PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

IN SUPPORT OF

FULL PLANNING APPLICATION

BY

Mrs J Shulman

TO

Demolish 1 house and construct 2 pairs of semi-detached houses

AT

60 & 62 Sea Lane, East Preston

PREPARED BY
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1.0 Introduction

1.1 The application site currently comprises 2 distinct elements as follows:

- 60 Sea Lane: A detached house fronting Sea Lane in need of structural and cosmetic repair with planning permission for demolition and construction of a large detached 5 bedroom house (application ref. EP/111/12); and,
- 62 Sea Lane: An undeveloped plot with extant planning permission for the construction of a large detached 5 bedroom house (application ref. EP/111/12).

1.2 This statement is submitted in support of a full planning application that seeks permission to:

- 60 Sea Lane: Demolish existing house and construct a pair of semi-detached houses having identical form, scale and very similar appearance to the detached 5 bedroom house for which extent planning permission exists; and,
- 62 Sea Lane: Construct a pair of semi-detached houses having identical form, scale and a very similar appearance to the detached 5 bedroom house for which extent planning permission exists.

1.3 The proposals, which will deliver 4 modern and energy efficient homes in a sustainable location, have been conceived after a full analysis of the site and surrounding area, the constraints and opportunities, the Development Plan policy, the national planning policy framework, the planning history of the site, and other material considerations.

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1.4 The application is accompanied by plans which demonstrate how this level of development may be accommodated on the site in a manner that is consistent with the character and amenity of the area and providing/maintaining fine living conditions for future occupants and neighbouring homes. I consider the principle of redevelopment in the manner proposed to be entirely appropriate having regard to these considerations.

2.0 Site and Surrounding Area

2.1 The site is located within a low density and sylvan suburban area characterised by dwelling houses of disparate form, scale and setting. It falls within the defined settlement boundary, where there is a presumption in favour of development, and within walking distance of local shops, schools and public transport services.

2.2 The site is currently divided into 2 distinct plots. The northernmost plot is occupied by 60 Sea Lane which is a detached 4 bedroom 2 storey house. The house adopts a pseudo chalet style whilst having a full 2 storey height and form. The house is in a deteriorating state of repair. It has a hardsurfaced frontage providing parking for multiple vehicles, and a larger level lawned garden to the rear. The southern section of the site is the undeveloped plot that was originally intended to be 62 Sea Lane. The plot has been the subject of a longstanding planning permission that has been renewed severally since the 1980s. The overall site, comprising both plots, has extent outline planning permission to accommodate 2 large detached 5 bedroom houses. Permission was granted by the planning committee of Arun Council on 13th July 2013 (ref. EP/111/12).

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2.3 The general character of the area is derived from the wide variety of the form, scale, style and setting of residential buildings within a distinctly suburban area. Whilst close to the coastline, there is surprisingly little evidence of a maritime influence to the layout or architecture of the area. The existing house at the application site displays a bland generic form of architecture which, whilst inoffensive, contributes nothing to the otherwise attractive suburban ambience of the area.

3.0 The Proposal

3.1 The proposal, as detailed above, is to demolish the existing tired and unspecial house at 60 Sea Lane, and to construct 2 buildings fronting onto Sea Lane. Each building comprises a pair of 4-bedroom semi-detached houses, so the overall proposal will deliver 4 family homes, a net gain of 3 at the site. Each of the proposed homes would benefit from a detached garage, off-street parking, and spacious front and rear gardens.

3.2 The massing of the development is virtually identical to that of the 2 large detached houses permitted in July 2013. The appearance of the development is, equally, very similar to that of the approved development to the extent that the severance of each of the approved houses into 2 will not be immediately perceptible in views from the public realm.

3.3 The proposals are adequately demonstrated on the planning application drawings.

3.4 The proposed development is considered to be more attractive than the generic house type currently occupying the site, and the proposal creates the

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opportunity to reintroduce some planting at the street frontage on the plot of 60 Sea Lane.

4.0 National Planning Policy Framework

4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) came into force, and replaced all pre-existing Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance, on 27th March 2012.

4.2 The NPPF explains (at paragraph 6) that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Paragraph 7 explains that there are three overlapping dimensions to sustainable development:

- an economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;

- a social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and

- an environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and

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pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.

4.3 Paragraph 19 confirms that the Government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth. Planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth. Therefore significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system.

4.4 Paragraph 49 states that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. It confirms that relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites. However, transitional arrangements protect those LPAs with non-compliant Development Plan Documents for a period of 12 months from the date of adoption of the NPPF.

4.5 Paragraph 50 states that, to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities, local planning authorities should:

- plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community (such as, but not limited to, families with children, older people, people with disabilities, service families and people wishing to build their own homes);

- identify the size, type, tenure and range of housing that is required in particular locations, reflecting local demand; and

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- where they have identified that affordable housing is needed, set policies for meeting this need on site, unless off-site provision or a financial contribution of broadly equivalent value can be robustly justified (for example to improve or make more effective use of the existing housing stock) and the agreed approach contributes to the objective of creating mixed and balanced communities. Such policies should be sufficiently flexible to take account of changing market conditions over time.

4.6 Paragraph 56 states that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. It explains that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people. Paragraph 60, however confirms that planning policies and decisions 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. It is, however, proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness. Paragraph 61 confirms that, although visual appearance and the architecture of individual buildings are very important factors, securing high quality and inclusive design goes beyond aesthetic considerations. It states that planning policies and decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.

4.7 Paragraph 186 says that local planning authorities should approach decision-taking in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development. The relationship between decision-taking and plan-making should be seamless, translating plans into high quality development on the ground. Paragraph 187 advises that local planning authorities should look for solutions rather than problems, and decision-takers at every level should seek to approve

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applications for sustainable development where possible. Local planning authorities should work proactively with applicants to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.

4.8 Having regard to planning obligations, paragraphs 203 and 204 say that local planning authorities should consider whether otherwise unacceptable development could be made acceptable through the use of conditions or planning obligations. Planning obligations should only be used where it is not possible to address unacceptable impacts through a planning condition and should only be sought where they meet all of the following tests:

- necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- directly related to the development; and,
- fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

5.0 The Development Plan

5.1 The Development Plan against which the proposed development shall be assessed is comprised of the saved policies of the Arun District Local Plan (2003).

5.2 Policy GEN2, linked to the proposals map which defines the settlement boundaries, states that development will be permitted within the built up area boundaries.

5.3 Policy GEN7 states that permission will be granted for developments that display high quality design and layout.

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5.4 Policy DEV17 states that, from developments of 1 to 14 new residential units, an affordable housing provision of 15% will be sought district wide, subject to further research to ensure this is financially viable. The policy makes provision for negotiations to reduce this liability where a development is incapable, in viability terms, of making the 15% contribution.

Supplementary Planning Documents

5.5 The Arun District Open Space and Recreation Standards SPG sets out the requirement for new residential development to make a financial or physical contribution to the provision of outdoor recreation and play facilities where there is a proven deficiency that would be exacerbated by the proposed development.

5.6 The East Preston Village Design Statement (2008) was endorsed as a material planning consideration by Arun District Council at its Full Council meeting on January 9th 2008. While the VDS is not a formal Supplementary Planning Document under current planning legislation, it has thus been endorsed as a material planning consideration by the Local Planning Authority. The VDS places the application site within Character Area 1 where the guidance encourages the retention of low density development of single dwellings and gardens.

6.0 Planning Considerations

6.1 The starting point in the determination of planning applications and appeals is a careful consideration of the proposals in the light of current national planning policy and guidance and against the policies contained within the statutory development plan. Proposals which are in accordance with these

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provisions can reasonably be granted planning permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Principle of Development at the Site

6.2 The site is located within a defined settlement boundary (as shown on the Proposals Map) where national and local planning policy states that development will be acceptable as a matter of principle. The site is subject to no further land use designation in the Local Plan, and surrounded by residential uses.

6.3 The site is located in a sustainable location within walking distance of the village centre and a range of local shopping facilities and services. National planning policy presumes in favour of the effective and efficient use of sites within built up areas to address an ongoing need for housing. The Development Plan and Village Design Statement identifies a clear preference for development of lower density homes in such locations. The proposal will address this need, providing desirable homes for families in a sustainable residential location, thereby contributing to the mixed community in accordance with national planning policy.

6.4 The proposal is to develop a parcel of land of 0.17 hectares with a total of 4 family dwellings providing a low density of approximately 23.5 dwellings per hectare. This figure, which falls well below the former indicative minimum density in national policy should be considered in the context of the generally spacious suburban character of the area and the generous plots that would serve each of the units proposed which the applicant nonetheless considers make a 'more' efficient use of the available land in a manner that is wholly

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compatible with the accessibility, mixed character and amenities of the surroundings.

6.5 The proposal makes effective and efficient use of the site to provide a small but important 'boost' to the supply of family housing for which there is an identified need. This is a positive component of the proposal which should be given weight in the determination of the application. The density of the development is in no conflict with the intent of the development plan to direct development to sustainable locations well served by local services and transport facilities.

Trees

6.6 The applicant previously commissioned a Tree Constraints Plan which identified important trees and shrubs at the site, and has designed the scheme around these to ensure that they are compatible with the development and will be retained as amenities of the site and surrounding area in the longer term. I enclose again the Tree Impact Assessment in support of the application, and would again restate that the footprint and massing of the proposed development is identical to that found to be acceptable by the Local Planning Authority 10 months ago in July 2013. The relationship with trees is accordingly acceptable.

6.7 The proposed development provides the opportunity to secure the protection and retention of planting and trees that make a positive contribution to the character and amenity of the area, together with some additional planting at the Sea Lane frontages which will represent a material enhancement of the current circumstances where the street frontage is either uncharacteristically

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open (the frontage of 60 Sea Lane) or completely enclosed by uncharacteristic fencing.

6.8 The proposal has been carefully conceived having regard to the desirability of preserving the contribution of existing trees within the site to the character of the area and the development itself.

Character and Appearance

6.9 The site falls within Character Area 1 of the East Preston Village Design Statement (VDS). The design consideration applied to development proposals in this area do not preclude infill development but require cognisance to be taken of the generally sylvan and spacious character of the area. The proposals adopt stylistically appropriate architecture and form, maintain generous spaces to the respective boundaries and include the retention and augmentation of planting accord fully with the provisions and guidance of local policy.

6.10 Whilst the individual plots serving each of the proposed semi-detached homes will be narrower than is typical in the street, this will not be readily perceptible from the public realm, nor harmful to the character of the area overall where plots of disparate widths are comfortably juxtaposed. The design cleverly precludes the segregation of the plots at the frontage of the respective homes. The proposed pairs of houses will adopt a similar form and style in order that the development appears cohesive. The architect has annotated the outline of the existing house at 60 Sea Lane onto the street scene drawing to enable a clear comparison to be made between the scale and massing of the existing and proposed buildings when viewed from the street. It clearly shows that the proposed dwelling will not appear materially larger, that the spatial

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relationship with the neighbouring property at 58 Sea Lane will be significantly improved, and that proposed 2 storey properties will sit comfortably within this context.

6.11 The properties adopt a suppressed eaves line to take account of the lower form of the neighbouring properties and otherwise present styling and materials reflective of the arts and crafts influences visible on surrounding buildings.

6.12 The proposals in totality are a logical approach to the development of the site and re-establish a pattern of development that was originally envisaged when the estate was laid out. The scale, layout, spacing and styling of the buildings take clear reference from neighbouring properties and will, in combination, make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area in accordance with national and local planning policy.

6.13 The subdivision of the previously approved houses into pairs of semi-detached houses without any discernible change to their massing or appearance makes fantastic and effective use of the land to deliver homes for which the Annual Monitoring Report clarifies there to be a shortfall and need in a manner that has largely been found to be acceptable and compatible with the visual amenities of the area.

6.14 It is a well-conceived response to the circumstances of the site and surrounding area in addition to contemporary planning policy.

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Affordable Housing

6.15 The Council's policy is that all new residential development should make an on-site or off-site contribution equivalent to 15% towards the delivery of affordable homes within the Borough.

6.16 The applicant has employed the services of a specialist in development viability and affordable housing to advise on this matter (John Newman of Tangent Surveyors). The consultant has calculated that the development will generate insufficient income after development costs and a small profit to be able to make a contribution. The calculations are set out in the enclosed Viability Assessment.

6.17 The viability assessment has been independently reviewed by the District Valuers Service, which has concluded that the terms of the affordable housing policy will be met by a contribution of £21,882, of which £12,246 has already been paid to the Council. I

6.18 At the time of writing, it is unclear whether the Council will concur with the independent professional advice that it has received. However, the applicant is willing to make the negotiated contribution of £21,882 in order to move the project forward.

Residential Amenity

6.19 The layout and elevation plans demonstrate that, having regard to the generous spacing of the proposed dwellings from neighbouring homes and the internal layouts and window positions, 4no. 2-storey semi-detached houses may

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readily be accommodated at the site in a manner that is wholly consistent with maintaining and providing high standards of living conditions.

Daylighting, Privacy and Outlook

6.20 The proposed pair of homes to be constructed on the plot of 60 Sea Lane will be set further from the boundary with the neighbouring property at 58 Sea Lane than the existing 2 storey house, and adopts a hipped roof arrangement that will reduce the perceptible height of the building when viewed from the neighbouring home. Whilst of greater depth than the existing house, the proposed development will have no greater impact on the neighbour in terms of privacy, light and outlook than the existing house and is thus both neighbourly and appropriate.

6.21 The proposed pair of homes at 62 Sea Lane will, because of its southerly position, obstruct some outlook from and light to the dwellings on the plot of 60 Sea Lane, but the impact is marginal and acceptable having regards to commonly accepted tolerances.

6.22 In totality, the proposal is a well-conceived low key approach to the future development of these established residential plots. The impacts on neighbouring homes are wholly acceptable.

6.23 The proposed dwellings, which will each enjoy spacious accommodation, large garden, garages and off-street parking will provide very high standards of living for their future occupants.

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Financial Contributions

6.24 Policies within the Development Plan and associated SPG require a contribution towards the provision of off-site recreation facilities and open space where there is an identified deficiency of such facilities.

6.25 The supplementary planning guidance relating to the contributions likely to be sought in respect of open space clarify that these contributions will not be sought uncritically. It is therefore anticipated that the Council will confirm at an early stage what capital projects any funding sought will be used for and how they are related to the development in accordance with the tests, now set into law, of CIL Regulation 122. Upon receipt of such information, the applicant will enter into a Planning Obligation committing to make such payments as are demonstrated to be necessary, reasonable and lawful.

7.0 Access

7.1 The access statement is required to relate only to the access to a development and not to internal aspects of a building. The following sets out how all users will have equal access to buildings, spaces and public transport. This element of the statement is to be taken alongside the elements above dealing with the site layout and access from a highway safety point of view and along with the site layout plans.

7.2 The site, when developed, will be level and provide pedestrian routes free of steps or barriers to accessibility. There will be no substantive physical constraints to access. Vehicular (car and cycle) access, as discussed above, is from Sea Lane via individual private or shared driveways. Access routes will be direct, open and have clear lines of sight so that there will be no conflict

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between vehicles and pedestrians, and no undue lack of natural surveillance or security concerns.

7.3 The applications drawings clearly show how the constituent elements of the development will be accessed. The development will be designed and constructed in accordance with Part M of the Building Regulations.

7.4 The location of the site in relation to facilities and in sustainability terms has been discussed within the "site and surrounding area" section at the beginning of this statement.

8.0 Conclusions

8.1 The proposed development represents a very clear response to the circumstances of the site. It will bring forward 4 attractive and spacious low-density family homes where currently there is permission for just 2. It will be low key and wholly consistent to the spacious character of the area. The illustrative plans show how the dwellings may be constructed in a manner that would be sympathetic to the prevailing form of development in the area, preserve its character and, critically, do so in a manner that will appear virtually identical to the development for which permission was granted in July 2013.

8.2 The development has been designed to maintain a high standard of outlook, light penetration and privacy to the proposed and adjacent homes.

8.3 The enclosed Tree Impact Plan demonstrates how the dwellings may readily be accommodated at the site in a manner that is consistent with the longevity and amenity of the trees within the site.

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8.4 The applicant will contribute to the provision of open space and recreation facilities as required. Moreover, having regard to the professional advice received from Tangent Surveyors and the District Valuers Service, the applicant will make a further significant financial contribution towards the provision of affordable homes within the District.

8.5 Full planning permission may readily be granted in accordance with the provisions of national planning policy and the Development Plan.

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