

PLANNING, DESIGN AND SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT

Proposed erection of a detached three-bedroom dwelling
following subdivision of the existing residential plot

Site	35 Churchill Avenue, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 2JP
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
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13 August 2026

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- This statement should be read with the submitted drawings, site layout, elevations and supporting technical information.

1. Executive Summary

This statement supports a revised full planning application for a detached three-bedroom dwelling within the side garden of No. 35 Churchill Avenue. The proposal follows the refusal of application DC/25/1668, dismissal of the subsequent appeal and detailed pre-application engagement with Horsham District Council. The scheme is not a minor adjustment to the dismissed proposal. It is a materially smaller and simpler design prepared specifically to resolve the concern that the earlier dwelling appeared cramped, overly intensive and visually intrusive within the available plot.

Key design changes

- Replacement of the former four-bedroom proposal with a more modest three-bedroom dwelling.
- Reduction in gross external area from approximately 176 m² to 120 m² - a reduction of about 31.8%.
- Reduction in building footprint from approximately 98 m² to 65 m² - a reduction of about 33.6%.
- Removal of the single attached garage introduced at pre-application stage, resulting in a further reduction in the overall width and massing of the dwelling.
- Reduction of the two-storey rear projection shown at pre-application stage to a stepped single-storey flat-roof extension.
- A compact, simple main building form with materially reduced width, volume and visual presence.
- Greater openness around the dwelling, an improved spatial relationship with No. 35 and increased scope for soft landscaping.
- No rear dormer is proposed, and a simple dual-pitched gabled roof is retained to support an orderly photovoltaic array.

The Council's pre-application advice recognised that the pre-application redesign represented an appreciable improvement over the appeal scheme. The current proposal develops that evolution further by removing the single attached garage, reducing the former two-storey rear projection to a stepped single-storey flat-roof extension and further simplifying the overall form.

Taken as a whole, the revised development now reads as a modest detached home set within meaningful garden space rather than as a large dwelling compressed into a subdivided plot. It is therefore considered to overcome the design and character concerns that determined the previous application and appeal.

The previous refusal and subsequent appeal focused principally on the scale, footprint, width, massing, plot relationship and resulting effect on the spacious character of Churchill Avenue. Other technical and amenity matters, including highway safety, parking, neighbouring amenity and overlooking, did not form part of the reason for refusal or the Inspector's determinative findings. This statement therefore concentrates primarily on the matters that were determinative previously and explains how the revised proposal addresses them.

2. Introduction and Purpose

2.1 Purpose of the statement

The purpose of this statement is to explain the evolution of the revised proposal and to demonstrate, in a clear and proportionate manner, how it responds to:

- the reason for refusal of application DC/25/1668;
- the findings of the Planning Inspector in Appeal Ref. 6002911;
- the Council's pre-application advice under reference PE/26/0164; and
- the design and sustainability objectives of the development plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

2.2 Design philosophy

The design exercise has not been driven by maximising floorspace. Its starting point has been the amount and form of development that can sit comfortably within the site while retaining the spacious qualities identified by the Inspector. The resulting dwelling is deliberately compact, efficient and architecturally straightforward.

3. Site and Surroundings

3.1 The site

The application site forms part of the side garden of No. 35 Churchill Avenue, at the northern end of the cul-de-sac. It is within the established built-up area of Horsham and is presently private residential curtilage. The site adjoins the open recreation area to the north and is experienced as part of the relatively spacious end to the street.

3.2 Local character

Churchill Avenue is principally characterised by two-storey post-war family housing. The original estate form remains evident, but the street has evolved through extensions, replacement garages, loft conversions, altered windows and changes to roof profiles. The prevailing character is therefore coherent in scale and use, but not architecturally uniform.

The revised dwelling responds to that context through modest proportions, traditional domestic materials, a simple roof form and substantial reduction in overall built form.

3.3 Sustainable location

The site lies within the urban area, close to established services, schools, public transport, walking routes and open space. The principle of an additional dwelling in this accessible location carries clear sustainability and housing-delivery benefits, subject to an acceptable design.

4. Relevant Planning History

4.1 Application DC/25/1668

Application DC/25/1668 proposed a detached four-bedroom dwelling with a broad double-fronted design incorporating an integral garage within the principal building. Permission was refused because the proposal was considered cramped and visually intrusive and because it failed to respect the established pattern, spacing and character of Churchill Avenue.

4.2 Appeal Ref. 6002911

The subsequent appeal was dismissed. The Inspector's criticism centred on the considerable footprint and width of the dwelling, the appearance of compression within the plot, the reduction in the host dwelling's curtilage, the perceived intensity of the subdivision and the erosion of visual relief at the end of the cul-de-sac.

Importantly, the appeal did not establish that the principle of one additional dwelling was unacceptable. The decisive issue was the scale and spatial composition of the particular scheme then before the Inspector.

4.3 Pre-application advice PE/26/0164

The Council subsequently advised that the reduced footprint and massing of the pre-application scheme represented an appreciable improvement. It nevertheless recommended further reduction of the rear projection, removal of the side garage, increased openness and landscaping, and consideration of a hipped roof.

The current application has been developed following that advice. The pre-application scheme had already reduced the overall scale of the appeal proposal by replacing the original integral garage with a single attached garage, but retained a two-storey rear projection relative to the host dwelling. The current proposal goes further by removing the garage entirely and redesigning the rear element as a stepped single-storey flat-roof extension while retaining the broader design approach.

5. Design Evolution and Principal Changes

5.1 Quantitative reduction

Measure	Dismissed scheme	Current proposal	Change
Accommodation	Four bedrooms	Three bedrooms	Reduced accommodation schedule
Gross external area	Approx. 176 m ²	Approx. 120 m ²	Approx. 31.8% reduction
Footprint	Approx. 98 m ²	Approx. 65 m ²	Approx. 33.6% reduction
Separation to No. 35	Approx. 2.0 m	Approx. 2.0 m	Unchanged, but now experienced beside a materially smaller building
Garage	Integral garage within a broad double-fronted dwelling	No garage	Reduced width, floorspace and visual mass
Rear projection	Substantial rear element	Stepped single-storey flat-roof extension	Reduced height and perceived rear massing

These figures demonstrate that the redesign is substantial. The reduction is not confined to one elevation or a cosmetic alteration; it affects the entire footprint, accommodation schedule and building volume.

5.2 Simpler form

The current plan removes the single attached garage shown at pre-application stage and reduces the former two-storey rear element to a stepped single-storey flat-roof extension of broadly the same depth. The principal dwelling is consequently read as a more compact and readily understood form. This simpler composition reduces visual clutter and allows the building to appear as a modest house within a garden setting.

5.3 Greater openness

The reduction in the overall footprint and the removal of the single attached garage shown at pre-application stage create a greater sense of openness around the proposed dwelling. The former two-storey rear projection has been redesigned as a stepped single-storey flat-roof extension. Although the rear element remains of broadly comparable depth, its reduced height and simplified form lessen its visual prominence and perceived mass. The improved spatial relationship therefore arises from the reduction in the volume, height and complexity of the built form rather than from any increase in garden depth.

Figure 1A: Dismissed scheme - original PLN14 Site Plan Proposed



PLN14 - dismissed scheme (DC/25/1668): approximately 98 m² footprint and 176 m² gross external area.

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6. Response to the Appeal Decision

Inspector's concern	Current design response	Resulting planning effect
Considerable footprint and width	Footprint reduced by about one third; garage accommodation removed; the former two-storey rear element reduced to a stepped single-storey extension; and accommodation reduced to three bedrooms.	A materially narrower and smaller dwelling with reduced visual mass.
Compressed appearance	Greater space is retained around the building and unnecessary ancillary built form has been omitted. The side separation to No. 35 remains approximately 2.0 m, as before, but the dwelling itself is materially smaller; the visual effect of that gap is therefore improved. Spacing opposite in the immediate street scene is of a comparable order at approximately 2.6 m.	The house is capable of being perceived as sitting within its plot rather than filling it.
Contrived and overly intensive subdivision	Both plots retain functional residential curtilages; the new dwelling has a simpler footprint and increased garden space.	A more balanced relationship between building, boundary and private amenity space.
Loss of spaciousness and visual relief	Reduced site coverage, open northern area and greater landscaping opportunities.	More of the open character at the end of the cul-de-sac is retained.
Sizeable, dominant detached dwelling	Three-bedroom accommodation, reduced floorspace, simplified elevations and no garage accommodation.	A modest family dwelling rather than an intensive insertion.

The cumulative effect is critical. Each change reinforces the others, producing a substantially different spatial and visual outcome from the appeal scheme.

7. Response to Pre-Application Advice

Council recommendation	Response	Status
Reduce footprint, bulk and massing	Substantial reductions in floorspace, footprint and accommodation, with a compact plan.	Achieved
Reduce the rear projection	The former two-storey rear projection has been redesigned as a stepped single-storey flat-roof extension of broadly the same depth, substantially reducing its height, visual prominence and perceived mass.	Achieved
Remove the single attached garage	The single attached garage shown at pre-application stage has been removed entirely, further reducing the building width and improving openness.	Achieved
Increase openness and landscaping	More open land remains to the north, rear and sides, enabling a stronger landscape setting.	Achieved

Council recommendation	Response	Status
Improve separation and plot relationship	The narrower building and omission of ancillary structures improve the visual space between dwellings. The 2.0 m side gap to No. 35 is unchanged numerically, but the materially smaller dwelling improves the quality of that relationship.	Achieved
Remove rear dormer	No rear dormer forms part of the current proposal.	Achieved
Consider a hipped roof	A gabled roof is retained, but on a materially smaller building and for contextual, architectural and sustainability reasons.	Alternative design response

The current application therefore follows the substance of the Council's advice. The roof form is the sole area where an alternative solution is proposed, and it should be assessed in the context of the much smaller building as a whole.

8. Character, Appearance and Spatial Quality

8.1 Relationship with the street

The proposal retains the established domestic scale of Churchill Avenue and avoids introducing a landmark or overly assertive building. Its front elevation, bay form and traditional proportions reflect the residential language of the street without attempting a literal copy of adjoining houses.

8.2 Plot proportions and spaciousness

The appeal scheme was criticised because its building-to-plot relationship appeared overly intensive. In the current design, substantially less land is occupied by built form. The house is set within usable private amenity space, and the retained property continues to benefit from a functional garden and independent access.

The proposal does not preserve every part of the existing side garden as open land; that would be incompatible with any new dwelling. The appropriate test is whether sufficient openness and spacing remain for the development to integrate successfully. The approximately one-third reduction in footprint, combined with the removal of the garage and the reduction of the former two-storey rear projection to a stepped single-storey extension, provides a materially improved balance.

In numerical terms, the separation between the side wall of No. 35 and the proposed dwelling remains approximately 2.0 m, consistent with the previous application iterations. The Inspector's concern, however, was not that dimension in isolation but the combined effect of width, footprint and massing. Those latter elements have now been materially reduced, so the same nominal gap is experienced beside a much smaller building. Spacing visible opposite in the immediate street scene is approximately 2.6 m, demonstrating that the proposed relationship remains of a comparable domestic order.

8.3 Landscaping

The new layout creates space for meaningful soft landscaping rather than narrow residual strips. A detailed landscape scheme can secure native or climate-resilient planting, reinforced boundary planting and habitat features. These measures would soften views of the dwelling and maintain a green setting at the end of the cul-de-sac.

9. Architectural Design and Gabled Roof

9.1 Overall architectural approach

The design uses a simple, traditional domestic composition. The omission of garage accommodation, the reduction of the former two-storey rear element to a stepped single-storey extension and the absence of a rear dormer mean that the elevations and roof are visually legible and restrained. The gabled roof sits above a far smaller footprint than the dismissed scheme and should not be considered in isolation from that reduction.

9.2 Contextual justification

Although the original estate includes hipped roofs, Churchill Avenue has evolved through loft conversions and roof alterations. In the immediate street scene, both hipped and gabled forms can be seen. A straightforward gable is therefore not alien to the locality, particularly when expressed on a modestly scaled dwelling.



Figure 2: View directly opposite the proposed dwelling, illustrating the different roof forms and roof treatments within the immediate street scene.

9.3 Visual bulk

The Council's suggestion of a hipped roof is acknowledged. That recommendation formed part of a wider package of design changes at a stage when the proposal still incorporated a single attached garage and a two-storey rear projection. Those elements have now been removed or substantially reduced. The principal reductions in perceived bulk have therefore been achieved through the redesign of the building itself rather than by altering the roof form.

Against that materially changed baseline, the proposed gable does not recreate the scale or intensity criticised previously. It forms a coherent roof over a compact plan and avoids additional hips, valleys and junctions.

9.4 Planning judgement

The roof-form question requires a balanced design judgement. A hipped roof may marginally reduce the apparent width of the upper roof in some views. The gabled roof, however, provides a simpler construction, a coherent domestic form and substantially larger uninterrupted roof planes, allowing photovoltaic panels to be arranged in a simple, coherent and visually ordered array with fewer constraints arising from hips and roof junctions. In the context of the much smaller dwelling, those architectural and environmental benefits justify the alternative response.

10. Sustainability Strategy

10.1 Sustainability through reduced development

The most fundamental sustainability improvement is the reduction in the size of the building. Compared with the dismissed scheme, the current proposal requires less excavation, foundation work, masonry, timber, insulation, roofing and internal finishes. This reduces embodied carbon and construction-related transport while also lowering the energy required to heat and maintain the completed home.

10.2 Energy-efficient fabric and services

The dwelling will be designed around a fabric-first approach, with high standards of insulation, airtightness, energy-efficient glazing and careful detailing to limit thermal bridging. The services strategy will incorporate a high-efficiency low-carbon heating system, low-energy lighting and suitable controls.

10.3 Gabled roof and solar generation

The dual-pitched gabled roof has been deliberately retained as part of the sustainability strategy. It provides broad, uninterrupted roof planes capable of accommodating a larger photovoltaic array than an equivalent hipped roof, thereby increasing the long-term potential for on-site renewable energy generation and future battery storage.

This is a genuine design benefit rather than an afterthought. The roof can accommodate photovoltaic panels in a coherent layout while retaining space for safe margins, maintenance access and any necessary roof penetrations. The larger usable plane also allows future expansion as panel efficiency, household electricity demand and battery technology evolve.

The environmental value continues throughout the life of the dwelling through renewable electricity generation, reduced operational carbon and lower reliance on grid energy. In planning terms, the gabled roof therefore contributes positive weight to the sustainability balance.

10.4 Low-carbon readiness

- Photovoltaic panels and provision for future battery storage.
- Electric vehicle charging infrastructure.
- An air-source heat pump or other suitable low-carbon heating system.
- Smart energy controls and energy-efficient lighting.
- A layout capable of future technological upgrades without major structural alteration.

10.5 Water efficiency

A separate water-neutrality statement is no longer required and no payment to the former Sussex North Water Certification Scheme is necessary. The proposed dwelling will be designed to comply with the Building Regulations Part G Optional Technical Standard of no more than 110 litres of mains water per

person per day. Water-efficient sanitary fittings, low-flow taps and showers, dual-flush WCs and external rainwater collection will be incorporated where practicable. Permeable external surfaces and an appropriate surface-water drainage strategy will assist in controlling runoff.

10.6 Biodiversity and landscape

The reduction in footprint increases the area available for planting and habitat enhancement. The landscape strategy can incorporate native and wildlife-friendly planting, integrated swift features where practicable, bird and bat boxes, hedgehog gaps, permeable garden areas and boundary treatments that retain ecological permeability.

10.7 Biodiversity Net Gain

The application is to be submitted on 13 August 2026. The submitted site plan identifies a site area of approximately 301 m² (0.0301 hectares). From 6 August 2026, development on a site of 0.2 hectares or below is exempt from mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain, unless on-site priority habitat would be adversely affected. Accordingly, subject to confirmation that no priority habitat is affected within the application boundary, the proposal falls within the statutory 0.2-hectare exemption.

Notwithstanding that exemption, the biodiversity and landscape measures identified above can provide positive ecological enhancement and support the objectives of HDPF Policy 31 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

10.8 Sustainable location and efficient use of land

The proposal makes efficient use of residential land within the established built-up area of Horsham, close to existing facilities and transport, providing an additional family dwelling without extending the settlement into undeveloped countryside.

11. Residential Amenity, Access and Technical Matters

11.1 Residential amenity

The revised dwelling has been arranged to avoid unacceptable overlooking, overbearing impact or loss of daylight to neighbouring properties. Its reduced mass and simplified form materially improve the relationship with the retained dwelling compared with the previous scheme.

11.2 Access and parking

Vehicular access and on-site parking are shown within the submitted layout. The omission of the single attached garage shown at pre-application stage avoids reliance on an undersized covered parking space and allows the parking arrangement to be assessed transparently as external spaces.

11.3 Trees and landscaping

The detailed site layout should be read with the arboricultural information and root protection measures. The reduced footprint and removal of the garage create greater flexibility to protect retained vegetation and establish replacement planting.

11.4 Drainage and servicing

Surface-water and foul drainage can be addressed through detailed design and appropriate conditions. Bin storage, cycle storage and utility provision can be integrated without introducing additional bulky structures.

12. Planning Policy Assessment

12.1 Policy context

The Horsham District Planning Framework 2015 remains the adopted Local Plan for the district. The proposal has also been assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework published in December 2024 and amended in February 2025.

In addition, the emerging Horsham District Local Plan 2023-2040 has reached an advanced stage of preparation. Its emerging design and placemaking policies reinforce the importance of appropriate scale and massing, local character, landscaping, sustainability and residential amenity. Those themes support the assessment set out below. In accordance with paragraph 49 of the NPPF, appropriate weight may be afforded to relevant emerging policies having regard to the stage of preparation, the extent of unresolved objections and their consistency with national policy.

12.2 Policy compliance matrix

Policy and principal requirement	Assessment of the proposal
HDPF Policy 25 – District Character and the Natural Environment	The proposal responds to the local townscape through a materially smaller three-bedroom dwelling, reduced footprint and width, removal of garage accommodation and a lower single-storey rear element. These changes retain more of the visual relief and spacious character at the end of Churchill Avenue.
HDPF Policy 31 – Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity	Meaningful garden and landscaped areas are retained around the dwelling. Native and wildlife-friendly planting, integrated habitat features, hedgehog permeability and permeable garden areas can provide positive biodiversity enhancement. The applicable BNG position is addressed in Section 10.7.
HDPF Policy 32 – The Quality of New Development	The compact plan, functional family accommodation, simple domestic composition and contextual material approach provide a coherent design that integrates with the established residential character rather than appearing as a dominant insertion.
HDPF Policy 33 – Development Principles	The proposal makes efficient use of land while protecting neighbouring amenity and responding sympathetically to surrounding buildings and open space. Its scale and massing have been materially reduced; external parking is shown and landscaping, cycle, refuse and servicing requirements can be integrated without additional bulky structures.
HDPF Policy 35 – Climate Change	The smaller dwelling reduces construction materials and embodied carbon. A fabric-first approach, photovoltaic generation, low-carbon readiness, water efficiency and permeable surfaces support climate-change mitigation and adaptation.
HDPF Policy 36 – Appropriate Energy Use	Section 10 applies the energy hierarchy by first reducing demand through efficient fabric, then allowing efficient low-carbon services and finally providing broad roof planes capable of supporting an orderly photovoltaic array and future battery storage.
HDPF Policy 37 – Sustainable Design and Construction	The materially reduced building size lowers resource use. High-performance fabric, efficient services and compliance with the Part G Optional Technical Standard of 110 litres per person per day support sustainable construction and operation.

Policy and principal requirement	Assessment of the proposal
HDPF Policy 38 – Flooding	No overriding drainage concern was identified through the previous appeal. Permeable external surfaces and an appropriate surface-water strategy will manage runoff, with final drainage details capable of being secured through the application process or by condition.
HDPF Policy 40 – Sustainable Transport	The site lies within the built-up area with access to local facilities, public transport, walking and cycling routes. The scheme will incorporate secure cycle provision and electric-vehicle charging.
HDPF Policy 41 – Parking	On-site external parking is shown within the submitted layout. Removal of the pre-application garage avoids reliance on a constrained covered space and allows parking provision to be assessed transparently as part of the site layout.
NPPF paragraph 129 – Making effective use of land	The proposal makes efficient use of residential curtilage within the settlement while retaining meaningful private amenity and landscaped space. The substantial reduction in footprint provides a more appropriate balance between development and the contribution made by the existing garden setting.
NPPF paragraph 135 – Achieving well-designed places	The revised scale, domestic proportions, landscaping opportunities and response to the varied roof treatments in the immediate street scene create a development that is sympathetic to local character while allowing appropriate change.
NPPF paragraph 137 – Early design engagement	The proposal is the product of continued design engagement following refusal, appeal and formal pre-application advice. The garage has been removed and the two-storey rear element reduced to a stepped single-storey extension in direct response to the Council's recommendations.
NPPF paragraphs 161, 164 and 166 – Climate change and energy	The compact form reduces energy demand; the roof geometry supports renewable electricity generation; and the dwelling is capable of incorporating efficient fabric, low-carbon heating, battery storage, electric-vehicle charging and water-saving measures.
NPPF paragraphs 187(d), 192 and 193 - Biodiversity and habitats	The scheme retains space for landscape and habitat enhancement and can incorporate measures to support local biodiversity. Section 10.7 explains the small-site BNG exemption and the potential for positive ecological enhancement. Paragraph 187(d) also supports the incorporation of features for priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs.
Emerging Horsham District Local Plan 2023-2040 - Strategic Policy 19: Development Quality (as proposed to be modified)	The Main Modifications incorporate the former Strategic Policy 20: Development Principles into Strategic Policy 19. The resulting policy reinforces high-quality design based on local context, including appropriate scale and massing, landscape setting, sustainability and residential amenity. The revised proposal responds positively to those principles.

Taken as a whole, the revised proposal responds positively to the adopted development plan and national planning policy. The design-led reductions address the character and spatial concerns identified previously, while the sustainability, water-efficiency and biodiversity measures provide additional positive weight.

13. Planning Balance and Conclusion

13.1 Planning benefits

- Delivery of one additional three-bedroom family dwelling within the built-up area.
- Efficient use of an existing residential site without encroachment into the countryside.
- A reduction of approximately one third in both footprint and gross external area compared with the dismissed scheme.
- Improved openness, plot proportions and landscaping opportunities.
- Removal of the single attached garage shown at pre-application stage and reduction of the former two-storey rear projection to a stepped single-storey extension; no rear dormer is proposed.
- Reduced embodied and operational carbon associated with a smaller, energy-efficient dwelling.
- A roof form capable of supporting a larger and more coherent photovoltaic installation.

A further material consideration is the manner in which the proposal has evolved. The original appeal scheme incorporated an integral garage within a broad double-fronted dwelling. The subsequent pre-application scheme reduced the scale of the proposal, replacing the integral garage with a single attached garage, but retained a two-storey rear projection relative to the host dwelling. The current proposal responds directly to the Council's advice by removing the garage entirely and reducing the rear element to a stepped single-storey flat-roof extension. This progressive refinement demonstrates a genuine commitment to addressing the Inspector's findings and the Council's pre-application recommendations.

13.2 Overall conclusion

The previous appeal was dismissed because the particular dwelling then proposed was too large and appeared compressed within the plot. That finding has been treated as the principal design brief for the current application.

The proposal is now a three-bedroom dwelling with approximately 31.8% less gross external area and 33.6% less footprint than the dismissed scheme. The single attached garage shown at pre-application stage has been removed, the former two-storey rear projection has been reduced to a stepped single-storey flat-roof extension, no rear dormer is proposed and the overall composition has been simplified. These changes materially improve the relationship between the dwelling, the retained house, the plot boundaries and the open end of Churchill Avenue.

The side separation to No. 35 remains approximately 2.0 m, as before, but that distance now sits beside a materially smaller and less bulky building. Together with the comparable close-grain spacing visible opposite at approximately 2.6 m, this supports the conclusion that the revised plot relationship is acceptable in context.

The Council's pre-application advice expressly recognised the reduced scheme as an appreciable improvement. The present proposal takes that evolution further and follows all principal recommendations other than the suggested hipped roof. Retention of a gabled roof is justified by the much smaller building below it, its compatibility with the evolved street scene, its architectural simplicity and its superior capacity to support an orderly photovoltaic array.

The proposal should therefore be assessed as a materially different and more balanced form of development. It preserves a meaningful degree of spaciousness, delivers a modest new home in a sustainable urban location and incorporates a credible low-carbon strategy. On that basis, the previous reason for refusal has been overcome and planning permission should be granted.