

**DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT IN RESPECT OF
A PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF 5 no. DETACHED DWELLINGS EACH
WITH A GARAGE, TOGETHER WITH ALTERATIONS TO AN EXISTING
ACCESS ROAD AND ASSOCIATED EXTERNAL WORKS.**

**SITE OF THE FORMER 'NEEDLEWOOD' CARE HOME
KERESFORTH HILL ROAD, BARNSELY.**

ASSESSMENT OF CONTEXT

Physical

Surroundings

The area could generally be described as semi-countryside in character, located to the west of Barnsley, between Kingston and the village of Dodworth. The M1 motorway is located approximately 500m to the west of the site. Open fields extend to the northwest and to the southeast on the opposite side of Keresforth Hill Road. The nearest residential settlement is approximately 750m to the north, and consists mainly of detached dwellings set in reasonably sized gardens. These are located along the length of Dark Lane with further similar development just beyond to the north.

The site and general surrounding area is located within the 'green belt'.

Site

The site is the location of the former 'Needlewood' Care facility, a children's home.

The original group of buildings have now been demolished, following numerous acts of vandalism and general damage, after closure of the care home some time ago. There were also either one or two cottages located in the northeast corner of the site, identified on historical os location plans. These also have been demolished at some point in the past.

There has been a subsequent successful planning submission for the erection of a new care facility on the site, however this approval has not been implemented and the site has since been sold on the open market to Maton Homes Ltd, who is the applicant for this current planning application.

The site is accessed directly off Keresforth Hill Road via a private drive and the topography and general character of the site can best be described as a 'wooded hillside' location.

The original building group were located centrally within the site and the buildings would have been screened from view for most of the year, due to the dense mature tree planting that exists generally and more particularly around the periphery of the site.

The site falls significantly by several metres from a high point on the northern boundary, down the hillside to the southern boundary.

The access road traverses the site in an east / west direction along a level plateau that opens up to form a wider flat area originally where the buildings were sited.

As stated earlier, the site is located in the green belt and all existing buildings have been demolished although building rubble from demolition works remain on the site.

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PLANNING STATEMENT

Social

The proposed development will create a modest number of larger type detached dwellings each with 4/5 bedrooms, into this semi-rural settlement. This size of dwelling is generally recognised as being in short supply within the borough and Barnsley MBC is currently promoting the introduction of such dwellings, on suitably identified sites, allowing prospective purchasers the opportunity to live locally without having to relocate to neighbouring authorities to find a suitable home.

It can be seen that this particular proposal would indeed reflect the criteria in this regard and is a scheme that hopefully will be supported by the planning authority.

Due to the relatively modest scale of the proposed development there will be no significant social consequences resulting from it.

Economic

From an economic point of view the availability of such house types should help maintain a healthy 'middle management' workforce in the area helping to contribute to the economic growth within the borough.

Other short term economic benefits will relate to the construction of the proposed development, potentially creating employment for construction workers etc. There will also be the added benefit of local businesses being supported by this project in the short term, e.g. builders merchants, suppliers etc.

Planning Policies

The site is located in an area designated as green belt. The area of land surrounding the site is also green belt. Development nearest to and generally within the vicinity is residential, taking the form of individually designed dwellings.

Notwithstanding it's designation of green belt within the local plan, residential development is considered to be an appropriate use of the site.

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One of the most important factors to consider when assessing development within the green belt is it's 'setting' and effect it has on the 'openness' of the green belt. In this particular case, due to the physical characteristics of the site, the effect on openness and setting is not an issue. Any views of the site from beyond it's boundaries and views of the site from further away (and therefore it's setting within the green belt,) will not be effected by the development as proposed. The site is very heavily planted with mature trees, presenting a predominantly wooded area on the hillside. The proposed built form will be located within the central area of the site and heavily screened from view from all sides. There will be only glimpses of the proposed dwellings from certain aspects beyond the site boundaries.

Another factor to consider is the amount of development proposed when compared to the original built form on the site. We are aware that planning permission has been granted in recent times for a replacement care facility that was considerably larger than the one it was replacing. However this approval was never implemented and so it is the original building that has to be used in comparison with this application. When comparing the total footprint of the five dwellings proposed (excluding garages), with the footprint of the original care home and it's ancillary outbuildings, there is an increase in the total area, but this is not a considerable amount and equates to an increase of approximately 20% overall.

Although there will be an increase in the proposed total footprint size, it is considered, on balance that due to the form of the development, this is not considered to be a major problem.

It is accepted that it will not be possible to restrict development to the original footprint location of the care home. This could only be achieved successfully by building a single structure. The type of development proposed does not fit into this scenario. However as the individual dwellings will be located in natural or created 'clearings' within the trees and one of the intentions of the developer is to retain as many trees as possible on the site, then the form of the development is considered to be a logical in this regard.

When visiting the site and entering along the access road, there will be an overall sense of space with the added benefit of the individual dwellings being located in large plots within a mature woodland setting. This relatively modest proposal could certainly not be described as 'over-development' and the unique and quality character of this site remains uppermost in the aspirations of the developer.

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DESIGN

Use

The site was the former 'Needlewood' Care Facility, (now closed) and the site lies redundant. The original buildings having been demolished, the immediate location where the buildings were situated is now in an overgrown and untidy state.

There now exists an opportunity, (following the successful sale of the site to a residential property developer,) to create a quality small scale residential development which can only enhance the appearance of the local environment.

Amount

The proposal is to erect a small group of detached dwellings each with a double garage. The garages will be detached. The dwellings will take the form of quality family homes, each with 5 bedrooms and an appropriate level of associated reception rooms.

The houses will be sat within generous plots each with the added benefit of a 'backdrop' of mature tree planting as part of the broader retained woodland planting that is generally to remain. Access to each plot will be from the existing re-modelled roadway constructed as part of this development.

Layout

The proposed dwellings are located in generous plots and set a good distance away from each other along the length of the access drive. Three properties are positioned on the northern side of the access road, one on the

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end, (creating a sense of enclosure) and the fifth dwelling is positioned on the southern side of the access road.

Due to the topography of the site and the desire to retain as much of the existing mature tree planting as possible, the location of the properties is the most logical and best use of the site, resulting in the minimum of alteration to the existing vehicular access way, other than the creation of a suitable turning facility on the 'end' of the drive.

Due to the generous plot sizes, separation distances are easily met and there are no overlooking problems between adjacent plots. s have been positioned to meet the separation distances required by the planning Private amenity space is of a particularly high standard due not only to the physical size of each plot but also to the fact that each is located generally within the existing woodland setting.

The houses will generally follow the gradient of the site, resulting in a 'stepping up' of roof levels when viewed as a street scene. There will be no necessity to create 'artificially generated' levels.

Each dwelling will have the frontage facing the access road, with private garden areas located to the rear.

Scale

The houses will generally be 'two and a half' storey in height with the upper floor contained wholly within the roof void. The exception to this will be plot 1, located on the southern side of the access road which will also have a basement storey, but visible only from the rear, as the site slopes quickly away to the south and this will take advantage of the extent of 'under-building' required to deal with the variation in site levels.

When viewed from the access road however, each dwelling will only present a traditional storey height elevation with the additional feature of dormer windows built into the roof slopes.

On the northern side of the access road, the site rises fairly quickly to the north and so the rear gardens, particularly of plots 3, 4 and 5 will be terraced for the initial several metre projection into the rear gardens, to avoid the construction of retaining walls that could present a dominant feature and appear overbearing.

The scale of the development is considered acceptable as there are no existing dwellings on the site to which the new dwellings have to relate and that could set a precedent in terms of scale.

Landscaping

The main feature of this site is the existing mature woodland that exists throughout the site. It is proposed that the arboricultural report submitted as part of this application, will set out a clear strategy for management of the existing trees and general landscape features. It is inevitable that some trees will need to be removed and many of these will be due to the poor condition they are in and poor prospect of future health, but as part and parcel of the management of the woodland generally, it will be proposed to introduce replacement planting

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wherever possible. Generally speaking, the existing mature tree screening around the periphery of the site will be retained, helping to maintain the high degree of privacy that exists in the central area of the site and indeed where the proposed dwellings are to be located.

There will of course be further landscape features introduced within individual private garden areas, but it is not anticipated that these areas will be under planning control.

Appearance

The external built form will be of good quality facing brickwork with enhanced detailing in re-constituted stone. The roofs will be a plain clay tile, grey in colour.

Access

Access to the site will be the existing access road upgraded to meet the standards advised and stipulated as part of the pre-application enquiry process entered into prior to this submission. Minimum visibility splays will be created and the access road will be increased in width to 5m throughout the entire length. A turning facility will also be created and gates at the entrance to the site will be set back a minimum of 5m from the roadside. The surface treatment will be tarmac with a suitable kerb/edging detail. The surface will be suitably sealed and drained and there will be no excessive gradients.

Drives and parking areas within each plot will be surfaced and sealed, again with no excessive gradients and will be suitable for use by disabled persons. Access into each of the dwellings will be fully DDA compliant.