

## Design and Access Statement

### **Proposed Dwelling At Astral House, Astral Drive, Thorpe Thewles, Stockton-on-Tees**

#### **Site**

The application site is located to the northern end of Thorpe Thewles to the north west of Stockton. The area is predominantly residential but set within a semi rural setting with this particular site part of a recently constructed housing development.

The site is located to the north of Astral Drive which is the new development road access leading from the main thorough fair running through the village know as Durham Road. The plot is currently occupied by a new detached dwelling with gabled roofs and part rendered upper floor walls over ground floor brick walls. The plot size is approximately 42m by 18m (773m<sup>2</sup> / 0.0773ha / 0.19a) with large garden to the rear and decent garden to the front incorporating the car parking area off Astral Drive.

Within the local area is a mix of house types with the new development in which it sits being a mix of semi and detached properties but along Durham Road there are bungalows and cottages. The site is within Development Limits and in a sustainable location with good access to two pubs, schools and public transport.

#### **Proposal**

This Planning and Design and Access statement supports the planning application for the erection of a detached two storey dwelling to the rear of the host dwelling. The proposed dwelling will be situated to the rear of the host property and accessed via an independent driveway off Astral Drive. Adequate separation distances to surrounding properties can be achieved as can a suitable level of amenity space for both the occupants of the host dwelling and those of the new house. The proposal accords with the policies of Core Strategy and the NPPF.

The proposed dwelling will be a three bed, two storey, detached dwelling in a style similar to the host property. There will be no garage but there will be parking for two vehicles within the curtilage to the front garden area. The main body of the house will be two storeys with gabled roof with windows to the front and rear and there is a single storey projection to the front ground. Artstone lintels and sills will give balance to the portrait windows and add detail, as will the dentil work at first floor level.

The building will complement those around it and continue the general theme of more executive dwellings in the vicinity whilst maintaining the local character. The proposed dwelling will also go towards the local housing need of the area.

## **History**

23/1977/VARY – Section 73 to vary condition No.2 (approved plans) of application 20/0057/FUL Application for the erection of 1no dwellinghouse. (approved)

23/1452/FUL Erection of 1no dwellinghouse. (withdrawn)

21/1892/VARY | Section 73 application to vary conditions no2 (Approved Plans), no3 (Tree Protection Plan) and no4 (Landscaping) of planning approval 20/0057/FUL - Application for the erection of 1no detached dwelling house

20/0057/FUL | Application for the erection of 1no detached dwelling house.

20/1875/REV | Revised application for the erection of 1no detached dwelling house

The main planning considerations of this proposal relate to the scale and appearance of the proposed dwelling, its impacts on the character of the surrounding area, the impact on nearby dwellings as well as the provision of access and parking.

## **Principle of Development**

The site is located within the limits of development as defined within the saved Policies of the Local Plan, in a residential area at a sustainable location, being in close proximity to a range of services. The NPPF has a presumption in favour of sustainable development. In view of these matters, the principle of development is considered to be in accordance with relevant policies and guidance.

## **Design, Character and Appearance**

Policy HE3 indicates support for development which maintains and enhances the overall character and appearance of such areas, which respects the built form and provides a high quality layout. It further indicates that the development of new dwellings within residential gardens will be resisted to protect the overall character and distinctiveness of the Character Area. However, it is submitted that the proposed site is different to principles of this policy in that the proposed dwelling will have its own independent access off a main road and is therefore not 'backland' development.

Policy SD3 Paragraph 2 states that housing priorities for the Council include providing housing that is affordable and providing opportunities for custom and self build properties. The proposed dwelling is a three bedroomed property of approximately 130m.sq so not overly large to be classed as an executive dwelling and the applicant intends for it to be a self build dwelling therefore according with the principles of SD3.

There is a mix of property styles and sizes in the surrounding area which include both render and brick elevations and in view of there being no set vernacular, the proposed design is considered to generally reflect the local area, in particular the host property of which it shares a similar general design.

The proposed dwelling will have space for up to two cars accessed via a drive from Astral Drive to the south of the dwelling and will be entirely independent of the host property. This maintains the general character of houses with individual driveways. The host property will maintain its separate driveway. The proposal would maintain the general separation of the properties along Astral Drive.

In view of these matters it is considered that the proposed development accords with the adopted Local Plan and the NPPF which generally require residential development to be sympathetic to the character of the locality and accommodate important features within the site. The proposal maintains the character of the area along Astral Drive which is defined mainly by medium sized properties subsequently protects its distinctiveness. As such, the proposed development would also accord with Policy HE3.

### **Amenity**

The proposed house will have main section measuring 11.45m by 6.05m, with eaves of 5.1m and a ridge height of 7.6m. The single storey section measure 1.55m by 7.5m with an eaves height of 2.25m and a ridge height of 3.55m. This is linked to the main body by a lean-to roof. Based on its layout will maintain a 21m separation between habitable room windows with all surrounding properties and well in excess of the required 11m from habitable room to gables.

The proposed internal layout and, subsequently, the windows serving the rooms have been designed to minimise their impact on neighbouring properties and maintain an acceptable level of privacy. Based on the general design, layout it is considered that the proposed dwelling will not be overlooked at the existing dwellings in the surrounding area and the scheme would be able to provide future occupiers with reasonable levels of privacy.

### **Access & Parking**

The proposed dwelling will have space for up to two cars on the driveway / parking area accessed via a drive from Astral Drive. The proposed dwelling will be entirely independent of the host property. The proposed access area will be via a dropped kerb access which maintains the general character of houses with driveways in the area.

As detailed in the Parking Provision for Developers SPD it states that a 3 bed dwelling should provide 2 in-curtilage car parking spaces, which is achieved by the proposed arrangement. The proposed use of the drive is consistent with those of neighbouring properties and, whilst the site will be used more intensively than at present (net gain of one dwelling), it is not considered an unrealistic increase of use, one that results in harm to the character of the area nor results in highway safety issues. The paving will be of a permeable type to conform to SUD's principles.

### **Inclusive Design**

The building has been designed to create an inclusive environment that recognises the needs of all occupiers and visitors. Direct vehicular access to the dwelling is via a car park area in front of the house with level access provided to the principal entrance door. The block paved front courtyard will be ramped up to a level threshold giving access for wheelchair users. The front entrance door will be in accordance with the current Part M of the Building Regulations.

All doors within the ground floor will have a minimum clear opening of 800mm for wheelchair users. A ground floor w.c. will have a minimum clear area in front of 900mm wide by 750mm long with an outward opening door. All switches and sockets will be in compliance with Part M of the Building Regulations.

Access to the upper floors will be via staircases in accordance with Part K and all switches and sockets in accordance with Part M of the current Building Regulations.

## **Other Matters**

There are no locally significant trees to be removed for the development, the existing boundary planting are to be retained and the site is currently a domestic garden there will be no loss of habitats or impact on the local ecology of the immediate or wider area.

Landscaping will be of a domestic nature and where possible the existing vegetation and grass will be utilised for the proposed development.

The site is not at risk of flooding and drainage will be via existing sewerage and drains. The addition of one house will not result in an overload of the existing systems. The risk of crime is not any higher than the houses surrounding it and the high quality of the proposed development should discourage any anti-social behaviours.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the above report it is considered that the proposed dwelling will allow for an adequate separation distance to all surrounding properties and a suitable level of amenity space for both the occupants of the host property and those of the new house. The impact of the proposed dwelling on the local character and street scene is considered to be negligible and the proposal will complement the properties in the surrounding area.

In view of the above it is considered that the proposed development accords with Local Plan Policy HO3, Core Strategy Policy CS3, and the NPPF as well as Policy HE3.

In accordance with the NPPF the Local Planning Authority should approve the proposals without delay as they accord with the development plan and as there are no adverse impacts that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole and as there are no specific policies in the NPPF that indicate development should be restricted.