

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

**PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE DEMOLITION OF
EXISTING BUNGALOW & GARAGES AND ERECTION
OF A REPLACEMENT DWELLING AT THORNHEDGE,
ASHBROOK LANE, POULTON, CIRENCESTER, GL7 5JF**

PLANNING, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT



Prepared by

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Our Reference: ADM.LPC5730

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement is submitted to accompany an application for planning permission to erect a two-storey house with an attached double garage with room over following the demolition of the existing bungalow and its attached pair of garages and conservatory.
- 1.2 In designing this scheme, care has been taken to ensure that the visual amenities of the locality will not be harmed, the proposed house to be on a similar alignment to the existing bungalow, set well back from Ashcroft Lane with existing trees retained to its south so that there will be no overlooking of Ashbrook House, located on the south side of the lane. The proposed dwelling will be of a more traditional appearance, built to higher standards of design and insulation, than the structure that it will replace.
- 1.3 This Statement will briefly describe the location and appearance of the application site before setting out what this application proposes. It will then refer to the planning policy context at the local level before referring to the design concepts. It will conclude with the opinion that the proposal will be Development Plan compliant and will request that planning permission be granted, subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions.

2.0 LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION SITE

- 2.1 Thornhedge is located on the north side of Ashbrook Lane, approximately 40m from its junction with Bell Lane, the road that runs northwards from London Road towards Betty's Grave and to Quenington.
- 2.2 The application site has two dwellings immediately to the east and residential development along the northern boundary, with planning permission having been granted for the erection of one dwelling between Alberta and Little Orchard in January 2019. To the south, on the opposite side of Ashbrook Lane, is Ashbrook House, a dwelling erected subsequent to the grant of planning permission in September 2001, as a replacement for the former dwelling 'Sarnia' that was located there.
- 2.3 Thornhedge is a detached bungalow that runs parallel to Ashbrook Lane, where it fronts the site. At its eastern end is a flat roofed double garage attached to the flat roofed kitchen, utility and entrance hall from the rear

garden. The bungalow is constructed of reconstructed stone with white UPVC fenestration and doorways, white fascia boards and a concrete tiled roof. A rooflight has been inserted into the south elevation at a later date with a flat roofed dormer window on the north elevation providing headroom at the top of the staircase to provide access to bedrooms and a bathroom. There are trees to the north and south of the dwelling, details of which are contained within the Arboricultural Report that accompanies this application. The majority of the area to the front of the house is put down to hard surfacing and trees with a photograph of the dwelling shown below.



- 2.4 The bungalow is in poor structural condition, to the extent that an experienced Structural Engineer has visited the site and has concluded, that the foundations have failed and that he would be unable to give the building a clean bill of health even if substantial remediation works were carried out. The Cotswold District Council Rating Officer (Nicky Innes) have been informed of the condition of the building and the advice that it should be demolished and the building now has a Major Structural Works Discount (Council Tax) for the maximum period applying, the Rating Officer has also suggested that an appeal is made to the Valuation Office Agency for the removal of the property from the Council Tax listing. From the above, it is clear that there are serious structural problems with the original construction of the dwelling which confirms that the best and safest course of action would be to demolish it.

3.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 This application proposes the demolition of the existing bungalow, garages, conservatory and porch and its replacement with a detached house. The house will be sited in the same position as the existing dwelling but will be 'T' shaped in plan form with the western section of the house to face towards the open countryside. The eastern projection will have a lower eaves height with gablets on the north and south elevations and the ridge and eaves will then drop towards the eastern boundary and incorporate the garages, which will have a guest room above, with daylight provided by a pair of dormer windows located centrally above each garage door. An external staircase will provide additional means of access/escape to this upper floor room, with the door in the gable end to be a solid timber door rather than a glazed window, as in the first floor gable end of the existing bungalow.



3.2 The applicant is the daughter of the previous occupiers of the dwelling, who were resident in Poulton for over 60 years. She intends to replace the existing dwelling with one in which she and her family can continue to reside, thereby retain the family's connection with the village.

3.3 The approach of demolishing a property and replacing it with another of traditional design is not an alien approach in Ashbrook Lane, as evidenced by the decision in 2001 concerning Ashbrook House, on the opposite side of the lane.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 4.1 The Cotswold District Local Plan was adopted in August 2018 and is the Development Plan that applications should be determined in accordance with unless there are overriding material considerations to the contrary. This Plan identifies development boundaries around the main settlements but Poulton is not within the list of principal settlements that have a defined development boundary. Accordingly, Poulton is a village to which Policy DS3 of the Local Plan applies and this states that small-scale residential development will be permitted provided it meets four criteria. These are that the development demonstrably supports or enhances the vitality of local community and the continued availability of services and facilities locally; is of a proportionate scale and maintains and enhances sustainable patterns of development; that it compliments the form and character of the settlement; and does not have an adverse cumulative impact on the settlement having regard to other developments permitted during the Local Plan period. It is the case on behalf of the applicant that because there is an existing dwelling in this location, the proposal will continue to support the vitality of the local community; will be of proportionate scale; will maintain the sustainable pattern of development; will compliment and enhance the form and character of the settlement and will not have any adverse cumulative impacts.
- 4.2 In referring to Policy DS3, it is our case on behalf of the applicant that the site is located within the village of Poulton. This is because there is housing on the west side of Bell Lane, the rear boundaries of which follow a distinct line which running from north to south, includes the residential properties to the north, the western boundary of the application site, the western boundary of Ashbrook House and then continues beyond that. For this reason, it is my professional opinion that Thornhedge is located within the settlement of Poulton. However, if it was considered that the site is outside the village and in the open countryside where Policy DS3 does not apply, the Local Plan states in paragraph 6.4.4 following Policy DS4 the applicable housing policy in such an area that it does not preclude the development of some open market housing in such locations, and gives an example of dwellings resulting from the replacement of existing dwellings. Accordingly, in Development Plan

terms, there can be no objection in principle to a replacement dwelling at this location.

- 4.3 The built, natural and historic environment policies are relevant, Policy EN1 stating that new development will, where appropriate, promote the protection, conservation and enhancement of the historic and natural environment. The application site is not within the Poulton Conservation Area nor within a location where the natural environment makes a significant contribution. Rather, it is in a location that has housing development to the north, south and east. One of the specific requirements of this policy is that the design should compliment the character of the area, which is what this application is seeking to achieve.
- 4.4 Policy EN2 is entitled 'Design of the Built and Natural Environment' and says that development will be permitted which accords with the Cotswold Design Code. It adds that proposals should be of design quality that respects the character and distinctive appearance of the locality. The supporting text says that development should be designed so that it follows an authentic vernacular and traditional approach, in line with the local character, or else be of a high quality contemporary and innovative appearance. This proposal follows the former, providing a style of development that will be harmonious with its surroundings.
- 4.5 The application site is not within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and Policy EN4 concerns the wider natural and historic landscape. It says that development will be permitted where it does not have a significant detrimental impact on the natural and historic landscape (including the tranquillity of the countryside) of the District. It adds that proposals will take account of landscape and historic landscape character, visual quality and local distinctiveness and expects proposals to enhance, restore and better manage the natural and historic landscape, and any significant features and elements, including key views, the setting of settlements, settlement patterns and heritage assets. The proposal will not affect any heritage assets, will retain the existing settlement pattern as well as its setting and not prejudice any key views. There are no significant landscape features, as confirmed by the accompanying Arboricultural Report.

- 4.6 The Cotswold Design Code refers to scale and proportion and says that new buildings should relate to the human scale and to their landscape or townscape context. The proposed development will sit comfortably in its setting and, although the house will be taller than the dwelling that it will replace, it will follow the predominant style of building in the locality, in terms of scale and appearance and will be built of local stone with a roof of imitation stone slate, that will be appropriate for its location.
- 4.7 Policy EN8 concerns biodiversity and species protection and states that the Council will not permit development that harms sites supporting any legally protected species or bats. From external inspection of the building, the plain tiles together with the fascia boards and the construction of the walling stone means that the building is not easily accessible to any wildlife. However, an ecological appraisal has been undertaken, the results of which comprise part of this application. In order to ensure that there is gain for biodiversity, a bat box is proposed to be attached to an existing tree, the location of which is shown on the accompanying site plan, as are 2 hedgehog hibernacula. Bird boxes can also be provided on other trees.
- 4.8 Policy INF4 concerns highway safety and says that development will be permitted provided that a number of requirements are met. Incorporated within these are that a safe and suitable access is provided and included within the design. As mentioned previously there is an existing vehicular access onto Ashbrook Lane, which will be utilised to form access to the proposed replacement dwelling and so there will be no difference in terms of access provision.
- 4.9 Policy INF5 concerns parking provision and says that this will be in accordance with the standards and guidance set out at Appendix f. This requires a minimum of 1 cycle space per dwelling, which can be achieved within the garage of the proposed dwelling. So far as car parking is concerned, the Local Plan relies on the parking toolkit spreadsheet produced by DCLG. For a 4-bedroom dwelling in a rural location such as this, it requires parking provision for 2.4 spaces. With there being an additional guest bedroom, 3 or 4 spaces would be more appropriate and as 2 are proposed within the existing garage and there being plenty of space for an additional 2

vehicles to be parked within the proposed driveway, adequate parking provision will be made within the scheme.

5.0 DESIGN CONCEPTS

- 5.1 The design approach has been to provide an attractive, traditional dwelling that will complement and enhance the appearance of the immediate locality. The approach has not been to mimic other forms of housing but to provide a dwelling of the type required by the applicant.
- 5.2 The dwelling also provides accommodation of a sufficient size for the occupant to be able to work from home, a sustainable approach, as recognised within the Local Plan. High insulation standards will also reduce the carbon footprint with the proposal to include the provision of solar panels. Although these are proposed on the north elevation, these panels will be ones that do not rely on sunlight and so may not be as efficient as if they were located on the south elevation. An electric vehicle charging point will also be provided within the garage of the property, the heating for which will be via an air source heat pump located to the rear of the garage.

Use

- 5.3 The existing use of the site is residential, comprising the existing dwelling known as Thornhedge, set in spacious grounds. The proposed use will also be residential, being one dwelling and so there will be no material change of use of the application site and no intensification of the number of dwellings.

Amount

- 5.4 As the scheme only proposes the erection of a replacement dwelling, there will be no change to the density of development on the site. With the area of the site being approximately 0.15 hectares, the density of development is 6.67 dwellings per hectare, which is low density, in character with the nearby housing development.

Layout

- 5.5 The layout of the site adopts a similar approach to that of the existing property with the main body of the house set parallel to Ashbrook Lane. However, the 'T' plan form will provide interest, especially when combined with the

appearance of the built form. There will be gardens to the north west and south of the dwelling, the garaging set further back from the highway than the existing situation.

Scale

- 5.6 The proposed dwelling will be 19.8m wide across its frontage, with the west elevation to be 12.6m in width. The span of the parts of the building vary between 6.0m at its western end, through 7.2m at the hall/landing section, to 6.4m at the garage end. The variation in spans means that there are changes in eaves and ridge heights with the main, western end being the tallest at 4.8m and 8.5m respectively. The eaves then steps down going eastwards to 4.2m and 2.4m, with the ridge dropping to 6.5m high for the eastern section. The scale of the proposed replacement dwelling is typical of traditional Cotswold housing, unlike the existing building.

Appearance

- 5.7 As stated previously, the proposed dwelling has been designed to be of Cotswold vernacular appearance, with steep pitched roofs and narrow spans. Gablets will punctuate the eaves line in the central part of the house, with dormer windows above the garages on the front elevation. The remainder of the fenestration will be casement windows with a bay formed on the south gable end to add interest to the appearance. Stone lintels, cills, chimney and walling together with imitation stone roof slates will mean that the appearance will be harmonious with its surroundings and enhance this part of Poulton. Photovoltaic panels are proposed on the north elevation, which will not be visible from the public domain. Although not the best orientation, they will still provide a renewable energy source for the proposed dwelling.

Landscaping

- 5.8 The application site contains a variety of trees along its frontage and to its north, which will be retained. Some have recently been removed, as part of tree management procedures. In view of the number of existing trees, it should not be necessary to impose a landscaping condition of permission.

Access

- 5.9 Thornhedge has an existing access onto Ashbrook Lane that will be used to serve the proposed replacement dwelling and so there will not be any discernible impact on the public highway once the redevelopment has been completed. There will be adequate space for the provision of parking for cars and cycles within the curtilage of the dwelling. Accordingly, there should not be any adverse highway impact as a result of this proposal.

6.0 THE CASE IN FAVOUR OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 6.1 The information contained within this Statement demonstrates that the proposed dwelling accords with the policies of the Development Plan in that it will enhance the visual amenity of the site and its surroundings, will accord with the Design Code adopted for the District and will meet all other environmental objectives. The site is within the village of Poulton where development such as this are permissible and, even if it was in the countryside, there is policy support for such proposals.

- 6.2 In the planning balance, a matter that a proposal such as this should take into account is the fallback situation, i.e. what would happen if permission is not granted. In this regard, the status quo could mean that the existing house could deteriorate, which would not be of benefit to anybody, whilst demolition should be undertaken due to the condition of the building stemming from its poor foundations. Another option would be to implement permitted development rights that are applicable to buildings in locations such as this, this site not being within a Conservation Area or the AONB. The height of a building such as this can be increased without the benefit of planning permission, subject to compliance with the requirements of the legislation. This option would not be the best for this site or its context and so the proposed replacement dwelling would represent a solution that would enhance the appearance of the site and its surroundings.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The proposed replacement dwelling will be an attractive house of traditional design and appearance, which will enhance the appearance of the site and its surroundings. It will be faced with natural Cotswold stone and have an

imitation stone slate roof that will further complement its appearance. The retention of existing vegetation and trees will soften its visual impact and the result will be a scheme that makes a positive contribution to this part of Poulton.

- 7.2 Applications should be determined in accordance with the Development plan and this Statement has referred to the applicable policies of Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-31 and shown that there is no conflict. Although there is no specific policy regarding replacement dwellings, it is clear from the supporting text that it is an appropriate form of development, even in countryside locations where restraint policies apply. Accordingly, and especially as there is compliance with the Cotswold Design Code, there is a Development Plan policy presumption in favour of permission being granted.
- 7.3 The proposal will not cause any residential amenity objection to the occupiers of nearby properties and in such circumstances, I trust that planning permission will be granted. However, should the case officer have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.