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Planning Design and Access Statement & Heritage Statement

Proposed Single Dwelling and Double
Garage

Land between 'Lodge Cottage' and
'Spring Cottage', Newnham, SG7 5JX

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On Behalf of
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1.0 Introduction / Background

- 1.1 This Design and Access Statement (Planning Support Statement) together with brief section dealing with the heritage issues and associated drawings are submitted for planning permission in respect of a single detached dwelling and detached double garage on part of the amenity area associated with 'Lodge Cottage' and adjacent to 'Spring Cottage'.
- 1.2 This application seeks permission subject to conditions.
- 1.3 The application is lodged pursuant to planning permission granted for a single detached dwelling and double garage 31 March 2025 ref 24 / 01498 / FP and 25 / 01175 / FP granted 1st July 2025.
- 1.4 The reason for a fresh application has been brought about due to the previous applicant having decided not to proceed with the self-build project but purchase a ready-made home in Baldock. Accordingly, with these proposals having been bespoke to that applicant, the opportunity to make more market appropriate revisions has been taken, described in more detail in Section 4.0.
- 1.5 The subject site occupies under-utilised ground to the North East of 'Lodge Cottage' on the Ashwell Road, currently garden/amenity area to the rental property, 'Lodge Cottage'.
- 1.6 The site is acknowledged to lie within the Conservation Area which effectively defines the whole of Newnham. However, the site has no other known special designation.
- 1.7 The host house, 'Lodge Cottage' is not Listed but like a number of properties in Newnham has been designated as a Building of Local Interest.
- 1.8 Newnham has been designated a Category B village in which infilling, which does not extend the built core of the village, will be allowed. This proposal does not extend the settlement envelope.
- 1.9 Whilst the above (1.8) sets the principle, it is fully acknowledged and accepted that this will be subject to individual context and all important detail.
- 1.10 This specific proposal takes a strong lead from the recent permission, now implemented, on land adjacent to 'Lodge Cottage' for a single 4-bed dwelling ref: 22 / 02115 / FP (Spring Cottage), together with the permissions granted last year, as referenced in 1.3.
- 1.11 Additionally, advice tendered in the pre-application advice related to the land to the rear of 'Lodge Cottage' and 'Pilgrims Cottage', ref: 23 / 02756/ PRE provided an excellent steer into formulating the previous proposals and now this application.

- 1.12 Accordingly, with all this wealth of information, no further pre-application advice has been sought, nor considered necessary, other than advice on the type of application to be submitted.
- 1.13 Therefore, taking the acceptability of the principle as a given, this submission seeks acceptance to the nominal changes to the extant permission which are described in section 4.0, Development Proposals.
- 1.14 Noting that NHC still have an adopted pro-active policy, it is asked that the Council looks positively at ways these relatively small changes can be supported by the employment of proactive interaction with the applicant's agent, if beneficial. However, it is submitted that the proposal should be a simple rubber stamp under delegated powers.

2.0 Site Analysis

- 2.1 This section largely replicates that submitted with the previous applications but is included for completeness.
- 2.2 The existing overall curtilage of the host house 'Lodge Cottage', equates to c. 2,140 m² (0.53 acres).
- 2.3 'Lodge Cottage' is a Building of Local Interest which is classed as a non-designated heritage asset.
- 2.4 The site lies directly opposite the Village Hall and a small hard standing car park associated with the hall.
- 2.5 The land is currently part of an anomalously large garden associated with 'Lodge Cottage', a rental property and found to be unmanageable for tenants.
- 2.6 The current total site frontage is c. 40m with the proposed subdivision resulting in the proposed plot having a frontage of 20m leaving an equal 20m for the host house, which is compatible with the local grain.
- 2.7 The land is bounded to the North by the access road between the new 'Spring Cottage' and the site. The access road serves 'Spring Cottage', the agricultural fields and semi agricultural facility / stables to the rear of 'Spring Cottage'.

- 2.8 The Ashwell Road frontage provides a traditional hedge fronted cottage garden with no vehicular intervention. However, as requested by the LPA, a footpath provides pedestrian access to Lodge Cottage by a dedicated footway.
- 2.9 The site lies within Environment Agency's Flood Zone 1 in which there is a negligible chance of flooding. Flood Risk map attached.
- 2.10 Additionally, Flood Risk is designated as "Very Low" in all categories of the Flood Risk Summary. Copy attached.

3.0 Heritage Statement

- 3.1 As with section 2.0 this largely replicates the previous submission.
- 3.2 This brief statement is put forward as part of this overall planning statement and in support of the planning application in respect of heritage assets that might be considered to be affected by the application proposal.
- 3.3 The relevant heritage assets related to this specific site are: Conservation Area; Listed Buildings; Buildings of Local Interest and potentially archaeology.

CONSERVATION AREA

- 3.4 Virtually the whole of Newnham is a designated conservation area which by definition is a "Heritage Asset". This however, does not preclude development such as here proposed and endorsed by grant of the previous permissions.
- 3.5 Whilst the buildings and structures within the village limits are of varied styles, construction, materials, appearance, etc, and of varied architectural or historic significance they are all, to a degree, covered by the protection of the Conservation Area status.
- 3.6 Whilst specific elements are dealt with individually here, I would submit that in reality it is hard to disentangle one from the whole. In other words, it is an aggregate of Listed Buildings, Buildings of Local Interest, Landscape, historic features, etc, that all make a collective contribution.
- 3.7 Accordingly, the Conservation Area is effectively the whole heritage asset.
- 3.8 The site inarguably makes some contribution to the Conservation Area by way of its openness as opposed to a built environment, however with no feature of significant merit, the contribution is limited.

3.9 Additionally, with grant of planning permission on land adjacent to Lodge Cottage (ref: 22 / 02115 / FP) now called 'Spring Cottage', a strong precedent has been set in support of this linear policy compliant infill and endorsed by grant of the previous permissions.

3.10 Moreover, the siting of the property fully conforms with the linear characteristic of this part of Newnham and with the cottage garden and hedgerow preserved, compatibility is assured.

LISTED BUILDINGS

3.11 There are no Listed Buildings immediately adjacent to or directly opposite the proposed site.

3.12 The only property set obliquely on the opposite, East side of Ashwell Road is 'Crouches'. This is Grade II, List Entry - 1102669:

House. Early C17 cottage with C19 cross wing extension. Restored. Timber frame main range, brick cross wing to right; all plastered. Steeply pitched tiled roof, originally thatch on main range. Brick axial stack aligned with entrance. 1 storey and attic to left, plank door entrance, 2 light casement and gabled dormer to left, single light casement to right. Purlins and wall plate visible in left hand gable into which a window has been inserted. Gabled cross-wing of 2 storeys with 3 light casements in deep reveals under shallow arches, bargeboards to street. Further lean-to extension to right. Interior not inspected.

I would say however, from a personal / professional point of view, purely from outward appearance, 'Crouches' does not wear its status well externally and resembles a more contemporary structure.

3.13 However, it is submitted that having granted planning permission for 'Spring Cottage' directly opposite 'Crouches', together with permission 24 / 01498 / FP and 25 / 01175 / FP there can be no substantive justification for this being a reason for objection.

3.14 As already established with NHC, the quality of design and overall end result previously approved can ensure that the Listed Buildings will not be adversely affected. With no change to the principle/street elevation, this too is automatically ensured.

3.15 There are a number of properties in Newnham that have been awarded the status of being a 'Building of Local Interest' and 'Lodge Cottage' is within this category, but as already demonstrated, not adversely affected.

ARCHAEOLOGY

3.16 Archaeology is also a heritage asset and Newnham is known to be in an area of Archaeological Significance

- 3.17 From research into previous applications which attracted archaeological implications, it is clear that Newnham, as a whole settlement does in some instances deserve respectful consideration.
- 3.18 On reviewing the application and more specifically the Permission Notice associated with 'Spring Cottage', it is important to note that there was no Archaeological Condition whatsoever.
- 3.19 Furthermore, in consideration of the need for any archaeological evaluation, it should be noted that, as the proposed dwelling is situated over redundant septic tank chambers and run off drains, along with the numerous tree root balls that have or are to be removed and the buried 11kv cable, any archaeology will already have been significantly disturbed.
- 3.20 Accordingly, it is suggested that it would be perverse to make any archaeological imposition on this application. However, noting that there was an archaeological condition appended to the two previous permissions, it is confirmed that had it been proposed to implement either, this condition would have been challenged for reasons outlined in 3.18 & 3.19.

4.0 Development Proposals

- 4.1 The approved proposals were an amalgam of meeting client aspirations, what was deemed appropriate for the site and collaborative dialogue with North Herts over a protracted period.
- 4.2 During the course of the planning process for application 25 / 01178 / FP, the applicant and his wife decided that, with the whole timescale already protracted, they would be better served finding an existing property ready for occupation, and this they have done.
- 4.3 The original 2024 application (24 / 01498 / FP) provided two very large double bedrooms and amenities to meet the applicants' unique brief. However, when costed this took the overall development cost over the allocated budget and hence the reduction in upper storey floor area for the subsequent application (25 / 01175 / FP).
- 4.4 Accordingly, the landowner and applicant of this submission, is looking to market the land or build out and has taken advice from local agents who have unreservedly suggested that the property would have greater marketability as a 4 bedroom dwelling. Hence this application.
- 4.5 This application therefore reverts to the scheme granted planning permission 31/03/2025 with the following observations and changes:
- The floor area both ground and first is unchanged.

- Three double and 1 single bedroom replace two large doubles.
 - The street elevation (East) remains unchanged.
 - The North elevation mass and bulk and overall design remains unchanged other than minor rearrangement of fenestration to accommodate the new layout and the introduction of a side door.
 - The Southern elevation remains unchanged other than the omission of a small ground floor window.
 - The West elevation remains unchanged other than revisions to part of the fenestration.
 - Materials remain unaltered.
 - The garage block remains unaltered in design, layout and siting.
- 4.6 All other standard elements such as waste and recycling storage are met together with an electric vehicle charging point in the garage which will also accommodate cycles and provide roof void storage. All as before.
- 4.7 No doubt landscaping and boundary treatment will be a standard condition appended to the Permission Notice, but it is suggested that, taking a lead from previous advice, a traditional hedge, most possibly beech would be an appropriate choice with post and rail, or estate fencing rather than close boarded fencing for other boundary treatments. Much is covered in the BNG proposal.
- 4.8 Since there is no change to the footprints and siting together with all other relevant matters, it is submitted that the original BNG report still applies and forms part of these application proposals. Elmaw's July 2024 Report and Small Sites Metric attached. All as discussed with NHC.

5.0 Summary

- 5.1 It is believed that sufficient precedents have already been set by virtue of the planning permissions granted adjacent to 'Lodge Cottage' ref 24 / 014980/ FP and 25 / 01175 / FP and 'Spring Cottage' ref 22 / 02115 / FP.

- 5.2 Most importantly, the permission 24 / 014980 / FP granted for this site has set the overall principle including size, height, mass and bulk with only the detail and conditions to be considered. The modest changes area all as scheduled in 4.5.
- 5.3 Additional information is provided with this application in order to reduce the number of conditions to be appended to the Decision Notice.
- 5.4 With the rising cost of utilities as well as taking a responsible attitude to building heat losses and climate change, it is intended that the house be built responsibly to a standard that exceeds the current Building Regulations.
- 5.5 Not only will this make a worthwhile contribution to Category B Newnham's vitality, it will provide a new family home within this community.
- 5.6 It is therefore suggested that there are no substantive planning grounds for not granting planning permission.
- 5.7 However, noting NPPF policy together with in-house policy with regard to the Council taking a pro-active role, it is requested that in a collaborative way of trying to enable rather than frustrate development of this type, if there are any issues that would benefit from dialogue, please open up communication at the earliest opportunity to allow a timely response.