



PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

RYEFIELDS FARMHOUSE OAK TREE LANE WOODGATE PO20 3GU

MARCH 2022



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning, Design & Access Statement has been prepared on behalf of Domusea Developments Ltd. It accompanies a detailed planning application for the erection of 4 no. two-storey houses and an associated scheme of hard and soft landscaping on land at Ryefields Farmhouse, Oak Tree Lane, Woodgate, PO20 3GU.
- 1.2 The site and wider land surrounding it has an extensive planning history including applications for larger housing schemes dismissed at appeal. The current proposals follow the refusal of two previous planning applications that were made for a scheme of 5 no. houses on the site (LA Refs: AL/81/21/PL & A/126/21/PL) but which were refused in October 2021 and January 2022 respectively. The latter application sought to address the original reasons for refusal cited by the Local Planning Authority with the provision of additional technical information, however, was refused on similar grounds to the first.
- 1.3 The site lies within the Built-Up Area Boundary of Aldingbourne and also lies on the edge of the Barnham, Eastergate, Westergate strategic housing land allocation (as defined by the Arun Local Plan 2011-2031 Policy Map 2) and as such can be considered to be within a sustainable location.
- 1.4 Trees within the site are protected by TPO/AL/1/19, which protects a large Oak tree on the site frontage and a further one to the east which slightly beyond the site boundary. The more recent TPO/AL/3/20 protects a number of trees within the wider strategic allocation and as such the trees on site are protected from works without consent. The application site lies within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore least liable to flooding. There are no other site specific constraints.
- 1.5 Plans and information submitted in support of the proposed scheme of development comprise:
- Location & Context Plan no. 1324/DP200 Rev 01
 - Block Plan no. 1324/DP201 Rev 01
 - Site Plan no. 1324/DP202 Rev 01
 - Plots 1 & 2 Floor Plan nos. 1324/DP203 Rev 01
 - Plot 1 Elevation Plan no. 1342/DP204 Rev 01
 - Plot 2 Elevation Plan no. 1342/DP205 Rev 01
 - Plots 3 & 4 Floor Plan no. 1342/DP206 Rev 01
 - Plot 3 Elevation Plan no. 1342/DP207 Rev 01
 - Plot 4 Elevation Plan no. 1342/DP208 Rev 01
 - Street Elevation Plan no. 1342/DP209 Rev 01
 - Photo Sheet Plan no. 1342/DP210 Rev 01

2.0 THE SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The Site

- 2.1 The application site forms part of the extended garden associated with Ryefields Farmhouse and is also used for some livestock grazing. The site is roughly rectangular in shape extending back from the road frontage by approx. 41 metres, and approx. 50 metres in width, measures 0.20 hectares in total area. Access to the land is from an unmade private access road, Oak Tree Lane, which runs from Lidsey Road to the west along the site's northern boundary.
- 2.2 The villages of Aldingbourne and Westergate to situated to the north of the site, on the northern side of the railway line, with a range of services and facilities available, including primary school, shop and public house. Lidsey Road has regular bus services to the town of Bognor Regis, making the site sustainably located.
- 2.3 The area is characterised by residential development to the west and north with detached and semi-detached properties within Oak Tree Lane in a linear pattern, fronting the highway. To the south there are open fields between the application site and the Willows Caravan Park beyond. Current development on site comprises an outbuilding on existing garden land associated with Ryefields Farmhouse. The boundaries of the site are marked by matures trees and hedging of varying height.

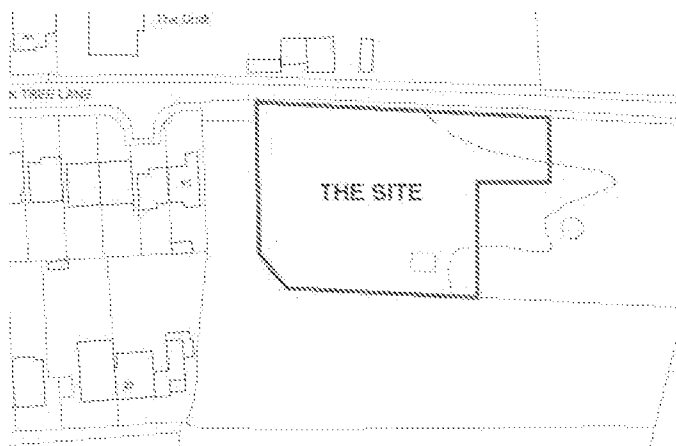
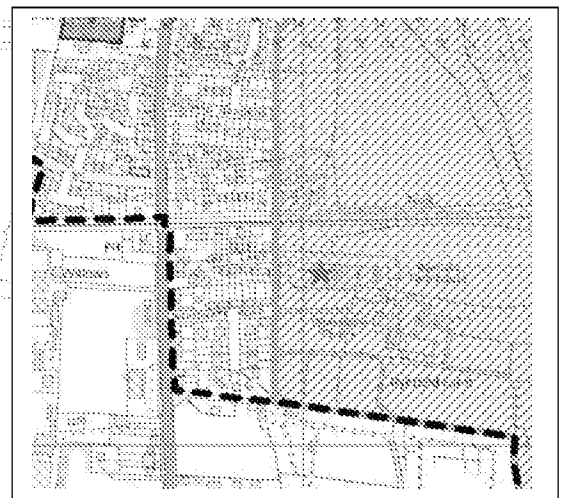


Figure 1: The Site and site in the context of BEW strategic allocation (site indicated by red star)



Planning History

- 2.4 Two previous applications (LA Refs: AL/69/11 and AL/106/12) were the subject of appeals on the site, which were concerned with proposals including additional land to the south and south-east and the strip of land between 24 Oak Tree Lane and the application site. In both cases the appeal Inspectors concluded that the site had a low level of sustainability regarding transport modes and the proximity to community facilities.
- 2.5 As such, the proposals did not override a shortfall in the then five-year housing land supply and tilt the balance in favour of the proposed development. In the latter appeal, the Inspector concluded that the appeal site may, in the context of wider strategic development involving a substantial amount of new housing, additional services and pedestrian/transport links, provide an opportunity for sustainable development. However, they were not satisfied that this would be the case for development of the appeal site in isolation.
- 2.6 More recently, in July 2019, an outline planning application with some matters reserved was refused for the demolition of existing buildings & the erection of 10 no. houses comprising 7 no. 3-bed and 3 no. 4-bed houses with associated access & parking (LA Ref: AL/72/19/PL). The scheme was refused on the following five grounds:
- 1) Insufficient information has been submitted to demonstrate that the proposed development of this scale could be satisfactorily accommodated in a manner which would not undermine the delivery of a comprehensively planned settlement of a high quality with a strong sense of place, having regard to such matters as the A29 realignment, non-car modes of transport, infrastructure provision, a high quality legible and permeable layout and a high standard of architectural principles.
 - 2) The proposed access does not create a safe and secure layout for traffic, cyclists and pedestrians whilst avoiding street clutter or consider the needs of people with disabilities by all modes of transport.
 - 3) Insufficient information has been submitted to demonstrate that the proposed development would be able to accommodate the movement of a 12m long refuse vehicle to collect household waste and items for recycling.
 - 4) Insufficient information has been submitted to demonstrate satisfactory foul and surface water drainage from the proposed development.
 - 5) The application fails to make provision for contributions towards the infrastructure needed to support the development.

- 2.7 This refusal was subsequently appealed (APP/C3810/W/19/3243619) and dismissed. The Inspector concluding as follow:

'the proposed development would not be accessible to all users other than by vehicle and would not meet the needs of vulnerable users. Furthermore, the proposal fails to demonstrate that there would be satisfactory arrangements for the collection of refuse and capable of providing satisfactory foul and surface water drainage. I afford substantial weight to these matters as part of the determination of this appeal noting conflict with both development plan and Framework policies. Although I have found that the proposed development would not prejudice the comprehensive delivery of development in respect of the BEW strategic allocation, this is a matter of neutral consequence in the overall planning balance'.

- 2.8 Subsequent to the appeal an application for 5 no. houses comprising 2 no. 3-bed and 3 no. 4-bed houses was submitted under LA ref: AL/81/21/PL. This was refused on a number of reasons, including a lack of technical information. Application LA Ref: AL/126/21/PL was submitted in an effort to address the concerns of the previous application, but fundamental objections remained in terms of the resultant character of the area, lack of site connections, housing mix and impact on trees and biodiversity.

- 2.9 The current proposal responds to and successfully overcomes the previous case officer concerns. The applicant and architect have considered the proposals further and have made the following changes:

- Reduction in units from five to four, creating a linear pattern of development fronting Oak Tree Lane, following the existing pattern of development to the west with built form set significantly back from the road frontage
- Retention of landscaping and planting area to the road frontage, removing hard standing for the parking of vehicles immediately adjacent to the road
- Retention of a significant number of trees, previously proposed for removal
- Bin collection point proposed close to the access serving Plots 3 & 4, to overcome previous concerns about drag distances for bins to refuse vehicles

3.0 CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

Contextual Assessment & Evaluation

- 3.1 The application site is located within the Built-Up Area Boundary of Aldingbourne as shown on Arun Local Plan 2011-2031 Policy Map 2 which comprises, to a large extent, the Barnham, Eastergate and Westergate (BEW) strategic allocation. The site is also situated within the extended Built-Up Area Boundary in terms of the 'Made' Aldingbourne Neighbourhood Plan, version 2 document 'Made' 14 July 2021. The extract map below shows the site in relation to the Built-Up Area Boundary (shaded grey) and two new housing allocations (shown red) fronting Lidsey Road.

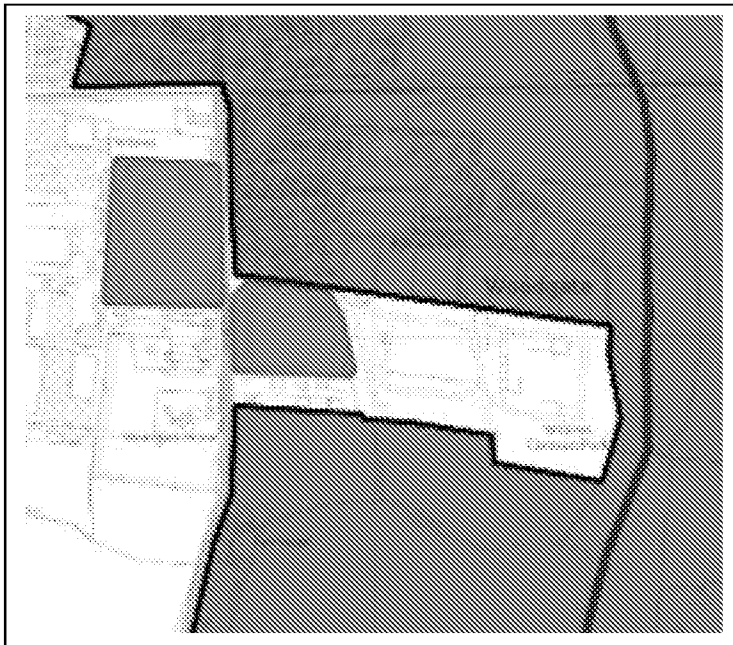


Figure 2: The Site in relation to Neighbourhood Plan Built-Up Area Boundary and housing sites (site indicated by red star)

Design and Appearance

- 3.2 The architectural approach proposes houses of traditional design with a simple appearance and a materials palette reflective of houses in the vicinity. The proposed houses will be constructed using a mix of brick and dark stained timber cladding on their elevations with clay tiled, half hipped roofs. The properties would feature casement style windows and gable detailing and porches to add interest within the street scene, see proposed street elevation over.



Figure 3. Proposed street scene and materials palette

- 3.3 It is considered that the proposed design and wider site layout has led to a well-proportioned scheme, whereby the proposed plots provide sufficient amenity space and compare favourably with other nearby properties. The proposals would provide an appropriate scale and density of development which would be consistent with surrounding residential development in the area and in turn, provide much needed additional housing in the local area without harming existing local character.

Layout

- 3.4 The proposed layout has been altered from the previous applications to provide a linear pattern of development fronting Oak Tree Lane, in line with the existing pattern of development further west. The revised layout aims to make more efficient and effective use of the residential land available. A centrally located access is proposed to serve the 2 no. 3-bed properties, with a shared area of hardstanding for the parking of vehicles and refuse collection point forward of the dwellings. The pair of detached 4-bed properties would have their own access from Oak Tree Lane and feature hardstanding for the parking of 2 no. vehicles and an integral garage. A new section of pavement is proposed along the northern boundary of the site in order to link to existing pavement for pedestrians.
- 3.5 Separation distances are considered adequate to allow for good sized rear gardens and protect residential amenity. Window positions have been fully considered in order to respect amenity and due to the siting of the 4 no. houses there would be no wider impact on neighbouring occupiers. Windows at first floor to the flank elevation of the houses serve either landings or en-suite bathrooms and would be fixed and obscure glazed below 1.7 metres, and as such would not lead to overlooking.
- 3.6 Occupiers of all the proposed houses would benefit from 2 no. off-street parking spaces, with Plots 1 & 2 benefitting from the addition of an integral garage. Each garage would measure 6 by 3 metres

in order to be of a size sufficient to accommodate refuse bins and cycles. A further 2 no. visitor parking spaces will be provided to the north of Plots 3 & 4.

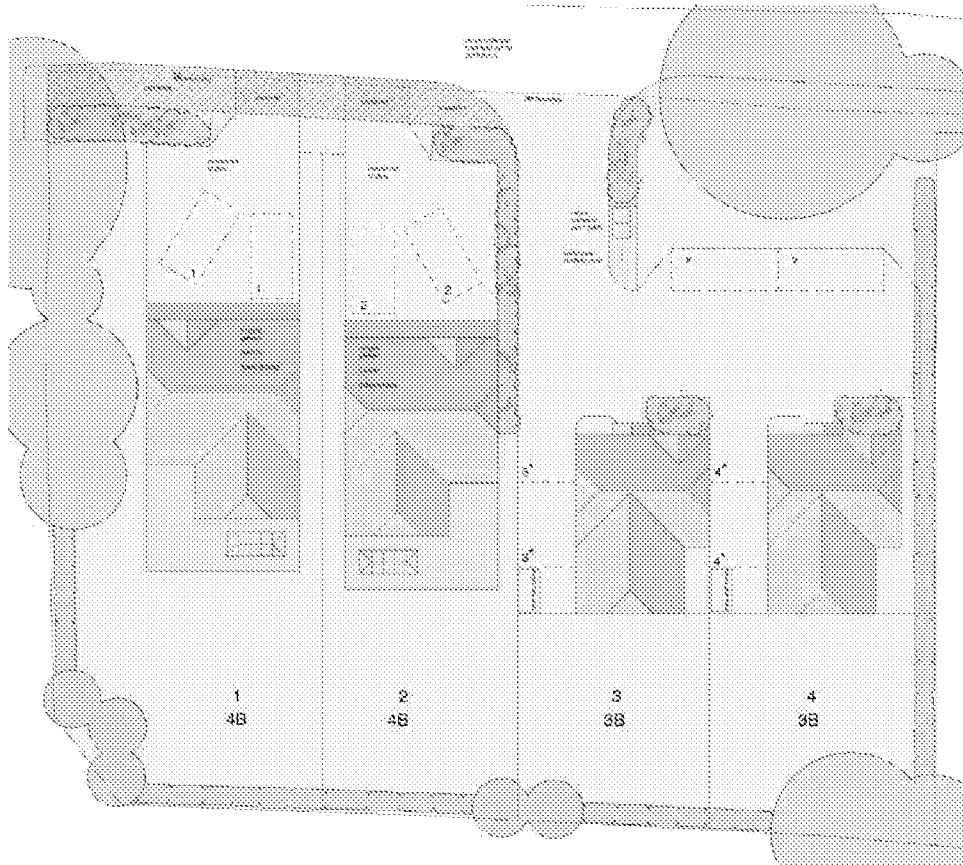


Figure 4: Proposed site plan

Scale

- 3.7 The proposal is for the demolition of an existing outbuilding and the erection of 4 no. 2 storey detached houses in a linear arrangement comprising 2. no 3-bed and 2. no 4-bed houses, of which the larger four bed houses will include integral garages. Given that detached houses of varying scales exist in the vicinity of the site, the proposed type and scale of buildings in this location is considered appropriate.
- 3.8 The proposed development will provide a good mix of 3 and 4 bed houses. Each unit will benefit from a good-sized rear garden, providing idea family sized homes. The internal accommodation provided within the proposed houses will comply with guidance contained within the Nationally Described Space Standards and likewise will be in accordance with Policy D DM2 of the Local Plan.

Access and Parking

- 3.9 The development will be served by accesses from Oak Tree Lane, which runs along the northern site boundary. Necessary visibility splays can be provided and there are no highway safety issues. The site is located within easy access of established public transport links and will also provide 2 to 3 no. allocated, off-street car parking spaces for each house with a further 2 no. spaces provided for use by visitors to the development. A bin collection point is provided adjacent to the access for Plots 3 & 4 and would be within necessary drag distances from the refuse vehicle. EV charging points would be provided for each property.
- 3.10 The proposals include the provision of a two metre wide footway along the western section of the site frontage that will tie in with existing footway provisions on Oak Tree Lane. This will ensure that the development is connected to the village and local services safely improving the sustainability of the site. Due to the scale of the development and the small number of trips generated it is considered that the proposals would not overburden the highway network.
- 3.11 It is therefore considered that the proposed scheme of development has successfully overcome the previous concerns in terms of the accessibility of the site to all users other than by vehicle; and meeting the needs of vulnerable users as well as that relating to the collection of refuse. The proposal therefore accords with Local Plan Policy T SP1.

Amount and Use

- 3.12 The amount of development is considered to be appropriate in the context of surrounding residential development and would make more efficient use of this land within the recently extended built up area for residential use – which is in line with the Council's guidance.
- 3.13 In accordance with Local Plan Policy the proposed scheme would result in a net gain of 4 no. residential units, and as such there is no requirement for the provision of affordable housing contributions. Furthermore, in terms of internal space standards, Policy D DM2 advises that regard must be paid to nationally described space standards. For two-storey 4- bed/8 person and 3-bed/6 person houses, the national standard requires a minimum of 124 and 102m² GIA respectively. All of the houses proposed will provide well in excess of these minimum GIA size standards.

Housing Mix

- 3.14 The housing mix is for 4 no. detached properties, made up of 2 no. 3-bed and 2 no. 4-bed houses. The previous application sought a mix of predominantly 4-bed houses which the officers considered

to be a reason for refusal. The current scheme seeks to overcome this concern by proposing a 50/50 split between 3 and 4-bedroomed houses. Whilst it is understood that Arun has an identified need for 2 and 3-bed properties it is considered that applying a district wide based standard mix used for standard housing to a minor scheme for housing would be unjustified in the current case.

Landscaping and Arboriculture

- 3.15 The site benefits from a well landscaped boundaries with mature trees and hedgerow and trees are protected by preservation orders. The proposals have been fully informed by a tree survey including a tree constraints plan and have taken on board previous concerns regarding the extent of tree removal, to ensure the development would not adversely affect existing landscaping that makes a positive contribution to the amenity of the area. To facilitate the proposals, it will be necessary to remove a small number of trees or hedging. The majority of trees proposed for removal are semi-mature trees of low quality and value (Category C). The proposed scheme of soft landscaping is considered appropriate to its location.
- 3.16 Furthermore, Policy ENV DM4 requires a tree survey, tree constraints plan and arboricultural method statement to be submitted to explain the impact of a development on exiting trees. A tree survey schedule, tree constraints and protection plans, and arboricultural impact assessment and method statement are submitted in support of the proposals. These should be read alongside this document to illustrate the measures of tree protection proposed during the build process, which could be conditioned in the usual way.

Ecology

- 3.17 Policy ENV DM5 of the Local Plan requires development schemes to seek to achieve a net gain in biodiversity and protect existing habitats on the site and also encourages schemes to incorporate elements of biodiversity as well as landscape features minimising adverse impacts on existing habitats.
- 3.18 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has noted that the existing site is formed of amenity grassland and scattered trees surrounded by species poor hedgerow and hardstanding. The site itself is of low ecological value with no habitats of interest noted. A Shadow Appropriate Assessment was also commissioned and identified that there would be no potential likely significant effects upon the Singleton and Cocking Tunnels SAC.

Surface and Foul Water Drainage

- 3.19 Local Plan Policy W DM1 requires development to identify that either adequate drainage capacity exists or that appropriate drainage capacity can be provided as part of the development. Similarly, any proposal which increases flood risk elsewhere will be refused. To meet with this requirement, a proposed Drainage Strategy is included with the submission.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

National Planning Policy Framework 2021

4.1 Paragraph 10 of the NPPF states: 'So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.'

4.2 Paragraph 11 states: *'For decision-taking this means:*

a) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay or;

b) where there are no relevant development plan policies or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

- the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
- any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole'.*

4.3 Paragraph 12 states: *'The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making.'* Indeed, Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications for planning permission to be determined 'in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.'

4.4 In this case, the development plan comprises the Arun Local Plan 2011-2031 and the Made Aldingbourne Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2029. Whilst previously outside of the Neighbourhood Plan settlement boundary the newly made Neighbourhood Plan has come into line with the drawn boundary of the adopted Local Plan, which includes the application site within the Built-Up Area Boundary, and in accordance with NPPF paragraph 11 c), the development plan is considered 'up-to-date'.

Arun Local Plan 2011-2031

4.5 Policy H SP1 of the Arun Local Plan sets out the overall provision of 20,000 new homes through the Local Plan phased over the plan period to 2031. This policy allocates 2,300 units to be provided in the BEW strategic allocation (SD5) within the plan period. The application site, which comprises residential garden land located off Westergate Street lies within the BEW strategic allocation as shown on Policy Map 2.

- 4.6 Policy H SP2 states: 'Development proposals within the Strategic Site Allocations must be comprehensively planned and should have regard to a masterplan endorsed by the Council for the respective areas which incorporates high quality imaginative design giving a sense of place and a permeable layout'. However, it is argued that given the site's size and location, it would be unreasonable and inappropriate for the Council to insist on its inclusion in the wider site masterplan so mitigating circumstances exist to justify a departure from the policy.
- 4.7 It should similarly be noted that Policy H SP2 sets out specific requirements for the BEW allocation in terms of key design, environmental and infrastructure requirements. However, due to the small size and location of the site, the key design aspects set out in the policy are too high level to apply to this proposal.
- 4.8 Notwithstanding this view, the Council acknowledged in their assessment of a proposal for the residential re-development of a plot on the northern side of the railway line (LA Ref: AL/103/18/PL), that the key infrastructure required to be delivered under Policy H SP2 was expected to come forward on the larger parts of the BEW strategic allocation (SD5). It was also noted by Officers that the cost of the infrastructure, including strategic highway improvements, was expected to be funded through proportional developer contributions from applications as they come forward towards education and healthcare etc. As the wider Consortium for the larger part of the strategic allocation did not raise any objections regarding the lack of contributions from the neighbouring scheme, and also given the small size and location of the site, the Council concluded that a zero infrastructure contribution was acceptable in that instance. For the same reasons, it is considered that the same conclusion should be reached in respect of the current proposal for Ryefields Farmhouse – given the distinct similarities in both the size of the site and its location.
- 4.9 In respect of LA Ref: AL/103/18/PL and having had due regard to the aforementioned relevant Local Plan policies, the Council concluded that the proposed number of houses, given the modest size and location of the site and constituted an acceptable and appropriate form of development for the BEW strategic allocation. Notwithstanding the differences in the amount of development approved/proposed, it is respectfully considered that that same conclusion can be reached in relation to the scheme that is proposed for land at Ryefields Farmhouse.

Arun District Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2021

- 4.10 The Arun District Design Guide was adopted in January 2021 and has been prepared as part of the Council's commitment to secure the highest quality development across the District and aims to provide detailed information that supplements the Local Plan's design policies.
- 4.11 At Part A.05 of Section 1 of the Design Guide, it is recognised that good design has an impact on all aspects of the built and natural environment and goes beyond the appearance of individual buildings and notes that the link between good design and an improved quality of life is well demonstrated and widely understood but not always materialised in developments.
- 4.12 Section 2 sets out a number of overarching design principles which apply to all development types, explaining the master planning process and how to integrate a plot with its surroundings. It does however, state that not all of the overarching principles that are set out within Section 2 will necessarily apply to the design of all types of development.
- 4.13 The third section of the guide offers further detailed guidance on technical issues associated with specific development types. Chapter P Infill Development (2-9 dwellings) and Chapter S New Homes are considered directly applicable to the development that is proposed for the application site so will therefore be the focus for the remainder of this addendum.
- 4.14 Chapter P requires all types of infill development to respond positively to the character, appearance and layout of surrounding buildings to ensure that amenity for surrounding and new residents is enhanced. In very broad terms, it is the prevailing character of surrounding buildings and spaces which are expected to inform an appropriate infill design response.
- 4.15 Chapter S is specific to the design of new homes and states that the design of proposals should reference the character of Arun District, provide a high level of amenity for their occupants and neighbours and be both socially and environmentally sustainable. They should take account of the building design, inclusive design, internal and external amenity space standards, parking and sustainability guidance provide in Section 2 of the guide.
- 4.16 In light of the above parts of the recently adopted supplementary design guidance, it is held that the proposals have taken a design approach which adheres to the guidance and in doing so, presents a scheme which has incorporated all of the key elements of good design. It's scale and layout is a positive response to its surroundings and the internal space provision of both properties proposed will offer future occupants with a high quality of accommodation.

- 4.17 The proposals represent an acceptable form of backland development which is of a density appropriate to the size of the plot, and which also respects existing local spatial patterns and the prevailing character. The level of accommodation has been designed to suit the intended occupants of the houses and will not compromise neighbouring residential amenities. It is also important to note that the houses have been designed to be capable of adaptation. In summary, the proposals successfully uphold the aims of the Council's design guidance and there is therefore no reason why any objections should be pursued on design grounds.

Aldingbourne Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2029

- 4.18 The Aldingbourne Neighbourhood Plan Version 2 was 'Made' in July 2021. In version 2 of the Neighbourhood Plan the built-up area boundary was altered so as to reflect the built up area boundary within the Local Plan. The application site is therefore located within the Built-Up Area Boundary in both the Local Plan and Neighbourhood documents.
- 4.19 In terms of Neighbourhood Plan Policy H6 Windfall Sites is most relevant to the application. This states:

Permission will be granted for residential developments on infill and redevelopment sites within the built up area boundary subject to the following conditions being met:

- 1. The scale and design of the development is appropriate to the size and character of the settlement.*
- 2. The built and landscape character is conserved or enhanced, especially where the character of the area is specifically recognised, such as the Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings.*
- 3. The proposal creates safe and accessible environments that offer good access via a range of transport modes;*
- 4. Land is demonstrated to be used effectively and comprehensively;*
- 5. Wildlife must be conserved or enhanced.*

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 The application is for the development of 4 no. houses on underused garden land within the recently extended built-up area. The application site lies immediately west of a housing development on Oak Tree Lane. It benefits from a sustainable location – close to shops, services and facilities. A wide range of recreation and sports facilities, primary, secondary and academy schools, and employment opportunities area readily available in the area. Furthermore, bus services operate along Lidsey Road (A29) which provides a link with Bognor Regis to the south.
- 5.2 The proposal will deliver 4 no. family-sized houses for the pressing housing needs for Arun District and its 5-year housing supply that according to the latest monitoring report (2020/21) currently stands at just 3.3 years. In accordance with paragraph 11 of the NPPF, the presumption in favour of sustainable development is engaged for the application. There are no other policies in the NPPF protecting areas or assets of particular importance that provide a clear reason for refusing the development and there are no other adverse impacts that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the NPPF policies as a whole.
- 5.3 In line with paragraph 68 c) of the NPPF, the proposal would see the development of a small windfall site within the built-up area. Policy SD SP2 of the Local Plan also encourages new development to be focussed within the built-up area boundaries and policy H6 of the Neighbourhood Plan is wholly supportive of 'windfall' residential developments on infill and redevelopment sites.
- 5.4 Overall, the proposed scheme comprises a well-balanced layout which is in keeping with the character and amount of development in the immediate locality. The proposed houses are of an appropriate design given the site's location and make a far more efficient use of land within the built-up area.
- 5.5 The land is not constrained by flood risk and foul and surface water drainage can be accommodated on site with the agreement of Southern Water. As noted in the Ecological Impact Appraisal no protected or notable species would be impacted by the proposals and the Arboricultural Assessment shows that the trees proposed for removal are of low ecological value, and any negative effects caused by their removal would be adequately mitigated by a replacement planting scheme as part of the proposed scheme.
- 5.6 As there are no other policies protecting assets or areas of particular importance that provide a clear reason for its refusal, and there are no other adverse impacts that outweigh the benefits, we therefore request that the application is granted planning permission in due course.