

Design and Access Statement

Design and Access Statement 60 Sheepwalk Lane, Ravenshead

3rd January 2024

Design Statement

Introduction

This statement is produced in support of a full planning application for 4no. 5-bed residential homes at the above site.

A pre-application has previously been submitted for the site with feedback received as per your letter dated 11th December 2019, ref 2019/1008PRE.

A full planning application was submitted and validated in January 2023 and was refused permission on 21st July 2023, ref 2023/0003. The reasons for this are captured below with an executive summary of our response to those points raised.

We have attempted to pick up the points raised by highways and the tree officer. A tree survey, ecological report and updated site plan with supporting text will help describe the revised proposals.

Reasons for Refusal and our Approach

1. In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority the proposed development would, by reason of the size of the site and the siting and scale of the proposed dwellings result in a cramped, overintensive form of development within the immediate streetscene and the wider established urban form and layout resulting in an incongruous feature which would harm the visual amenity of the site and the character and appearance of the immediate streetscene and the wider setting. The proposal would therefore fail to meet with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021, Policy 10 of the Gedling Borough Council Aligned Core Strategy (2014) and Policies LPD 34, LPD 35 and LPD 40 of the Local Planning Document (2018).

We believe the removal of the hedgerow can be justified as this is not a particular characteristic of the street scene – the houses opposite all have small hedges out front, and further along Sheepwalk there are not huge hedgerows. We propose to replicate a small hedgerow and/or some planting which would not compromise visibility and would contribute to the amenity and street scene.

All the plots have rear gardens and plots 1 and 2 front the road. The orientation of plots 3 and 4 have been changed so that they also 'look forward' and feel these are congruous with the surrounding approved developments.

- *Development of a new dwelling to the front of 86 Sheepwalk Lane (approval ref 2017/0356).*
- *New dwelling to the front of 90 Sheepwalk Lane (approval ref 2017/0301).*
- *92 to 94a approval ref 2014/1159).*

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2. In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority the proposed dwellings at Plots 1 and 3 by virtue of their scale, and siting in proximity to the side boundaries with nos. 62 Sheepwalk Lane and no. 2 Dover Beck Close would result in undue harm to the occupiers of these adjacent properties in terms of overbearing overshadowing impacts and overlooking impact from first floor windows. The proposal therefore fails to accord with Section 12 of the NPPF (2021), Policy 10 of the Gedling Borough Council Aligned Core Strategy (2014) and Policy LPD 32 and LPD 35 of the Local Planning Document (2018).

We have amended the overall layout of the site. The main access road runs to the centre of the site rather than the rear and all plots have been moved from the existing north and south boundaries. There are no windows proposed on the northern or southern elevations and so the only overlooking is from the bedroom windows which is a standard aspect of dwellings on a residential street.

3. In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority insufficient information has been deposited to meet the requirements of the highway authority in order to demonstrate that the development would not raise any highway safety issues in terms of access and visibility. The proposal therefore fails to accord with Section 9 of the NPPF (2021) and Policy LPD 57 of the LPD (2018).

We were not afforded the opportunity to submit additional information to address the highways matters raised as the comments were never clearly relayed to us during the application process. We have since had sight of those comments and the layout has been developed to address the points raised in an acceptable manner.

The Site

The site is currently occupied by a single-storey detached bungalow within a residential area. The detached bungalow is relatively central to the site (front-to-back) but is in extremely close proximity to both side boundaries and therefore the neighbouring properties. The site is surrounded by mature trees which are located outside of the applicant's site and the red line boundary. The overall topography is a slope from west to east (Sheepwalk Lane to rear of the site).

The existing bungalow does not have any redeeming architectural merit and there is no 'harm' associated with the demolition of the property. The site density, based on the single dwelling footprint, equates to 4.47 dwellings per hectare which is 'extremely low'. The development of a site of this size and style is not without precedent in the area – see Annex A.

The Proposal

The proposal is for the demolition of the existing single-storey bungalow, to be replaced by new housing in the form of 4no. 5-bed homes.

All the new dwellings will be two storeys in height with a pitched roof; there will be 2no. housing types handed depending on whether they sit to the north or the south of the site. We believe it is important in the development of the site layout to ensure that whilst making efficient use of the land, functional gardens were provided for each of the homes.

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It is proposed to provide vehicular and pedestrian access to each of the four dwellings by moving the existing access more central to the site. An integral double garage and off-road parking is provided for each of the properties. Although there will be a degree of increased vehicular movement to and from the site just by the nature of creating 3no. additional homes, all parking will be off-road and will be in line with Gedling Borough Council's parking criteria and guidance.

It is understood that the development will need to comply with the current highway standards. To that end, the visibility splays have been designed to comply with 2.4m x 43m in both directions and will form part of the revised entrance design. The current site access is off Sheepwalk Lane and to the north of the site; the centrally located access will facilitate access to all four units from a central 'spine' road and is 5.8m wide at the entrance and for the first 8m to allow 2no. cars to safely pass. All the dwellings are 'forward facing' with rear gardens to each.

The boundary treatment to the front elevation will be designed with the visibility splay in mind. The hedging/planting will be replaced with a low level and any planting will be set-back so as not to impair visibility from within the boundary.

A bin storage collection area will be provided adjacent Plot 1 for use by all.

The quality of the architecture aims to have a positive impact on the character of the area and is in line with other examples along Sheepwalk Lane and the wider area, specifically the demolition of single dwelling sites being replaced by homes of a much higher density, high quality scheme.

The proposed boundary treatment proposed is a close boarded timber fence. A detailed hard and soft landscape proposal will be developed during the design development stages and in consultation with the local authority. There may be concerns regarding the removal of mature vegetation to the boundary; the aim is to provide a sympathetic solution within the red line boundary to mitigate that loss and contribute to the overall character of the site development without detriment to the surrounding properties. Precedent images of the type and style envisaged for the streetscape have been included within Annex B.

The storm and foul drainage will be redesigned within the site boundary and connected to the existing final spurs into the main sewer systems within the public highway. A full capacity study will be undertaken along with a percolation test to see whether the ground conditions can take a SUDs system to deal with stormwater.

There are significant trees 'off-site' as identified in the arboricultural report. Whilst reference has been made to the potential impact of Plot 2 on the existing tree routes, the applicant is keen to advise that approaches to mitigate and eliminate the risk to those trees using techniques such as floating slabs, soft dig excavation and bespoke piled foundation design which will be designed as part of any pre-commencement condition.

Sustainability

The proposal will take a 'fabric first' approach to complying with the latest building regulation standards. In addition, we aim to explore rainwater harvesting and PV options to reduce demand on the energy requirements of the homes. The installation of a SUDs system will also be considered to manage stormwater from the site.

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Materials

The proposed materials have been highlighted on the proposed elevation drawings; they are subject to further detailed development in consultation with the local authority. The final selection of material type and colour will be subject to market availability at the time of construction and agreement/approval with the planners prior to commencement on site; there is a commitment to high-quality products that will not date quickly, and that have good maintenance properties to safeguard the quality of the homes for the medium to long term.

The proposal at present may be summarised as:

- External Walls – A mixture of facing brick to 2.1m high, with the upper storey in an insulated render system
- Windows – Aluminium windows with dark grey colour TBC; high thermal and acoustic properties to comply with Building Regulations as a minimum
- Doors – Treated Timber Doors to front and rear (utility)
- Garage Door – Treated Timber ‘up-and-over’ electric garage door
- Roof – Tiles in Grey
- Stormwater Goods – Type TBC; to match window frame colour

Included in Annex C is a series of precedent images capturing the type of material quality the development aspires to deliver.

Summary

The new housing will function well and will complement previously consented schemes. The development will add to the overall quality of the area over the lifetime of the development and will also be designed to have high quality internal finishes (see Annex D).

The new housing is visually attractive because of a subtle, understated architectural response; the layout and hard/soft landscaping is appropriate to the development and will contribute to the overall quality and amenity of the wider development.

The housing also increases the density of the site in a sympathetic manner, adding much needed quality housing stock into a sought-after area rather than the ultra-low density of the single bungalow.

The housing style, central access road and soft/hard landscaping contribute to a sense of place and is not without precedent in the immediate surrounding area.

A strong sense of community and security – balanced with privacy – is achieved in the overall site layout; overlooking is avoided but the ability to have natural surveillance of the properties is inherent within the scheme.

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Annex A – Local Precedents



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Annex B – Streetscape



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Annex C – Look & Feel (External)



Annex D – Look & Feel (Internal)

