Planning, Design and Access Statement
Including Statement of Significance

Applicant: Stonewood Homes Ltd

Site: Manor Farm, Grittleton

Proposal: Variation of condition 7 of permission 21/01331/VAR

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1.0 Introduction:

1.1 Planning permission and listed building consent was originally obtained in April 2019 under applications 18/07128/FUL and 18/07246/LBC for:

"Conversion of existing agricultural buildings to form 8 No dwellings and erection of 6 No new dwellings with associated access, engineering and landscaping works.

1.2 In 2021, Stonewood Homes Ltd bought the site, and a Section 73 application was submitted to alter some of the design details. Planning permission and listed building consent was subsequently granted in November 2021 under applications 21/01331/VAR & 21/01258/LBC respectively.

1.3 In January 2022, development works commenced on site. Part of the works required part of the existing stone boundary wall to be realigned and to improve existing visibility splays. The boundary wall is located within the Conservation Area and contributes to the significance of the setting of the Manor Farm site. The intention was to maintain as much of the existing and historic wall as possible. In addition, the wall is a retaining wall, holding up a significant amount of garden land which is in private ownership and on land outside of the control of Stonewood Homes Ltd.

1.4 The boundary wall was realigned broadly in compliance with approved plan MFG.S1.10.P5 (Proposed Site Plan), but it is accepted that it was not realigned fully in compliance with that plan.

1.5 A planning condition (number 7) was imposed on both the original grant of permission, and on the subsequent S73 which required that:

"No part of the development shall be brought into use until the visibility splays shown on the approved plans have been provided, with no obstruction to visibility at or above a height of 0.9m above the nearside carriageway level. The visibility splays shall be maintained free of obstruction at all times thereafter".

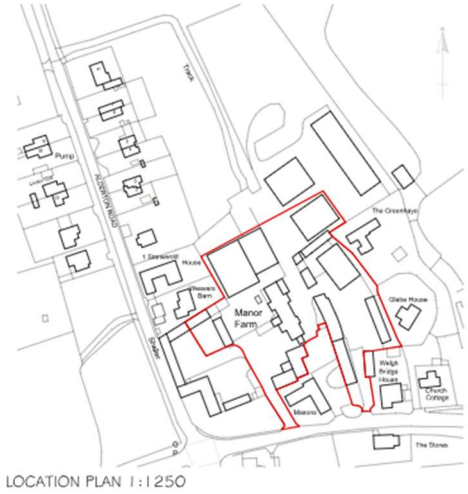
1.6 This planning application seeks to regularise the planning breach for non-conformity with the approved plan in so far as relates to the visibility splays.

2.0 Relevant Background information

2.1 The original planning application (18/07128/FUL) provided a red line site location plan which showed the land subject to the planning application and also land within the owners control shown in blue:



2.2 When application 21/01331/VAR was submitted, the same site location was submitted, and then updated by the submission of a revised plan which removed the blue line, and which also removed a barn to the west of the site. This was due to the change in land ownership:



2.3 This revised site location plan is listed as an approved plan on the decision notice for application 21/01331/VAR.

3.0 Description of Proposals

3.1 The application proposes the variation of condition 7 of permissions 18/07128/FUL and 21/01331/VAR from:

"No part of the development shall be brought into use until the visibility splays shown on the approved plans have been provided with no obstruction to visibility at or above a height of 0.9m above the nearside carriageway level. The visibility splays shall be maintained free of obstruction at all times thereafter.

REASON: In the interests of highway safety"

To:

"The site access and visibility splays shall be carried out in accordance with drawing 230602-TP-3200 P01, and maintained as such thereafter.

REASON: In the interests of highway safety"

4.0 Planning Policy Context

4.1 The statutory development plan comprises the Wiltshire Core Strategy, adopted January 2015.

4.2 The village of Grittleton is categorised as a small village within the spatial strategy for the Chippenham community area. Villages identified as small villages do not benefit from defined settlement limits.

4.3 The site is located within the Conservation Area and is in an area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

4.4 Relevant Local Plan Policies include:

- Core Policy 10 Spatial Strategy Chippenham Community Area.
- Core Policy 51 Landscape
- Core Policy 57 Ensuring high quality design and place shaping
- Core Policy 58 Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment
- Core Policy 61 Transport and new development

4.5 Grittleton Parish does not have a Neighbourhood Plan

5.0 Planning Assessment

5.1 Section 38(6) of the Town and Country Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires Local Planning Authorities to determine planning applications in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

5.2 This application is submitted to vary condition 7 of permissions 18/07128/FUL and 21/01331/VAR. Drawing 230602-TP-3200 P01 details the alterations reflected by the proposed changes to the access.

5.3 Section 73 planning applications are intended to permit amendments that do not amount to a 'fundamental alteration' to the original proposal.

5.4 In this instance, the proposed change to the setting out of the historic boundary wall does not amount to a 'fundamental change'.

5.5 The boundary wall is historic, and the access successfully served an historic working farm. The visibility splay improvements required by applications 18/07128/FUL and 21/01331/VAR relied on the land behind the wall being within the control of the applicant. This changed at the time that application 21/01331/VAR was submitted, and the blue line appears to have been specifically removed from the site location plan.

5.6 Subsequent to the development being progressed, the wall has been realigned, taking into account land ownership and to ensure that as much of the historic wall was preserved as possible. The access road has been resurfaced and a telegraph pole previously located in the middle of the access road has been removed.

5.7 Proactive discussions have taken place with Wiltshire Council Officers regarding compliance with the approved site layout plan and compliance with condition 7. The development has been carried out broadly in compliance with the approved layout plan, taking into account land ownership.

5.8 With regard to compliance with condition 7, this has been harder to achieve, and particularly with compliance with no obstruction to visibility at or above a height of 0.9m above the nearside carriageway level as the wall is a retaining wall, and which varies in height from 1.5-2m in height. The land that the wall retains falls outside of the land controlled by Stonewood.

5.9 Advice was sought from the Local Highway Authority by Wiltshire Council Officers, and they advised that the visibility splays are acceptable with regard to achieving reasonable levels of visibility and intervisibility. To further assist, it was recommended that the junction of the access with the road be subject to a solid white line along The Street carriageway, which would give a visual offset for drivers, resulting in a clear line which drivers would use as if it were a raised kerb. This is now shown on drawing 230602-TP-3200 P01.

5.10 To ensure compliance with drawing 230602-TP-3200 P01, it is suggested that condition 7 be re-worded to ensure that the site access and visibility splays be carried out in accordance with drawing 230602-TP-3200 P01.

6.0 Statement of Significance

6.1 Barns B2 and B3 within the centre of the development site are Grade II Listed. Due to the farmyard group setting, it is considered that the existing buildings (pre-1948) within the site are protected by virtue of curtilage listed status.

6.2 The whole site is included within the Grittleton Conservation Area. The group setting of the farmyard has been somewhat diminished by the separation of units into private ownership, however, there still remains a sense of historic unity and significance.

6.3 The boundary wall which borders the site access is part of Manor Farm, which is not listed in its own right.

6.4 The removal of part of the site boundary wall has been permitted by virtue of historic planning permissions. The reduction in realignment of the wall and retention of much historic fabric as possible is considered to be an improvement to that of the previously consented scheme and as such there is no harm to the historic setting.

7.0 Conclusion

7.1 The application is submitted to regularise the alignment and layout of the boundary wall to the site.

7.2 To ensure improvements to the access, white lining is proposed to clearly show the junction arrangements with the site and The Street.

7.3 The alteration is not considered to be a fundamental change to the previously consented scheme, and the re-wording of condition 7 is suggested.

7.4 Planning permission is respectfully requested.