

PLANNING AND DESIGN STATEMENT

**Land adj. The Lawns, London Road,
Ashington**

Greenhayes Planning Ltd

INTRODUCTION

1. This statement is prepared on behalf of our client, in support of a full planning application for two new dwellings at land to the rear of the Lawns, London Road, Ashington, RH20 3JRN.
2. The proposals will utilise previously developed land, within the settlement boundary and the development will follow the wider surrounding character of the settlement. The new dwellings will be of an accessible standard and will follow the lower profile nature of the adjacent properties whilst maintaining the amenities of neighbouring properties. The two dwellings will utilise the existing access and will be well located to access local amenities and other services, including public transport, within the village.
3. The applicant held positive pre-application discussion with the council under reference PE/23/0175, and they confirmed a lower profile scheme could be supported by the council subject to further work in respect of noise, trees and ecology. This additional assessments have been undertaken and the design has been developed in line with this advice and it is anticipated that the council will be supportive of the application.
4. The proposed properties would be likely for family members, and thus in reality will likely be of a self-build nature but for ease of process, the applications are submitted in full. The proposals have been prepared in accordance with the pre-application advice, with further studies on noise and ecology undertaken to inform the scheme.
5. The scheme can be considered to comply with the development plan, both the local District plan and also the Neighbourhood Plan, being within the settlement boundary and it is a contained site, within an infill location. The new dwellings, will reflect a similar density to the surrounding area, will be of low profile and will respect the wider settlement pattern. The design and layout retains a dominant and spacious landscape character and will include noise mitigation measures which will ensure a good standard of living. Thus, the scheme will meet the development plan and therefore can be approved without delay (as per Paragraph 11D)
6. Whilst this is the case, the relevant test of this application is engaged on account of the council's housing supply position. This is understood to stand at 1.7 years supply (April 2026), which is well

below the five year supply requirement and this places significant weight on such housing delivery, especially in light of the accessible nature of the property. This situation engages Part D of Paragraph 11 of the NPPF which states planning permission should be granted unless there is adverse harm that will significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the development. The positive planning case can be summarised as follows;

- (1) The proposals accord with the spatial strategy of the NP and LP.
- (2) The development would utilise an infill site within a contained location
- (3) The site is previously developed land and the proposals would make efficient use of the site in accordance with Paragraph 125 of the NPPF.
- (4) The scale of the dwellings will be reflective of the adjacent properties and will have a similar density to the development to the south
- (5) The design is of a traditional design which is appropriate to the site context and locality and will meet relevant floorspace and garden requirements.
- (6) The new dwellings will meet a high environmental standard through the energy and water efficiency standards and also the inclusion of renewable energy as an integral part of the design.
- (7) Due to presence of the distance from London Road,, the substantial mature boundary planting and the lack of wider views, the development will preserve and enhance local character.
- (8) The scheme will retain important trees and propose further wider landscaping and will create a landscaped context on the site
- (9) The site can also be considered as a small site as set out in Paragraph 73 of the NPPF which recognises the value of such sites in addressing the housing supply shortfall.
- (10)The accessible and single storey nature of the dwellings are of benefit as these are seldom delivered within the general market and the new design will fully meet these needs in a sustainable manner.
- (11)The noise assessment confirmed an acceptable environment can be provided for future occupiers and will be superior to neighbouring properties to the south.
- (12)The council can only deliver 1.7 years supply of housing and thus the opportunity for a further home should be grasped and supported.
- (13) The dwelling will meet the relevant internal design standards and will have a good sized garden that is more than sufficient for this two bedroom dwelling and the needs of the occupier

(14) The application can secure a net uplift in biodiversity and will also grasp enhancements through the new native planting and new bird and bat boxes can be fitted to the boundaries of the site.

(15) The scheme has a good access to the public highway and has parking within the site

7. Thus, the scheme can be considered positively, either against the development plan and on account of the relevant test which is known as the Part D 'titled balance' test as it is clear there is no adverse effects that would outweigh the many benefits of the scheme.

8. This statement will assess the proposed development against the development plan and any other material considerations, including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) and will ultimately justify the development in planning terms.

THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

9. The site is part of the land associated with the Lawns which is owned by the applicant and is a former tennis court (and its fenced enclosure) and wider storage. The land is accessed from the west via the access road that runs back to London Road. The land is well contained, with mature trees to the boundaries and the land is at a higher levels than the A24 that runs to the east. The site is bordered by the main gardens to the Lawns to the west and further residential properties to the south. A further dwelling lies to the north west of the site.

10. The site is located within the built up area of Ashington and which is considered to be broadly sustainable village by the local plan. The village has a range of facilities and the site lies on one of the main walking routes as defined by the local plan.

THE PROPOSALS

11. Planning permission is sought for the construction of 2 single storey residential dwellings which would utilise the main access to London Road. The properties would of a traditional design and would be 2/3 bedrooms and would be served by parking and gardens. The properties would exceed the usual design standards and would seek to meet a high environmental standard. The site would retain the surrounding trees and would have a dominant landscape context and would include a new planting buffer and acoustic fencing along the eastern part of the site.

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

12. Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that development must be undertaken in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This plan led approach is confirmed in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which also provides guidance on the weight that should be afforded to adopted plans and those emerging through the local plan adoption process.
13. The relevant development plan for the purposes of this application is the Horsham District Planning Framework which was adopted in 2015 and the Billingshurst Neighbourhood Plan.
14. In the previous decision the council cited the following documents of the local plan;
 - Policy 1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development,
 - Policy 2 - Strategic Policy: Strategic Development
 - Policy 3 - Strategic Policy: Development Hierarchy
 - Policy 24 - Strategic Policy: Environmental Protection
 - Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
 - Policy 26 - Strategic Policy: Countryside Protection
 - Policy 31 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
 - Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
 - Policy 33 - Development Principles
 - Policy 34 - Cultural and Heritage Assets
 - Policy 35 - Strategic Policy: Climate Change
 - Policy 36 - Strategic Policy: Appropriate Energy Use
 - Policy 37 - Sustainable Construction
 - Policy 41 - Parking
 - Policy 42 - Inclusive Communities
15. The council cited the following policies of the Neighbourhood Plan;
 - Policy ASH1- Spatial Strategy
 - Policy ASH2- Walking

Policy ASH3 Residential Parking Provision

Policy ASH5- Landscaping

Policy ASH6- Noise impacts

16. The council are also in the process of updating its local plan and this is currently awaiting examination and due to its stage in the examination process and the fact the relevant policies accord with the NPPF, weight can be afforded to the policies including those cited within this statement..
17. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. Within the Framework there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment as well as in quality of life. The framework is a material consideration in decision making and sets out what the government considered to be sustainable development, having regard to the three roles of the planning system which seek development to have regard to economic, social and environment sustainability. Recent case law considers this presumption in favour principle to be a material consideration in decision making.
18. The policies of the NPPF are a strong material consideration to this application including Section 5 of the NPPF requires Local Authorities to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes which aims to boost significantly the supply of housing, Section 11 relates to the efficient use of land and Section 12 requires good design to be delivered and Section 14 relate to climate change and Section 15 relates to the natural environments.
19. The relevant policies are discussed in more detail below in the individual sections.

THE PLANNING ASSESSMENT

. Principle of Development

20. The site lies within the development boundary for Ashington which is defined by Policy 3 of the local plan as a Medium Village. These settlements have a moderate level of services and facilities and community networks, together with some access public transport. These settlements provide some day-to-day needs for residents but rely on small market towns and larger settlements to meet a number of their requirements.

21. Policy 3 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) states that development will be permitted within towns and villages that have defined built-up area boundaries. Any infilling and redevelopment will be required to demonstrate that it is of an appropriate nature and scale to maintain characteristics and function of the settlement in accordance with the development hierarchy. It is considered the provision of 2 dwellings, which are of a scale similar to the other surrounding dwellings and the quantum sought is appropriate to the areas as the density of the properties will reflect the wider locality, including a similar density to the properties to the south.
22. This approach is also consistent with the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan (ANP) which states development will be accepted within the built up areas. The scheme will contribute to the housing needs as set out in that document.
23. In terms of other matters relevant to the principle of development, the site can be considered a previously developed site as it contains a tennis court, fencing and other features. the NPPF supports the efficient use of brownfield land and this priority can be seen as a common thread through its policies. The application of Paragraph 125 would further support the efficient and effective use of the land, whilst creating a wide range of benefits including two accessible homes, biodiversity enhancements and social and economic benefits to the wider community and economy.
24. Also, of relevance to this application and the manner in which it would be assessed, is the council's housing supply position. It is noted that the council are only able to demonstrate a 1.7 year supply and thus the delivery of two further units and the accessible nature of the accommodation will have benefits to the quality of the overall housing stock for the area.
25. Indeed, the council have accepted it cannot show a five year supply of deliverable housing land with a very low position of 1.7 years and thus well below the requirement of the NPPF. Therefore, its housing policies are out of date having regard to the approach set out in paragraph 11 of the NPPF. This renders any relevant policies out-of-date and places a positive context to such decisions. Indeed, the very serious position of the housing supply, should mean the delivery of housing should take precedence unless serious harm arises, especially in this case where the type of housing lends further weight in support of the scheme.
26. Notwithstanding the compliance with the relevant policy, as a result of the above, the development stands to be considered positively against Paragraph 11d of the NPPF which states;

where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date , granting permission unless

- i. 'the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
- ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and provision of affordable homes, individually or in combination'*

27. Thus, there are a range of benefits to the scheme, as set out in this statement and an absence of harm, meaning the positive balancing test falls in favour of the scheme. There are no assets of particular importance that are relevant to this application and thus the scheme can be considered positively against Paragraph 11 of the NPPF.

Design

28. The proposals have taken account of the pre-application advice and the scheme reflects the wider scale, density and layout of the wider locality, including the newer properties to the south. The properties will be orientated to face north, with a rear garden to the south, with this positioning ensuring the properties do not impinge on the tree cover that extends along the boundaries to the site. The gardens will be enclosed with fencing and planting and the properties will have rear gardens of over 100sqm which is a good size for the 2/3 bedroom properties that are proposed.
29. The site layout will also include a new tree/scrub band along the eastern side of the plots, with a 3m acoustic fencing within this landscaped buffer which will both reduce the effects of the road to the east and secure an uplift on the biodiversity value of the site. The properties will follow a similar building line to the property at 'The Lawns 'and will utilise the access to London Road, which has a number of passing points.
30. The properties have also been reduced to a lower profile and themselves are designed in the traditional style, being of traditional bungalows, with a clay tile pitched roof and a local stock brick to

the elevations. An ornate overhang porch will frame the entrance area. There will also be an orangery type addition to the rear, with a roof lantern to provide good levels of light to the interior of the property.

31. The new dwellings will be entered from the northern elevation, into a hall area that will provide access to three bedrooms and a large open plan living area, which includes access onto the rear garden area and a small patio area. The properties measure nearly 100sqm and therefore exceed the relevant space standards for a 3 bedroom property.
32. The properties will also include renewable energy such as solar and ASP and will meet high levels of water efficiency to minimise running costs and reduce emissions over the long term.
33. Therefore, the development can be said to meet Policy 32, 33 of the local plan and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Amenity

34. The scheme will secure a good standard of amenity for the future occupiers and also will maintain the amenities of the neighbouring properties.
35. Firstly, turning to the amenity of the future occupiers of the property. Each of the rooms will have large openings and will have an outlook over landscaped areas and gardens and the properties will not be affected by any overlooking from neighbouring properties.
36. The pre-application meeting highlighted potential effects from the nearby A24 and road noise and thus in line with the advice, the applicant has undertaken a noise assessment and the scheme will implement its recommendations. This confirms subject to the installation of appropriate glazing the recommended internal noise levels can be met by the development and the scheme can also include appropriate ventilation and cooling systems as part of the wider system to be installed.
37. The noise assessment also covers the matter of rear garden amenity space and recommends the installation of a 3m acoustic fencing which can be sited within the eastern landscape buffer and which reduce the wider external noise levels by at least 5db. This shows the levels externally being close to the recommendations of the WHO standards and indeed, the western parts of the garden will likely be in line with these recommendations. This confirms this is acceptable having regard to the context and that the site is suitable for residential development.

38. This will ensure the scheme is supportable against Policy ASH6 of the ANP. The NP states in its supporting text to Policy ASH6 *'This was an issue raised by a number of local residents. Measures such as tree and shrub planting can help to minimise noise impacts and are therefore encouraged'*. The NP approach is also followed by the scheme as a landscape buffer of 4-5m and acoustic fencing is included within the scheme.
39. In respect of the effects on existing residential properties, the single storey nature of the properties, will avoid any overlooking, loss of privacy or outlook and the relationship is considered to be acceptable.
40. Thus, the scheme will maintain the amenities of neighbouring property and will provide a good standard of accommodation for future occupiers in line with Policy

Landscape/Townscape

41. As acknowledged in the pre-application response, the site is relatively well screened by the surrounding trees and the hedgerow to the gardens of the neighbouring property lie to the south and the distance from London Road which together reduce any visibility from public view. Furthermore, the containment from the A24, which runs to the east, further reduces any wider impact. The developed nature of the site and this containment means no impact will be caused and the scheme can be seen as a discreet infill development.
42. The scheme will retain important landscape features including the boundary trees and will secure new landscaping in the communal areas to the north and along the eastern boundary where new trees and scrub planting will take place. While the site does not abut open countryside, the layout and development has had regard to the advice in Policy ASH5 by proposing lower profile properties and maintaining a spacious and landscaped site which is reflective of neighbouring properties in terms of layout and density.
43. The properties will be of similar height and massing to the neighbouring properties and will front onto the access in a similar manner to the Lawns and will follow a similar building line, thus being appropriate within the wider building line.

44. Thus, the development would comply with policies 32, 33 and 34 of the Horsham Local Plan and also ASH5 of the neighbourhood plan.

Ecology/Trees

45. Due to the type of environment and lack of habitat on site, the property has limited ecological value. That being said the development has been subject to a preliminary ecological assessment which confirms there would be no impact on protected species or habitats.
46. In addition to the uplift in biodiversity through habitat, additional bird boxes can be installed to the new building and bat boxes can be fitted to mature trees.
47. The properties and any additional development have been located outside of the tree RPA and a net gain in tree planting will also be achieved.
48. Thus, the scheme can meet the relevant policies in respect of ecology and trees, including Policy 31

Highway matters

49. The site lies within a sustainable location, on one of the main walking routes through the village and which connects the site with the wide range of amenities that is available in the village, including shops, community facilities, education to name just a few. The site is also well served by public transport which connects to Crawley and Horsham. Thus, the site is a sustainable location for new housing.
50. The site will be served by the existing access, which is acceptable for two dwellings and the scheme includes a turning area and parking both for the occupiers and visitor parking. Thus, the means of access and highway matters are considered to be acceptable and in line with the relevant policies.

Other matters

51. It is understood the position statement issued in late 2025 confirms water neutrality is no longer an issue for development and that all development can proceed due to the headroom available.

52. The site is within Flood Zone 1 and therefore follows the usual approach of directing development to land at the lowest risk of flooding. The property can incorporate SUDS within the design and will also be served by a connection to the main sewer.

CONCLUSION - THE PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR

53. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF dictates that this application should be considered in light of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. As the assessment within this statement shows the development would constitute sustainable development as set out by the NPPF and would deliver benefits in respect of the three roles of the planning system.
54. The scheme will create two residential dwellings which will be of an accessible design and will deliver a range of benefits through this redevelopment of this brownfield land, which lies within an infill location within the wider settlement.
55. The scheme has been shown to meet the terms of the development plan
56. The council's current housing supply position introduces a more positive context to the application and this statement sets out the many benefits of the development and the absence of any significant harm.