

57-73 Wilbury Road Garages, Hove, BN3 3PB

25th January 2021

Application to Demolish Existing Garages and Erect 2no. 3 bedroom Dwellings**1. Introduction**

The proposal seeks permission to demolish the existing garages situated to the rear of 57-63 Wilbury Road and to construct two semi-detached dwellings with roof level accommodation and on-site parking and cycle storage.

2. The Site

The site is situated to the rear of 57-63 Wilbury Road which is part of the Willett Estate Conservation area. An area of special character containing principally late 19th Century Development. The semi-detached houses on Wilbury Road are fine examples of the character of the Willett Estate CA. The site is otherwise surrounded by 20th Century developments such as Elizabeth Court, Phillip Court, and Baltimore Court. These developments are largely screened by trees and separated by lawns.

The existing garages are predominantly used for storage purposes, the majority of which are not rented to people living in the area. Aside from the conservation area designation the site has no other land use planning designations to indicate that residential development would not be acceptable in principle. The surrounding area is residential in character and the site itself is bordered on all sides by residential uses. Therefore, in principle, this site is suitable for residential development.

3. Scale

The proposed development relates to a restricted site to the rear of existing late 19th Century housing. The level of development, two semi-detached houses, is suitable to the plot size and comfortably accommodates an appropriate level of parking and amenity space for two dwellings. Policy HO5 states that the planning authority will require the provision of private usable amenity space in new residential development appropriate to the scale and character of the development. Both the proposed garden areas are of a suitable size, shape and configuration to meet the needs of future occupiers. The plot is generous and there would be sufficient useable garden space to not only provide a good standard of amenity for the occupants but also to ensure the scale is comparable to that of many other developments in the area.

Refuse and Recycling Storage facilities can easily be provided within the site. The position of these is shown on the proposed site plan on the corner of the access lane. It is considered that this is the most practical location to facilitate rubbish collection or alternatively, the bins being to Wilbury Road. This could be further detailed as a planning condition.

4. Parking and Transport

SPD14 states that the maximum car parking standard for a 3-bedroom dwelling within a Key Public Transport Corridor is one space per dwelling plus 1 space per 2 dwellings for visitors. The proposals include one car parking space per dwelling. Visitor parking could be managed by the surrounding Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ).

As the existing garages are currently used for storage and not parking, there is no issue with displaced parking. Both parking spaces have been designed to be disabled spaces. The proposed parking layout is such that it allows the cars to have space to reverse out of their spaces and exit the site in forward gear. In order to prevent any vehicle/pedestrian conflict, it is proposed to place an angled mirror on the corner of the access lane and the perpendicular lane within the site.

The pavements within the site will be 1.1metres wide in order to accommodate wheelchair access. DfT's 'Inclusive Mobility' document states that 1.0m is the 'absolute minimum width' for a wheelchair user. It should also be noted that given that this is a small development of 2 houses, that pedestrian/wheelchair user conflict is highly unlikely.

4. Parking and Transport continued

The internal roadway is 2.6 metres wide and this will accommodate standard sized vehicles.

To aid pedestrian visibility at night, lighting could be provided along the access lane and the lane running in front of the new houses. Such detailed matters could be dealt with by a planning condition.

The site is within walking distance of Hove railway station and is located within the Council's Key Public Transport Corridors.

The Council's Parking Standards (SPD14) requires 2 cycle spaces per dwelling and this is provided within the site and will therefore accord with sustainable transport principles, helping to reduce dependency on the private car whilst encouraging sustainable travel for future occupants and visitors alike. In order to comply with Brighton & Hove Local Plan policy TR14, cycle parking will be secure, convenient to access and covered.

5. Design Principles

The site is in the Willett Estate Conservation area. An area which takes its name from William Willett, a builder of national repute, responsible for many of the fine houses built in the town centre during the last quarter of the 19th Century. 57-63 Wilbury Road are historic buildings which contribute to the character of the conservation area. These two bay fronted, semi-detached buildings comprise two-storeys plus basement and mansard roofs with large dormers. Their brick elevations are relieved by a variety of details and grand swept entrance steps, tiled with canopies of timber fretwork.

The garage site sits behind this group of period properties, added sometime between 1951 and 1964. They are an inconsequential addition and in relation to the older buildings of the site, it is clear that they have a negative impact.

The design of the proposed semi-detached replacement dwellings has been informed by their 19th Century neighbours. Similar materiality of brick and slate have been used, articulation to the front elevations and dormers to the front and side roof slopes. The proposed buildings have an articulated rhythm with a steeply pitched roof, sympathetic to the properties of Wilbury Road and the wider conservation area. The proposed fenestration compliments the local buildings. The new dwellings will not be readily visible from the public realm, the site has limited views from Wilbury Road and will have no adverse impact on the character or appearance of the CA.

The proposals serve to enhance the Willett Estate CA, particularly taking into consideration the existing unattractive garage site, which detracts from the character and appearance of the conservation area. The proposed dwellings will make a positive contribution to the appearance of this area and greatly improve its relationship with its immediate neighbours.

6. Tree Survey

As there are numerous trees surrounding this site, an Arboricultural Assessment has been prepared and submitted with this application. This assessment notes that the dwellings are well situated in relation to existing trees, allowing the dwellings to benefit from the maximum available natural light and further ensured an appropriate degree of separation between the adjacent trees and the proposed dwellings.

The Arboricultural Assessment notes the effect of the existing boundary wall running along the western boundary of the application site, as well as the level changes between the sites and garage foundations and how these have served to form 'a physical barrier to the formation of roots within the application site.'

In summary, there will be no conflict with the trees that surround the site and therefore the proposed development is acceptable with regard to its impact on trees.

7. Summary

The existing garages are currently used for storage purposes and their redevelopment for residential use represents a more efficient use of land. The garage site detracts from the Willett Estate conservation area and its redevelopment represents an opportunity to enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area with a suitably designed residential building.

The proposed design represents a sensitive and suitable addition to the Willett Estate conservation area. The brick elevations and the steep, hipped roof with dormers are design principles informed by the historical context of the site, which aims to improve and preserve the appearance of the site itself. The scale, height and proportions of the proposed building are appropriate to the size and configuration of the application site. Overall, the proposed development will substantially enhance this part of the Willett Estate conservation area. As the proposed development is modest in scale and can comfortably provide all related functions (parking, amenity space, cycle storage, refuse and recycling storage), the proposed development represents an appropriate level of development for this site.

All external materials, windows and doors are designed to represent the period style of the host property. The proposed development will make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the historic setting and improve its relationship with its immediate neighbours.

There will be no conflict with the trees that surround the site and therefore the proposed development is acceptable with regard to its impact on trees.

Overall, the proposal assists the Council in meeting its housing targets, provides a high quality living environment for future occupiers, represents an appropriate design and, does not adversely affect neighbouring properties.

Policy HE6 is the relevant policy which relates to the development within conservation areas and sets out criteria which applicants should take into consideration when proposing work within these historic areas. This states that proposals within or affecting the setting of a conservation area should preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area and should show:

- a. A consistently high standard of design and detailing reflecting the character or appearance of the area, including the layout of the streets, development patterns, building lines and building forms;
 - b. The use of building materials and finishes which are sympathetic to the area;
- The proposed development is of a high standard and sympathetically retains the important features of design reflected in the character of the area.

The Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 under S72(1) requires "special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area". The courts have held that this requires development to not be harmful.

The proposed development is appropriate to the character of the area. There is nothing in the Willett Estate Conservation Area Statement that identifies any particular significance to the development of garage sites on Wilbury Road.

No harm to the character and appearance of the Willett Estate Conservation Area is caused by this proposal, it accords with the development plan and there are no material circumstances that indicate otherwise. It is therefore respectfully requested that planning permission be granted.

The Site



This image shows the front elevation of 57-63 Wilbury Road and the access road to the garages at the rear.



Images showing the access road to the north of no.63 Wilbury Road and the garages behind.



The Site

The garages are shown here outlined in red. Elizabeth Court is to the North of the site, then Phillip Court to the North West and Baltimore Court to the West.

The Site

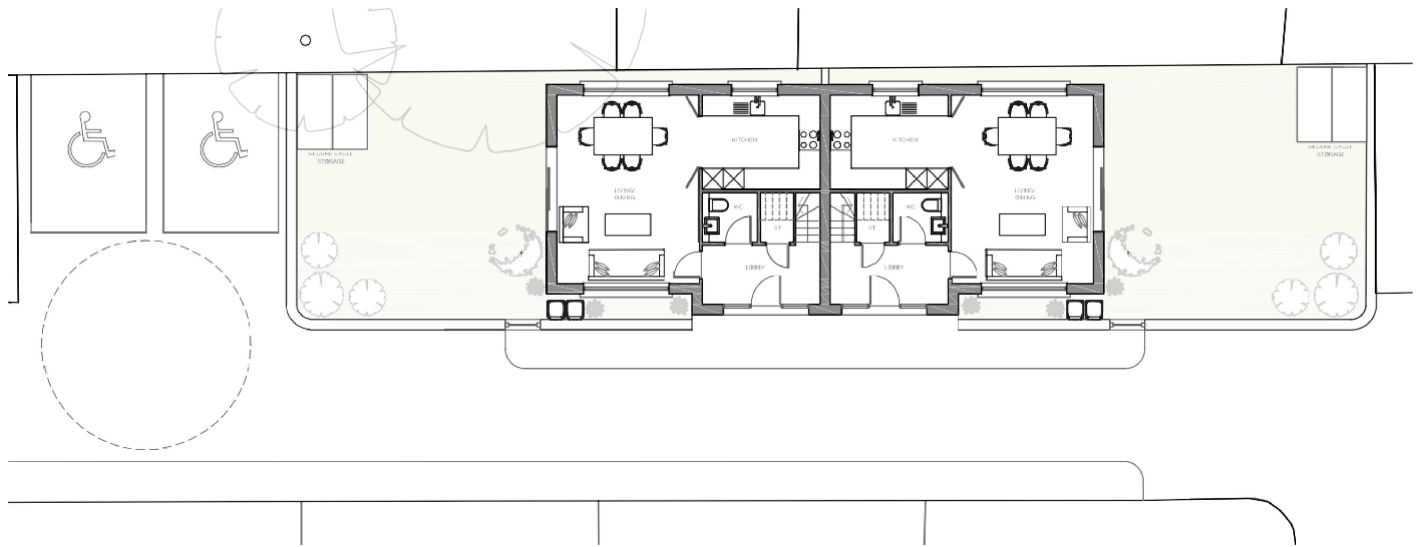


Elizabeth Court



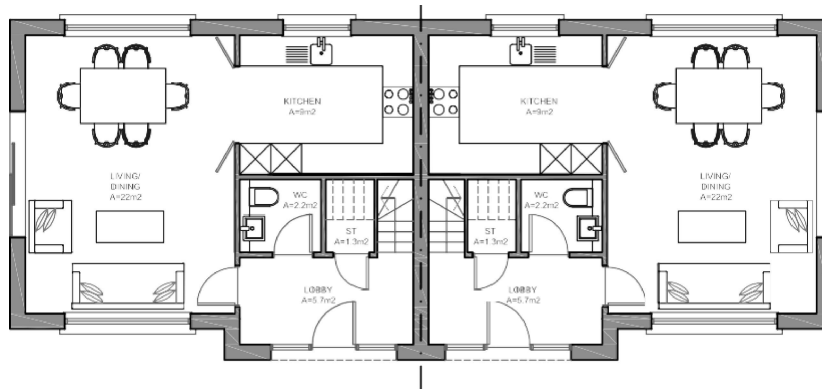
Phillip Court

Scale of Development



The proposed plan showing site layout and relationship between outside and inside spaces. The scale of the proposed development can be seen to fit comfortably into the site and is proportionate to the site, allowing ample amenity space.

Proposed First Floor Plan

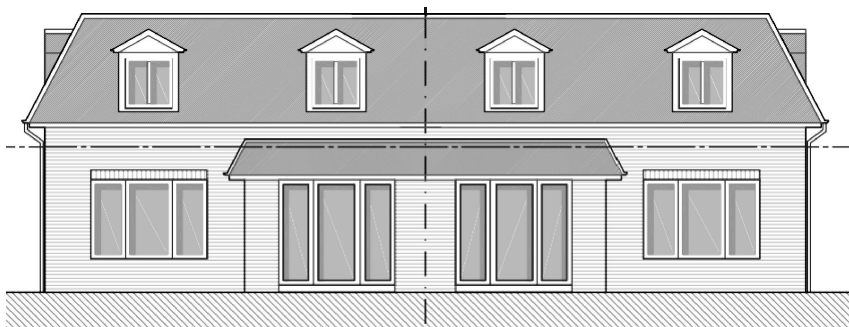


Proposed Ground Floor Plan

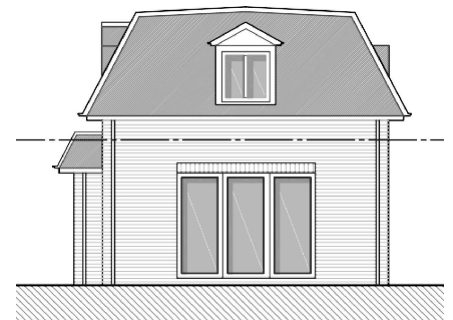
Design Principles



The elevations of Wilbury Road, showing bay fronted, semi-detached buildings comprising two-storeys plus basement and mansard roofs with large dormers. These buildings inform the design of the proposed dwellings. Similar materiality of brick and slate have been used, with steep roof slopes and dormers.



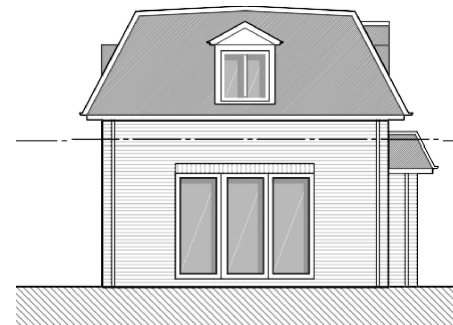
Proposed Front Elevations



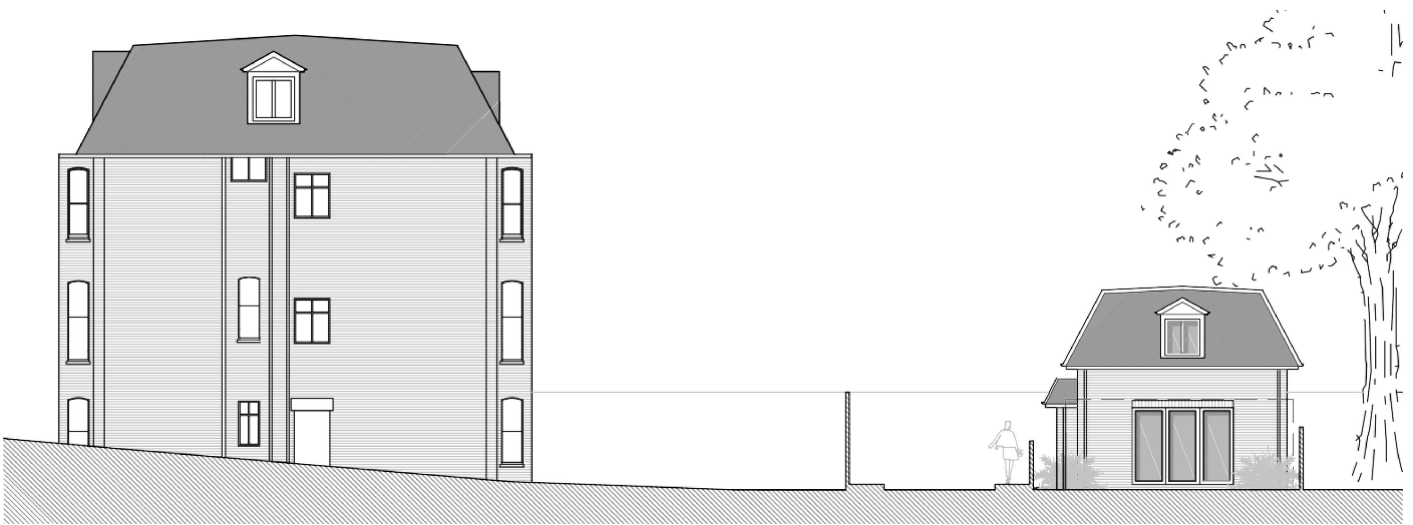
Proposed North Side Elevation



Proposed Rear Elevations



Proposed South Side Elevation



Proposed North Side Elevation