

Planning, Sustainability, Design & Access Statement

***Land to rear of Nos.18-20 Forest Avenue,
Cowplain, Waterlooville, Hampshire, PO8 8JD***

***Proposed erection of two three-bedroomed
houses and a three-bedroomed bungalow.***



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Debtor Book Solutions

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Context

This irregular-shaped site of 0.3 hectare stands to the rear of Nos.18-20 Forest Avenue in Cowplain, close to the local centre.

On 27th March 2012, the Minister for Planning issued the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as a key part of the Government's reform of the planning system; amongst other things, the NPPF replaces PPS1 ('Delivering Sustainable Development') and PPS3 ('Housing'). Proposals Map 1 of the Havant Borough Core Strategy (HBCS) shows the site within the urban area with no special designations. Amongst other things, Policy CS17.1 promotes the 'Concentration and Distribution of Development within the Urban Areas'. The Environment Agency's *indicative* on-line map suggests that this site is *not* within a Flood Zone.



The approach to the application site along Forest Avenue, from the north



The approach to the application site along Forest Avenue, from the south

In its present state, the holding presents a poor and impoverished appearance, detracts from the environmental quality of the locality and reduces civic pride. While public views from Forest Avenue and Forest Close towards the site are foiled by the residences that face east and south towards those roads, passers-by may catch glimpses of its western and southeastern corners along the access drive between Nos.18/20 Forest Avenue (over a distance of 10 metres) and the service road at the rear of

Nos.24-28 Forest Close; only from those vantages is it apparent that the site even exists.

Residents of this locality enjoy ready access to the range of services and facilities that is offered within the Cowplain local centre (just five minutes walk away, via Latchmore Forest Grove) and Padnell Infant and Junior schools (8.5 minutes walk via Padnell Road). Residents may travel a little further into the town centre of Waterlooville (23 minutes walk, via London Road), where a wider range of services and facilities is offered. London Road (4 minutes walk away,



The application site viewed from Forest Avenue (east)

via Longwood Avenue) forms part of the bus priority corridor that is followed by the No.41 'First' service - it takes passengers north to Clanfield via Horndean or south to Waterloo town centre and thence to Portsmouth city centre via Cosham and North End; there are 113 buses a day between 0625 and 2237 hours. While it is evident that residents of this locality do not *need* to use a private car to enjoy good access to services (ie. it is an accessible, sustainable location), vehicular and pedestrian access to



Cowplain local centre (5 minutes walk away to the southeast)

the holding from Forest Avenue is afforded via a driveway between Nos.18 and 20 and dropped kerbs are already in place on the Forest Avenue frontage. Two cars can be parked on the forecourt areas outside Nos.18 and 20. Clear views to the north and south along Forest Avenue ensure that vehicles entering and leaving the site enjoy good visibility and are themselves clearly seen by approaching drivers, cyclists and pedestrians. The provision of secure on-site facilities for bicycle storage would promote the use of that alternative to the private car as a sustainable transport mode (as recognised at para.32 of the NPPF), particularly for trips under five kilometres.



The application site viewed from Forest Close (south)

In his 'Written Ministerial Statement: Planning for Growth' in March 2011, Decentralisation Minister Greg Clark confirmed that the *'Government's clear expectation is that the answer to development and growth should wherever possible be 'yes' except where this would compromise the key sustainable development principles set out in national planning policy'*. Paragraph 14 of the NPPF reiterates that principle, by generating a presumption in favour of sustainable development and the approval of proposals that accord

with the development plan, without delay.

The locality is characterised by family dwellings in a wide variety of styles, formats and plot sizes that includes bungalows and two-storey houses (see aerial photograph on cover page). To the south of the application site, Nos.19-23 and 24-28 Forest Close are terraces of two-storey houses. To the east, Nos.22 and 24 Forest Avenue are semi-detached chalet-bungalows. No.20 Forest Avenue is a detached house, Nos.16/18 make up a pair of semi-detached houses and Nos.12-14a form a terrace of three houses. The erection of three detached dwellings on under-used land in this sustainable location within the urban area would evidently accord with the mixed character of the area and *not* compromise any key sustainable development principles.

The application site comprises 0.3 hectare of unused land to the rear of Nos.18-20 Forest Avenue. A storm drain of 1.2 metres in diameter lies parallel to the northwest boundary of the site and a steel container stands to the rear of No.20.

Attention is drawn to the planning appeal (APP/X1735/A/08/2064792; HBC ref: 07/60703/014) that was allowed by Inspector Chivers in July 2008 for the erection of three five-bedroomed houses on this site, together with three detached double garages, accessed via Forest Avenue and notably, on-site parking provision for twelve vehicles. By e-mail dated 13th July 2011 (copy enclosed) Rachael McMurray (Planning Officer) of Havant Borough Council helpfully accepted that *'...implementation of the garage foundations and base, which would form part of Planning Permission 07/60703/014 for the erection of 3No. detached 5 bedroom houses and 3No. detached garages utilising new access to Forest Avenue with associated car parking...would constitute the commencement of development'*.



The western sector of the application site, viewed from the access drive

Planning permission (08/55703/015) was also granted by Havant Borough Council in July 2008 for the erection of three four-bedroomed houses (with integral garages) on this site, with access via Forest Avenue and on-site parking provision for twelve vehicles. As both proposals were evidently seen to accord with the character of their surroundings and to fully satisfy Havant Borough Council's requirements, they have provided useful models for the formulation of this scheme. Redevelopment of this site by the erection of three dwellings (ie the same number as previously permitted) would make efficient and effective use of this despoiled, unused land that is situated in a relatively sustainable urban location.



The eastern sector of the application site

While the Government's amendments of PPS3 in June 2010 appeared to generate a presumption against 'garden grabbing', Inspector Grace opined in the appeal (APP/P2114/A/10/2134578) at Newport, Isle of Wight, that *'I do not consider arguments based on strategic land supply for the entire island have a significant bearing on this proposal for an individual dwelling'*. In similar vein, Inspector Reid opined in South Croydon (APP/L5240/A/09/2117977) that *'Although private residential gardens*

are now excluded from the definition of previously-developed land, if they are in relatively sustainable and accessible locations, they are potentially suitable for housing development in policy terms, because they reduce the pressure for development on existing public and private open spaces, Green Belt land and the countryside'. Notably, the NPPF provides for the development of residential gardens where no harm would be caused to the local area; that test is met in this case.

Consultation

In accordance with the advice proffered at para.188 of NPPF, the views of Daphney Haywood (Planning Officer) of Havant Borough Council were invited on preliminary schemes; her constructive views have naturally been taken into account in the formulation of these revised proposals.

Statement of Community Involvement

Consultations were recently undertaken by the applicant with immediate neighbours (ie Nos.12-26 Forest Avenue, 19-24 Forest Close and 29-43c Longwood Avenue) through the provision of draft proposals (by hand) and a presentation at Waterloo Golf Club, to ascertain their views. The occupants of Nos.14, 14a, 16 and 22 Forest Avenue and Nos.29a, 35 and 39 Longwood Avenue expressed support for this proposal; Nos. 29 Longwood Avenue and 20 Forest Close asked to be kept up-to-date on the progress on the proposal; and No.23 Forest Close had no concerns. The occupiers of Nos.18, 24 and 26 Forest Avenue, Nos.21, 22 and 24 Forest Close and Nos.37 and 43c Longwood Avenue did not express any interest in the proposal, so their views could not be taken into account in its formulation.

Amount, Layout, Scale & Appearance

It is proposed that the container be removed and two three-bedroomed houses erected in the southern sector of the site, with a three-bedroomed bungalow on the western part (beyond the easement of the storm drain). The development would reflect a net residential density of ten dwellings per hectare, to strike a balance between local character and the site's accessibility advantages and achieve an attractive development that respects its context and surroundings.



Computer Generated Illustration (CGI) of the proposed scheme, viewed from the east

Respect for the mutual privacy of existing and future residents has been accorded priority in the formulation of this proposal, since concept stage. The house on Plot 1 would be sited 43.6 and 49.6 metres away from the rear elevations of Nos.20 and 22 Forest Avenue respectively, and 11 metres from the south boundary of No.16. The house on Plot 2 would stand 21.1 metres away from the rear elevation of No.23 Forest Close and 2.1 metres away from Plot 1. The bungalow on Plot 3 would stand 37.9 metres away from the rear elevation of No.39 Longwood Avenue. (These measurements were derived from an Ordnance Survey base plan c/o ProMap). First-floor windows in the side elevations of the houses on Plots 1 and 2 are proposed to be obscure-glazed for bathrooms and fixed shut below 1.7 metres above floor-level,

with clear-glazed openers above, to serve landings. It is proposed that a vertical-board timber fence 1.95 metres in height be erected around the perimeter of the site, with an acoustic fence two metres in height along the southwest boundary of No.18 and the northeast boundary of No.20 Forest Avenue. Nos.18 and 20 Forest Avenue stand 4.7 metres apart and the windows to habitable rooms in their respective south (No.18) and north (No.20) elevations are predominantly double-glazed or single-glazed at high-level (as is the rear element of No.18).

Over a length of just ten metres of Forest Avenue, passers-by may catch a glimpse down the access drive (between Nos.18/20 Forest Avenue) of the south corner of the bungalow on Plot 3 and an oblique view of the north corners of the houses on Plots 1 and 2 respectively; over a length of just four metres of the service road to the rear of Nos.24-28 Forest Close, a glimpse of the south corner of Plot 1 would be afforded. Finished in Kassandra Multi brick (Wienerberger Ltd), dark-oak cladding (for dwellings) and light-oak supports (for car-ports) beneath hipped/gabled roofs of plain Phalempin Volcano tiles (Imerys Roof Tiles), the development of this unused site by the erection of three detached dwellings would make more efficient use of sustainable urban land in a manner that accords with the mixed character of its surroundings and not result in detrimental impact to its appearance; on the contrary, this scheme offers clear environmental benefits and the prospective creation of a landscaped sylvan backdrop for the occupiers of neighbouring dwellings.

It is particularly noteworthy that all the pre-commencement conditions set down in the appeal decision have been given detailed attention in this submission.

Landscaping

Since the application site is screened from Forest Avenue and Forest Close, no special landscaping measures are proposed; future occupiers of the new units would undoubtedly wish to plant private garden areas to their own taste. It is however, proposed that native trees and hedges be planted at the head of the access drive (ie at the rear of Nos.18-20) and to the east of Plot 3 and boundary vegetation would be reinforced where necessary (as indicated on the enclosed Landscape Plan).

Arboriculture

In his 'Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement' of October 2012 (copy enclosed), Arboricultural Consultant Bernie Harverson asserts that *'There is no tree loss required on this site in order to facilitate development, although some trees are shown for removal for sound arboricultural management reasons regardless of any redevelopment proposals...in arboricultural terms a case has been made for this development to proceed and the proposals are therefore fully supportable.'*

Noise

There would be negligible increase in the likely daytime noise levels at Nos.18 and 20 Forest Avenue from the proposed development and whilst there may be occasional vehicles at night, such vehicle movements are unlikely to cause disturbance in bedrooms with windows open or closed. In light of the proposed erection of acoustic fencing along the common boundary's with Nos.18 and No.20 and the provision of non-migratory driveway materials (ie permeable paving and tarmac), the view is taken that there would be no significant loss of amenity to existing and future residents, due to noise disturbance.

Ecology

In their Ecological Survey of October 2012 (copy enclosed), ECOSA assert that the site '*...offers minimal potential for supporting protected species, with low potential for supporting foraging/commuting bats, nesting birds and common species of reptile...negligible potential for supporting badger, roosting bats, dormouse and great crested newt*' and conclude that '*...no further Phase 2 surveys are necessary at this stage to support a planning application for the site.*'. No protected species would be harmed by this proposal.

Access

Nos.18 and 20 Forest Avenue would continue to be served by the car parking spaces on laid areas outside those dwellings. In accordance with Havant Borough Council's 'Parking and Cycle Provision Supplementary Planning Document' of March 2010, each new dwelling would be served by two car parking spaces on a laid forecourt beside Plot 1 or beneath attached carports (ie Plots 2 and 3). Provision is made for vehicles to pass each other without obstructing the access drive, to the east of Plot 1. Secure bicycle accommodation would be afforded within timber stores in rear gardens. Refuse and recycle bins would be stored beside the respective plots and taken to the collection point at the Forest Road frontage on the appropriate day.

Since the driveway already serves two family dwellings and the site enjoys extant planning consent for three five-bedroomed houses with on-site parking provision for twelve vehicles (ie twenty-four vehicle movements a day), the view is taken that pedestrian and vehicular traffic associated with this proposal would not harm the amenities of neighbouring residences (particularly Nos.18 and 20 Forest Avenue) or cause danger or inconvenience to users of the public highway.

The proposed dwellings would accord with Part 'M' of the Building Regulations (Access to Buildings), as provision is made for level access to the main entrances and a hard-surfaced connection to parking and amenity areas that is suitable for access by persons with impaired mobility. The site enjoys unhindered access to Forest Avenue and provision is afforded for emergency vehicles to be manoeuvred within the site, no difficulties are anticipated with such services reaching the proposed dwellings or gardens.

Sustainability

This proposal incorporates several environment-friendly features to achieve a minimum Code-level 3 rating for Sustainable Homes:

- The orientation of the dwellings maximises passive solar gain and the levels of day- and sun-light reaching habitable rooms.
- High-efficiency condensing boiler would heat the new dwellings.
- Low-energy fittings will be utilised throughout.
- Water efficiency measures would be afforded.
- Provision is afforded for rotary clothing dryers and compost bins.
- Each dwelling would be served by a wood burner.
- Permeable surfaces will be laid throughout, to allow percolation through external surfaces to subsoil levels and minimise surface-water discharge.
- Use of materials with low environmental impact over their lifespan

The applicant would naturally be prepared to accept a planning condition that would give effect to the intention to achieve a minimum Code-level 3 rating.

Site Waste Management

Top-soil 'scraped-off' following the setting-out of the site is to be retained on the site, for re-use in soft landscaping. Timber will be salvaged where possible and inert waste material would be disposed of to a licensed Hampshire County Council site. Any other waste will be segregated into skips and removed by licensed collectors.

Working Practice

In accordance with the enclosed Tree Protection Plan and the Contractors Plan, the operation of construction machinery on the site will be restricted to 8.00am-6.00pm Monday-Friday, 8.30am-1.00pm on Saturday, with no working on a Sunday or Bank Holiday. All materials and plant will be kept within the curtilage of the application site. Retained trees are to be protected with fencing during the construction period.

Crime & Anti-social behaviour

Since vehicular and pedestrian access to the proposed dwellings could only be achieved via the existing access and habitable-room windows would afford a high standard of natural surveillance, no special measures are considered necessary for the prevention of crime or anti-social behaviour. The contents of Secured by Design 'New Homes 2010' has naturally been given detailed attention in the formulation of this proposal.

Planning Policy

Section 38 of the Planning and Compensation Act 2004 requires an application or appeal to be determined in accordance with the relevant policies of the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise; an element of flexibility is provided which enables decisions to be made which may disagree with the development plan.

Para.50 ('Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes') of the NPPF records Governments view that the planning system should deliver a mix of housing that reflects local demand to support a wide variety of households in all areas that *'...create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities...'*. Para.56 ('Requiring good design') records that *'Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment.'* and *'Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development...'*. Para.60 records that local planning authorities *'...should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles'* but encourages *'...local distinctiveness.'*

The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government advised all chief planners on 27th May 2010 of his intention to abolish regional strategies but recorded his expectation that his letter should be regarded as a 'material consideration in any decisions they are currently taking'. Although the South East Plan was revoked with effect from 6th July 2010, the High Court ruled on 10th November 2010 that the Government had acted unlawfully and it was reinstated with immediate effect. The Regional Spatial Strategy for the Southeast of England identifies South Hampshire as one of nine sub-regions that should be *'...the focus for growth and regeneration'*

(Policy SP1). It is submitted that this proposal is entirely consistent with the new strategy and would achieve a *marked* enhancement of this urban site. Policy BE2 (re 'Suburban Intensification') calls for local planning authorities to '*...identify locations where intensification could assist wider planning objectives*' and asserts that such locations include areas of '*...high accessibility immediately around public transport nodes in predominantly residential neighbourhoods...*'. This proposal would play a modest yet vital part in the achievement of that intention.

Policy CS9 ('Housing') of the Havant Borough Core Strategy generates a presumption in favour of housing proposals that satisfy four (of eight) criteria. Policy CS16 ('High Quality Design') provides for the grant of planning permission for development that is designed to a high standard, which helps to create places where people want to live, work and relax. Policy CS17 ('Concentration and Distribution of Development within the Urban Areas') generates a presumption in favour of development '*...that makes the most effective use of land in the Borough...*', nominates Waterlooville as one of five sectors of the Borough where new housing should be concentrated and accords priority to the development of redundant, derelict or underused land within the urban area. This scheme meets those ambitions.

It is respectfully submitted that those requirements are *satisfied* by this proposal since it would not detract from the existing street-scene; would be in keeping with the mixed character of its surroundings; is of a high standard of design; would contribute to the achievement of 6,300 new dwellings between 2006 and 2026; represents a suitable density of development for this location, taking into account accessibility to public transport and proximity to employment, shops and services as well respecting the surrounding landscape, character and built form; provides a combination of dwelling types which would help meet identified local housing need; ensures housing development is delivered in a phased manner with an appropriate proportion of previously developed land so as to avoid unnecessary development on greenfield urban extension sites; incorporates materials and design elements sympathetic to local character; provides safe access for pedestrians and cyclists and vehicular traffic; provides satisfactory cycle and car parking; respects privacy, outlook and sunlight; and the prospect of criminal activity and anti-social behaviour has been taken into account.

Contributions

The applicant recognises that it is Havant Borough Council's customary practice to seek contributions towards the provision of recreation and transportation infrastructure whenever new residential development is proposed and would welcome identification at the earliest opportunity of the facilities on which the monies from this proposal would be expended, the amount(s) and the proportion of the assessed cost of the facility that is expected to be borne by this development. Only when such information is presented could assurance be given that the requisite tests of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations would be satisfied, to pave the way for an undertaking to be entered.

Conclusion

Development of this site in the manner proposed would achieve efficient use of this neglected sustainable urban site without causing demonstrable harm to the character or appearance of the locality, which offers a more attractive and sympathetic development than the 'commenced' scheme. It would play a modest yet valued part

in the provision of units for family dwellings and broaden the choice of housing accommodation available in this northwestern sector of Havant Borough and provide an acceptable form of development that accords with the development plan and no other material considerations suggest otherwise.

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29 October 2012