Our ref: DS/Andrews

20th May 2024

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Development Management
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Dear Sir,

Town and Country Planning Act 1990
Construction of 4no dwellings and associated works on land at Lanes End, Gastard SN13 9QS.
Application reference PL/2023/11159.

Introduction

1. This revised Design and Access Statement to support this full planning application, referenced above, should be read instead of the original Design and Access Statement dated 21st December 2023.

2. The original documents still form part of this application, however some will be superseded by the following revised documents to support this application:
   - The Revised Design and Access Statement (this letter);
   - the Arboricultural Report by Wessex Tree Consultancy, dated May 2024;
   - the Tree Protection Plan, on base plan 1022-P-01B;
   - the Location and Block Plan, numbered 1022-01B;
   - The Proposed Site Plan, numbered 1022-P-01B; and,
   - the Proposed Site Section, numbered 1022-P-04A.

Site Description and Background

3. The application site which extends 0.23 hectares (0.57 acres) is located to the south east of Gastard, a Small Village within the Corsham Community Area. Lanes end runs from the main road through the village, Silver Street, and continues just over a mile, eastwards to Wick Lane. To the east of the site is a builders merchants and residential properties sit to the south, west and north of the site.

4. The site, accessed from Lanes End, is mainly gravelled and hosts containers used for commercial storage (B8). Trees sit to the front and rear of the site, some of which have Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's) on them, most of which will not be impacted by the proposed development.

5. The land on the site has been used for storage for many years, firstly in connection with Elm Park Mine, and in more recent years for general storage. We consider that the land is still within lawful use for B8 storage as no material change of use has occurred.

6. Elm Park Mine is a dormant stone mine located to the south east of the site. An application on the mine was determined in April 2008 (ref. N/06/0730/FCM). A condition of that permission required all extraction to cease by 31 May 2023. Since then an application to extend the mine was granted in 2017 (ref. 16/12001/WCM), this was never implemented and time has now elapsed. It was considered not financially viable to mine stone in this location, hence the mine laying dormant for many years.

7. The site does not fall within, but is close to the Gastard Conservation Area, which is located to the east. There are some Grade II listed buildings near the site, the closest being St John the Baptist Church which is located to the northwest of the site, adjacent the dwelling Churchside which neighbours the site.

8. The other nearby listed buildings sit to the east of the builders merchants, on the opposite side of Lanes End include; Stonecroft, Lanes End Farmhouse and Barn at Lanes End Farm. We consider that the listed buildings are far enough away not to be impacted by the development. Furthermore, the views are buffered by buildings and trees between the sight lines.

9. A planning application for 8 dwellings was refused on the site in April 2023 (as shown below). We consider that this application for 4 dwellings is a more suitable proposal and addresses the reasons for refusal in that previous application. Furthermore, a residential development on the site has previously been considered acceptable by the local planning authority (see Planning History section below).

10. This revised Design and Access Statement is submitted during the application process in order to address comments and concerns that have been made since this application (PL/2023/11159) was submitted.

Planning History

11. PL/2023/01088 - Construction of 8 dwellings and associated works - Refused, April 2023.
    N/08/0338/FUL - Erection of eleven dwellings (Re-submission of 07.02740.FUL) - Withdrawn, April 2008.
    N/07/02740/FUL - Erection of eleven dwellings - Refused, December 2007.
    N/87/01175/OUT - Outline application for residential development - Approved with conditions, August 1987.

The Development

Design

12. The site has been re-designed mainly to take into consideration the concerns raised regarding the lay-by. The lay-by will now remain unaltered and there will only be one access into the site, adjacent to the builder's merchants.

13. The dwellings have been designed to sit comfortably within the site, with the consideration of the surrounding properties and the style of other properties in the village. In addition, thought has been given to the environment and the future requirements of the occupiers.

14. The proposed 4 two-storey dwellings are positioned on site to form a cul-de-sac, with plot 1 facing the road, plots 2 and 3 to the rear, facing the road and towards plot 4, and plot 4 is positioned facing the access road that leads to the entrance of the cul-de-sac.

15. The proposed dwellings on plots 1 and 2 are an 'L' shaped design, the rooms of these dwellings each consist of; a kitchen, utility room, cloakroom, lounge and dining room on the ground floor. The first floor contains; 4 bedrooms, one en-suite and a family bathroom.

16. Plots 3 and 4 are slightly smaller and consist of; a kitchen/diner, utility/cloakroom and lounge on the ground floor. And; 3 bedrooms, an en-suite and a family bathroom on the first floor. All four dwellings have a porch positioned centrally on the front elevation, the main entrance.

17. The dwellings have been designed to reduce the carbon footprint of the users by the addition of solar panels to each roof to create an environmentally friendly source of natural energy to be used alongside, as required, mains electricity. Solar panels are now commonplace on roofs of dwellings throughout Wiltshire.

18. In addition to the solar panels, electric vehicle (EV) charge points are positioned close to the parking areas of each dwelling. Bicycle and bin storage have also been included in the design. All of these elements are shown on the Site Plan (no.1022:P:01B).

19. More details of the design and layout of the dwellings are shown on the supporting plans, some of which have been submitted previously, as part of this application.

Materials

20. The dwellings will be constructed from course natural rubble stone to ensure they remain in keeping with the dwellings in the surrounding area. The roof

will be finished with clay tiles to match the majority of the properties in the village.

21. Stone walls, also constructed from course natural rubble stone, will be used as boundary treatments along the north of the site that bounds Lanes End. The materials will be in keeping with existing boundary treatments in Gastard.

22. Details of materials can be submitted and agreed to as part of a pre-commencement condition.

Parking

23. Plot 1 (4 bedroom dwelling) has 2 parking spaces located towards the front of the plot, adjacent the house, with an additional parking space and a visitors parking space to the rear of the plot, on the private drive. Plot 2 (4 bedroom dwelling) has 3 parking spaces adjacent the property and adjacent to the rear parking area of plot 1.

24. Plots 3 and 4 (both 3 bedroom dwellings) have 2 parking spaces each that are located alongside each dwelling. These are accessed via the main driveway into the site, off Lanes End.

25. The parking areas for the four dwellings have been adjusted with the revised access in mind and so that they mainly sit outside of the tree canopy areas, to avoid tree detritus.

26. Electric vehicle charging points will be positioned at the nearest point to the parking areas for each dwelling. Bicycle storage will be located within the ample rear gardens of each property.

Access and highway

27. The site is currently accessed from Lanes End, which has good visibility splays in both directions. The existing access is shared with the builders merchants to the east and by visitors to the storage yard, that is currently located on site.

28. The proposed development will be accessed from the existing access which will lead to a prvate driveway that will serve plots 1 and 2, as well as the visitor parking space. A new pedestrian pathway will be created to the front of the site, ensuring safe pedestrian access from the site, into the village.

Services

29. The site will be connected to mains water and sewage, the pipes run under and along Lanes End. Electricity cables currently run overhead of the site, these will be put underground and connected to the proposed dwellings.

Landscaping

30. The existing trees to the south and west of the site will remain, a large proportion of these trees have Tree Protection Orders (TPOs). The existing trees will help to obscure the views both in and out of the site. Additional trees, shrubs and hedging will be planted around the site, as indicated on the proposed site plan. This will add to the residential feel and soften the appearance of the proposed new dwellings on the surrounding area. It must be said, however, that none of the trees on the site - even those which are subject to the Tree Preservation Order - are of high quality, or make any significant contribution to the character and appearance of the wider landscape. The submitted tree report shows that the important trees can be retained and maintained following the development of the site for residential purposes. The retention of the trees is one part of the planning balance to be struck. In our view, the ability to retain and maintain the trees as proposed is one factor to be considered against the need to remove a non-conforming use in a predominantly residential area and the need to meet housing supply targets by allowing the development of previously developed land in a sustainable location.

31. The tree to the north corner of the site will now be retained, post and rail or metal fencing will be used along the boundary that is close to the tree, to protect the roots. The appearance of the fencing will be softened with planting.

Relevant Planning Policies

32. Under the provisions of section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, applicants for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. At the current time the statutory development plan in respect of this application comprises of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Revision December 2023), the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) (adopted January 2015) and the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan (CNP) (2016-2026) Made 2019.

National Planning Policy

33. We understand that the NPPF is relevant to new proposals and that the NPPF expects local planning authorities to plan positively for sustainable development. The three objectives for sustainability are economic, social and environmental are reflected in the policies of the NPPF as well as local policies.

34. Paragraph 11 sets out the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' and states, for decision taking:

c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

d) 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 clear 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.

35. Paragraph 38 says that local planning authorities should ***work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.***

36. Paragraph 70 states that (inter alia), ***small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, and are often built-out relatively quickly. To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should:***
c) support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes.

37. Paragrph 109 focuses on promoting sustainable transport and says that, ***significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.***

38. Paragraph 115 states that, ***development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.***

39. Paragraph 116 continues, ***within this context, applications for development should:***
a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;
b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;
c) create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards;
d) allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and
e) be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.

40. Paragraph 135 sets out the criteria for well designed places (inter alia). ***Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:***
a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities).

41. Paragraph 165 states that, ***inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future). Where development is necessary in such areas, the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere.***

Local Planning Policy

42. We consider that the relevant policies in the WCS are CP1, CP2, CP11, CP41, CP50, CP51, CP56, CP57, CP58, CP60, CP61, CP64 and CP67 as set out below.

43. Core Policy 1: Settlement Strategy - ***Large Villages are defined as settlements with a limited range of employment, services and facilities. Small Villages have a low level of services and facilities, and few employment opportunities. Development at Large and Small Villages will be limited to that needed to help meet the housing needs of settlements and to improve employment opportunities, services and facilities.***

44. Core Policy 2: Delivery Strategy - The aim is to deliver at least 42,000 homes within the period of 2006 to 2026, 24,740 of this housing is the minimum requirement for the north and west Wiltshire area. ***At the Small Villages development will be limited to infill within the existing built area. Proposals for development at the Small Villages will be supported where they seek to meet housing needs of settlements or provide employment, services and facilities provided that the development:***
i) Respects the existing character and form of the settlement
ii)Does not elongate the village or impose development in sensitive landscape areas
iii) Does not consolidate an existing sporadic loose knit areas of development related to the settlement.

45. Core Policy 11: Spatial Strategy for the Corsham Community Area - ***Over the plan period (2006 to 2026), approximately 1,395 homes will be provided, of which about 1,220 should occur at Corsham. Approximately 175 homes will be provided in the rest of the Community Area. Growth in the Corsham Community Area over the plan period may consist of a range of sites in accordance with Core Policies 1 and 2.***

46. Core Policy 41: Sustainable Construction and Low-carbon Energy - ***New development, building conversions, refurbishments and extensions will be encouraged to incorporate design measures to reduce energy demand. Development will be well insulated and designed to take advantage of natural light and heat from the sun and use natural air movement for ventilation, whilst maximising cooling in the summer.***

47. Core Policy 50: Biodiversity and Geodiversity - ***Development proposals must demonstrate how they protect features of nature conservation and geological value as part of the design rationale. There is an expectation that such features shall be retained, buffered, and managed favourably in order to maintain their ecological***

value, connectivity and functionality in the long-term. It continues, ***all development proposals shall incorporate appropriate measures to avoid and reduce disturbance of sensitive wildlife species and habitats throughout the lifetime of the development.***

48. Core Policy 51: Landscape - ***Development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance landscape character and must not have a harmful impact upon landscape character, while any negative impacts must be mitigated as far as possible through sensitive design and landscape measures.***

49. Core Policy 56: Contaminated Land - ***Development proposals which are likely to be on or adjacent to land which may have been subject to contamination will need to demonstrate that measures can be taken to effectively mitigate the impacts of land contamination on public health, environmental quality, the built environment and amenity.***

50. Core Policy 57: Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping (inter alia) - ***Development is expected to create a strong sense of place through drawing on the local context and being complementary to the locality. Applications for new development must be accompanied by appropriate information to demonstrate how the proposal will make a positive contribution to the character of Wiltshire through:***
i) enhancing local distinctiveness by responding to the value of the natural and historic environment, relating positively to its landscape setting and the existing pattern of development and responding to local topography by ensuring that important views into, within and out of the site are to be retained and enhanced
ii) the retention and enhancement of existing important landscaping and natural features, (e.g. trees, hedges, banks and watercourses), in order to take opportunities to enhance biodiversity, create wildlife and recreational corridors, effectively integrate the development into its setting and to justify and mitigate against any losses that may occur through the development
iii) responding positively to the existing townscape and landscape features in terms of building layouts, built form, height, mass, scale, building line, plot size, elevational design, materials, streetscape and rooflines to effectively integrate the building into its setting
iv. being sympathetic to and conserving historic buildings and historic landscapes
v. the maximisation of opportunities for sustainable construction techniques, use of renewable energy sources and ensuring buildings and spaces are orientated to gain maximum benefit from sunlight and passive solar energy, in accordance with Core Policy 41 (Sustainable Construction and Low Carbon Energy)
vi. making efficient use of land whilst taking account of the characteristics of the site and the local context to deliver an appropriate development which relates effectively to the immediate setting and to the wider character of the area
vii. having regard to the compatibility of adjoining buildings and uses, the impact on the amenities of existing occupants, and ensuring that appropriate levels of amenity are achievable within the development itself, including the consideration of privacy, overshadowing, vibration, and pollution (e.g. light intrusion, noise, smoke, fumes, effluent, waste or litter)
viii. incorporating measures to reduce any actual or perceived opportunities for crime or antisocial behaviour on the site and in the surrounding area through the creation of visually attractive frontages that have windows and doors located to assist in the informal surveillance of public and shared areas by occupants of the site
xii. the use of high standards of building materials, finishes and landscaping, including the provision of street furniture and the integration of art and design in the public realm

xiv. meeting the requirements of Core Policy 61 (Transport and New Development).

51. Core Policy 58: Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment - ***Development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic environment.***

52. Core Policy 60: Sustainable Transport - ***The council will use its planning and transport powers to help reduce the need to travel particularly by private car, and support and encourage the sustainable, safe and efficient movement of people and goods within and through Wiltshire.***

53. Core Policy 61: Transport and New Development - ***New development should be located and designed to reduce the need to travel particularly by private car, and to encourage the use of sustainable transport alternatives. As part of a required transport assessment, the following must be demonstrated:***
i. That consideration has been given to the needs of all transport users, where relevant, according to the following hierarchy:
a) Visually impaired and other disabled people
b) Pedestrians
c) Cyclists
d) Public transport
e) Goods vehicles
f) Powered two-wheelers
g) Private cars.
ii. That the proposal is capable of being served by safe access to the highway network.
iii. That fit for purpose and safe loading/unloading facilities can be provided where these are required as part of the normal functioning of the development.

54. Core Policy 64: Demand Management (inter alia) - ***Demand management measures will be promoted where appropriate to reduce reliance on the car and to encourage the use of sustainable transport alternatives. These measures include:***
i. car parking management – efficiently and effectively managing the car parking stock through the implementation of appropriate supply, maintenance, charging and enforcement measures. These measures include:
d. residential parking standards – the provision of car parking associated with well designed new residential development will be based on minimum parking standards. In determining the appropriate mix of parking types, the presumption will be that unallocated communal parking will be included in the majority of new residential development.

55. Core Policy 67: Flood Risk - ***Development proposed in Flood Zones 2 and 3 as identified within the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment will need to refer to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment when providing evidence to the local planning authority in order to apply the sequential test in line with the requirements of national policy and established best practice. All new development will include measures to reduce the rate of rainwater run-off and improve rainwater infiltration to soil and ground (sustainable urban drainage) unless site or environmental conditions make these measures unsuitable.*** The site is located within Flood Zone 1.

Corsham Neighbourhood Plan (2016-2026) Made 2019

56. ED1: Corsham Design Guide (Character Area 22 – Gastard) - The guidance for new development in Gastard supports infill development and medium housing density. Parking should be provided on the property and driveways softened by planting. Buildings on Lanes End should take into consideration the character of historic housing.

57. The most favourable height of housing is 2-storeys constructed with limestone or rubble stone and dark grey, brown or red roof tiles. For properties along Lanes End the encouraged boundary treatments are stone walls, with or without hedges.

58. CNP E1: Biodiversity - ***Otherwise acceptable proposals for development which protect and, where possible, enrich the habitat of the protected bat species associated with the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC) will be supported. Applicants will need to demonstrate how their proposals would contribute to the delivery of the Corsham Batscape Strategy2 , including details of measures to preserve and, where possible, enhance wildlife corridors, (especially with regard to foraging areas), priority flight lines and maternity roosts. Proposals that enhance the biodiversity of Corsham will be supported.***

59. E2: Sustainable Development - ***All new development should seek to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Proposals should:***
    a) Safeguard and, where possible, enhance biodiversity and geodiversity;
    b) Adopt best practice in sustainable urban drainage;
    c) Reduce flood risk and ensure that the design and location of new development is resilient to the effects of flooding
    Proposals are encouraged to demonstrate:
    d) Innovative design which seeks to achieve low carbon sustainable design;
    e) The promotion of the efficient use of natural resources, the re-use and recycling of resources, and the production and consumption of renewable energy;
    f) Grey water re-use; and
    g) The development of low and zero carbon energy through a range of technologies.

60. HE1: Good quality Design - ***All new development within the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan Area must demonstrate good quality design. This means responding to and integrating with local surroundings and landscape context as well as the existing built environment.***

61. H1: Infill Developments - ***Proposals for brownfield developments within the Corsham settlement boundary or small infill sites within Gastard and Neston will be supported where they:***
    a) have a scale, form and density which would be complementary to surrounding properties and would not result in the loss of amenity for existing residents;
    b) are encouraged to achieve high standards of sustainable and low carbon design; and
    c) would be accompanied by appropriate provisions for parking, access and storage of waste.

62. T1: Traffic Movement - ***Development proposals that generate a significant amount of traffic movement must be accompanied by evidence that sets out the transport***

issues relating to the development including the measures to be taken to deal with the anticipated transport impacts of the scheme. If the impact cannot be satisfactorily mitigated the proposal will be resisted.

63. T2: Pedestrian and cycle routes - ***Developments should provide safe pedestrian and cycle routes and improve connections within and to the town and surrounding area wherever appropriate and possible. Developments will also be expected to provide suitable cycle parking facilities in a convenient location.***

Planning Considerations

Principle of development

64. Core Policies (CP) 1 and 2 of the WCS comprise the overarching strategy for new developments in Wiltshire. Additionally, Core Policy 11 relates to the Corsham Community Area and identifies Gastard as a 'Small Village'. CP1 states that; ***Development in Small Villages will be limited that needed to help meet the housing needs of the settlements.***

65. CP2 supports infill development in Small Villages where it meets the needs of the settlements, respects the character of the area, does not elongate the village, nor consolidate an existing loose knit area. Infill is defined in CP2 as *not more than a few dwellings*. Case law has often considered no more than 4 dwellings to be acceptable for infill development.

66. There are dwellings located to the south and west of the site, and to the north, on the opposite side of Lanes End. The builders merchants is located to the east, with further dwellings and farm buildings beyond. We consider that this proposal is for infill development on brownfield land and suitable for family housing.

67. This proposed development for 4no dwellings respects the character of the area, following the criteria in the Corsham Design Guide. It does not elongate the village, nor does it consolidate sporadic loose knit development. The proposed dwellings will fit in with the existing residential built form.

68. The principle of dwellings on the site was considered acceptable in a previously approved application ref. N/87/01175/OUT. However, a detailed application did not follow and time elapsed.

69. The proposal would provide support to the vitality of the local community from the future occupiers of the development, both on a social and financial level. During the construction, the community could also benefit as building materials could be sourced from the neighbouring builders merchants. This will also reduce the environmental impact that construction can result in.

Sustainability

70. The proposed development is located around a mile away from the market town of Corsham. This can be reached by regular bus services (bus numbers 10 and 69) that run through the village approximately every 2 hours. Bus number 69 also travels to the towns of Trowbridge, Melksham and Chippenham, as well as villages in between.

71. The site is within walking distance to the church of Saint John the Baptist and local pub, the Harp and Crown. The nearby town of Corsham, which could be reached by bicycle, hosts all essential services required for residents of the village. Cycle storage will be located in the rear gardens of each development.

72. Solar panels will be added to the roof of each dwelling which will benefit the occupiers, saving them money on their fuel bills. It will also reduce pressure on the national grid.

73. Electric vehicles are considered to be an environmentally friendly form of travel. Electric vehicle charging points allocated to each dwelling, close to their allotted parking spaces.

Ecology

74. A Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) was carried out on 6th September 2023 by Ellendale Environmental, the report forms part of this application. In summary, the site provides limited potential for ground dwelling species and habitats due to the majority of hardstanding on site and security fencing surrounding.

75. The trees surrounding the site do not provide suitable roosting features to support bats and no droppings were found. Although, it is possible that bats may forage in the woodland and scrub.

76. Biodiversity enhancements include bird and bat boxes placed in trees around the site or within the new dwellings where practicable. It is also suggested that the addition of native planting around the site will benefit the existing habitat and provide connectivity between habitats.

77. The proposed development includes additional planting and will also include bat and bird boxes around the site and on dwellings where practicable. The details of these can be submitted as part of a pre-commencement condition.

Trees and Landscape

78. The proposal will protect, conserve and enhance the landscape character by replacing the utilitarian storage facility with 4 new dwellings that are designed to blend in with the character of the area. The retention of a

majority of the trees that surround the site, as well as additional trees, shrubs and hedges will soften the views both in and out of the site.

79. An Arboricultural Survey was carried out in June 2023. The report has been revised with the adjustments to this proposal in mind. One of the adjustments being the retaintion of one of the TPO trees (T5) to the front, north corner, of the site. The retaintion of the tree will help to buffer the views towards the builders merchants when travelling from the start (west) of Lanes End. See the revised Arboricultural Report dated May 2024.

80. The retaintion of tree T5 will result in a no building in the root protection area surrounding the tree. Therefore, a post and rail or metal fence is proposed along that front corner of the site. Hedgerows/shrubs will be planted close to the fencing, to help soften the appearance.

81. The existing tall beech hedgerow that lines the front of the site will be removed and replaced with dry stone walling and hedgerows, to match the character of existing boundary treatments in Gastard, as recommended in the Corsham Design Guide. Details can be provided as part of a pre-commencement condition.

82. Retension of the hedgerow would result in isolating the dwellings from the village and it would be contradictory to the Corsham Design Guide. The removal of the beech hedgerow will open up the rural views to the residents of the new dwellings. Furthermore, the Landscape Officer had no objection to the removal of the beech hedgerow.

83. The Landscape Officer raised issues regarding the use of timber fencing and that it does not contribute to the character of the area. Timber fencing is currently in place along the boundary of the site that adjoins the application site on Lanes End, as shown in Image 1, below.

84. Further along the road, more timber fencing can be seen, as well as wooden field gates on properties opposite the site. Therefore, the addition of wooden boundary treatments should be considered acceptable. Furthermore, shrubs, hedges and trees, existing and proposed, will help to soften the boundary treatments.



Image 1: Google image shows existing timber fencing along the north east boundary of the site.

85. The configuration of the 4 dwellings resembles a layout on the main road through Gastard, as shown in the image 2, below. One dwelling is facing the road, one is side on and one is set back from these dwellings. Very much like the layout of this proposal.



Image 2: Google image showing configuration of dwellings on Velly Hill.

Ground Contamination

86. A ground investigation walkover survey and intrusive investigatory works was carried out on 2nd August 2023. Please note, the report was written with

the previous proposal in mind (ref, PL/2023/01088), the reduction of dwellings from 8 to 4 will not affect the results of the survey.

87. The report concluded that any potential hazard and pollution risks are very low or low and may not warrant further consideration. Therefore, the proposed development will not cause harm to public health, environmental quality, the built environment or the amenity of surrounding residents.

Noise

88. There are existing dwellings along lanes end, including adjacent and opposite the builder's merchants. Any noise generated by deliveries and collections to and from the builder's merchants would happen during opening hours. Therefore, having minimal impact on the proposed development and no different to impact of the noise, generiated by lorries, on the existing dwellings.

89. Elm Park stone mine, which is located to the south east of the site, does not currently have a permission to be mined, the previous permission expired on 16th May 2020. The Council has control on whether the mine is ever to become opereational again. If this were to happen, works and lorry movements would be restricted by an hours of operation condition. Lorry movements generated by the mine would be minimal, approximately 2 collections per week, compared to that of the existing builder's merchants.

Design, Character and Appearance

90. The Gastard Conservation Area is located to the east of the site, adjacent the builders merchants. There are also three Grade II listed buildings to the east of the site that sit within the Conservation Area. In addition to this a Grade II listed church that is situated to the northwest of the site, just beyond the adjacent bungalow on Lanes End.

91. The proposed development has been designed with the consideration of the historic character of the surrounding area in mind. The nearby dwellings consist of a mix of styles including 2-story detached and bungalows. The majority of the dwellings in the village are constructed of traditional stone with clay tiled or slate roofs.

92. The Corsham Design Guide seeks to retain medium housing density for new development. We consider that the proposed infill development of 4no dwellings is medium housing density. The Design Guide also favours a build height of 2-storeys, styles to fit in with the existing historic character and encourage stone wall boundaries along Lanes End. All of these criteria have been worked into the design of the proposal.

93. The gardens are of a generous size, especially to the rear which will contain storage areas for cycles, waste and recycling bins, as shown on the proposed

site plan. The additional planting around the site will help effectively integrate the development into its setting, whilst also providing enhanced biodiversity to the site.

Amenity

94. The proposed 2-storey dwellings are considered to be an acceptable height of dwelling according to the Corsham Design Guide. With the spacious rear gardens, trees and distances to surrounding dwellings there will be no significant overlooking.

95. A construction management plan can be submitted as part of a pre-commencement condition in order to control working hours and minimise disruption during the construction period.

96. The builders merchants can be noisy at times with deliveries, however the opening times are 7.30am - 5pm and purchasers of the properties will be aware of this when buying any of the properties on the site. Only one of the dwellings (plot 4) directly faces the builders merchants. Hedging is proposed to help buffer the view from the ground floor. Plot 3 faces Lanes End between plots 1 and 4.

97. Furthermore, there are existing dwellings opposite and next to the builders merchants that are in a similar situation with views across to the builders merchants and with the noise that is created by the business. Due to the limited working hours of the business, we do not consider this to be an issue.

98. Elm Park Mine, as mentioned previously, has not been financially viable to mine. An application on the mine N/06/0730/FCM contained a condition that stated all extraction must cease by 31st May 2023. A more recent application was made to extend the mine (ref, 16/12001/WCM) which was granted in 2017. This permission was not implemented and time has now elapsed for both applications.

Access, Highways and Parking

99. The proposed dwellings will be accessed via the existing access off Lanes End and into the private drive that serves plots 1 and 2, as well as the visitor parking space. Off street parking at the properties will ensure this access is kept clear and accessible at all times.

100. The safe access is already existing to the highway and there is no severe or unacceptable impact on highway safety. The number of vehicles using the access will not be significantly greater than that of the existing use.

101. There will be allocated parking spaces for each dwelling; 3 spaces for each of the 4 bedroom dwellings (plots 1 and 2) and 2 spaces for each of the 3 bedroom dwellings (plots 3 and 4). There is also a visitor parking space

between plots 1 and 2, as shown on the proposed site plan. The proposed parking is in accordance with Wiltshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2026 Car Parking Strategy.

Flooding and Drainage

102. The site, which is less than 1 hectare, is located within Flood Zone 1, therefore, there is less than 1 in 1,000 annual probability of river or sea flooding. Surface water will be disposed of via soakaways.

103. The proposed dwellings will be connected to the mains waste and water systems, which run along Lanes End. Drainage strategy details can be submitted as part of a pre-commencement condition.

Concluding Summary

104. We consider that we have addressed the issues raised throughout this application, thus far, by adjusting the design and revising the arboricultural situation.

105. The site is in a suitable and sustainable location, with essential services within a reasonable cycling and driving distance of around a mile away. A regular bus service stops in the village and runs to Corsham and other towns and villages in Wiltshire.

106. The 4 dwellings will sit in harmony with the surrounding area and have been designed to fit in with the historic character of the village. The existing and proposed landscaping will create a soft visual buffer for the existing and future residents.

107. Biodiversity will be enhanced with the addition of bat and bird boxes, as well as additional landscaping, creating potential wildlife corridors and habitats. Many of the existing boundary trees will remain and additional planting will create a more visually attractive site.

108. There will be no unacceptable impact on highway safety, nor the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. The user numbers will not be dissimilar to the current use of the access, albeit less commercial traffic after construction.

109. The creation of 4 new dwellings in the Corsham Community Area will have a positive impact on the Council's Housing Land Supply figures, which have not yet met the 5 year need.

110. The proposal meets the criteria set out in the national and local policy documents, which include; the NPPF, the WCS and the CNP.

Land at Lanes End, Gastard SN13 9QS.

111. We trust that you have all the necessary information that you require to validate and determine this application and if the officer does require any information or clarification on any element of the proposals we invite a discussion during the determination process.

Yours faithfully,

[redacted]

Debbie Silver