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DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Proposed Residential Development of 4 Detached Houses with Garages and Visitor Parking Areas including a New Access Driveway and retention of the Existing Property.

June 2012 (revised application)

Clear area for the new development within the allocated land and form new access. Reduce ground levels as indicated for the construction of the 4 houses and garages including the construction of a new garage and parking area to the retained property.

At :- 35 London Hill Rayleigh Essex SS6 7HW

Note : This document has been produced in accordance with circular *Guidance on Changes to the Development Control System*. The document is divided into 4 main sections, Assessment, Involvement, Evaluation and Design Process.

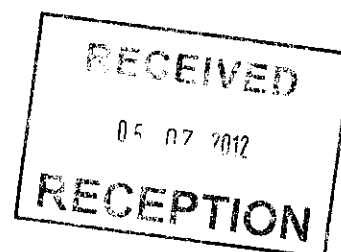
Assessment

The land, which forms the development site, is located within the garden area at 35 London Hill, Rayleigh. The area of the developable land has a section of road frontage to London Hill with the existing vehicular/pedestrian access. This access point is to be relocated as later described and agreed with the County Highways officer, Mark Lawrence.

The existing property, No 35 London Hill, is to be retained and the existing garage, damaged when a tree was blown over a few years ago in bad weather, is to be demolished and a new garage with storage for cycles and logs is proposed as a replacement.

The whole site has provision for 4 new properties and the retention of the existing house. The gardens of 35 London Hill are to be retained where possible and the slopes and grassed areas regarded to a more manageable gradient, which will retain the existing trees and extensive landscaped areas in a to enhance the new and existing properties.

Where existing quality landscaped areas are required to be removed as part of an extensive landscape and building programme as Specialist Landscape Designer is to be instructed to assess all the site and advise on a detailed programme for the retaining of plants and the creation of formal gardens to each of the properties.



The details of the landscape proposals will be set out in documents to be completed following the granting of Town Planning permission for the development, the Local Authority is requested to incorporate a formal landscape proposal condition as part of the consent.

The southern boundary of the site has a public footpath that forms a separation from the general residential properties in this location and the 'Rayleigh Mount'. This is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM EX 39) and the proposals do not form any part of the SAM. A copy of the recent letter from English Heritage dated 1st November 2011 is attached to this Design and Access Statement for clarification of this point. Over the last 10 years there has been some debate on this issue and this has been resolved as set out in the attached letter from English Heritage.

During the course of various proposals to extend and alter the existing property, the applicant has undertaken archaeological surveys and these confirmed that the general opinion was that the site is clear of any finds and that the grading and topography of the ground had been created by previous owners many years ago, when the site formed part of a commercial coal yard and residence.

A tree survey was carried sometime ago and a further survey with the up dated data on the site forms part of the Town Planning application.

In addition to the tree survey the applicant has commissioned wildlife surveys including badgers and crested newts for the site and these will also be issued in conjunction with the application and availability.

The site has a total area of approximately 0.46 hectares and the ground as previously stated has a slope of up to 6.00m from the eastern boundary to the western side of the site. The general levels vary throughout the site and a detailed level survey of the site is included as part of the Town Planning application.

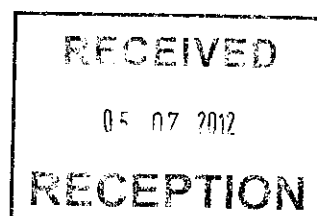
London Hill is principally a residential area, there are a few office buildings within former residential properties and to the west of the site London Hill meets with the High Street and this has a mainly commercial use. To the rear of the site there is the SAM as previously mentioned and the Rayleigh Mill is a Council owned multi-function building. There are large car-parks in the area to the north of the High Street and this serves users of the 'Mill' and High Street.

The site is zoned 'Residential' and is also within the Council's Town Centre Conservation Area.

Involvement

There has been considerable consultation with the District Council's planning officers, the County Conservation adviser and also the County Highways officer. During these discussions, carried out at the District Council offices and at County Hall it was established that the site was suitable for the total of 5 units, including the retention of the existing property.

The existing vehicular access from London Hill has relocated to conform to the County Highways officer's requirements and it is agreed that this provides a much safer level of visibility than previously available from this site.



The proposed development lies within the Council's conservation area as previously stated and as is required, consultation with the planning officers, Clare Robinson, Katie Rodgers and John Whitlock of the District Council and Robin Carpenter from County has resulted in more harmonious proposal than the original withdrawn application, 11/00699/FUL.

A detailed inspection of the site has been carried out by the officers in the last few months and this has enabled the planning officers to better appreciate the scheme/application now being promoted.

As previously stated the sight-lines for the vehicular access have been discussed both on site and at the Highways Office and the necessary drawings detailing the areas required for the visibility have been agreed. The latest agreed information has now been positioned on the application details for formal approval.

The layout as now indicated shows the developed area for the 4 new properties located within the site and not included is the single house originally proposed fronting London Hill. It was agreed that this would be better located away from the existing properties to London Hill. The new units now create a feeling of their own identity with the original house situated at the top part of this with its own private driveway access.

Plot 1 of the new development indicates a 2 storey house in the same style as the new properties and due to the revised orientation this plot now eliminates the potential of overlooking that the planning officers were concerned about on the previous application. The suggestion to place a bungalow to this part of the site would not have resulted in a solution to the issue of overlooking as originally thought. The windows to a bungalow would have been at the same level as a normal house where the ground levels are similar, in this case the existing property in London Hill has a ground level in excess of 4.00m below that of the site noted as Plot 1. It was resolved to rotate the front of the property towards the south thus reducing the overlooking issue to a minimum. It is also proposed to increase the tree screen planting to this boundary which resolves the issue completely.

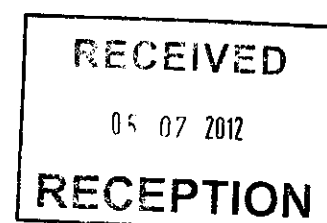
The line of the new access roadway has been moved away from this boundary thus allowing the existing feature tree to be retained. This also gives a very pleasant vista at the point of the site entrance.

Within the site it is proposed to provide retaining walls within private gardens that allows areas of level/flatter lawns to give each property a better user amenity space.

The removal of the smaller house to the London Hill frontage indicated to the previous proposal has resulted in the rear land/space within the site to the 4 cottages that adjoin the boundary to be totally untouched and therefore the existing planting and screening is to remain untouched.

Evaluation

The proposal is a commercial project and, as indicated above, the development of the site was carefully considered when the design concept was first put together. It has always been considered that the proposal for a residential scheme of 4 units plus the retention of the existing property is the best form of development to the site.



The existing garden is now difficult to maintain and due to the size it has become harder for the applicant to retain.

The applicant has lived in this property for a considerable number of years and they would like remain in residence and enjoy their retirement in a home that has given them much pleasure, albeit hard work, with a reduced garden area.

Design Process

The new properties have been designed to provide a blend of a more traditional range of properties incorporating up to date layouts and better internal amenities

The 'Mews' type layout within a courtyard parking area arrangement gives the vehicular access a sense of purpose rather than a completely divorced situation sometime associated in similar sized proposals.

Each house has been carefully considered relating to location and each properties relationship with each other. It is felt that mix of styles and sizes within a framework of a designed landscaped environment, helps to maintain a level of privacy for each property in a very harmonious surrounding.

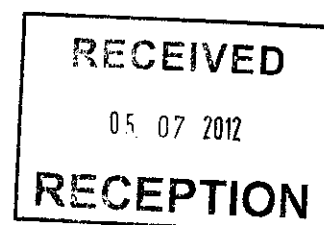
Each house has a traditional mix of materials, facing bricks, rendering, tile hanging/boarding under plain clay tiles and slate tiles that are generally found in better quality developments. The properties will have wood-burning stoves as well as a standard conventional gas heating system in compliance with the requirements of the Sustainable Home criteria.

Due to the existing ground levels of the site careful consideration has been given to the project to ensure that each property has a clear and free outlook maintaining the integrity of the new and existing properties. It has been necessary to move existing ground levels, where necessary, and this work has been kept to a minimum allowing many of the existing garden features to be retained.

The new properties have been sized and located relating to the Council's general planning policy guidelines, which set out the minimum distances relating to new buildings and their relationship to adjacent boundaries and existing properties. The calculation for the provision of amenity space, as well as parking are all met and are in-line with the Council's policy.

The garages that have been indicated on the application are generally single units with additional provision for cycle storage and other household requirements being located either adjacent to the new garage or located within other more suitable positions within the property. Although the Council has adopted a policy for garages that sets out the required size for each space, this scheme has allowed for single garages to be above the policy space provision with the storage space provision located outside the garage as indicated. It is felt that this is a more practical solution and the storage of cycles etc. are located in a separate unit.

The landscaping detailing to this development is an important consideration as previously indicated. It is essential that a carefully and well thought out scheme is provided to the development. The use of retaining walls and banking is a feature that allows the ground level, both new and existing to relate well with the development.



Much of the amenity areas will be enclosed with metal post and chain-link fencing which will allow the planting of natural hedges and trees to demark the individual boundaries and private garden enclosures.

Therefore the landscaping scheme should be of a high standard and of a quality to be enjoyed by the occupiers of the development, whilst also maintaining the privacy of the adjacent properties. As stated above, it is considered that the use of quality landscaping and a well thought out layout of the development will bring an improved level of environmental standards generally outside of the low budget allowance of many residential schemes.

The developer is investigating various *Green Issues*, in particular the use of heat pumps to provide heating and hot water that will further enhance the development and these points will be shown in more detail at the Building Regulation submission stage.

The general pedestrian accesses into the new properties will conform to the latest Building Regulations and in particular wheelchair access to the properties will conform the latest guidelines.

As part of the developers awareness of *Green Issues* each property will have a designated location for the storage of refuse bins including recycling as required to support the Council's recycling programme.

It is considered acceptable that the Council's refuse trucks and Fire Brigade tenders would be able to enter and leave the site in forward gear.

Conclusion

This document should be read in conjunction with all previous correspondence issued to the Local Authority.

The proposal is a well thought out scheme and it provides an economic use of a development sit. The existing properties that surround the site are a mixed of mixed uses and it is felt that the proposal would have no adverse effect on these uses and the street scene that fronts London Hill.

As the architect for this development have been very pleased with the Council's positive approach to the pre-application discussions for the project and I am more than happy to put my name to this proposal.

In final conclusion I would request that the Local Authority approve the application now before them.

JOHN R A JACKSON LLP

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