Planning, Design and Access Statement

Proposed Replacement Dwelling

10 Brownfield Way
Wheathampstead
Herts AL4 8LL

Prepared by
EHW Ltd | Chartered Architects & Designers

On behalf of
Mr and Mrs J Wright

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This statement is put forward in support of the proposal for a replacement residential dwelling at 10 Brownfield Way, Wheathampstead, Herts AL4 8LL. The proposed dwelling will replace a small and unmodernised 1950s bungalow and detached garage with a modern family home on this large 0.5 acre site.

1.2 This statement will outline the key factors which have influenced the design and layout of the detailed scheme and aim to demonstrate that the proposed development has been designed to a high standard, with much consideration given to its relationship with neighbouring properties and the street as a whole.

1.3 This scheme is submitted following receipt of pre-application advice and in accordance with the positive response we received from NHDC on 23 November 2017.



10 Brownfield Way, Wheathampstead



2.0 Development Description

2.1 The proposed development is a single, detached residential dwelling with five bedrooms and integral garage. The majority of the living space will be arranged across the ground floor, with a partial second storey containing four family bedrooms and two bathrooms. The proposed building will replace the existing bungalow and detached garage.

3.0 Site Analysis

3.1 The site is located in Brownfield Way, an attractive private street linking Blackmore Way to the north and The Broadway to the south. The majority of the road is within the administrative area of North Hertfordshire District Council and is accessed from Blackmore Way, with the DC boundary crossing the street south of No 11 and No 14, and vehicle access restricted at this point.

3.2 The properties in Brownfield Way are a diverse mixture of single-storey and two-storey detached dwellings most of which have been significantly extended over the years, both horizontally and vertically. All houses are set back from the road, and the properties in this part of the road generally have similar frontages, mostly relatively open in character.

3.3 No. 10 is one of the few properties in the road that has not yet been extended or altered. The property is set within an extensive 1,960 m² plot. The gross external footprint of the current house and outbuildings is 97 m² including the detached garage and shed.

3.4 Both of the immediately adjacent properties are also bungalows, which have been significantly extended to the side, front and/or rear (see photos). The gross external footprint of No 8 Brownfield Way is 153m² and the gross external footprint of No. 12 Brownfield Way is 175m² including the conservatory and garage. Planning permission to further extend No. 8 at the rear has been granted (total gross external footprint will become 190m²) - shown in outline on the site drawings.

3.5 The next two nearest houses are both two-storey properties. To the north, No. 6 Brownfield Way has been entirely rebuilt (gross external footprint of 217m²) and appears to be a chalet bungalow from the street elevation, but has a full two-storey wing at the rear. No. 14 to the south has been altered and extended extensively (see photos) and the profile of the original bungalow is no longer apparent from the street. No. 14 has a gross external footprint of 247m².



14 Brownfield Way, Wheathampstead



5 Brownfield Way, Wheathampstead



6 Brownfield Way, Wheathampstead



12 Brownfield Way, Wheathampstead



8 Brownfield Way, Wheathampstead

4.0 Relevant Planning History

4.1 We do not believe that there is any relevant planning history related specifically to 10 Brownfield Way, but no doubt North Hertfordshire District Council will highlight any pertinent to this application.

6 Brownfield Way, Blackmore End

17/01596/1	Erection of 4-bedroom detached dwelling following demolition of existing bungalow. (Variation of Condition 4 of planning application 15/00159/1 granted 10/3/2015).

5 Brownfield Way, Blackmore End

17/00297/1HH	Two-storey side extension plus two and single-storey side and rear extensions.

4 Brownfield Way, Blackmore End

16/02348/1HH Single-storey rear extensions and front bay windows, alterations to existing roof and insertion of front and rear dormer windows to facilitate loft conversion.

8 Brownfield Way, Blackmore End

16/02004/1HH Single storey rear extension and replacement of flat roof with tiled pitched roof.

4 Brownfield Way, Blackmore End

15/01042/1HH Erection of detached garage, single storey rear extensions and front bay window.

14 Brownfield Way, Blackmore End

14/017998/1DOC First floor and single-storey front extensions to create two-storey dwelling. Single-storey side and rear extensions following demolition of existing conservatory (amended plans received 9 December 2013).

Plus a number of large extensions and replacement dwellings in Blackmore Way, including numbers 23 and 27, which we were involved in.

5.0 Principle of Development

Policy Context

5.1 National Policy :
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

There are a number of adopted and emerging policy documents which are relevant to this proposal. The NPPF will help guide the principle of development. However, in light of the fact that North Hertfordshire District Council Core Strategy and Local Plan are still not yet adopted and development plan documents are under public examination, the decision-making process will generally need to rely on the saved policies of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan, except where it is in contrast to the objectives of the NPPF.

North Hertfordshire District Local Plan:
Policy 6 Rural Housing beyond the Green Belt
Policy 30 Replacement or Extension of Dwellings in the Countryside

Development

5.2 The principle of development in terms of a replacement dwelling is generally considered to be acceptable in both urban and rural environments. It is felt that the vast number of recent and historic permissions for extensive alterations and new build dwellings in the immediate surrounding area provides sufficient justification for the proposed new build on the site. This was endorsed by the NHDC Planning Officer, Kate Poyser, through the pre-application advice and a subsequent meeting on site.

5.3 A number of other material planning considerations have also been addressed through the pre-application process.

Pre-Application Advice Analysis

5.4 The initial advice dated 17 July 2017 concludes that a replacement dwelling in this location would be acceptable in principle. Valuable feedback was provided in terms of the planning issues surrounding this scheme, which were then addressed by way of further development of the scheme with a subsequent site meeting with the Case Officer and further feedback/advice.

5.5 Although the Case Officer's initial pre-application report suggested that a pitched roof dwelling would be more in keeping with the street scene, we subsequently had a very constructive site meeting at which both pitched roof and flat roof schemes were presented enabling their relative impact on the street and immediate neighbours to be assessed. We were also able to explain how the proposed scheme had been designed specifically to complement the neighbouring properties whilst maintaining design integrity and to minimise any impact on privacy and light.

5.6 In addition, we pointed out a number of recent contemporary flat roof applications that had been approved by NDHC (and the same Planning Officer), and in more sensitive locations than this, including one at 23 Blackmore Way, literally around the corner.

5.7 The Officer was open to further dialogue and provision of the case for a more modern, two-storey flat roofed dwelling, and following submission of revised design drawings (with an offset first and second storey at the back, as requested), we received confirmation on 23 November 2017 that this was acceptable to NHDC and hence our application adopting this style.

5.8 Accordingly, this has been taken as support for the proposals in terms of principle, design, siting, size, height and overall massing. As always, the devil is in the detail, which we are confident has been more than adequately addressed.

5.9 Finally, a contemporary example is shown below, which provides an alternative and forward-thinking style of architecture and landscaping which blends well with the surroundings, be that urban or rural.



23 Blackmore Way

6.0 Material Planning and Validation Considerations

Affordable Housing

6.1 This development will provide one dwelling in replacement for the existing property, therefore affordable housing will not be required in light of the fact that there will be no nett gain in housing numbers.

Biodiversity

6.2 It is unlikely that any protected species will be affected by the replacement dwelling, especially given that the proposed siting and location relates to the existing development on the site.

Car Parking

6.3 In respect of car parking standards, at least three designated spaces are proposed in accordance with the current parking standards.

6.4 Cycle storage will be provided within the integral garage.

Crime Prevention

6.5 Security of the property is a prime consideration at the initial design stage in order to ensure that security is integrated into the proposal rather than as an afterthought.

6.6 The detailed scheme design will generally follow the principles of Secured by Design requirements in terms of siting, layout and product specification. Measures adopted for the purpose of designing out crime naturally will include high quality locks and intruder alarms/security systems to act as a deterrent to any would-be offenders.

6.7 All security hardware will be sourced from accredited Secured by Design member companies whose products pass the standards and tests set by the police service.

6.8 The parking area is within view of the main house and neighbouring properties, and will include the provision of artificial lighting/security lighting to act as a major inhibitor to any illicit action.

6.9 Windows throughout are double-glazed and to Secured by Design Standards, which has been proven to significantly reduce this form of forced entry.

Energy Proposal

6.10 Given recent changes to the new housing standard requirements, the use of the Code for Sustainable Homes has been reviewed. The proposals however will endeavour to reach the standard set by Code Level 4.

Planning Obligations

6.11 The proposed development will result in one replacement dwelling and with no nett gain it is not considered justifiable for financial contributions to be required. Therefore, a completed Unilateral Undertaking will not be submitted as part of the formal planning application.

Sustainability

6.12 The proposals include the intention to construct a dwelling that accords with the relevant requirements. It is planned to encompass a number of environmentally responsible features wherever possible.

Waste

(i) In line with waste and recycling standards, bins and recycling boxes will be made available for the recycling of garden and food waste, card, paper, plastics, tins, glass, newspapers and magazines. The bins will be stored to the side of the property.

Energy

(i) Energy conservation is extremely important. The insulation of the building will improve on the current Building Regulation requirements.

(ii) Renewable energy sources will form part of the detailed design to help reduce the reliance on less sustainable energy solutions.

(iii) The orientation of the site has been considered carefully to ensure that passive solar gain is optimal as far as practicably possible.

(iv) All materials resulting from works on site will be reused in the development where possible and site levels will be maintained where possible.

Air, Water

(i) Water efficient fixtures will be used wherever possible. Rainwater storage will be provided within the site.

(ii) Permeable surfaces will be used for hard landscaped areas wherever possible. Surface water run-off will not discharge into a watercourse and the property is not located on a floodplain.

Nature

(i) The site is not located within a designated site of nature conservation importance. However, the protection of any habitat found will be of utmost importance and should such an event arise, advice will be sought from a specialist to ensure its protection.

(ii) All timber made widely available in the UK is likely to be from FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) certified sources, which will be used where necessary.

Access

(i) The site is located within the built core of Blackmore End, with good links to local amenities, schools via bus and connecting rail transport links. Cycle storage will be accommodated on site, as already noted.

7.0 Design

Use

7.1 The proposed use for this site will be residential (C3), with no changes to the current land use. The proposal is for a single dwelling that has been designed to provide an enhanced standard of living accommodation, specifically designed to meet our clients' unique, long term brief.

Amount

7.2 In terms of external footprint, it is considered that the proposals are proportionate and comparative with the immediate surrounding properties, which have all been significantly extended or rebuilt, and its relationship with the generous plot.

7.3 Using numerous permissions granted in Brownfield Way and Blackmore Way as an example, it is evident that large scale increases are considered acceptable in the immediate locality. Recent permissions are scheduled in Section 4.0 Planning History.

Layout

7.4 The proposed dwelling will be sited in approximately the same location as the existing property, with its prime frontage onto Brownfield Way.

7.5 The layout has been designed to respect neighbouring properties, whilst providing the desired level of accommodation for the applicants, their family and its growth/development.

7.6 The vehicle access will remain at the front of the property.

Scale

7.7 The scale of the proposal has been considered in detail and in relation to the surrounding built form. In order to improve the level of accommodation to adequately suit a family, the property requires a partial second storey. However, the second storey has been set back from the road to maintain a single storey near the front of the plot, reducing the visual impact of the building and reflecting the overall massing of the adjacent bungalows.

7.8 The height of the proposal has been kept to a minimum using a flat roof throughout. This helps the property sit comfortably alongside the adjacent bungalows without breaking the visual roof line. Additionally, the three main "blocks" are individually identifiable, further reducing the overall perceived scale and mass.

7.9 Recent and historic developments have resulted in an increased width and size to the individual properties along Brownfield Way, most of which now occupy almost the full width of each respective site. In contrast, and in order to respect the immediately neighbouring properties, a generous gap has been left on both sides of the proposed development.

Appearance

7.10 The design and appearance of the new dwelling concentrates on a high quality contemporary architectural style taking reference from a number of notable residential dwellings which have been constructed worldwide.

7.11 Paragraph 60 of the NPPF identifies that planning should not attempt to impose architectural styles of particular taste and should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or style. This paragraph goes on to state that it is proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.

7.12 It is important to note that there is not one particular style present in the immediate surrounding area, with several new build dwellings incorporating contemporary elements in terms of design detailing. It is therefore considered that any design should both enhance and complement the surroundings without slavishly replicating lack lustre forms of pastiche development.

7.13 Whilst contemporary, it is considered that the proposed design can integrate successfully with its surroundings. It is proposed that the external materials will make use of render/rain screen panels with the possibility of including brick reclaimed from the existing dwelling, retaining a degree of continuity between before and after and with adjacent properties. The external materials and colours are yet to be finalised, but a dark grey cladding is proposed for the first floor element, with white render and brick predominating the ground floor, as shown in the images submitted. Such materials would be sympathetic to the street scene and help the second-storey element blend in with the roofs of adjacent properties.

Landscaping

7.14 A very basic indicative soft and hard landscaping scheme has been shown. However, it is suggested to be preferable to deal with the details of this scheme by condition.

Access

7.15 Vehicular and pedestrian access from Brownfield Way will be retained, simply located to the opposite hand.

7.16 The dwelling will have level thresholds affording easier access to all users. The property will be compliant with the Equality Act 2010 but this aspect will be covered by the Building Regulations application and in particular Part M and Equality Act compliance requirements.

8.0 Conclusion

8.1 The design process has guided the scheme to a conclusion which integrates successfully with the surroundings, positively engaging with the opportunity to provide an innovative architectural addition to Brownfield Way. The contemporary style is equally important if not more important in terms of setting the standard for future structures and spaces. Generous living accommodation with large openings for natural light greatly benefit wellbeing and are considered important aspects of good design. Moreover, the finished design is one that fully and unreservedly responds to our clients' brief both spatially and visually, and we are delighted to have been afforded their enlightened approach at a time when predictable, characterless architecture for new build dwellings seems to dominate.

8.2 The amenity of neighbouring properties has also been fully respected with only a single upper-storey window to the northern flank elevation, serving the family bathroom, which is to be obscure glazed.

8.3 In light of the above, it is considered that the scheme is viable and accords with relevant policies and standards set both locally and nationally. Therefore, we consider that this development should be supported and endorsed by grant of planning permission.