

**DEMOLITION OF EXISTING DWELLING AND ERECTION  
OF REPLACEMENT SELF-BUILD DWELLING,  
ALTERATIONS TO EXISTING GARAGE AND ANCILLARY  
WORKS**

**BIRCHWOOD, CADBURY CAMP LANE, CLAPTON-IN-  
GORDANO, BS20 7SA**

**PLANNING STATEMENT**

**APRIL 2024**

**grassroots**  
PLANNING

# grassroots PLANNING

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## REPORT CONTROL

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 On behalf of our client, Mr Martin Day, Grass Roots Planning has been instructed to prepare and submit a full planning application for a proposed replacement self-build dwelling along with associated works at Birchwood, Cadbury Camp Lane, Clapton-in-Gordano, BS20 7SA (the site). The site lies within the administrative boundary of North Somerset Council (NSC).
- 1.2 Planning permission was granted in 2022 for the erection of a two-storey extension, loft conversion and energy efficiency works to create a circa 500sqm dwelling. However, upon reviewing the proposed design of the fallback scheme, it was felt that a better design quality and more energy efficient dwelling could be achieved through the demolition of the existing dwelling and its replacement with a new home.
- 1.3 The site comprises hardstanding to the frontage of the dwelling and a decking area to the rear. A three-bay garage sits to the east of the dwelling and to the south a pond. The remainder of the site is garden, laid to grass and heavily wooded. Dwellings are interspersed along Cadbury Camp Lane and are predominantly detached large dwellings surrounded by the adjoining woodland.
- 1.4 The application comprises the following documents and should be read in conjunction with this statement:
  - Application Forms & Certificates.
  - Design and Access Statement prepared by Orme Architecture
  - Plans prepared by Orme Architecture:
    - 1868/002 – Existing Site Plan
    - 1868/003A – Proposed Site Plan
    - 1868/010 - Existing Plans and Elevations
    - 1868/020 – Existing Garage Elevations
    - 1868/030 – Proposed GF Plan
    - 1868/031 – Proposed FF Plan
    - 1868/032 – Proposed LGF Plan
    - 1868/033 – Proposed Roof Plan
    - 1868/040 – Proposed Elevations N\_E
    - 1868/041 – Proposed Elevations S\_W
    - 1868/042 – Proposed Garage Elevations
  - Energy and Sustainability Statement prepared by Grass Roots Planning;
  - Preliminary Ecological Appraisal prepared by Nash Ecology; and
  - Arboricultural survey prepared by Silverback Arboricultural Consultancy.



## 2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The site is known as Birchwood and is located on the southern side of Cadbury Camp Lane, near to the village of Clapton-in-Gordano, North Somerset. The site is located at the eastern end of the lane and currently contains the main two-storey dwelling and a triple bay garage.
- 2.2 The dwelling is constructed of cream-coloured bricks with a garage and carport attached to the frontage set within a generous plot. A tarmac driveway connects to the lane on the northeastern side of the site. The site is shown in Figure 1 below.



**Figure 1. Red Line Boundary**

- 2.3 Residential development in this location is generally characterised by large dwellings set back from Cadbury Camp Lane, within spacious plots. Architecturally, there is a variation in terms of materials used and design, but this generally includes a mixture of off-white (chalk) smoothcast render, natural coursed stone, anthracite zinc cladding, composite timber cladding and concrete slate alternate low pitched roof tiles. The windows and doors are a mixture of high-performance aluminium and UPVC grey framed units.
- 2.4 The surrounding context comprises a series of woodlands, with those surrounding Birchwood known as 'Chummock Woods'. To the north is the M5 and to the west/south-west is Cadbury Camp, an Iron Age Hill Fort which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument maintained by the National Trust. Further to the south beyond the woodland is agricultural land.
- 2.5 The site is approximately 0.194ha in size.

## 3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The proposed development is for the replacement of the existing dwelling and the erection of a three-storey family home. The project has been designed as a self-build with the client having significant input to the design of the dwelling. Given the slope of the site, the dwelling would be seen as two-storey from the front, increasing to three to the rear as shown in the elevations in Figures 2 and 3 below.
- 3.2 To the ground floor the entrance of the property opens up into a generous hallway connecting the main living spaces. A boot room and WC is positioned to the eastern end along with a sunroom. To the main south extent is a large open plan kitchen/diner with a semi enclosed living room to the west. This opens to a south facing terrace. A garage is positioned to the front of the proposed dwelling connected via a utility room. A games room is also located here.
- 3.3 Moving to the first floor this is proposed as the principal suite with the master bedroom, dressing room an ensuite. An additional room is proposed that could be used as an office or additional bedroom if required. Both connect to the south facing balcony terrace.
- 3.4 Lastly the lower ground floor, which is partially set into the landscape includes an additional three bedrooms with ensuites, kitchenette, gym and cinema room.
- 3.5 The dwelling has been designed to be of a modern appearance using high-quality materials such as natural stone, corten cladding and timber. Large, glazed panels help to realise the modern design of the proposal whilst allowing for large amounts of natural light to the internal rooms of the home.



Figure 2. Proposed North Elevation



**Figure 3. Proposed Rear Elevation**

- 3.6 The proposed dwelling utilises the existing ground source heat pump that has been installed and is confirmed to have sufficient capacity for the increased floorspace. Additionally, mechanical ventilation heat recovery is proposed to be utilised within the dwelling. New solar panels are proposed to the roof of the building.
- 3.7 The previously consented extensions to the dwelling allow for a total floorspace of 476m<sup>2</sup>; an increase of 47% over the existing dwelling. The proposed dwelling comparatively provides for 783m<sup>2</sup> Gross Internal Area, representing roughly a 137% increase in volume over and above the original dwelling.

## 4.0 PLANNING STATUS & SITE HISTORY

### Planning Status

- 4.1 The site lies outside of any development boundary and within the Green Belt, according to North Somerset Council's planning policy maps, an extract of which is shown below in Figure 4.
- 4.2 The immediate surrounding area around the site is also subject to a woodland Tree Preservation Order and a Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) (shown in orange). The site also lies within the North Somerset and Mendip Bats Special Area of Consultation Zone (Zone C).



Figure 4. Extract of NSC's Planning Policy Maps (site outlined in red)

### Site Planning History

- 4.1 There have been two applications for the site which are the following:
- 22/P/0918/TPO – Works to TPO trees – Approved 15 Jun 2022
  - 22/P/0652/FUH - Proposed erection of a two-storey rear extension and loft conversion with 1no dormer window to the rear. New external insulation, and



installation of a solar PV shading system (Brise Soleil) to rear ground floor level and a PV Solar panel array to the South Elevation roof – Approved 12 May 2022.

## 5.0 PLANNING POLICY

- 5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.2 The relevant parts of the Development Plan that apply to the application proposals consists of the North Somerset Core Strategy (2017), Sites and Policies Plan Part 1 (2016) and Sites and Policies Plan Part 2 (2018).
- 5.3 The ‘other material considerations’ referred to in Section 38(6) of the Act would include the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), Planning Circulars, Planning Policy Statements (PPS), relevant national legislation, planning judgements, and Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) or Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) (emerging and adopted).

### Core Strategy

- 5.4 The North Somerset Core Strategy was adopted in 2013 but became subject to a legal challenge. As such, a number of policies were ‘remitted’ and re-opened for examination, relating in particular to housing numbers and supply. As such, the Core Strategy was fully adopted in 2017.
- 5.5 Relevant policies from the Core Strategy are as follows:
- Policy CS2: Delivering sustainable design and construction – This policy requires the use of on-site renewable energy sources to meet a minimum of 10% of predicted energy use for residential proposals involving a single dwelling. Developments should also reduce the impact of additional surface water run-off.
  - Policy CS4: Nature conservation – New development should be designed to maximise benefits to biodiversity and a net loss of biodiversity interested should be avoided, with net gain achieved where possible. Proposals should also protect and enhance trees, green infrastructure and promote native tree planting/woodland creation.
  - Policy CS5: Landscape and the historic environment – This policy sets out that the character, distinctiveness and quality of North Somerset’s landscape should be protected and enhanced; furthermore the historic environment should be conserved and enhanced.

- Policy CS6: North Somerset's Green Belt – Within North Somerset the boundaries of the Bristol – Bath Green Belt will remain unchanged during the plan period.
- Policy CS9: Green Infrastructure – The existing network of green infrastructure should be safeguarded, improved and enhanced, with priority given to the connection of disjointed woodlands, particularly that on the Wraxall / Failand ridge.
- Policy CS11: Parking – Adequate parking must be provided and managed to meet the needs of anticipated users.
- Policy CS12: Achieving high quality design and place making – This policy sets out that high quality architecture and urban design will be sought and should seek to improve the image of the area.
- Policy CS33: Smaller settlements and countryside – New residential development outside of settlement boundaries will be restricted to replacement dwellings, residential sub-division, residential conversion or buildings where alternative economic use is inappropriate, or dwellings for essential rural workers.

### Sites and Policies Plan Part 1

5.6 The Sites and Policies Plan Part 1 (SPP1) provides a range of detailed development management policies which supports the Core Strategy:

- DM8: Nature Conservation – Development proposals must take account of their impact on local biodiversity and ensure that there is no net loss of biodiversity, and where possible, a net gain should be achieved.
- DM9: Trees and woodlands – Development proposals should retain, protect and enhance the tree canopy cover and include the introduction of appropriate new tree planting and woodland creation as an integral part of the design.
- DM10: Landscape – This policy sets out that development proposals should not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the landscape character of the area, including respecting the tranquillity of an area.
- DM12: Development within the Green Belt – This policy states *‘the replacement of an existing building is not regarded as inappropriate provided the new building is in the same use and is not materially larger than the one it replaces. A replacement building will not normally be regarded as materially larger provided it does not exceed 50% of the gross floor area of the original building’*. In North Somerset, the ‘original’ building is as it existed on the 26<sup>th</sup> July 1985. The policy goes on to state that consideration will be given to the impact on the openness of the Green Belt and regard will be taken of the design, siting and overall scale of the proposals.
- DM28: Parking Standards – Development must meet the council’s parking standards.
- DM32: High quality design and place-making – Development must consider the characteristics of a site and its surroundings. Design solutions should seek to enhance local distinctiveness.

- DM44: Replacement dwellings in the countryside – states that the replacement of a single dwelling in the countryside will be permitted provided that the proposals meet a number of criteria, including that the replacement dwelling is within the same curtilage, is not out-of-scale and character with the surrounding area and its design and siting will not harm the character of the area; and that it should be no more than a 50% increase in the side of the dwelling it replaces.

### **Relevant SPDs/SPGs**

5.7 North Somerset Council have a range of adopted supplementary guidance to support the Core Strategy and Sites and Policies Plan. The following documents are of relevance to this application:

- Parking Standards SPD (November 2021)
- Biodiversity & Trees SPD (December 2005)
- North Somerset and Mendip Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Guidance SPD (January 2018)
- Residential Design Guide Part 1 (January 2013)
- Residential Design Guide Part 2 (April 2014)

### **National Planning Policy Framework**

5.8 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England. Central to this guidance is the clear direction that there should be a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Of particular regard:

Paragraph 135 of the NPPF requires that decisions should ensure developments:

- Function well;
- Add to the overall quality of the area for the lifetime of that development;
- Are visually attractive in terms of:
  - Layout
  - Architecture
  - Landscaping
- Are sympathetic to local character/history whilst not preventing change or innovation;
- Maintain a strong sense of place having regard to:
  - Building types
  - Materials
  - Arrangement of streets

in order to create an attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit.

- Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate an appropriate number and mix of development;
- create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

Paragraph 139 of the NPPF states that development that is not well designed should be refused but that significant weight should be given to development that reflects local design policies and government guidance on design and development of outstanding or innovative design which promotes high levels of sustainability and raises the standard of design in the area, provided they fit with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.

Paragraph 140 of the NPPF seeks to ensure that the quality of an approved development is not materially diminished between permission and completion through changes to the permitted scheme.

## 6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The main issues which apply to the site are as follows:

1. Whether the principle of development is acceptable in this location;
2. Whether the design of the replacement dwelling respects the character and quality of the area;
3. Whether there would be any adverse impacts on trees;
4. Whether there would be any adverse impacts on ecology;
5. Whether there are any other material considerations that apply to the development.

6.2 We will now go on to analyse these issues.

### **Issue 1: The Principle of Development and Impact on the Green Belt**

6.3 As set out in Section 3 of this statement, the overall increase in floorspace between the existing dwelling and the proposed development is 137%. This is above that normally considered acceptable under policy DM12 and policy DM44 of the Sites and Policies Plan which states that a 50% increase would be found acceptable.

6.4 Notwithstanding this, there are material considerations which apply that mean an increase over 50% is acceptable. In addition to the permitted development rights which allow for a significant amount of development over and above what is being proposed, we are aware of a number of other applications on Cadbury Camp Lane in which NSC have approved and allowed a much higher increase in floorspace than 50%, namely:

- Application Ref. 22/P/2947/FUL at The Beeches. Planning permission was approved for a replacement dwelling increasing the floorspace by 450%.
- Application Ref. 22/P/1404/FUL at Bottreaux which approved a replacement dwelling with a 124% uplift in floor area.
- Application Ref. 19/P/0200/FUL at Timber Tops which sought the demolition and replacement of the existing dwelling which resulted in a 100% increase in floorspace (the original application was approved by Councillors despite an officer's recommendation to refuse);
- Application Ref: 17/P/1192/F at West Park for an extension – there are no figures on the floorspace proposed but within the officer's report it is confirmed that the increase is over 50%;
- Application Ref: 17/P/5230/FUL at Hamilton House for the demolition of the existing dwelling and its replacement with a new dwelling states within the officer's report that the increase of floor space would be approximately 190%;

- Application Ref: 18/P/3784/FUH at Cherry Copse for a number of extensions to the existing building. However, the existing dwelling was not considered to be 'original' as it was replaced in 2008, therefore the increase in floorspace was substantively over 50%;
- Application Ref: 18/P/4865/FUL at Pine Trees was to demolish the existing house and garage and construct a new dwelling in its place. The officer's report confirms the increase in floorspace would be 69%; and
- Application Ref: 18/P/5152/FUH at Lime Breach for a single storey side extension confirmed in the officer's report that the increase in size was over 50%.

6.5 Therefore, whilst it is recognised that each application must be determined on its own merits, there has been a substantive number of cases which set a precedence in this location for an increase over and above 50% in floorspace within the Green Belt, particular due to the location of these dwellings which is characterised by detached homes set within large and spacious plots, all of which have either been extended significantly or replaced with a much larger property.

6.6 With respect to impact on openness within the Green Belt, the site slopes down from north to south and is surrounded by mature trees meaning that there are limited (if any) views from the surrounding area. As set out within various other officer reports for developments in this location the area is characterised by detached homes set within large, spacious plots, meaning a development of this scale is unlikely to affect the street-scene. This is particularly true when considering the surrounding woodland which shields any development from view. Accordingly, we consider that the impact upon the openness of the Green Belt will be minimal.

6.7 As such we consider the principle of development to be acceptable and in line with Policies DM12 and DM44.

## **Issue 2: The Design of the Proposed Development**

6.8 The design of the proposed development proposes a contemporary but inviting appearance. The proposed overhang to the front elevation provides a strong approach to the dwelling which contrasts with the rear where full-height glazing is proposed to make the most of the views and natural light in the southern elevation.

6.9 The use of natural stone and corten cladding complements the modern design, which when viewed from the north, would appear two-storey given the land slopes towards the south. Furthermore, the form of the dwelling has been broken up with the ground floor set in creating an overhang to first floor which adds visual interest. Additional bedrooms with openings to

the south, a cinema room and a gym suite are proposed at lower ground floor in the darkest areas of the home.

- 6.10 The nearest property lies circa 50m to the northwest of the existing dwelling on the site, with significant tree screening between both properties which means there is limited intervisibility between the two.
- 6.11 Accordingly, the proposals comply with policies CS12 and DM32 of the development plan and with paragraph 130 of the NPPF.

### **Issue 3: Impacts on Trees**

- 6.12 Silverback Arboricultural Consultancy have produced the Arboricultural report that accompanies this submission. It includes an Arboricultural impact assessment, tree protection plan and method statement.
- 6.13 The report makes recommendations in terms of the foundation design where the dwelling encroaches to the RPA of T25. Protective fencing is proposed to prevent any damage to trees as part of the development. Such mitigation measures can be secured by way of condition. No other impact on trees are anticipated.
- 6.14 As such, the proposals comply with policy CS4 and DM9 of the development plan.

### **Issue 3: Impacts on Ecology**

- 6.15 Nash Ecology have undertaken a site visit, and their report should be read in conjunction with this statement. The ecological report does not identify any significant constraints to the development and recommends cautionary measures for construction along with opportunities for enhancement. In this instance, the proposed works are located within (and entirely restricted to) a residential garden enclosed by wooden fencing; impacts are expected to be highly localised and not extend beyond the Site boundaries. As such, there are no impact pathways between the Site and the SNCI.
- 6.16 The development is proposed as a self-build project and meets the threshold to be exempt from BNG. Notwithstanding this sparrow nest boxes are proposed as part of the ecological enhancement, along with holes in boundary fencing for hedgehogs.
- 6.17 Accordingly, the proposals comply with policy CS4 and DM8 of the development plan, alongside the Biodiversity & Trees SPD as well as the North Somerset and Mendip Bats Guidance SAC SPD.



## Other Material Considerations

### Highways

- 6.18 The development utilises the existing access from Cadbury Camp Lane which is a private road with limited traffic. As the proposals are simply replacing one dwelling with another, the estimated levels of traffic are not anticipated to increase. The development proposals provide ample space for car parking along with cycle storage in the existing garage. This is in accordance with policy CS11 and DM28 of the development plan, as well as the Parking Standards SPD.

### Energy Efficiency

- 6.19 Full details are set out in the supporting energy and sustainability statement. As shown on the submitted plans, the proposal will incorporate solar photovoltaic panels on the south-facing roof slopes, supplying the property with renewable energy. The existing ground source heat pump will be utilised for heating the property and an electric vehicle charging point is to be provided as required by part S of Building regulations.
- 6.20 Additionally, given the age and construction of the existing property it is likely to suffer heat loss through the lack of air tightness. As a result of the rebuilding of the dwelling there will be an increase in energy efficiency according with policy CS2 of the development plan.

## 7.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The proposed development seeks the demolition of the existing dwelling, which has little design merit and is no longer fit for purpose for the applicant, and the erection of a new high-quality and energy-efficient self-build dwelling.
- 7.2 Retrofitting the existing building or extending it would result in an ungainly and incoherent building with a series of extensions that have not been holistically designed. In comparison, the proposed dwelling has been designed with the applicants in mind, with a cohesive design and use of materials, large glazing and energy efficient features.
- 7.3 The proposed dwelling would uplift the floor space by 137% which is considered comparable when compared to that permitted in the area and with a large proportion of the proposal set into the ground the dwelling would not appear unduly large or overprominent.
- 7.4 We have examined all other material considerations and have no identified any other adverse impacts that would outweigh the benefits of the proposals.
- 7.5 As such, we commend the application to the Council for approval.



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