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DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT A

Proposed New Dwelling with Garage and associated parking – 64 High Street Markyate St Albans Herts AL3 8HZ

Background

No 64 High Street is a Grade II Listed Building, with a carriage access to the side directly from the High Street itself.

In past years, the access served the rear of a number of adjacent houses to the north west. Several linked low rise outbuildings, built in an 'L' shape used to occupy the site of the access driveway to the proposed new house, with only one of those left at the end of and between the rear gardens of No Nos 60 and 62.

The current application site is an area of land which previously appears [from old map records], to have no specific historical use.

The applicants, Mr & Mrs Gower, have lived at No 64 High Street and have been an integral part of the village for a number of years. The plan is for Mr & Mrs Gower to build the new house for their own family to move into and the design hopefully reflects their wishes in terms of layout and design.

A pre-application approach was made to Dacorum Borough Council earlier this year and a response was received which in principle generally appeared favourable.

At a subsequent meeting with the appointed Planning Officer and Conservation Officer, it was agreed that the most acceptable way forward would be to attempt to demonstrate a 'history' for the new house, to show how a local building or style of building might have been found to compliment the setting of the listed building.

After extensive research of old photographs and historical records, we felt that the most attractive and appropriate building found locally which might be considered appropriate, was the old Water Works building, located off Pickford Road.

This building was used as a 'template' for the design of the new house and elements were picked out for inclusion into what we hope to be an acceptable and attractive design.

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The following is a picture of the old Water Works, taken in 1930. This was later converted and is now also a family home.



We are not aware of any previous applications having been made on this land for any form of housing development.

We do not believe that any harm would result from this development. No impact would be seen to result upon the amenities of local neighbours, there is no contrived form of access proposed. In fact the access was considered appropriate to serve another dwelling during the pre-application stage

The design of the buildings is sympathetic to the established pattern of development, and the feeling of space around the properties, and indeed the retained generously proportioned gardens would hopefully actually be appropriately considered as a *betterment* of the area and would in no way impact negatively upon the setting of the host Listed Building.

Development Context and Design Philosophy

The site is generally flat and extends sharply upwards along the westernmost boundary. The houses to the west are set significantly higher, and so viewed from the High Street, the new house would not present as an extension of the existing built form – [*consideration given to comments received previously from the Conservation Officer*].

It is also generally private and very well screened from other properties.

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It was important to consider a design, a building which may well have played a part in the history of the setting of the Listed Building and indeed in the Conservation Area as a whole.

While development of this sort might be encouraged - subject to agreed elements of amenity protection and access etc. - of principal importance in this case was to introduce a design of building which would read well alongside others and which could easily be accepted within the fabric and framework of the settlement.

The design of the new house clearly 'borrows' large elements from the chosen building (old Water works), and expands upon those to help create a very light and well proportioned house, which at the same time recognises a degree of subservience in terms of height, and scale.

Although offering a generous footprint, the building has been carefully articulated to enable the reduction of span depths, which in turn favours a more low-rise style of building.

At no point do we have a full two storey height element and the staircase is housed towards the centre of the principal part of the building, to allow ready access from a central point, since essentially on the first floor, the accommodation is only one room wide.

To prevent a series of linked rooms therefore, a second staircase was added from the family room to the study above and this could additionally also provide access to Bed 2 if required.

From a taller glazed atrium styled room, lots of light would be afforded to the lower Family room and staircase and the added advantage to the neighbouring property we felt would be to enable a visual 'separation' of the garage block and the main house, rather than present a long unbroken brick wall and tiled roof along the northern boundary.

Wherever possible, the fenestration has been introduced to minimize potential overlooking into neighbouring houses and to maximize light into principal habitable rooms.

Approaching from the extended access driveway, the front door would be prominent under a porch canopy and the parking area will suggest a courtyard layout, in keeping very much with the host house.

Plenty of amenity land and garden has been provided for the new house, principally to the south and openings into that area have been carefully considered. In contrast, elements such as the log and bin stores have been 'hidden' away to the northern side of the house.

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The house would be fired by gas, but with a back-up of a log burner and it was important to provide storage for dry logs too, which we think successful where identified.

The new dwelling would have a combined footprint including the garage, of 198.3m², would be built over two floors, and would have an internally measured habitable floor area of 241.0m².

The overall site area of the scheme is 0.09 hectares.

The house would be built using appropriately sourced and agreed facing brickwork, under a roof of small clay tiles, which we believe will allow the house to remain fully in-keeping with the setting of other nearby properties.

It is anticipated that we would adopt white painted hardwood timber windows, although generally, we would assume the facing material choices to be the subject of a separate pre-commencement Planning Condition

Car parking and Access

A hard standing and turning area has been provided for a minimum of three cars, in addition to the double garage.

This offers, we trust, an appropriate level of parking in accordance with current standards.

Access would be across a flat site with an approved bound hard surface, and a ramped access would be provided for less ambulant users of the house.

All other matters of providing access for disabled people, such as appropriately sited switches and sockets, level thresholds and wider door widths would be adopted in line with current Building Regulations and good general practice.

Pedestrian access would be further maintained from the public footpath along the High Street.

Sustainability

Generally, road links are excellent, with the A5 within a couple of hundred metres and there is easy access to the motorway just a couple of miles away at Junction 9.

There are good local shops in the village, including a bank and all other local amenities are readily available within the village or nearby.

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Indeed the village school is just a short walk.

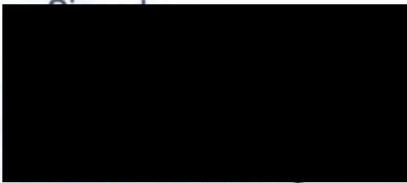
Obviously in removing the village of Markyate from the Green Belt restrictions, acknowledgement has previously been made by the LPA to verification of the above comments, and at the time of writing, the largest introduction of new housing in Markyate for a generation is taking place, and within a short walking distance of this site.

In terms of the fabric of the building, the construction would be carried out under the current Building Regulations, which inevitably seek to produce dwelling built to a generally higher than average specification in terms of limiting heat loss and carbon emissions.

Conclusion

We hope to have been able to demonstrate that all efforts have been made to offer a coherent design, based upon and consistent with an acceptably cogent concept, and in order to help supplement our application, we respectfully submit this statement for consideration by Dacorum Borough Council.

Signed



Andrew P Whiteley

A P Whiteley Consultants Ltd

Dated 02.02.2017