

Design & Access Statement



**11 ST WINEFRIDE'S ROAD
LITTLEHAMPTON
WEST SUSSEX
BN17 5HA**

**PROPOSAL:
DEMOLITION OF EXISTING DWELLING
AND
ERECTION OF 4 X 3 BED DETACHED DWELLINGS
WITH ASSOCIATED GARAGING**

**SITE:
11 ST WINEFRIDE'S ROAD
LITTLEHAMPTON
WEST SUSSEX
BN17 5HA**

**APPLICANTS:
MR M HARTNETT
MJ PROPERTY DEVELOPMENTS LIMITED**

The Design Component

Amount of Development

Consent is here sought for the demolition of the existing dwelling sited at 11 St Winefride's Road, Littlehampton and its replacement with 4 x 3 bed detached dwellings with each being served by an ancillary detached single garage. The accommodation will comprise a kitchen/living room and wc on the ground floor and three bedrooms, bathroom, en-suite bathroom and study on the first floor.

Layout

The four dwellings will be located fronting onto the west side of St Winefrides Road and are gently stepped to transition the building line between nos. 7 and 13 St Winefrides Road. This stepping of the building line is a natural consequence of the site being located on the inside of a gentle bend in the road. Each dwelling would have sufficient off-street parking for up to 4 vehicles. The dwellings would be served by individual crossovers onto the public highway.

Appearance

The four dwellings are essentially variations on the same house design. Each house has a main roof pitched side to side and this roof is either hipped or a full gable. Each of the houses has a two storey gable projection on the front which will either be hipped or gabled to match the main roof slope. Further variations in the front elevation include use of a varied palette of materials including brick, flint and tile hanging. In certain of the house designs the first floor window above the porch will also have a small gable feature. Each house will have an external chimney located on the west side elevation.

Scale

Each of the four properties are two storey in height with no additional accommodation proposed within the roof space. The ridge height of the proposed dwellings would generally accord with the height of other houses located on the west side of St Winefride's Road. The relative scale of the dwellings in relation to their immediate environs is depicted on the 1:200 scale street scene elevation which accompanies this application.

Landscaping

The site has a mix of boundary hedging along the front, sides and rear of the site and there are one or two moderately sized trees located at the rear. The redevelopment here proposed does not require or entail the removal of any significant tree but it is intended to remove the existing untidy frontage hedging and replace that with new planting between the proposed crossover points.

An important characteristic of the street scene in St Winefrides Road is the mature frontage soft landscaping which dominates the street scene and, to a degree, subverts the built environment located behind this frontage planting. It is the intention of this scheme to reiterate this important characteristic with substantial mature planting within the front gardens of each of the four plots and this will be a mix of hedging with specimen tree planting interspersed. Again, the 1:200 scale street scene elevation indicates the intention to provide a substantial belt of planting along the frontage which, in time, will soften the appearance of the dwellings within the street scene. The precise details of this landscaping would, it is assumed, be the subject of a condition on any planning consent issued. It is, suffice to say, that the hedging preferred would be of an evergreen nature but with the trees being, perhaps, smaller, native trees such as wild cherry, ash, silver birch and holly. The frontage boundary would also be demarked by a low rise (1 metre high) fence or wall, the precise details of which could, again, be the subject of a planning condition.

The Context Appraisal

The site lies on the west side of St Winefride's Road opposite its junction with Woodlands Road. The area is strongly residential in character and lies a short distance to the east of Littlehampton town centre. The original character of the area comprises detached dwellings set in comfortable plots. The original houses generally date from the early part of the 20th century. However, the street scene is interspersed with more modern infilling/redevelopment. Housing on this part of the west side of St Winefride's Road largely comprises detached inter-War houses constructed in the 'Tudorbethan' style. Some of the housing in the road is slightly older than this and has a more Edwardian characteristic. However, there is modern infill development including a substantial three storey flat roof block of flats immediately opposite the appeal site on the junction of St Winefride's Road and Woodlands Road. Photographs attached to this statement give a general flavour of the street scene.

The area has a pleasant character which derives significantly from the mature landscaping within which the plots are set. This landscaping is particularly strong along the road frontage and, to a degree, obscures views of the individual dwellings themselves which are set back from the road. Again, the importance of this soft landscaping is illustrated in the submitted photographs.

The application site comprises a substantial detached property set within what is comfortably the largest plot within the immediate locale. The house sits to the north end of its plot, close to no. 13 St Winefride's Road. The plot has a frontage width of approximately 50 metres and an average depth of about 46 metres giving a site area of 0.23 hectares.

The existing house has been unoccupied for some while and has taken on a semi-derelict appearance. Photographs attached to this report demonstrate that the house is of no particular or significant architectural merit and therefore does not contribute positively to the street scene.

The application site contains quite strong soft landscaping along the front boundary but this soft landscaping is unkempt and untidy. It does not contain any individual trees of importance or significance. Other boundaries to the site also contain some boundary screening and there are one or two individual Scots pine trees towards the rear of the site which would not be affected by these proposals.

There is a single crossover into the plot at the north end of its frontage.

Planning Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework 2012

The NPPF lays down a presumption in favour of sustainable development. There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:

- 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 at the right time to support growth.
- A social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities by providing a 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.
- An environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment.

At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. As a result, the decision making process is required to approve development proposals that accord with the Development Plan or, where the Development Plan is absent or otherwise out of date, planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impact of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies contained within the Framework as a whole.

Section 6 of the NPPF requires Local Authorities to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes. They are further required to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites such as to provide five years' worth of housing against their housing requirements with a minimum additional buffer of 5%. However, where there is a history of under-delivery this buffer should be increased to 20%.

Section 7 concerns the need for good design and emphasises that the Government attaches great importance to the built environment. Good design is identified as a key aspect of sustainable development. Therefore the achievement of high quality and good design is required for all new development. Planning policies and decisions should inter alia aim to ensure that developments are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping. Local Planning Authorities are invited to consider using design codes where they could help deliver high quality outcomes. However, it is stated that design policies should avoid unnecessary prescription or detail and should concentrate on guiding broader principles of scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout, materials and access of new development.

Relevant Development Plan Policy

The statutory Development Plan for the area comprises the saved policies within the Arun District Local Plan 2003. The key policy in this document is GEN7. GEN7 concerns the form of new development, it states that planning permission will only be granted for schemes displaying high quality design and layout. Point (ii) requires new development to demonstrate that it responds positively to the identified characteristics of the site to create attractive places and spaces with the needs of people in mind. New development should also enhance local distinctiveness. Point (iv) requires development to not have an unacceptable adverse impact on adjoining occupiers or property.

There is an Emerging Local Plan (the Arun District Local Plan 2011 – 2029). It is at a very early stage and is some way off being put to an Examination in Public. As currently constituted, it contains a number of draft policies but has been stripped of policies relating to future growth because of a lack of agreement at political

level as to what the future levels of housing and commercial growth should be. Until such levels of growth are settled the Plan has avoided identifying strategic locations for such development. All this means that the Plan is some way off formal adoption and, as currently constituted, is missing important aspects. The weight that can be applied to the development control policies contained therein can only therefore be very limited at this stage. Nonetheless the decision letter quotes policies from this Plan including **D SP1**, **D DM1**, **D DM3** and **D DM2**.

Policy **D SP1** concerns design. It sets out the need to achieve good quality, high standard design which must consider the efficient use of land, layout, landscape, the setting of the site, density, mix, scale, massing, materials, finish, architectural details and nearby habitats.

Policy **D DM1** concerns the aspects of form and design quality. In considering applications for new development the following elements are to be considered:

- Character – new development should make the best possible use of available use by reflecting or improving upon the character of the site and the surrounding area in terms of its scale, massing, aspect, siting, layout, density, building materials, landscaping and design features.
- Appearance – new schemes should demonstrate a high standard of architectural principles, use of appropriate building materials and the incorporation of hard and soft landscaping.
- Impact – new development should have minimal impact on nearby property and land through, for example, avoiding loss of sunlight, overshadowing, overlooking or causing an overbearing presence.

Policy **D DM2** sets out proposed internal space standards for residential development according to the floor area of the property and the number of bedrooms proposed. The policy states that the standards set out outline current best practise but that District-specific standards are to be included in this policy. Clarity will be added in a proposed Arun District Design Guide.

In respect of standards for amenity space, policy **D DM3** states that private amenity space in new residential development should be as per specified minimum standards '*unless the urban density form in town centres requires greater flexibility.*' In respect of a two bed terraced dwelling the rear garden should be 50m² and 10 metres in depth and, in respect of a three bed terrace this rises to 65m² but the 10 metre depth remains consistent.

Evaluation

The application site comprises a substantial area of land located in a central position within the coastal settlement of Littlehampton. The site is clearly under developed in its present form with the existing single detached house being located at one end of the plot with the remainder of the site being left open. The existing house has no particular or significant architectural merit and therefore its redevelopment should be acceptable in principle.

The scheme for 4 detached dwellings comprises a density of development of approximately 17 dwellings per hectare and this is not considered inappropriate, given the context of the site and its central location.

The dwellings have been designed to take their lead from the inter-War domestic architecture to the south and north. They therefore have a traditional design comprising a mix of hipped and gabled roofs with a detached single garage located down the side. The dwellings are appropriately spaced to provide gaps within the street frontage and this is primarily achieved by running private access drives down the sides of the properties. The dwellings are essentially the same house design but, when viewed from the frontage, sufficient changes in design and detailing are proposed in order to create an appropriate level of variety and visual interest. These front elevations would exhibit a mix of gabled and hipped finishes and changes in materials, including flint panelling, tile hanging and stock brick.

The two storey nature of the houses means that their scale would accord with surrounding development and this is evident on the 1:200 scale street scene which accompanies the application. In particular, the height of the dwellings would not be overpowering. The applicants recognise the importance that soft landscaping plays in informing the character of this part of the street scene. It is therefore intended to undertake substantial hedge and tree planting within the front gardens of each property. This would be the subject of a detailed landscape scheme but is intended to comprise mixed evergreen hedge planting (eg. laurel and holly) interspersed with a small number of standard trees which could comprise silver birch, wild cherry, ash, holly and field maple. Within a short space of time this landscaping would become sufficiently established to make a visual statement within the street scene such that the proposed houses would only have a muted presence.

The houses have a shallow stepped building line to take account of the curve in the road. The positioning of the houses on this staggered building line is considered logical and appropriate. Account has been taken with regard the impact the development would have on the immediately adjoining properties to the north and south, nos. 7 and 13 St Winefride's Road. Whilst the southern plot would be located a standard distance off south side boundary, comparable to other properties in the street scene, the flank elevation of no. 7 St Winefride's Road is blank in terms of fenestration and there would therefore be no impact relating to loss of light or outlook. At the north end of the plot the proposed dwelling here would have a similar spacing from no. 13 St Winefride's Road to the existing dwelling. No additional harm or loss of amenity would therefore arise.

Each of the dwellings has been designed to meet minimum room standards contained within the emerging Local Plan. They are proposed as three bed properties with a fourth room on the first floor being set aside as a study/home work station. This is the smallest

room within the property but, given that it is not proposed as a bedroom, it should not be the subject of the standards outlined in policy. Further, the minimum rear garden distances required for properties such as here proposed are met in this instance. Generally, the garden depths measure about 25 metres.

The Local Planning Authority requirement for financial contributions towards social housing on schemes such as this is noted. As a consequence, a Unilateral Undertaking signed under Section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act is submitted with the application. This promises to pay a commuted sum of £5,628 on first occupation of the first dwelling. This is calculated on the basis of a ward value of 2 where the requirement is for a sum of £1,876 per 3 bed roomed house. Given that there is an existing house on the site, the net increase in the number of dwellings proposed here is 3 and therefore $3 \times £1,876$ is the figure proposed as the commuted sum. It would not be correct in this instance to describe the proposed dwellings as 4 bed units as the fourth bed on the first floor is specifically identified as a home office/study and, in any event, this room would not meet minimum room standards required for a bedroom as set out in the emerging Local Plan.

Access Design Policy on the Scheme

Each of the proposed houses is to have an individual domestic crossover leading to a single detached garage located behind the rear building line. Each plot would therefore comfortably accommodate up to 4 car parking spaces per unit. This would more than adequately meet the needs of each individual property. The plots would not provide on-site turn facilities but, given the relatively modest traffic speeds on the adjoining highway and the fact that St Winefride's Road is not a significant road in the surrounding network, it is considered safe and convenient for vehicles to reverse out onto the public highway.

15.9.14