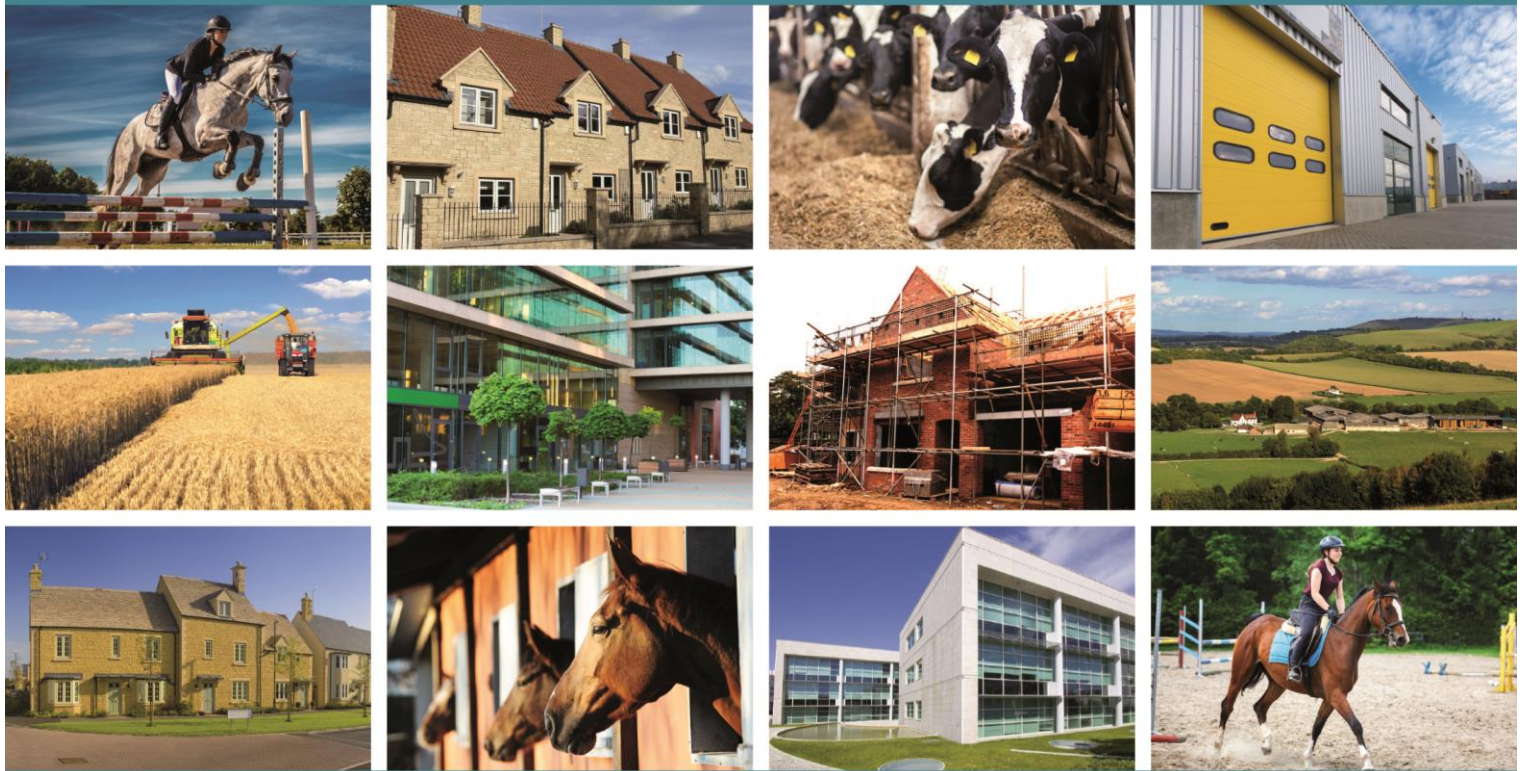




RCC TOWN PLANNING CONSULTANCY



Site: Canfield, 31 White Street, Easterton SN10 4NZ

Proposal: Replacement of existing dwelling and associated works

On behalf of: Mr and Mrs Blagbrough

Date of Issue: April 2026



RCC TOWN PLANNING CONSULTANCY

PLANNING STATEMENT

RCC Town Planning Consultancy

T: 01380 730047

W: www.rcctownplanning.co.uk

E: info@rcctownplanning.co.uk

This statement is the Copyright of RCC Town Planning Consultancy Ltd. To this extent this statement may not be copied or used by any means or for any purpose without the written consent of RCC Town Planning Consultancy Ltd.

CONTENTS PAGE

Introduction	1.0
Background and Planning History	2.0
Site and Context	3.0
Planning Policy	4.0
Planning Assessment	5.0
Conclusion	6.0

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared on behalf of the applicants to support their full planning application for the replacement of the existing single storey dwelling known as Canfield, White Street in Easterton. Its replacement is proposed to include 'rooms in the roof' but it would continue to retain a single-storey appearance. The application follows an approval in 2024 for extensions and improvements to Canfield, which have not been completed. However, this consent remains extant.
- 1.2 The statement will examine how the proposed development relates to the site and its context. The statement will also provide an explanation and justification for the scheme having regard to the national and local plan policy context.



2.0 BACKGROUND AND PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 This application concerns the principal dwelling known as Canfield, which is a detached bungalow, originally constructed in the early 1970's, as shown in figure 1 below. Canfield has a rather outdated and bland appearance and a disjointed design. Finished in a mixture of buff bricks and render, under a concrete tiled roof with slack pitch, it is of no particular architectural merit and represents an opportunity to improve design quality to better reflect the locality.
- 2.2 Canfield is situated at the top of White Street towards the edge of the village of Easterton. The applicants own the adjacent annexe/outbuilding on the right of this photograph at Figure 1 below, along with paddock land bordering the gardens, situated north, south and west of the dwelling as shown in the aerial photograph at Figure 3 on page 5.



Figure 1: Showing outdated and disjointed appearance of 'Canfield' from within site to its south.

- 2.3 Canfield was subject to a side extension in the 1980's under application reference K/86/0440, and in 2002, consent was granted to remove the agricultural occupancy condition.
- 2.4 The annexe/outbuilding situated close to the bungalow is a former agricultural building, part of which was permitted for conversion into a 1-bedroom holiday let in 1989. It was run as a successful holiday let for over three decades.
- 2.5 In 2022, permission was granted under planning reference PL/2022/02257 which allowed further conversion of that building to form a second bedroom, along with the flexibility that this could serve either as holiday accommodation or as an annexe.
- 2.6 The additional conversion works were duly undertaken, however, one of the then occupants of Canfield sadly passed away. The previous applicants' son and daughter-in-law have since moved into the main house. They provide support for their mother, who now occupies the former holiday let building, as an annexe, in accordance with the permission granted. Consequently, Canfield now serves as a family dwelling, with the annexed accommodation allowing for multi-generational living.

2.7 In 2024, the applicants applied to extend, adapt and upgrade the main accommodation. The proposals looked to modernise the building to better suit their needs and enhance its design, whilst also improving the sustainability credentials of the structure. Permission was duly granted on 3rd October 2024 under planning reference PL/2024/07583. Approved elevations and floorplans are shown below in Figure 2.



Figure 2: Showing approved elevations above and approved layout below (PL/2024/07583)

- 2.8 However, once works commenced, it became apparent that the extent of works necessary was far more extensive than originally anticipated. Rising construction and energy costs have also been a factor. Works ceased and the applicants explored with their architects, the notion of replacing the existing dwelling, rather than attempting to retrofit costly improvements to the existing building that would not deliver the same gains as a new build.
- 2.9 As a result of these deliberations, the applicants now consider that replacing the existing dwelling is the best option. The replacement would be tailored to meet the requirements of modern living, with built-in futureproofing and the provision of an environmentally sustainable structure, to serve the applicants as their long-term family home. Replacing the existing structure gives a far better opportunity to improve airtightness and insulation through modern products and construction methods; greater options for sustainable heating sources and allows better opportunity to be made of natural light and solar thermal gains to minimise energy needs.
- 2.10 To help facilitate the sustainability improvements and allow the property to take advantage of views over its associated land, the proposals would see the orientation of the dwelling effectively shifted through 90 degrees. Furthermore, this orientation allows for both an improved landscaped approach to the dwelling and a better relationship with the annexe building, affording improved light and privacy to these areas. This approach is currently rather cramped adjacent its annexe and dominated by hard surfacing.
- 2.11 The proposals would see the appearance of the building brought up to date, using high-quality, sensitive materials which better reflect the vernacular. Use of the space within the roof above the ground floor accommodation, makes for more efficient use of the structure, without the need for adding a whole second storey.
- 2.12 This planning statement will now move onto a discussion of the site and context and relevant planning policy before a discussion of the planning merits of the proposal.



3.0 SITE & CONTEXT

- 3.1 The application site is situated on the eastern edge of the small village of Easterton, approximately 6 miles south of Devizes. The site is situated within the Special Landscape Area (SLA), but no other designations apply to the site or its immediate environs, see figure 1 below. The site lies wholly in a low Flood Risk Zone 1.



Figure 3 – Location of application site

- 3.2 Canfield is situated at the northern end of White Street and as already noted, comprises a bungalow with a large detached annexe/outbuilding. The applicants also own paddock land directly surrounding the curtilage to the north, south and east. There is a parking and turning area in the hard surfaced area between the two buildings.
- 3.3 The plot benefits from a high degree of visual screening and filtering provided by well-established boundary vegetation of dense beech hedgerows interspersed with mature/semi-mature trees which are a particular feature of the field/curtilage boundaries that can be clearly seen in the aerial photograph above.
- 3.4 The access to the property is via an existing established driveway from White Street to the south of Canfield, see figure 4 below. White Street is a tarmacked road which terminates at the site. Beyond the property, White Street becomes a byway (EAST20) connecting with the B3098 to the north.
- 3.5 The site itself and its immediate surrounds are relatively flat, with a gentle slope upwards to the north, and gentle fall downwards to the west. To the southeast, byway EAST 25 is relatively flat in the vicinity of the application site before rising up more steeply as it continues in a southeasterly direction towards Salisbury Plain.
- 3.6 There are dense beech hedgerows and mature/semi-mature trees along the eastern boundary with White Street/the byway EAST20, which provide notable

visual screening from the nearest public viewpoints as demonstrated in figures 4 & 6 below.

- 3.7 The southern curtilage boundary also benefits from dense hedging as shown in figure 7.



Figure 4 – View towards application building from access showing discreteness of the site behind dense boundary hedging and mature trees.



Figure 5: Showing view from within site close to access, with the southern curtilage section of boundary hedge on right, southern paddock boundary left with mature beech hedging and trees.



Figure 6: Showing site behind boundary alongside route of byway

- 3.8 From the north, views of Canfield from the byway (EAST20) are largely screened by the existing annexe/outbuilding in conjunction with the boundary vegetation.



Figure 7: View looking towards top of White Street, Canfield behind the trees (centre-left of road)

- 3.9 From slightly further south, as shown in Figure 7 above the site is almost entirely screened by trees and dense hedging to the field boundary.
- 3.10 From byway EAST25 which proceeds from the end of White Street in a southeasterly direction, filtered short and longer range views are obtainable looking

west. However, from here, the dwelling is very much seen in the context of the existing large annexe/outbuilding and the built form of the village including other smallholdings. Moreover, by re-orienting the replacement building towards the western boundary and covering the roof in natural slate, the proposed dwelling would appear entirely congruous and would not harm visual amenities of the area or the wider landscape.



Figure 8: showing view towards site (on right) from byway EAST25. Most visible building on the right is the existing annexe/ outbuilding.

- 3.11 From further upslope and more distant public rights of way, the changes would be discrete/ barely discernible in the context of other nearby buildings. Wider views from Salisbury Plain back towards the village are dominated by existing two storey housing, including those along White Street, and the former Jam Factory housing site.
- 3.12 As regards local character, aside from the local landscape, the more traditional village properties are centred around the High Street and include varied designs and a wide range of materials. Properties here include exposed timber framed examples, painted brick, local stone, orange brick and render for walls, whilst roofs are traditional clay tiles there are slates and even a thatch. Beyond this central core, further up White Street dwellings appear exclusively post-war dwellings where the use of brick and render dominate. Most are detached or semi-detached, two storey individual designs, with the use of orange bricks or render.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY

- 4.1 The main planning policy framework relevant to this proposal is the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) adopted in 2015 and the Government guidance within the National Planning Policy Framework 2025 (NPPF). The Wiltshire Design Guide (2024) is also relevant as an adopted Supplementary Planning Document. Easterton is not designated as a Neighbourhood Area and there is no draft or made Neighbourhood Plan covering the site.
- 4.2 At the local level, the WCS also contains a small number of 'saved policies' from the former Kennet Local Plan (KLP). It should be noted that this document was prepared prior to its adoption in 2004 and it is thus now over 20 years old and not up to date; having been adopted prior to the amalgamation of the four former districts, with four inconsistent policies, and prior to the introduction of the NPPF and its more recent updates.
- 4.3 The NPPF is supplemented with the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG).
- 4.4 It was anticipated that The Wiltshire Core Strategy would soon be replaced by the Wiltshire Revised Local Plan which commenced Examination in Public late 2025. However, the Inspector has since raised a number of fundamental concerns in relation to proposed housing numbers et al, and it has been recommended that the Council either withdraw the Local Plan or that the Inspector's final report be issued recommending non-adoption of the Plan. Whilst the WRLP looks highly unlikely to be adopted in the near future, the evidence base leading to the redrafting of a more consistent and up to date replacement dwelling policy which accords with the NPPF, is considered of some relevance. In this regard, draft Policy 82 (Housing in the Countryside) point 4, is the specific policy wording proposed to replace the old KLP version.
- 4.5 The relevant policies and guidance are set out in the tables below:

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (2025)

Chapter	Title
11	Making effective use of land
12	Achieving well-designed places
15	Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

WILTSHIRE CORE STRATEGY (Adopted 2015)

Chapter	Title
CP1	Settlement Strategy
CP2	Delivery Strategy

CP41	Sustainable Construction (now largely superseded by B Regs requirements)
CP51	Landscape
CP57	Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping
CP60	Sustainable Transport
CP61	Transport and Development

SAVED POLICIES OF THE KENNET LOCAL PLAN (Adopted 2004)

Chapter	Title
HC25	Replacement of Existing Dwellings

5.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

5.1 The key planning issues for the consideration of this proposal are:

- Principle of replacing an existing dwelling and discussion of policy requirements
- Impact of the replacement dwelling including any neighbour impact or character and appearance of area
- Other matters including parking and turning and BNG

Principle of Development

5.2 Local Plan policies, both past and forthcoming, make it clear that the replacement of existing dwellings in the countryside is acceptable 'in principle'.

5.3 However as noted above in Section 4.0, there is somewhat of a planning policy 'gap' with regards replacement dwellings in the countryside. Whilst the old Kennet Local Plan policy continues to retain 'Development Plan status', the weight that can be afforded to its more prescriptive requirements must be notably diminished by:

- a. the fact this is an aged policy, developed over 20 years ago;
- b. the policy was adopted prior to the amalgamation of the four districts into Wiltshire Council and its requirements are inconsistent with its counterpart policies;
- c. the more prescriptive policy requirements are at odds with the recently drafted policy 82 of the draft Revised Wiltshire Local Plan and which has been through public consultation.

5.4 The Local Plan Review also stated that policy HC25 would be deleted and, whilst the adoption of the LPR is someway off there is a clear direction of travel to remove this dated policy.

5.5 Nevertheless, this Saved Policy states (our emphasis underlined, comments in square brackets):

'In the countryside, the replacement of an existing dwelling which has not been abandoned will be permitted where:

- a) the siting is closely related to the footprint of the dwelling it replaces, unless the re-siting of the dwelling would remove a road safety hazard; and*
- b) the scale of the replacement dwelling is not significantly larger than the original structure.*

In cases where a dwelling is re-sited to remove a road safety hazard careful attention will be given to the potential impact of the proposed development on the wider landscape, particularly where the site is located within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or the Special Landscape Area. [Last paragraph does not apply as not being re-sited to remove a road safety hazard]'



- 5.6 As regards a), the siting of the proposed replacement dwelling is indeed closely related to the existing; the axis is simply re-oriented in the interest of environmental sustainability and minimising impact. Indeed, even with the re-orientation, approximately half of the footprint would occupy the very same floor area.
- 5.7 As regards the requirement at b), to not be 'significantly larger', it is logical that the context is of key importance. What can be reasonably accommodated or deemed 'significantly larger' is likely to be different in certain locations and it is likely the reason that the policy did not prescribe a particular percentage. This is borne out in the latest draft replacement dwelling policy (see paragraph 5.11). Factors such as visual prominence, the context of neighbouring buildings and the role that design and materials play are particularly relevant.
- 5.8 This plot benefits from a high degree of visual screening/filtering, with large gaps to neighbouring dwellings where it can reasonably accommodate a greater degree of change without resulting in particular harm. The footprint of the proposed replacement would be 36.9% larger (at 278 square metres) than the existing footprint (203 square metres). However, it is also worth noting that the extant consent already permits a footprint of 249 square metres and as such the footprint now proposed would only be 11.6% larger than the permitted extended dwelling. Only modest increases are proposed to the eaves (0.2m) to allow for modern construction methods. Whilst the ridge height would increase by just under 2m. This allows for a more traditional roof pitch which also enables rooms in the roof without going to a full 2 storey dwelling.
- 5.9 Furthermore, the design represents a significant improvement over the existing dwelling, with the proposed roof being finished in slate to better reflect the local palette of materials and blend with its surroundings. The retention of the low eaves and low ridge height means that the dwelling would continue to be viewed tantamount to a single storey building.
- 5.10 In summary, having regard to the comparable changes, the high degree of visual screening as demonstrated in section 3.0, the changes to the orientation which, in effect, keep the dwelling further from its eastern boundary, and by changing the roof material to a more vernacular and discrete slate, we submit that the proposed replacement dwelling is not 'significantly larger' in this context.
- 5.11 As discussed above, the Council's clear direction of policy travel is set out in the new draft Policy 82 which is far less prescriptive in terms of scale, favouring instead a more impact based assessment. Policy 82 4. (our emphasis underlined) states:

'When the development would entail the replacement or subdivision of an existing residential dwelling, provided that the scale and design of the development is appropriate, having regard to the local landscape and design context.'



In all cases, it must be demonstrated that safe and suitable access to the site is achievable for all users; that appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes have been considered; and that any adverse impacts on the transport network can be acceptably mitigated.'

- 5.12 As already reasoned above, the scale and design are considered appropriate having regard to local landscape and design context. However, these matters are given further consideration within the following subsection which considers visual and neighbour impacts.
- 5.13 Whilst the final paragraph of Policy 82 is of more relevance to 'new' countryside dwellings, which are also covered by this policy, in light of the situation that a 4- bedroom dwelling already exists in this location, the proposal will retain a safe and suitable access and will not adversely impact the transport network.
- 5.14 Arguably, the status of existing local level policies as reasoned above, are out-dated, in which case, the decision maker should rely minimally on these policies. In this instance, it is pertinent to consider this scheme on the basis of the planning balance; notably, whether the proposal results in significant harms which are not outweighed by the benefits.
- 5.15 For the reasons given, we submit that the proposals would deliver significant benefits, particularly in terms of the environmental sustainability benefits but also in terms of the living conditions, health and well-being of the applicants, and future occupants. Moreover, the scheme would notably deliver design improvements which would enhance the character and appearance of the dwelling, reducing hard surfacing and enhancing the landscaped approach. No neighbours would be adversely affected and this statement has evidenced how the scheme would conserve the visual amenities of the area and would not adversely impact the wider landscape.
- 5.16 Consequently, the proposals accord with Saved Policy HC25 of the Kennet Local Plan, draft forthcoming policies or more up to date impact-based policies, and there are no harms which would outweigh the benefits of approving this scheme.

Design, including residential amenity, impact on visual amenity and the wider landscape.

- 5.17 Policy CP57 of the WCS recognises that good design in new developments can help to provide a sense of place through drawing on local context and being complementary to the locality. Policy CP51 seeks to protect, conserve and enhance Wiltshire's distinctive landscape character.
- 5.18 The Wiltshire Design Guide, whilst perhaps more relevant for housing developments which involve layout, connections, and new streets, the document does discuss the importance of context, identity and quality detailing. In particular, Section 9.0 on homes and buildings notes that 'Well-designed homes and buildings are functional, accessible and sustainable.' It

further confirms that, 'Homes need to provide a good standard and quality of internal space. This includes room sizes, floor-to-ceiling heights, internal and external storage, sunlight, daylight and ventilation and air quality as well as sound, intrusive artificial light and odour levels. The quality of internal space needs careful consideration in order to protect amenity.'

- 5.19 The Design Guide clearly confirms that high quality design goes beyond external appearance focussing on living conditions and sustainability. Paragraphs 2.7 – 2.11 of this report have explained that the justification for pursuing this replacement dwelling is driven by many of the factors set out here, which are both challenging and costly to retrofit to an existing building which is not constructed to modern standards.
- 5.20 The proposals demonstrate a considered high-quality design which delivers a sustainable solution which has regard to existing needs but also provides accessible flexible spaces at ground floor level to future-proof changing requirements. Indeed, current Building Regulations standards demand that the structure will need to meet high standards of air-tightness, be well-insulated and utilise sustainable energy sources. Such standards would be almost impossible to attain through improvements to the existing structure without major interventions which cannot be justified here.
- 5.21 We submit that the proposed design changes here are in fact, a notable improvement upon the previously approved extensions and alterations, which resulted in a rather piecemeal design, albeit with a similar approach to upgrading the glazing and appearance. In that instance, the planning officer commented within the officer report that (our emphasis underlined):

'There are various floor-to-ceiling windows/doors located on all three elevations of the extensions which offer a modern appearance to the extension. Many of the existing openings on the property will also be replaced with larger openings of a more modern appearance, with the most notable change being the introduction of four full-height windows on the southern elevation in place of what is currently a pair of sliding doors and a pair of relatively small windows. A powder coated metal pergola is also proposed to extend along most of the southern elevation of the property and the eastern elevation of the extension.'

Overall, the proposed additions and alterations to the property will see a notable modernisation of the external appearance of the bungalow. Given the lack of any heritage designations or architectural merit offered by the existing property, this is considered acceptable.

- 5.22 This design proposal opts for a slate roof rather than the existing concrete tiles, and employs the use of render below eaves level with some timber cladding, however, like the previous scheme, the overall affect is a more contemporary design approach which was previously considered acceptable here.



- 5.23 Regarding impacts on visual amenity and the wider Special Landscape Area, section 3.0 of this report provides a detailed visual assessment of the site and context. It evidences through the photographs provided, the mature landscape setting for the existing site, and its context, including the presence of other dwellings in White Street and beyond which dominate. The proposed replacement dwelling has been discussed and in this context, we submit that the scheme would not result in any detrimental impact to visual amenity or the character of the surrounding landscape.
- 5.24 As noted by the planning officer considering the extension scheme, the site has no near neighbours, and as such, the scheme will not adversely affect neighbour amenity.
- 5.25 The scheme is therefore considered to comply with the WDG, policies CP57, and CP51 of the WCS. The development will also accord with Sections 12 and 15 of the NPPF, which highlights the significance of good design to the principles of sustainability and paragraph 130, which requires that planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting.

Other matters including parking and BNG

- 5.26 The existing dwelling is laid out as a four-bedroom property and the proposals would not increase this number of bedrooms. The site benefits from an existing safe access and driveway which would be retained. The local highway authority determining the previous extension application (also for 4 bedrooms) raised no objections on the basis of the proposed three parking spaces. This scheme similarly retains three large parking spaces and as such, the scheme provides adequate parking and would not be detrimental to highway safety.
- 5.27 The proposals therefore accord with Core Policy 61 and 64 of the WCS and the terms of the NPPF.
- 5.28 As regards Biodiversity Net Gain, this proposal is intended to be a self-build and will meet the requirements of the Self-Build Exemption for BNG purposes. As such, no further submission is necessary.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 This statement has explained the current planning policy position with regards replacement dwellings; confirming that whilst clearly acceptable in principle, the weight to be given to more prescriptive policy requirements is questionable in light of the aged nature of Saved Policy HC25 of the very old KLP and the clear direction of travel for future policy.
- 6.2 Whilst this statement provides a clear and substantiated case as to why the proposals are acceptable even when considered against the existing policy wording, it reasons that the decision maker may decide to attribute only very limited weight to these policies and the key factors may be best considered through assessment of the impacts and overall planning balance.
- 6.3 This statement has demonstrated, through the visual assessment and discussion of the external appearance, how the scheme would conserve the visual amenities of the area and would not adversely impact the wider landscape. The scheme would deliver external design improvements which would enhance the character and appearance of the dwelling, reduce hard surfacing and enhance the landscaped approach.
- 6.4 It concludes that parking and access arrangements would remain suitable and that no neighbours would be adversely affected.
- 6.5 Moreover, it explains that the proposals would deliver significant benefits, particularly in terms of the environmental sustainability benefits but also in terms of the living conditions, health and well-being of the applicants, as well as future occupants.
- 6.6 As such, the proposed development accords with the WCS, including Saved Policies of the KLP, the WDS and the National Planning Policy Framework. The Council is therefore politely requested to approve this application.

