

Planning/Design and Access Statement

**Demolition of existing buildings and erection of 2 no. dwellings
with associated car ports/parking, alterations to
existing access and relocation of
existing staircase to flats**

**Land to the Rear of Beechlands Cottages,
Beechlands Close, East Preston**

**On behalf of
Dearden Homes Ltd**

January 2018

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared on behalf of my client Dearden Homes Ltd to support this application for the demolition of the existing buildings on this site and the erection of 2 no. new dwellings with associated car ports and parking, alterations to existing access and the relocation of the existing staircase to the adjoining flats.
- 1.2 This site has been the subject of a pre-application enquiries in relation to the provision of 3 no. dwellings on the site and, in the most recent response dated 09 March 2017, the planning officer confirmed that the Local Planning Authority would support an application for the redevelopment of the site for the three dwellings subject to further consideration of neighbour amenity. The matters identified by the planning officer were considered and a planning application was submitted, which, it was felt, dealt with the issues. However, various new matters were raised by the planning officer during the consideration of the application and it was subsequently withdrawn.
- 1.3 The scheme has been reconsidered in the light of the planning officer's comments and the scheme now proposes the provision of 2 no. link detached properties. This statement describes development in detail and considers the policy context applicable to the proposal and how it responds to the planning officer's comments. It will demonstrate that the proposal is compliant with Development Plan policy and can be accommodated on the site without harm to local amenities.

2. The Site and Its Surroundings

- 2.1 The site the subject of this application lies on the north side of Beechlands Close to the rear of Nos. 1-4 Beechlands Cottages. The existing cottages were erected following the grant of planning permission in 2009 (EP/91/09) and the development replaced garages which were formerly on the site. Planning permission has recently been granted for an additional dwelling on the eastern end of the terrace (EP/41/17). That proposal maintained an access on the east side of the site to a commercial building and six retained garages located to the north. It is this land to the north which is now the subject of this proposal.
- 2.2 The site is currently occupied by six rather dilapidated garages adjacent to its northern boundary and a single storey brick built building on the southern boundary (adjacent to the rear boundaries of Beechlands Cottages) which is in use temporarily by a security company. To the west lie the shops which front onto Sea Road with flats above. The rear elevations of the flats are however set back from the rear elevation of the shops to provide access via stairs and a communal walkway. A service access runs from Beechlands Close between the shops and no. 1 Beechlands Cottages.

- 2.3 To the north of the existing garages lies the rear garden of 125 North Lane which, at this point, contains a large outbuilding and large surfaced area for parking and turning. To the east lie the garages to the flats in Beechlands Court. The site is therefore surrounded by residential development and in a highly sustainable location in the centre of the village.



Google Image of Site

3. The Application Proposal

- 3.1 The application proposes the demolition of the existing garages and single storey building on the site and erection of two link detached dwellings running across the centre of the site from west to east. Private amenity space will be provided to the north of the dwellings and parking within integral car ports and on the forecourt to the south. Access will be from Beechlands Close and turning will be available on site. The principle of this layout has been accepted in the previous two pre-application proposals, and in discussions with the planning officer on the withdrawn application, subject to detailed considerations of neighbour amenity and the usual development management criteria.

- 3.2 The application also proposes improvements to the existing service access which passes along the west side of Beechlands Cottages. This will maintain and improve access to the rear of the shops for delivery purposes. Such access is only by agreement with the owner of the shops as the majority of deliveries take place to the front due to ease of access there. The tenants of the shops and flats have no right to park on the application site. All other rights such of access such as UK Power Network and 125 North Lane will remain. An area for the shops to store delivery trolleys and bins is also proposed which also represents an improvement on the current situation where no such storage facilities exist.
- 3.3 To facilitate access along the western boundary, the existing means of escape staircase which projects into the site is proposed to be relocated to the northern end of the shops/flats. This staircase is for emergency use only as all the flats have their main access at the front of the shops. It is proposed to include screening along the north side of the staircase to preclude any overlooking and although such overlooking northwards already exists from the walkway.

4. Planning Policy

- 4.1 Government Planning Policy comprises the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It does not change the statutory status of the development plan but is a material consideration in the determining planning applications. It states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and defines three dimensions in meeting this: the economic role, social role and environmental role. These roles are not expected to be undertaken in isolation because they are mutually dependent.
- 4.2 Sustainable development is placed at the heart of the Framework paragraph 14 states that there is the presumption in favour of sustainable development which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan making and decision taking. For decision taking this means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay and, where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, granting permission unless any adverse impact of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against policies in the Framework taken as a whole or specific policies in the framework indicate development should be restricted.
- 4.3 Paragraph 111 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should encourage the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value.

- 4.4 In terms of decision taking, the NPPF states that LPAs should approach decision-taking in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development. LPAs should look for solutions rather than problems and decision takers should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible. They should work proactively to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.
- 4.5 Local development plan policies are contained within the Arun District Local Plan 2003 and saved policy GEN7 is considered to be the most relevant to the determination of this application. The policy deals with the form of the development and states that it will be permitted providing it meets the specified criteria.
- 4.6 Criterion (i) seeks to ensure that the development makes efficient use of land or buildings and the proposal is compliant with this criterion as it makes more efficient use of this brownfield site and brings forward new homes in a sustainable location.
- 4.7 Criterion (ii) requires development to respond positively to the identified characteristics and resources of the site and the area to create attractive places and spaces with the needs of people in mind and respect and enhance local distinctiveness. The proposal complies with this criterion by providing a form of development which is in-keeping with the character of residential development in the locality and provides new homes with suitable amenities for future occupiers.
- 4.8 Criterion (iii) requires development to provide sustainable development and, as the proposed development is located within the built-up area of East Preston, it meets this requirement being accessible to alternative modes of transport, shops and services.
- 4.9 Criterion (iv) seeks to protect the amenities of adjoining occupiers. This is dealt with in detail elsewhere in this report and demonstrates that the new dwellings can be accommodated on the site without any harm to any established amenities.
- 4.10 Criterion (v) seeks to ensure that the development takes account of any unacceptable adverse impacts that may arise from adjoining land uses or property. The application site is located in a central village location where it is bounded predominantly by residential properties with some retail/service uses. The relationship between buildings will be similar to those that exist and therefore no adverse impacts which would affect the residential use of this site are anticipated.
- 4.11 Criterion (vi) deals with the retention of open or wooded areas and is not applicable to this site.
- 4.12 Criterion (vii) seeks to ensure that development allows for the safe movement of pedestrians and vehicles. The existing access will serve the development and where it

joins the public highway there will be sufficient space for two vehicles to pass with sufficient visibility to ensure the safe movement of vehicles on and off the public highway. The access will be a shared surface which will keep traffic speeds low. On-site turning is available to ensure that vehicles, including a fire appliance, can enter the site, turn and leave in forward gear. It is therefore concluded that this criterion is complied with.

- 4.13 The most relevant policies of the Made East Preston Neighbourhood Plan are policies 1 and 3. Policy 1 states that development proposals will be supported provided, amongst other matters, the scale, density, massing, height, landscape design, layout and materials reflect the character of the surrounding buildings and it meets the adopted car parking standards. Beechlands Close lies in Character Area 2 which is defined largely an area of bungalows and the policy 3 therefore seeks to maintain this character. However, this site the subject of this application is surrounded by two storey development and therefore it is in this context that it needs to be considered. It will be demonstrated in the next section that this proposal is in keeping with the character of the area and therefore accords with policy 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan, GEN7 of the Local Plan and the overarching guidance in the NPPF.

5. Planning Considerations

- 5.1 The site lies within the village of East Preston where the principle of development is acceptable under Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan policies. The main issues for consideration are whether the development is designed and laid out to be in keeping with the character of the area and respects the amenities of adjoining residents. It is also necessary to consider whether the access and parking arrangements are appropriate.

Design and Layout

- 5.2 The proposed dwellings will be situated fairly centrally on the site in a position similar to that indicated at the pre-application stage and in the previous application. However, the scheme has been reduced to provide only two dwellings and whilst they remain as two storey they are now proposed to be link detached dwellings. Unit 1 to the east will have a ridge height of 7.6m and Unit 2 will have a ridge height of 8.5 m. This is a significant reduction from the highest ridge of the previous scheme of 1.7m and 0.77m respectively. The scheme also includes car ports with a bedroom above at the western end and between the two properties. This reduces the overall massing of the proposal as these ridge heights are only 6.2m and 6m respectively. The outline of the previous proposal is shown on the south elevation as a comparison.
- 5.3 The development is slightly wider than previously proposed however the additional footprint is at the western end where a lower element of integral car port with

accommodation above is closest to the flats to the west. The west elevation therefore presents itself as a lower, narrower, half hipped elevation and the two-storey part of that dwelling is further from the rear of the flats than previously proposed. It is submitted that the two storey elements of the proposal are not out of keeping with the general character of the area being surrounded by two storey development including Beechlands Cottages, the flats to the east, and shops/flats to the west.

- 5.4 The dwellings are proposed to be constructed in materials in keeping with other developments in the locality. In this respect the dwellings will be constructed in brick with fibre cement boarding used to break up elements on the front elevations and wrap around the east elevation. The roof will be plain clay tiles with bonnet hips. In design terms therefore the dwellings will be similar to other developments recently approved in the locality.



South Elevation (front)

- 5.5 Each property will have a living, dining room, kitchen and w.c. on the ground floor with three bedrooms and two bathrooms at first floor level. The eastern property (Unit 1) will have a GIA of 108sqm and the western unit (Unit 2) will have a GIA of 118sqm. Externally, the properties will have 119sqm and 93sqm gardens respectively which exceeds the standard for a small semi-detached property (85sqm) and a depth of 10m. In all respects therefore, the proposal accords with the Nationally Described Space Standards and emerging policy for external space requirements.
- 5.6 Planning officers have previously referred to the potential for overlooking from the walkway to the flats to the west. This has been addressed in the positioning of windows on the rear elevation of Unit 2. There is only one bedroom window at the eastern end of the rear elevation which is around 13m from the end of the walkway and at an oblique angle which will preclude intervisibility. As before, it is proposed to raise the fence on the western boundary with trellising to restrict overlooking to the

garden. In any event, the relationship proposed between the garden and the walkway is the same as that approved at Beechlands Cottages to the south where it was considered acceptable.

- 5.7 In terms of the relationship of the proposed dwellings with the rear elevations of Beechland Cottages, the scheme has been designed so that there are only 3 first floor habitable rooms on the south elevation which will be around 21m from the rear of the existing cottages including the end property which has planning permission. The properties are also at an oblique angle. In terms of the north elevations, these will be situated 10m from the northern boundary which represents an appropriate distance to preclude overlooking.

Parking and Access

- 5.8 The WSCC parking demand calculator indicates the requirement for 5 no. parking spaces where each property has two allocated spaces. The proposal provides 5 spaces with two spaces for Unit 2 (one in the car port and 1 in front), two for Unit 1 (one in the car port and one in the courtyard and a fifth space is provided for visitors. The proposal provides sufficient on-site parking to meet its needs and is in a highly sustainable location where other means of transport is available.
- 5.9 The access from Beechlands Close is existing and serves the garages and building currently on the site. The traffic movements associated with the new dwellings will therefore replace the existing movements and there will be unlikely to be a material increase. The access will be designed to be 4.5m wide at the entrance enabling two cars to pass without waiting on the public highway. In all other respects, it is submitted that the access can adequately serve the development and will not give rise to any severe residual impacts. The western access road will be improved within the application site by relocating the retaining wall to improve the width.
- 5.10 Sheds are proposed in the rear gardens of the properties which will provide cycle storage for the future occupiers which are accessible through the car ports.

6. Local Validation Requirements

Foul & Surface Water Drainage

- 6.1 The proposed development will connect to the public foul sewer. Porous surfacing will be used for the driveway and parking spaces and a soakaway is proposed for the discharge of surface water.

Bin Storage & Collection

- 6.2 A bin store is proposed within the curtilage of each dwelling. A bin collection point is proposed adjacent to the eastern boundary at the top of the access drive. This will be sufficient to store refuse and recycling bins for each resident. It is anticipated that the refuse vehicle will have not to enter the site and that the bins will be collected by the operatives from the store.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 The application proposal provides for two new dwellings within this highly sustainable village centre location. It makes effective use of this under-utilised brownfield site and, given the particular characteristics its surroundings, does not cause any unacceptable adverse impacts and represents a form of development in-keeping with the locality. The proposed dwellings have been designed to provide a high-quality development and respects the amenities of adjoining residents. The dwellings meet the internal and external space standards and the plot sizes are appropriate to their context.
- 7.2 It is submitted that the proposal is compliant with local and neighbourhood plan policy and approval is sought on this basis.