

# Design, access and heritage statement

March 2024

Gables, Newnham Road, Newnham, Hook, Hampshire, RG279AE



## Introduction

The preparation of this statement, on behalf of the applicant meets the statutory requirement as supporting documentation for the Householder planning application submitted to Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council for the proposed replacement detached garage to the residential property at the above address.

This document aims to set down our design philosophy, detailing the urban design, architectural approach and access principles plus describe the way in which the property form and its open space provide a legible and positive experience of the development; enhanced by a consistent architectural style and materials palette.

It assesses the character and immediate appearance of the location plus offers an insight into the evolution of the proposal from the initial concept to the accompanying principals; all which when combined have significant bearing.

The proposed development can be summarised by the following characteristics:

- property located adjacent to but **NOT** within the Newnham Conservation Area
- corner location on the junction of Newnham Road and Kingsbridge Copse
- no immediate residential neighbouring property (located between Newnham Village Hall and Kingsbridge Copse access)
- the house sits central to the property, facing Newnham Road
- development supports and complies with current local planning policies
- existing brownfield site, located within identified residential settlement boundary
- replacement garage to the front garden following removal of the existing garage to the rear garden
- overall application site area approximate 0.08 hectares
- more efficient, effective use of land in sought after location
- improved private family home within walking distance of local shops and amenities
- no alteration to the existing vehicular access from Newnham Road or current parking levels
- reasonably screened location with no overlooking issues
- no tree loss or hedge pruning to facilitate the development
- increase in private garden amenity to the rear garden following removal of current garage
- designed to adopt traditional, local building materials to blend in with immediate vernacular
- opportunity to further enhance a beautiful, sustainable residential environment
- no disturbance to the surrounding residential properties
- opportunity to offer safe, secure storage of vehicles and cycles

## Development content

The application site is in Newnham, a small, beautiful and matured village setting between Hook and Basingstoke, served by an excellent road and rail network.

The local narrative is set by the Newnham Conservation Area though Gables itself is not found with this designation but remains central to an established, residential area entirely within identified urban settlement, within walking distance of Hook town centre and other amenities, services, recreational facilities and employment opportunities.

Newnham Road is an undulating, winding tree lined highway accessed at each end by London Road (A30) to the east and the village green junction to the west with properties predominantly to the northern side with views across the open fields beyond. The main railway line serving London to/from southern areas runs parallel to Newnham Road therefore only isolated housing is found on the south side due to the railway cutting.

Gables (formerly known as Kimian) is central to Newnham Road where properties vary in age, character and size but generally detached family houses and cottage style semi-detached properties set in spacious plots surrounded by trees, matured hedging and open countryside.

Much alteration has taken place over the years but distinctly there remains a mix of two storey houses, with detached or integral garages set in varying sized plots with no specific architectural style, pattern or height due to much development and refurbishment. Though most adopt traditional external materials, houses introduced in more recent years, notably those behind Gables in Kingsbridge Copse do offer a fresher approach to a diverse street scene.

The application site is occupied by a detached, chalet style two storey dwelling with detached single garage in the rear garden. It is surrounded by garden area, driveway and paths offering all round access with low level border planting, mixed mature hedging and isolated tree screening overhanging from neighbouring properties.



The dwelling is set back from the highway, separated by its private gravel dressed driveway which continues past the house towards the garage set immediately behind the house, offering flexible levels of parking and turning facility. With an external footprint including the garage of 137m<sup>2</sup>, the overall built form equates to approx. 17% of the application site, suggesting a plot capable of considered expansion.

The 4 bedroom dwelling is a traditionally designed, 'L-shaped' red brick dwelling with mixed hipped/gabled roof laid to small, plain concrete roof tiles and matching half round ridge tiles/bonnet hip tiles, interrupted by inclined rooflights and hipped dormer windows with plain tiled cheek returns to elevate an otherwise simple roofscape. Contrasting brick detailing, soldier coursing to the window and door plus arch heads to the covered entrance add complimentary features.

The closed eaves are formed from white upvc soffit and fascia aligned by matching white squareline guttering which marry into the white upvc casement windows and exterior doors with diagonal leaded lights. A green composite front entrance door has full height white upvc sidelights plus a projecting feature bay window matches the remaining windows.

The garage in the rear garden facing the house corresponds to the host dwelling in many ways, finished in red brick with matching solid green pressed metal vehicular entrance door, solid composite green coloured personnel door to the side and white upvc casement window with diagonal leaded light facing the garden. Its flat roof is finished in green coated, profiled metal sheeting and fascia to each side with stone coping to the parapet head above the entrance door that rises above the roof finish.

There is also a small red brick built store in the rear garden, again matching the house with two, green painted timber doors and corrugated sheet roofing above which will be retained.

In short, the location is characterised by a mix of detached and semi-detached residential dwellings in an informal pattern, set in irregular plots of similar size, consisting of a diversity of architectural styles but no particular design consistency.

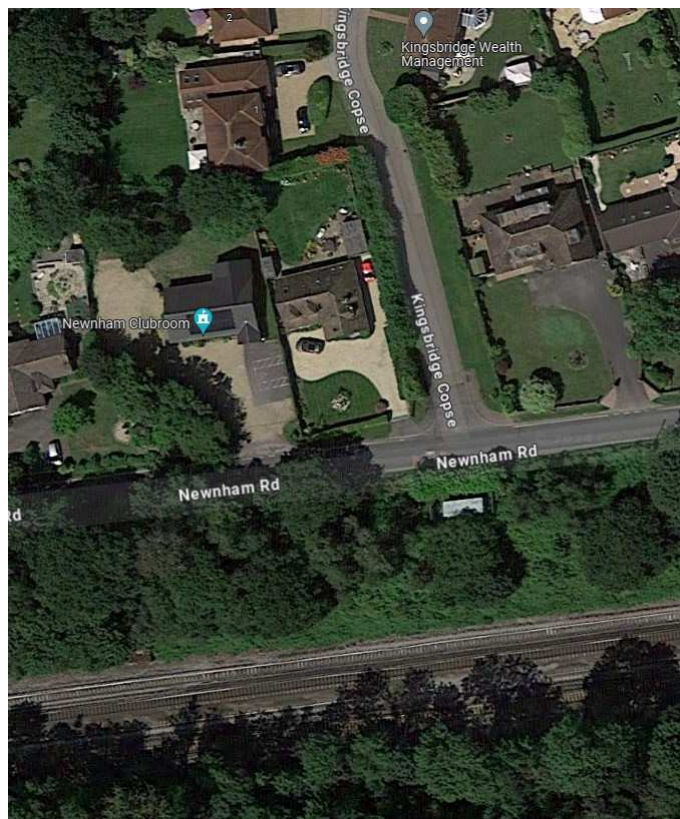
As the application site is situated within urban settlement, there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development provided that proposals are in compliance with development plan policies and that no unacceptable harm to residential amenity, the environment, highway safety or any other material planning considerations arise.

## Application site assessment

The rectangular shaped site has dimensions approx. 43.7m long by 18.6m wide with an area totalling approx. 812m<sup>2</sup> (0.08 hectares). The front of dwelling is set 18.7m from the front boundary to the south with the smaller outshot 3.2m closer then approx. 16.7m from the rear boundary to the north.

Facing eastwards, the house has a 4.2m gap to the side with gravel driveway, significant hedging and grass verge separating this from Kingsbridge Copse though the detached garage set further back in the rear garden runs parallel to this side boundary within 1.2m. To the western boundary with Newnham Village Hall, a narrow minimum distance of 1.5m allows for a path which when all combined establishes a house in a central position on the site with special separation from all boundaries.

The dwelling is separated from Newnham Road by its front garden laid to lawn plus the spacious gravel dressed driveway which runs the full width of the property from its access point in the south east corner, surrounded by matured hedging and low level planting. Access to the highway is via a pair of 1.2m high automated timber entrance gates with matching 1.2m high vertical timber closeboard fencing and minimum 2.1m high matured hedging running the full length of the front boundary. Further separation from the highway is achieved by the grass verge though there is no public footpath.



To avoid disturbance to the highway infrastructure, pedestrian movement and vehicular safety, the front boundary and access should remain untroubled by the proposal.

The eastern boundary line separates the application site from Kingsbridge Copse, which accesses the more recent development behind and is lined by minimum 3.6m high hedging and grass verge with elements of closeboard fencing and brick walling to offer some security. Newnham Village Hall to the west is a moderate timber clad communal venue with parking all round and grassed areas to the rear and is separated from the application site by 1.9m high vertical timber closeboard fencing, low level planting and trees to the rear.

Behind Gables is No. 1 Kingsbridge Copse, the only residential property that immediately neighbours the application site and is similarly screened by trees and thick, matured fir hedging approx. 3.6m high in addition to the 2.1m high brick wall that surrounds the garden.



The rear garden itself is laid to lawn with isolated bedding areas to the boundaries and paved patio area that accesses the garage and store, decoratively arcing around further planting which blend to present a secluded, private garden environment despite the dated, awkwardly positioned garage. The presence and subsequent health of the trees that overhang from the village hall will not be impacted but either the removal of the existing garage or the erection of its replacement.

The topographical levels are generally consistent across site with the property set at a slightly lower level to the highway, approx. 200 - 300mm leading down from the access to the front entrance. The house and existing garage to the rear are set at the same level, stepping down from the patio to the remaining garden area therefore ground levels do not unduly influence design.

All existing boundary fencing, planting and hedging are retained as is the double width gated entrance. There remains every opportunity for good degree of space separation given the spacious front driveway area, rear garden and with boundaries well screened.

Therefore the site is full of opportunity as there is no physical constraint to restrict design of the proposed garage beyond the size/location of the trees, the relationship with the boundaries, existing topographical levels, local parking standards/vehicular movement, the prerequisite consideration of the neighbouring property's amenity and the incumbent street scene.



The application site itself is not identified in the development plan as having any special historical, townscape, environmental or other distinction. There are no additional restrictions other than normal development control aspects to unduly influence design with every consideration given to the status of the setting and to neighbouring households.

The Planning Act 1990 explains that the council should *'determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character of appearance of which it is desired to preserve or enhance'*.

The NPPF sets out that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation
- The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality
- The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness

Given this and the otherwise unconstrained location, the general characteristics of the site and the prevailing pattern of the surrounding established built environment, it is reasonable to pursue a proposal for a replacement garage as long as it remains in accordance with the relevant planning policies, ensuring the immediate area is unharmed and indeed enhanced.

## Relevant planning history

To justify the application it is essential that its planning history is fully assessed which provides a useful chronology through time of how the property has been assessed by the local planning authority since the present house was introduced (formerly known as Kimian) :

ref: 15/02632/HSE	validated description	17 August 2015 Erection of two storey side and rear extensions following demolition of existing garage and garden store/WC
	decision	refused 9 October 2015
ref: BDB/47556	validated description	29 March 2000 Conversion of loft with dormer and velux windows
	decision	approved 10 May 2000

ref: BDB/46006

validated

3 August 1999

description

Loft conversion comprising dormer and velux windows

decision

refused 29 September 1999

## Design solution

Planning is sought for the erection of a replacement, detached double garage following removal of the current single garage in the rear garden to form improved, secure facilities and equally enhance the private garden.

The intention is to remove the existing brick built, flat roof garage which limits the rear garden and takes up so much valuable amenity space then erect a double garage in the front garden to better suit a dwelling of this size that can easily accommodate the families need for safe, secure parking of vehicles and cycles plus household goods associated with such a property.

As well as looking to enhance their private garden area, the open nature of the location with access road to one side and community venue/meeting point to the other means the family has experienced security issues especially when the hall is in use beyond the evening. Their need is to provide secure facility for their vehicles/belongings and by positioning the garage to the south west corner, further discourage unwanted access in an otherwise vulnerable boundary point.

Another reason to position the garage to the front boundary is to help minimise traffic noise from the highway plus regular noise from the railway line. Though the hedging and fencing helps, a physical barrier will offer additional acoustic protection.

The priority though is to avoid loss of parking and turning facility with the highlighted position felt to offer this without moving the current access or consequential infrastructure disturbance beyond the boundary.

The proposed garage looks to complement the existing in terms of material use and style with an appearance to match and minimise any impact on the character or appearance of the property. The home owners have on numerous times throughout the design process expressed their desire to respect and preserve the immediate style of the location in their choice of external materials.

The garage is sized to easily satisfy the minimum requirements for internal dimensions of the local parking standards, housing the homeowners vehicle(s) and cycles with sufficient access all round as well as appropriate, everyday storage.



Finished at low level in facing quality red brickwork to match the host dwelling, the remainder of the façade will be clad in natural, horizontal stained timber boarding to soften the appearance, help blend into the wooded location that surrounds the immediate setting plus the timber framed hall next door. A barn end, cropped hipped roofscape finished in small plain concrete roof tiles similarly match Gables with a profile designed to ensure it does not dominate the host dwelling with a ridge height matching that of the projecting front outshot and therefore lower by approx. 0.5m than the main house.

A double width access door is deemed the most suitable when considering manoeuvrability with a modern, roller shutter offering better security and flexible colour options to best suit the chosen timber boarding. A personnel door facing the house offers some natural daylight given no windows are included which too, can easily blend into the natural aesthetic of the facade.

The scale, mass and height of the proposal is appropriate when considering the spacious surroundings and a lack of immediate neighbouring residential property. It remains sensitive to and reinforces certain characteristics without affecting privacy or the natural screen that continues to flourish. It is scaled to respect the constraints within the location with an improved land use and successful integration with no impact on sight lines or safe traffic movement.

There is a real responsibility to deliver a richer, improved version of the current garage that the dwelling deserves. It is hoped that the relationship between the proposal and the host dwelling enhances the property in terms of its external appearance, one which blends to offer a balanced mix of material palette and visual articulation.

With the current hedging that bounds the frontage remaining untouched, this helps to safeguard effective all year round cover to protect the natural environment and encourage habitat opportunities.

The accompanying photographs establish the visual context of the current location and the drawings, which incorporate the design philosophy, illustrate the style of the proposal. It is trusted that the design helps complement the context of the property and provide a harmonious relationship to ensure local residents suffer no adverse material impact.



It is hoped the use of locally sourced, natural building materials that match the host dwelling will help justify a proposal that is easily absorbed with negligible impact on the surrounding built environment, embracing and enhancing the incumbent style of Newnham.

The addition intends to reflect the immediate vernacular in terms of external material use, demonstrating a positive, well modelled contribution to the location which respects the narrative of its surroundings in line with local plan policies.

Designed solely for the current household to meet their specific needs; it affords the chance for an improved standard of living, space separation and amenity space and provides an opportunity for wider energy conservation in the use of modern construction technique as its orientation in relation to the daytime sun offers the opportunity to install roof mounted solar panelling.

With an external footprint of 45.8m<sup>2</sup> and the removal of the existing garage, the built form increases by just 3%, a negligible net increase to a property in such an impressive location.

Given the nature of the proposal, it is trusted it has no adverse impact on the setting of any built heritage asset that is found within a potential zone of influence of the development or does not harm the character of the street scene.

When considering the potential impact (in heritage terms), the NPPF states that *'when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance'*.

The NPPF goes on to set out the tests for substantial harm and less than substantial harm. Relating to this proposal, the development is unlikely to result in any harm to the heritage asset. However, if the Council consider that the development is going to result in harm, this should be considered as 'less than substantial harm',

It continues *'where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use'*.

In this case, given the overall plot size and that most soft landscaping and natural environment remains, the development proposal will not be harmful in any form. Likewise, given where the dwelling sits on the site in terms of its juxtaposition with other buildings, the proposed garage does not result in any demonstrable harm to the character.

## Access

The proposal has little impact on vehicular access, turning or levels of parking on site as the proposed position of the replacement garage adopts an area currently laid to grass. The access to and from Newnham Road in the south east corner is retained as are the 1.2m high automated timber entrance gates and crossover to the highway.

With the realignment of the driveway to suit the garage, there is a slight increase in driveway area to aid turning though not enough to significantly alter the levels of parking the property already enjoys. Naturally, further spaces are created with the garage itself, though these will be offset following removal of the existing garage to the rear and potentially maybe those along the narrow driveway that leads towards this down the side of the dwelling.



Despite the positioning of the garage to the front south west corner of the property, the orientation of this in relation to the angle of the road does not impeded the current sight lines of vehicles leaving either Gables itself or Kingsbridge Copse. Similarly, it does not impede access to or from Newnham Village Hall as it is set behind the current hedging and 1.8m high timber closeboard fencing that lines its own boundary with Gables.

It is therefore felt the current vehicular parking provision on site remains acceptable and similarly, the safe manoeuvring of vehicles to enable all to leave the property in a forward gear is comfortably untroubled, especially considering the applicants will remain at the property so there will be no net increase in the current traffic movements.

The nature of the application site also allows for ample parking for both residents and workmen throughout the duration of the alterations with the storage of materials and plant etc easily attainable within its boundaries.

## Conclusion

The proposal assists in the Council's target of accommodating currently developed land in order to maximise residential development, ease residential housing pressures and secure regeneration opportunities which contribute to the local economic, social and environmental wellbeing.

It is trusted that the proposed garage will better complement the context of the property and provide a more harmonious introduction ensuring neighbours and the immediate locality suffer no adverse material impact, establishing a more obvious connection to the property given its relatable welcome to a home of this character.

In light of these conditions and general characteristics of the site, the proposal accords reasonably with the implementation of national and local Development Plan policy objectives in seeking a more sustainable, efficiently performing property embodying the Governments objective of encouraging development which reduces its impact on natural resources.