

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

School House Garden.

Proposal for 2 new 3 bedroom dwellings and 2 new 1 bedroom units

to

Land adjacent School House, School Lane Offley SG5 3AT

On behalf of the trustees of

Salisbury & Burroughs Educational Foundation (SBEF)



Aerial View of site (Courtesy of Google Maps) (existing highlighted)

Design and Access Statement

1 Design Process

1.1 Assessment of Site Context (physical, social and economic characteristics of site and area)

Physical

Site

School House is situated on the Eastern Side of School Lane and is adjacent to Offley Endowed Primary School. The School, a small village church school, serves both the village of Offley and Lilley.

The Village of Offley is surrounded by attractive rolling Hertfordshire countryside and lies two miles west of Hitchin.

The proposed site – formerly part of the garden of School House lies within Offley Village Boundary. The site abuts School Lane to the West. To the East Offley School and to the South an access lane and a terrace of vernacular late Victorian cottages 1-6 Hill Top Cottages. These cottages to the South are in the Northern section of the Great Offley Conservation area.

Travelling north along School Lane the road curves to the RH side and the site is mainly concealed by hedging

Social

The Site area is about 540sq m (0.054 Hectares)

The Site is owned by The Trustees of Salusbury & Burroughs Educational Foundation (SBEF)

The Charity Commission overview of the foundation is

'Makes grants to Church of England Schools in Offley and Cockernhoe. Gives financial assistance to persons of either sex, who are resident in Offley and who have not attained the age of 25 years; for outfits, clothing, tools, instruments or books in order to prepare for, or to enter, a profession, trade or calling.'

The Purpose of this application is for the trust to optimize the use of the land entrusted to the SBEF.

The new dwellings will provide rented accommodation so the SBEF can generate income to distribute.

Site Use

The site was formerly in the curtilage of School House.

Site Access

Site Access can be achieved from the existing crossover and gate to School Lane.

Vegetation

There is a mixed hedgerow abut School Lane.

The remaining area is grass.

Flooding

The Site is within Zone 1 meaning there is a low risk of Flooding.



South View Elevation



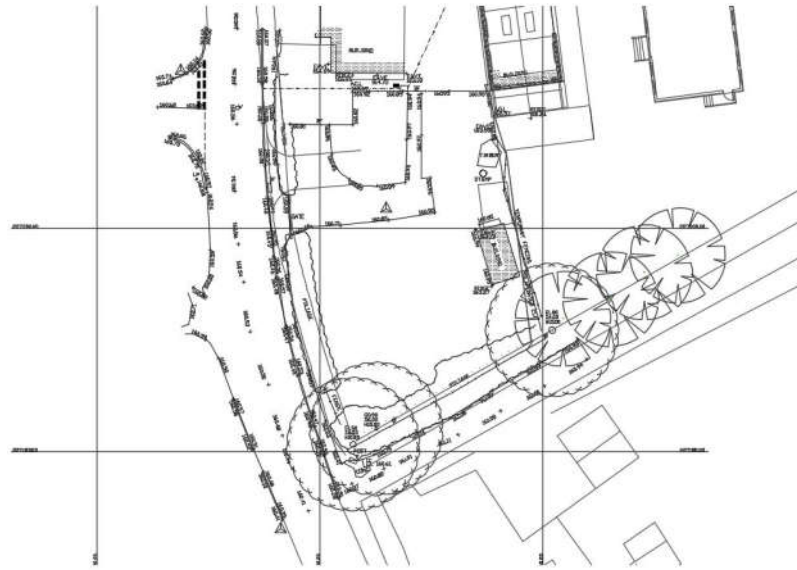
Street Elevation South view



North View Elevation



View entrance gate



Existing Site Plan

The proposed development on the land is located within the built-up part of Offley. In accordance with Planning Policy SP2 Category A village infill housing developments would be acceptable in principle in such areas where such developments can take place without damage to the character or appearance of the locality.



Street view to East



Street view to North

Economic and environmental

The creation of well-crafted and well-designed homes will contribute to the local economy and wellbeing of the area. Offley is a desirable residential location. Each home will have good outdoor space or private garden with Off Street parking including an area for EV charging with a front area suitable for ASHP. The site is a sustainable location being within 50m of the village school close to other local amenities Village Hall and local pub

The quality development is designed to use minimal energy. The new homes will be highly insulated to current Building Regulation requirement (if not better!) Natural light will be optimised with openable windows giving natural ventilation and wherever possible good cross ventilation.

Eco friendly materials and traditional construction techniques would be core to this development.

The front hedge will be retained and part replanted to allow for improved vision splay road access onto School Lane.

1.2 What existing planning policies apply

Current planning policies as set out in the North Herts Local Plan 2011-2031 (NHLP)
Main relevant policies: SP2 Development in Category A Village.
SP9 and D1 Sustainable Design.

Relevant sections from The National Planning Policy Framework

1.3 Involvement/Consultations- Who has the scheme been discussed with and results

The scheme has been discussed with the Trustees and we understand with North Herts Planning.

The proposal has not been discussed with a Crime Prevention Officer.

1.4 Evaluation- referring to assessments and consultations above

The proposed development now applied has been carefully designed to minimize any impact to the adjoining neighbouring properties.
By virtue of a single half hipped roof gable end this allows for a good South Facing roof for PV panels, a good layout for carparking with a mews style front area and south facing gardens to maximize sun.
The form also minimizes the number of windows overlooking the School play area.

The new homes echo the proportions of the 19th Century Hill Top Cottages

In accordance with Planning Policies developments can take place without damage to the character or appearance of the locality. The development as designed is considered to be respectful to the adjoining conservation area.

The proposal will offer comfortable 'green living'. The ground floor south doors open out onto the garden for healthy living. There is one car park spaces for each dwelling.

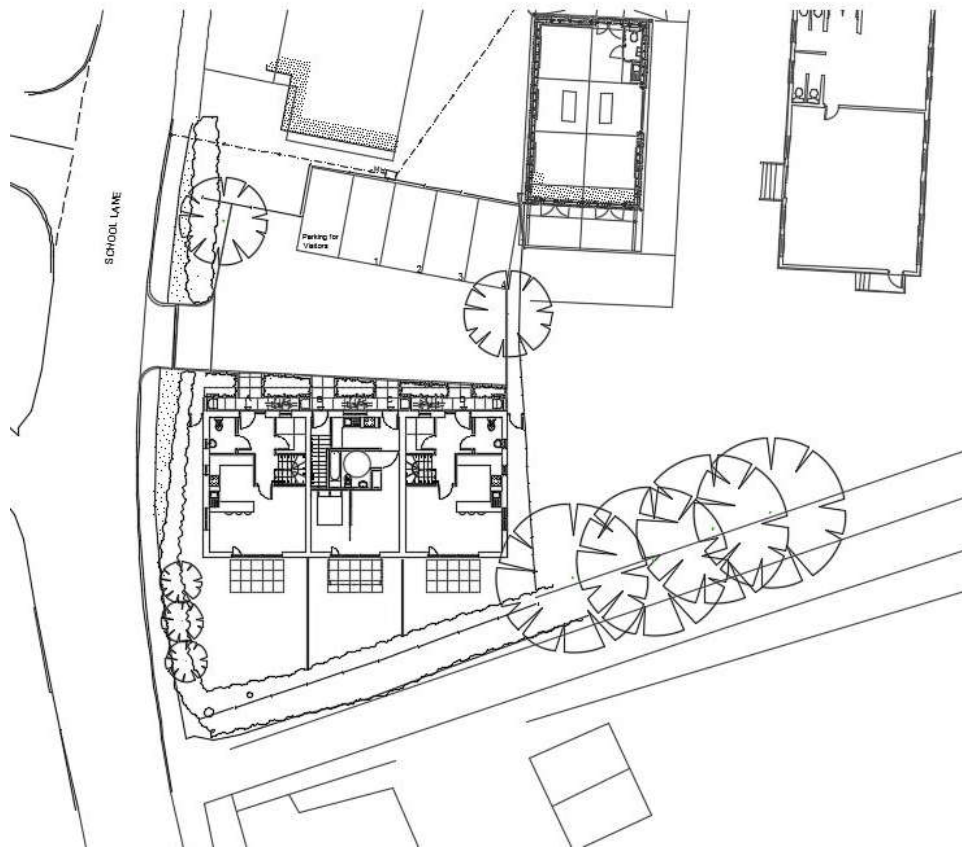
The development does not prejudice crime prevention and all the windows and doors on the both floors will be lockable to satisfy insurance requirements.

1.5 Design – How has the evaluation influenced the design?

As above the layout has been structured to give the best homes possible.

The roofs will be slate and walls a red clay brick is proposed for the external material. Well-proportioned casement windows will give good light and ventilation.

The homes will harmonize with the surrounding houses and landscape. The village character of the site and surrounding properties is fully respected and will form a well-designed sustainable cluster of housing.



Proposed Site Plan

2 Physical characteristics of proposed Development

2.1 Use –How does it fit in the area

The materials and design are similar to the nearby Hill Top Cottages which are within the Conservation Area.

There is no loss of mature trees

The new homes will enrich Offley's varied housing. The proposed dwellings will have a contemporary 'vernacular' character being neither modern nor dully traditional in appearance, they will be in harmony with the adjacent properties and by using quality materials which all weather gracefully.

The scale, materiality and landscaping of the proposed homes will complement and enhance this area of the village.

2.2 Size of development and why is it appropriate.

The area of the site is about 540sqm

House A 3 bedroom is 83.2 sqm

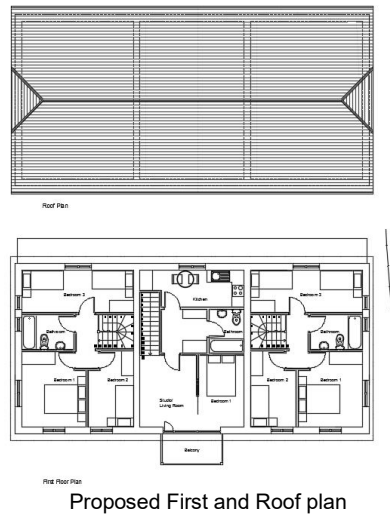
Flat B (first floor) 1 bedroom is 38.7 sqm

Flat C (Ground floor) 1 bedroom is 35.1sqm

House D 3 bedroom is 83.2 sqm

This gives a mix of home types.

The size of the proposed homes is in line with family/ single person properties within the area and suitable for the density of this area.



Proposed First and Roof plan

2.3 Layout - Where will the development be on the site

As discussed, the layout gives a single access point onto School Lane Mews parking and pleasurable south facing gardens.

The homes are oriented and shaped externally to evoke a mews setting in the semi-public area and private garden zones to maximise privacy.



West Elevation



North Elevation



South Elevation



East Elevation

Proposed Elevations

2.4 Scale – relative to existing buildings and or features.

The proposed new dwellings have been carefully designed to suit land conditions and levels.

2.5 Landscaping

Sympathetic planting and the entrance have been designed to create a visual boundary between the School Lane and the development.

The site lies in Floodzone 1 with a low risk of flooding, paving would be kept to a minimum and the scheme will incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage (SuDS) design methods including permeable paving and water butts.

2.6 Appearance

The proposed dwellings will have traditional slate roofs with red clay bricks. The materials will not be out of discord to the site and neighbouring properties.

Crafted contemporary details including timber horizontal louvres panels for ventilation, Porches and eaves details have been incorporated within a traditional framework to create characterful, bright and enjoyable life time homes.

The large south facing bi fold glazed doors will again enhance the bright sun lit living kitchens and maximise the view of the courtyard gardens.

We believe the four new homes to be positively contributing to the village overall appearance and character.

3 Access arrangements

3.1 Policy approach.

The properties will be designed to provide access as required under Part M of Building Regulations. Flat C has the potential to be adapted for Disabled use.

The entrance reuses the existing cross over which currently has a five bar gate.

3.2 Consultation

This application has been discussed with the Trustees and we understand there have also been earlier discussions with the planners.

3.3 How access is achieved (links to roads footpaths etc)

There is an existing access to the site via a five-bar gate.

The access has been verbally discussed with Hertfordshire Highways. School Lane is an unclassified Road. On plan 736/11-01 the 33m vision splay has been plotted. The cars can turn in the area so always exit the mews in a forward direction. A section of the hedge will need cutting back and replanting. The entrance reuses the existing cross over

Each home will have one parking space. An additional space is provided for visitors. There is space for two bicycle per dwelling. Pedestrian access will be provided via paved entrance paths. A position has been allocated for refuse bins.

4. Conclusion

Considering the location, size and sympathetic design of the proposed new homes, we believe this proposal would be a positive contribution to the housing of Offley. It is a development that enriches the local area through the construction aesthetically pleasing buildings.

It is hoped the planners will be able to agree with the above comments and be able to give the scheme planning approval.

7th July 2024
Hox Design Architects

RevA 11/7/24 Corrections /client comments