



Planning & Building Consultants

Contact Tel:- 01225 938329

Park Gates
Rood Ashton Park
West Ashton
Wilts
BA14 6AT

Development Management

Design and Access Statement

Proposed 2 New Dwellings & Landscaping at 15 Castle Street, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 8AS

This design and access statement sets out the supporting information and design principals from which this proposal has been formulated.

This should be viewed in conjunction with the associated plans submitted, AH2022/98 Sheet 1-3

Brief description of proposal

The proposal is erect 2 semi-detached dwellings with associated landscaping.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Design and Access Statement accompanies a full planning application for the redevelopment of the site to provide two semi-detached dwellings. The application relates to land that previously benefitted from planning permission under reference **PL/2022/09736**, which established the principle of residential redevelopment on the site.
- 1.2 The current proposal represents a revised and simplified form of development compared to the previously approved scheme. The earlier proposal, although acceptable in planning terms, has subsequently been demonstrated to be financially unviable and incapable of being delivered. This application has therefore been prepared to ensure that the site can be brought forward in a viable, policy-compliant and deliverable manner, whilst maintaining a high standard of design appropriate to its town centre and conservation area context.

2. Site Location and Context

- 2.1 The site lies within an established built-up area, characterised predominantly by residential development. The surrounding area comprises a mix of dwelling types, architectural styles and plot sizes, reflecting the organic growth of the town over time. The site occupies a sustainable location within the town centre, with convenient access to local services, facilities and public transport.
- 2.2 At present, the site is **vacant**, with the former use discontinued and all existing buildings removed. As a result, the site presents as cleared, previously developed land within the urban area. Its vacant

condition is particularly noticeable given its central location and proximity to surrounding development, reinforcing the importance of securing an appropriate and timely redevelopment

3. Planning History

- 3.1 Planning permission was previously granted for residential redevelopment of the site under application **PL/2022/09736**. That decision confirmed the acceptability of residential use in principle and demonstrated that the site was capable of accommodating new housing without causing unacceptable harm to residential amenity, highway safety, or the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
- 3.2 The current application does not seek to challenge or revisit the conclusions reached under the previous permission. Instead, it builds upon the established principle of development by proposing an alternative scheme that is reduced in scale, simplified in design and capable of being delivered in practice.

4. Reason for Resubmission

- 4.1 Following the grant of planning permission for the earlier scheme, detailed financial appraisal demonstrated that the development was **not financially viable**. Factors contributing to this included the complexity of the approved design, elevated construction costs and abnormal development requirements, which together rendered the scheme undeliverable.
- 4.2 In response, the current proposal has been formulated to reduce complexity, construction cost and risk, while continuing to provide a high-quality residential outcome. The revised scheme is intentionally simpler in form and layout, ensuring that the site can be developed in a realistic and timely manner. This approach aligns with the objective of the planning system to facilitate sustainable development that can actually be implemented.

5. Proposed Development

- 5.1 The proposal comprises the construction of **two semi-detached dwellings**, arranged to reflect the prevailing pattern of development within the surrounding area. The scale and form of the buildings have been carefully considered to ensure that they sit comfortably within their context and do not appear visually dominant or out of keeping with neighbouring properties.
- 5.2 Each dwelling is designed to function as a high-quality family home, with appropriate internal layouts, access arrangements and private external amenity space. The development represents a modest and efficient use of the site, avoiding over-development while ensuring that the land is positively utilised.

6. Design Principles

- 6.1 The design of the proposed dwellings has been informed by a clear understanding of the site's context and constraints. Particular attention has been paid to scale, massing and proportions, ensuring that the buildings relate well to surrounding development and respect the established character of the area.
- 6.2 The simplified architectural approach results in a clear and legible form, reducing visual clutter and unnecessary complexity. Materials and detailing are intended to reflect the local context and conservation area setting, contributing positively to the street scene. Overall, the design seeks to achieve a balanced response that is both functional and visually appropriate.

7. Access & Movement

- 7.1 Access to the site will be provided in a safe and convenient manner, consistent with highway authority requirements. Vehicle access arrangements have been designed to operate efficiently, with adequate visibility and manoeuvring space provided within the site.
- 7.2 Parking provision accords with adopted standards and is arranged to ensure that vehicles can enter and leave the site safely. Pedestrian access is straightforward and clearly defined, providing a logical connection between the public realm and each dwelling.

8. Impact on Residential Amenity

- 8.1 The proposed development has been carefully designed to safeguard the amenity of neighbouring occupiers. Building positions, separation distances and window arrangements have been considered to avoid unacceptable overlooking, overbearing impact or loss of daylight.
- 8.2 Future occupants of the proposed dwellings will also benefit from a good standard of residential amenity, including private outdoor space and adequate internal living conditions. The proposal therefore achieves an appropriate balance between the interests of existing and future residents.

9. Biodiversity Net Gain

- 9.1 The development qualifies for **de minimis exemption** from mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain requirements. The proposal affects **less than 25 square metres of habitat**, which falls below the threshold at which Biodiversity Net Gain calculations are required under current legislation.
- 9.2 Given the limited scale of habitat affected and the previously developed nature of the site, no biodiversity metric or net gain plan is necessary to support the application.

10. Archaeology

- 10.1 The archaeological context of the site remains unchanged from that considered under the previously approved application. At that time, the site was assessed as having limited archaeological potential, informed by existing evidence and investigations in the surrounding area.
- 10.2 It is also relevant that the site contains an **underground tank**, which will be removed as part of the proposed development. The installation of this structure would have required significant excavation, resulting in substantial historic ground disturbance. This further reduces the likelihood that archaeological remains of significance survive on site.
- 10.3 Having regard to the previous planning conclusions, the demonstrable ground disturbance, and the importance of maintaining scheme viability, it is considered that the re-application of archaeological conditions would be unnecessary and disproportionate and it is requested that there is no need for a watching brief as part of any approval.

11. Drainage

- 11.1 The drainage arrangements for the proposal will replicate the approved discharge methods as per the previous planning application PL/2022/09736.
- 11.2 There is an existing foul sewer connection which will be utilised, which will serve the 2 new dwellings, which discharges into the public foul sewerage system.

- 11.3 The surface water arising from the site will be discharged into wessex water surface water sewer, at the agreed rate with wessex water. The amount of surface water discharge will be of a lesser volume compared to the previous approved block of 6 flats under PL/2022/09736, as the proposed buildings are of a smaller foot print, resulting in a lower volume discharged into the sewer.
- 11.4 More of the site will be landscaped compared to the previous proposal PL/2022/09736 and the surface water will percolate into the ground onsite, this will be via the rear gardens and the permeable block paving area to the front. The result is that the site is more sustainable compared to the previously approved scheme.

12. Planning Balance

- 12.1 The proposal delivers new housing on previously developed land within a highly sustainable town centre location. The principle of residential redevelopment has already been accepted, and the current proposal represents a reduced and less intensive form of development than that previously approved.
- 12.2 The scheme would result in lower impacts on the character and appearance of the area, residential amenity and local infrastructure when compared with the earlier permission. The design responds positively to the conservation area context and would contribute to the visual improvement of a currently vacant site.
- 12.3 The timely delivery of housing is a significant material consideration. The Council is currently experiencing a shortfall in its housing land supply, and national planning policy strongly encourages the approval of deliverable housing schemes in sustainable locations. The proposed development is capable of being implemented without delay and would make an immediate contribution to housing delivery.
- 12.4 It is also material that the previously approved scheme will not proceed due to financial viability constraints. In the absence of an alternative deliverable proposal, the site would remain vacant for the foreseeable future. Given its prominent town centre and conservation area location, continued vacancy would detract from the character and appearance of the area and represent a missed opportunity for regeneration.
- 12.5 On balance, the proposal accords with the development plan when read as a whole and benefits from strong support in national planning policy. The planning balance weighs clearly in favour of granting planning permission.

13. Appearance

- 13.1 The new dwellings will be constructed in materials similar to that of the adjacent building to the South, to reflect the character of the existing area., complying with local plan policy CP57.
- 13.2 The walling will be finished in a red brick, with the use of natural stone quoins & headers and cills. The roofing material will be a natural slate. The fenestration will be white upvc. The rainwater goods, will be upvc.
- 13.3 The front elevation of the building will be constructed in a flemish bond, with the side and rear constructed in a stretcher bond. The use of the historic brick pattern on the front, will respect the listed building characters opposite the road and the recent adjacent block of flats to the south on the adjoining site, granted under planning application PL/2022/07710. Below is a picture of the brick and flemish bond to be used.



Sample panel of walling – Flemish bond style brickwork

13.4 Below is a picture of the natural slate to be used.



Natural Slate for roof finish

13.5 The side and rear fences will be a close board timber fence.

14. Conclusion

14.1 This Design and Access Statement demonstrates that the proposed development of two semi-detached dwellings represents an appropriate, sustainable and deliverable form of development. The proposal builds upon the established principle of residential redevelopment and responds positively to financial viability considerations, while respecting the character and amenity of the surrounding area.

14.2 The development would secure the regeneration of a vacant site, deliver new housing in a sustainable location and contribute positively to the town centre and conservation area. Planning permission is therefore respectfully recommended.