

Design & Access Statement

Incorporating Planning and Sustainability
Statement

Land at Whitsbury Road
Havant
PO9 5SP

Demolition of existing buildings and erection of a
supported housing building for mothers and children
(Use Class C2)

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1 Introduction

Document type:

Design and Access Statement incorporating Planning Statement (as required by Local List)

Site Address:

Land at Whitsbury Road, Havant, PO9 5SP

Proposal:

Demolition of existing buildings, erection of a supported housing building for mothers and children (Use Class C2)

Application type:

Full planning permission

Design:

Marlow Architects

Author:

Mr M. Annen BSc, MSc, MRTPI (Director)

Date:

January 2024

Location:



About the Applicant:

Stop Domestic Abuse is a registered charity which is the commissioned provider of inclusive domestic abuse services for adults and children living in Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton.

They provide refuge and community-based support to adults, children and young people

affected by domestic abuse in need of advice, support and information tailored to their level of risk and support needs. They currently have 19 refuges providing a safe place to live for women and children when they cannot stay in their own homes. Each refuge is made to feel like a home and provide both one-to-one support and group activities for women and children.

2 Background

The Site

Site area

0.1 ha

Topography

Access slopes down from Whitsbury Road but main site is relatively level

Use

Vacant garages previously privately let

Built form

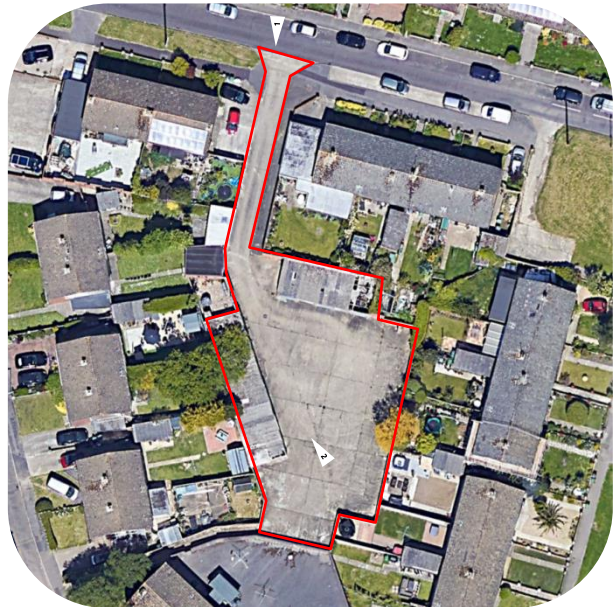
Two blocks of single storey red-brick garages (total of 13) along the northern and western boundaries; shallow monopitch corrugated sheet roofs; visibly poor state of repair.

Landscape

No soft landscaping; site entirely surfaced with concrete

Access

Kerbed bell mouth vehicle access from Whitsbury Road with concrete driveway; pedestrian access to southwest corner from Nursling Crescent via paved pathway between properties.



The Surroundings

Character Overview

Residential estate of c1970s terraced and semi-detached houses and flats

Use

Largely residential use in the vicinity of the site including all immediately adjacent properties

Amount

Density varies significantly depending on development type (i.e. flats or houses)

Layout

Generally frontage development along the streets following consistent building lines

although with some deviations in places forming pockets of open space along roadsides

Scale

Exclusively two storey buildings with low pitched roofs in the vicinity of the site including all immediately adjacent properties; some taller larger scale buildings beyond Prospect Lane.



Appearance

Typical architecture of its period showing variation on similar designs; characteristic features being shallow pitched gable roofs; wide "landscape format" windows and varied use of materials in front elevation including varied types of tile hanging and contrasting brick.

Landscape

Relatively few large trees, areas of grass along roadsides; houses have small front gardens generally enclosed by low brick walls some opened up for driveway parking.

Access

Foot: easy walking distance of various local shops and facilities including primary school

Cycle: easy access around the urban area via on-road routes

Public Transport: nearby buses on Oakshott Drive and Prospect Lane with services 20 and 21 providing regular services to Havant town centre or Portsmouth

Car: Access to the main road network onto B2149 via Bartons Road.



View of housing on Whitsbury Road (site access on left)



View of housing on Nursling Crescent (near footpath access)

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (revised version published December 2023)

At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a **presumption in favour of sustainable development** (para 11). As part of this presumption the NPPF actively **encourages new development in sustainable locations** (para 109) and has a particular emphasis on the effective use of land by **reusing land that has been previously developed** (para 124).

Section 5 sets out how LPA's should significantly boost the supply of housing to ensure a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed and that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed (para 60).

To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes (para 70).

Section 11 of the Framework promotes the effective use of land, giving substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs. This section also promotes and supports the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively (para 124).

Chapter 12 of the NPPF promotes good design in the planning system, creating better places in

which to live and work and helping make development acceptable to communities.

Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
- f) 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.

The Development Plan

Core Strategy (adopted March 2011)

Predating the first publication of the NPPF this Local Plan document is very out of date.

Policy **CS7** Community Support and Inclusion

Planning permission will be granted for development that:

...

3. Provides services for older people and other vulnerable groups, including Extra Care Facilities.

Policy **CS16** High Quality Design

Planning permission will be granted for development that is designed to a high standard, which helps to create places where people want to live, work and relax.

Issues addressed include responding to local character, landscape and biodiversity, connection to locality, avoiding unacceptable harm to the amenity of neighbours, reducing crime and improving legibility, inclusivity and environmental impact.

Policy **CS17** Concentration and Distribution of Development within the Urban Areas

Development will be permitted that makes the most effective use of land in the borough by granting planning permission that:

1. Concentrates new housing, employment, retail, leisure and other development within the five urban areas of Havant, Leigh Park, Waterlooville, Emsworth and Hayling Island, as shown on the Proposals Map. (site lies within Leigh Park urban area)

2. Prioritises development on previously developed land, including redundant, derelict or underused land and buildings within the urban area. (emphasis added)

3. Broadly distributes the new housing and employment development in the five areas of the borough as indicated on the Spatial Distribution Map (Key Diagram).

Policy **DM7** Elderly and Specialist Housing Provision

Within the defined urban areas development specific to the requirements of the elderly, people with disabilities or other forms of specialised supported housing provision will only be permitted provided that the following relevant criteria are met:

1. It is demonstrated that appropriate levels of on-site amenity space are accessible for residents' use which provides a satisfactory outlook for all residents.

2. A setting for the building is provided which is in keeping with the surrounding area.

3. Sufficient space for servicing is provided.

4. Services that may generate noise and disturbance (such as laundry rooms, kitchens and refuse storage) are located and designed to avoid undue disturbance to the amenities of neighbouring properties.

5. The development would not result in a concentration of such uses in one of the five areas of the borough or an over-concentration within each of these areas.

Local Plan (Allocations) (Adopted July 2014)

Policy **LP2** Leigh Park Housing Allocations
(Garage Courts/Parking Areas)

The following sites are allocated for residential development (approximately 60 dwellings in total):

Ref. Location/Address Site area

...

L56 Garage Court off Whitsbury Road 0.11 ha

...

The number of dwellings shown for each site is indicative, based on known site characteristics and density considerations. Planning permission will be granted provided that detailed proposals:

- 1. Are broadly consistent with the indicative figure for the number of dwellings.*
- 2. Take account of all site specific development requirements set out in the relevant site profile.*

The L56 site is the application site. The policy makes it clear that this site is considered suitable

for redevelopment. The policy only gives an indicative figure for the total of the 19 sites – not a figure for each. Whilst the policy indicates a number of dwellings which would imply Use Class C3 dwellinghouses, it actually allocates for “residential development” which does not rule out other forms of residential development to C3 dwellings including Use Class C2.

The supporting text to the policy states:

7.10 There are a large number of parking/garage courts in Leigh Park that can be redeveloped to provide new homes. Many of these sites are rarely used for parking with garages boarded up, and the areas left vulnerable to crime and anti-social behaviour. These underused areas present a suitable opportunity to make better use of the land in order to accommodate the need for new homes. In addition, Portsmouth City Council (as landowner) will seek to improve other parking/garage courts. The sites have been considered together as one allocation to provide approximately 60 dwellings.

Planning History

Pre-application

A pre-application enquiry was made to the LPA in April 2023 for a scheme substantially the same as the present proposal. Following a meeting in August 2023, the pre-application response was received in September 2023

The pre-application response found that the planning policy was supportive of the principal of proposal. It was acknowledged that the development results in some challenges in terms of site coverage and relationship with adjoining residents but that the design had been carefully considered by the development team in order to minimise the impacts.

The following specific concerns were raised which have been addressed in the current

proposal:

Concerns about "raised" play equipment in the play area and potential for overlooking – suggestion about height limits and/or additional screening: It is suggested that a condition is placed on permission requiring details of play equipment to be agreed by the LPA. In addition pleached trees are to be planted on the south boundary adjacent to the play area, as well as on the western and norther boundaries to provide additional screening to the communal garden area and the car parking area.

Concerns about security in relation to the pedestrian rear-gate: it is now proposed to close this access.



CGI aerial view of the pre-application proposal

3 Design Response

Overview

The proposal is to make use of the redundant garage court for new residential development in the form of specialist vulnerable persons temporary accommodation as supported housing for mothers and children (Use Class C2).

Use

The site is allocated for "residential development" which does not specify the nature of residential accommodation to be provided. It is considered that the site is well located for the proposed use being in a low-key secluded location but well integrated in the urban area with good access to schools, shops and public transport.

Amount

The amount of development is that which balances the need to produce a viable scheme and to make best use of previously developed land to maximise the assistance which can be given to vulnerable women, whilst respecting the local character and the amenities of existing neighbours.

The proposed two storey building would provide accommodation for up to nine vulnerable mothers and their children in the form of nine rooms with en-suite facilities and communal facilities including lounge/kitchen/dining space, storage, laundry, playroom, and staff facilities.



Proposed ground floor plan

Layout

The proposed layout is informed by the constraints of the site, its geometry, point of access and the surrounding development.

The proposed building is set in the main section of the site being a T-shaped building oriented close to the eastern boundary with a leg projecting towards the west.

This creates a natural forecourt adjacent to the vehicle access drive which will provide parking and cycle and bin storage. To the side and rear of the building a secluded amenity space will be formed with a patio, green space and an area dedicated as a children's playground.

Internally the ground floor will accommodate all the communal facilities with the open plan communal living area opening onto the patio and outside amenity space. There will also be two of the private bedrooms also facing the amenity space but with planting to provide privacy.

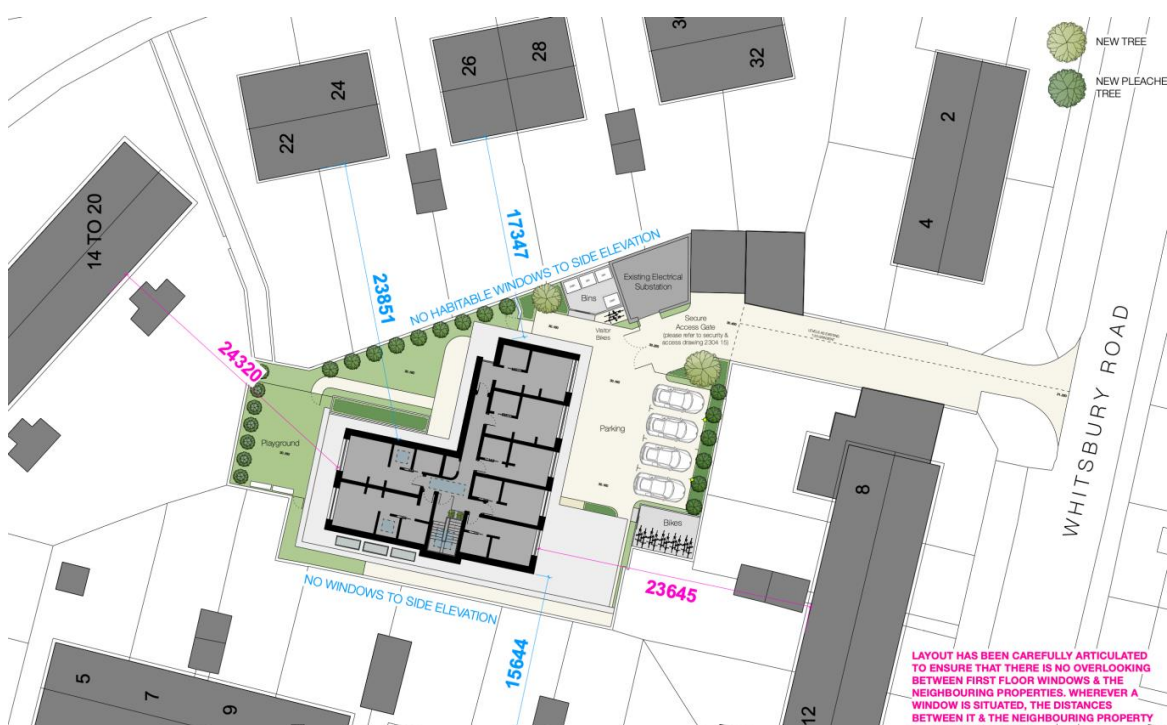
The first floor will accommodate the remaining seven bedrooms in an L-shaped footprint. The layout has been carefully considered with these facing either north or south ensuring that window-to-window separation between these and the neighbouring houses is maximised (with a minimum of 23.64 m).

Access

The proposal will utilise the existing access from Whitsbury Road which is considered suitable given the low-key nature of the use, the nature of the road itself and the past use of the site.

Four car parking spaces are to be provided which is considered sufficient given the nature of the use and the accessibility of the location.

The nature of the vulnerable users means secure gates with electronic access control will be provided to the main entrance. For security, the rear pedestrian access will be stopped up.



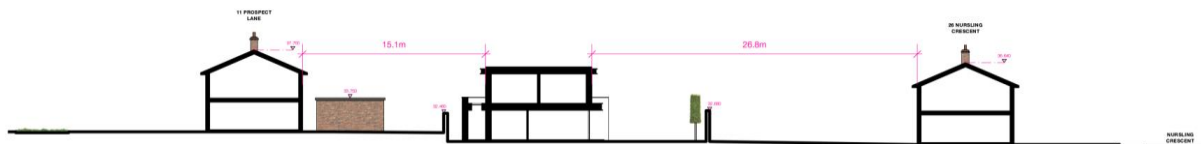
Proposed site layout showing first floor plan

Scale

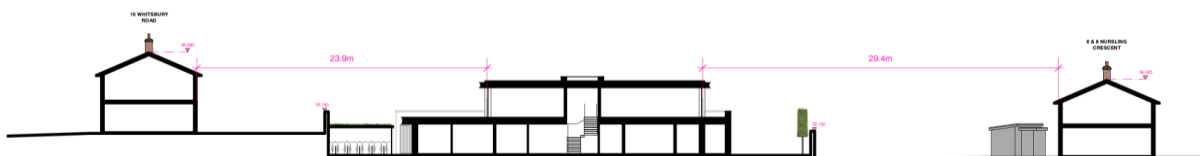
A two storey building is proposed with flat (or very shallow) roofs. This would mean that the proposed building would be lower than all the surrounding houses. It is therefore considered that the proposed building would have limited visibility from the surrounding streets and in any glimpsed views would appear suitably subservient to the frontage buildings.

Whilst the proposed building does have a substantial footprint, it is considered that because of the way it is articulated, it would not be read in such a way. Instead, individual angles of view would suggest a building with no greater mass than many of the surrounding building masses such as the four-house terraces (e.g. nos 8-12 Whitsbury Road) and eight-flat blocks (eg 6-20 Nursling Crescent).

The deliberately low height of the building aims to avoid a harmful impact on the neighbouring properties by way of being overbearing. To this end the first floor has also been stepped in away from the boundaries – particularly around the south and east sides. Whilst the building is closer to the boundaries on the eastern side, it must be noted that these properties on Prospect Lane are set at a higher level thus the impact of the new building is reduced.



PROPOSED SITE SECTION A - A



PROPOSED SITE SECTION B - B

Proposed cross and length-ways sections

Appearance

The proposal is for building with a contemporary appearance but with materials and design selected to make reference to the local architecture – for example the use of brick and a contrasting cladding at the first floor. These materials have also been chosen to create a solid ground floor structure with a much lighter upper floor. The proposal is for a flat roof building to keep the height to a minimum and will have a green roof. In addition, the building elevations will be articulated by the use of deep overhangs clad in grey aluminium, perforated metal louvre screens at the first floor and living wall screens at the ground floor.

Landscape

A high quality landscape proposal is envisaged which integrates landscaping into the building including the use of living walls, green roof and planters. The aim is to soften the building and also to maximise the benefits to the amenity of residents.

The existing boundary walls will be retained but will be supplemented with pleached trees planted along the north, west and south boundaries



Proposed Front Elevation

4 Planning case

If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Section 38(6) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

Principle of development

The site is allocated for "residential development" in Local Plan policy LP2 but the type of residential development is not specified. As the proposal provides residential development (within Use Class C2) it is considered that the proposal is supported in principle.

Character and appearance

The previous section has addressed this issue concluding that the proposal would have no detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the locality whilst the new building and landscaping could be considered a significant improvement above the existing appearance of the site.

It is therefore considered that the proposal would preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the locality.

Residential amenity

As has been set out in the previous sections, the proposal has been carefully considered with regards the surrounding properties including

ensuring sufficient window-to-window distances to avoid overlooking and careful design to avoid undue overbearing impact enhanced by the use of pleached trees along boundaries.

Highways

It is considered that the proposal would have no adverse impact on the safety or operation of the surrounding highways network. The access is considered suitable as is the proposed level of parking. Suitable bin and cycle storage would be provided.

Material Considerations

The proposal is for a specialist form of accommodation for which there is a significant unmet need.

Conclusion

It is considered that the proposal complies with the relevant Development Plan policies.

As the proposal complies with the Development Plan and there are no material considerations which indicate that it should be determined otherwise, the proposal ought to be approved.