

Design Access Statement

Land to the East of Redlands Lane, Westbourne. Emsworth, Hampshire, PO10 7UT

Development of Four detached dwellings

Ref:111036

Background

The site referenced at Redlands Lane is located to the North of the recently re-designated planning zone at Hampshire Farm site, which is currently undergoing substantial development for residential housing

The specific area of proposed development is approximately one acre in size and is bordered by mature trees many of which have TPO orders assigned to them.

It is felt that the plot provides a unique opportunity, to create a well-balanced development which takes advantage of the natural tree-lined boundary and the aspect that this could create.

Particular attention has been paid to maintaining a low density development with special consideration given to the proximity of the surrounding properties and the general character of the area.

Site Planning history / relevant planning policies / context etc

Considerations

There was some pressure from HBC to maximise the potential of the site in terms of the number of properties that might reasonably be accommodated and with the incorporation of a level of affordable housing. This aspect was carefully considered with a view to developing between 8-10 properties ranging in size from two to four bed units and was discussed in detail with HBC. This option was felt to be non-viable for the following reasons;

1. The site layout in terms of the density of houses when assessed in terms of the existing tree root systems was prohibitive and crowded.
2. There would be unreasonable traffic, disruption and pressure on the access to the site.
3. There were major local resident objections to the scale of that type of development as it related to the character of the surrounding properties.

Proposed Scheme

The scheme supported by this application of four detached, five bedroomed dwellings set in a spacious well preserved landscape it is felt best addresses the above issues and we feel serves as a more sensitive and most appropriate way forward.

The access to the site will be from Long Copse Lane via the Redlands lane track. The track has been used for many years as a vehicular access. As part of the pre-application planning process this access was assessed formally by the highways agency and HBC planning with regard to suitability and is considered by them to be an appropriate access route for this scale of development. The track will be maintained in its current gravel and hard-core based form.

We have had ongoing discussions with the occupiers of a number of the neighbouring properties to the site and they have strongly supported this type of scheme in preference to the first option referenced above that was considered.

Environmental assessment

It is felt that Redlands Lane site lends itself to a relatively sympathetic low level of development which takes advantage of the valuable mature trees that surround the entire site and which provide it with a unique aspect in terms of its natural beauty and the opportunity that exists to embrace this with an appropriate development.

A great deal of attention has been placed within this application with regard to the protection of the surrounding trees and the impact on wildlife both during the development phase and with regard to the resulting site layout.

Trees

Particular care has been taken to the protection of the tree root systems as well as the tree canopies and specialist arboricultural expertise has been commissioned as a key aspect of this application and a detailed report is included with this application.

This expertise will be retained to work closely with builders to ensure continuity and adherence to due process as it applies to those areas of perceived risk.

Wildlife

An environmental impact report has been commissioned as part of this application concluding that the development site itself does not constitute any significant risks in terms of potential impact to wildlife.

It is recognised however that the surrounding boundary area whilst not being affected itself by the development will be sensitive to birds, bats and possibly other species and so a risk assessment along with recommendations that mitigate disturbance to wildlife during the building phase are a key component of this application.

Landscaping

The site benefits by a well matured tree and hedge lined boundary area which will in itself form an outstanding natural landscaping feature. These areas will not be interfered with as part of this project but the areas within the more immediate vicinity of the properties will be sensitively lawned and will use natural materials as far as possible in conjunction with a permeable gravel surfaced access road and driveways.

Site layout and topology

A topological survey has been conducted prior to devising the site layout, details of which are included in this application. There are a number of significant challenges that have had to be overcome in terms of the site layout and design of each of each individual unit to achieve a balance of interests for all parties involved.

Special consideration has been given to the views, aspects and functionality of the proposed dwellings not just in terms of their own interests, but to the interests also of the surrounding properties and to the trees, wildlife, access and boundary constraints as well as an existing main sewer line that runs across the site.

Other mains services to the site are also already in place so disruption in terms of outlying boundary crossing with services provision in this respect will be minimal.

Access

Disabled access will conform to Part M of the Building regulations and as the site is basically flat there will be no issues with steep gradients or steps.

The new houses will have mobility thresholds to external doors and passageway and door widths internally will be suitable for wheelchair users. There will also be a toilet on the ground floor also suitable for wheelchair users and all electrical sockets and switches will be at the recommended heights for disabled use. Each property will have enough space for parking of at least four cars, two spaces will be available in the garages and two further spaces on the driveways. The garages will also be large enough to accommodate at least two bicycles.

Access to and within the site will be suitable for service vehicles to manoeuvre and turn round.

Appearance

The new houses will be in a conventional style using traditional materials in keeping with the local vernacular with a mixture between the plots to give each property an individual character.

Conservation of fuel and power

The houses will be designed to a minimum of Code Level 3 for sustainable homes and will be constructed to at least the standards required for heat conservation by the current Building Regulations. Water usage will also be controlled to comply with the requirements.