dwellings or the conversion of non-residential buildings into small residential units will be encouraged. Whilst it is accepted that this policy does not strictly apply since the application scheme proposes the demolition of the existing garage, it is consistent with the NPPF by confirming that the Local Planning Authority will support proposals that optimize the use of existing residential land in order to boost the supply of housing. Policy H9 confirms that in considering such proposals, the Council will have regard to the effects of the development on the character and appearance of the area, the amenities of adjoining occupiers and the provision of car parking. It is considered this application scheme can meet all these aims and will not result in harm to the area.

Overall, in terms of the principle of development, the proposal would make efficient use of land, which is located in a sustainable location in the urban area of Guildford, close to existing services, facilities and with good public transport links.

#### *Character and area*

The character of the immediate area is defined by residential development, predominantly two-storey in height, some of which fronts the road, others are sited further back into their plots. The location of the neighbouring dwellings has informed the development proposed by this application, such that appropriate separation distance is proposed to these dwellings. The proposal would be located adjacent to no. 6 Guildown Avenue. It would be of a very similar scale and appearance, so as to clearly follow the established pattern of development in the area.

We believe the location of the development would be sited and designed to minimise visual impact and to respect its context. The introduction of enhanced landscaping improvements would safeguard the character of the area in long term and would ensure that the proposed parking area would not be visually dominating or result in an adverse impact on the character of the area. As set out above, the proposed design would be in keeping with the existing buildings within the immediate area.

In terms of the design and appearance of the dwellings, the detached dwelling would be a of a traditional form and design whilst utilising modern materials / elements. The proposal would provide a pitched roof design and would be bound by close board timber fencing.

Having regard to the scale and form of development envisaged, we consider the likely visual impact of the proposal to be acceptable. The proposal would comply with policy D1, saved policy G5, the Residential Design SPG 2004 and the NPPF.

### *Impact on neighbouring*

In terms of impact on neighbouring residential amenity, the dwelling would be positioned towards the southern end of the wider site, but with approximately 25m set off from the front elevation of no. 8 Guildown Avenue. When considering the proposed development at land to the rear of no. 6, the Officer Report stated the following:

*'No 8 Guildown Avenue is a detached single storey dwelling located to the south-west of the application site. The dwelling is unusual in the area in that it is located centrally within its plot, almost equidistant between Guildown Avenue and The Mount. At its closest point, the proposed dwelling would be located 17.9m away from the dwelling at No 8. The intervening boundary is marked by a tall, close boarded fence and mature vegetation. Given the reduction in the height and scale of the proposed dwelling, it is considered that the proposed dwelling would not result in a loss of privacy or overlooking and would not be overbearing.'*

The current proposal, as shown on the proposed Block Plan, would be sited a minimum distance of 25m from the front elevation of no. 8. Any intervisibility from the first floor windows on the rear elevation of the proposed dwelling would simply look out onto the front parking area of no. 8. Notwithstanding the relatively significant separation distances, this relationship is considered to be acceptable in residential areas.

As such, it is clear that the proposed dwelling would be located a sufficient distance away from any neighbouring properties or amenity spaces to prevent any unreasonable loss of privacy, loss of light or any overbearing impact and is considered an acceptable front to back distance between properties.

In terms of noise and disturbance, the comings and goings associated with a net increase of one dwelling would not result in such an increase in activity to result in material harm to the neighbours.

As proposed therefore, the proposal would not result in any unacceptable harm to neighbour amenity by reason of overbearing impact, loss of light, loss or privacy or noise and disturbance, in accordance with saved local plan policies H4 and G1(3).

### *Access and Parking*

The proposed dwelling would utilise an existing vehicular access. The addition of another dwellinghouse would not give a material rise to traffic so as to result in a change to the existing arrangements. As such, the development would not result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network that would be severe.

At least two parking spaces are proposed to the front of the dwelling, with another space provided within the integral garage, in accordance with the Council's adopted standards.

With regards to waste storage, recycling and collection a refuse storage area for general waste and recycling would be provided.

The proposal therefore accords with paragraph 111 of the NPPF and the Local Plan.

### *Ecology and Biodiversity*

Policy ID4 states that new development should aim to deliver biodiversity gains where appropriate. Gains in biodiversity means improvements to biodiversity through habitat creation and/or enhancement. This should be integrated into the design of the site through the provision of new wildlife habitats. The NPPF Paragraph 174 requires the promotion of the conservation, restoration and

enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

Paragraph 179 also requires that opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.

Bird or bat boxes as small-scale measures to improve biodiversity across the site can be secured by way of condition, which is in accordance with the requirement of Policy ID4.

#### *Thames Basin Heaths SPA*

The applicant is aware that the site falls within the buffer zone to the TBHSPA and is willing to enter into a S.106 agreement to secure the relevant mitigation.

#### *Sustainable Design and Construction*

In order for the development to comply with Policy D2 of the New Local Plan and the Climate Change, Sustainable Construction and Energy SPD 2020, the new dwelling would need to achieve a 20% reduction in carbon emissions through the use of renewable energy.

As set out in the LPSS and the Council's Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2011 and Climate Change SPD, there is a requirement to achieve a 20 percent reduction in carbon emissions through the use of on site low or zero carbon technologies and include water efficiency measures in line with building regulations.

It is possible to secure these measures by condition to ensure compliance with Policy D2. In addition, a car charging facility will also require to be provided and the details of which can be secured via a planning condition. A cycle storage will be provided within the garden as detailed on the submitted plans.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

This full planning application seeks permission for the erection of a detached two storey dwelling following the demolition of the existing outbuilding at land adjacent no. 6 Guildown Avenue, Guildford.

This application follows a number of applications which have been made recently granting permission to erect detached dwellings within the area. The nearest to the current application site being at land to rear of nos. 6 and 10 Guildown Avenue. The current application site is a logical location for another detached dwelling and would clearly assimilate into the pattern of development within the immediate area.

The proposal will provide net increase of one dwellings in a sustainable urban location. This will optimise the potential of the site and in so doing, boost the supply of housing, as required by the NPPF.

The proposal fully responds to the opportunities and constraints of the site, would be of a density and form appropriate to the area and would have a satisfactory relationship to neighbouring buildings.

The proposal represents an entirely acceptable form of development, making the best use of the topography whilst respecting the character and appearance of the area. The scale, layout, form and appearance of the proposal are considered to be entirely appropriate for this site and location. This

has already been found to be the case by the LPA as part of the previous schemes within the immediate area which have allowed for the erection of new detached dwellings.

It has also been demonstrated that the proposal would not result in harm to protected species and so it would not conflict with Policy NE1 of the Local Plan 2018 (Part 1), Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

The site does not lie within or adjacent to a Conservation Area, would not affect the setting of any listed buildings, and is not subject to any specific nature conservation designations (with the exception of the Thames Basin Heath SPA Buffer Zones).

The proposal would also provide a satisfactory residential environment for the future occupiers of the development with bedrooms and overall internal floor areas meeting and exceeding the Government's Technical Housing Standards.

It has been demonstrated that the proposal would not result in any technical objections from statutory consultees.

In our view, the proposal has significant merit, and the proposal would be in accordance with the NPPF 2023 and the Development Plan for the area. We consider the development accords with the Development Plan and there are no adverse impacts that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the Framework as a whole in accordance with Paragraph 11 of the NPPF 2023.

We believe that we have provided all the relevant information required to enable the Council to make a positive decision on this application. However, please do not hesitate to contact us should you require further information or points of clarification.