

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

(March 2010)

Proposal

Full Planning Approval for the construction of a new four bedroom two storey dwelling and detached garage on Land Adjacent to Hillcrest, Green Street, Holt, Wrexham.

Context

To conform with Policy PS1 (Settlements Limits) of the Unitary Development Plan, the proposed development site is within the "Village development boundaries" and is located in the middle of Holt village limits.

It is proposed that the new dwelling would be built on the large sloping site within the garden space of the applicant's existing house with a new boundary between the two properties. The new dwelling is to be an 'upside down house' with bedrooms at lower ground floor level and living accommodation at upper ground floor level.

This Planning Application is a resubmission after withdrawing the previous application (**REF: P/2009/0300**) to enable a resolution to some issues raised by the Conservation Officer regarding overall design aesthetics.

A meeting was held on site with Gerry Kellett (Senior Planning Officer) and Anna Irwin (Conservation Officer) to discuss the issues with the design. It was agreed that an innovative modern design is more appropriate for the site than a pastiche style.

Following the meeting, correspondences were exchanged with Gerry and Anna proposing alternative designs until we finally arrived at the proposed scheme, which both parties agreed was acceptable in principle.

Accessibility

The site is located approximately ½ mile from the nearest Convenience Store, Post Office, Garage, Village Hall, Pub etc.

The site is located adjacent to the B5102 road, making it easy to reach amenities in the surrounding town & city (Wrexham and Chester).

A meeting was held with Phil Palmer (Highway Department) to discuss the access arrangements for the new dwelling as well as existing provisions for Hillcrest & Hill Cottage.

The vehicular access to the new dwelling will be off the existing access to Hillcrest, with a turning area located within the boundaries of the new house and three designated parking spaces.

The access arrangement for Hillcrest will remain the same however the parking and turning area has been amended to incorporate a satisfactory individual turning area and three designated parking spaces.

The access arrangement for Hill Cottage (1 bedroom) will remain unchanged as will the designated parking space, however there is a large turning space created within the new wider driveway.

It is proposed that a small section of the stone boundary wall at the access will be taken down and rebuilt as it is currently in a state of disrepair. The wall will be sympathetically reconstructed to retain the wall's aesthetic merit and conform with policy EC7 (Conservation Areas).

Suitable access arrangements will be made to and within the dwelling to provide adequate facilities for people with disabilities.

- The parking spaces have been located as close as possible to the main entrance into the building. The parking area allows adequate space for the transfer from vehicle to wheelchair where required.
- Level footpaths with a suitable surface will be provided from the car parking area to the main front door at upper ground level.
- External lighting will be provided to illuminate external areas around the building.
- All external doors at upper ground floor level will have a low threshold (not exceeding 15mm) suitable for wheelchair users.
- The Main Entrance door will incorporate a door with an opening width of approximately 850mm to afford easier access for wheelchair users.
- Every effort has been made with the design of the dwelling to ensure that the entrance storey (upper ground floor level) of the dwelling will be accessible by all persons, wheelchair users and ambulant disabled persons.

Character

Amount:

1 No. Four Bedroom dwelling set over 2 storeys with a floor area of 199.7m².

Siting:

The new dwelling will integrate well with the existing (Hillcrest) dwelling, as the first storey will be set below visible ground level. This gives the effect on approach to the dwelling that it is only a single storey structure. The spatial arrangement of the dwelling has been designed to avoid as many of the habitable room windows overlooking the existing (Hillcrest) dwelling.

Alternatives for the siting of the dwelling and garage were considered but none were appropriate for this site. The size, shape and slope of the site, the location of adjacent buildings and the access requirements have all influenced the siting and presented no credible alternatives.

Appearance:

The existing surrounding buildings are generally residential dwellings. Materials include brick and render external walls, slate pitched roofs, corbelled brick details and decorative stone features.

The external materials of the proposed dwelling are intended to create a clean modern aesthetic. The smooth 'white' rendered walls create clean well defined lines while the areas of cedar horizontal boarding form exciting shapes and outlines.

It is anticipated that when excavating the site there is likely to be an area of sandstone found and this will be used to avoid the need for retaining walls where possible. Where a retaining wall is required it will consist of a concrete wall with a decorative sandstone facing layer.

As noted above various options for the external appearance were investigated in consultation with the Planning Officer and Conservation Officer but none were considered appropriate.

Scale:

To conform with Policy GDP1 (a) (Development Objectives) of the Unitary Development Plan, the scale of the new dwelling is appropriate to the surrounding buildings.

The surrounding buildings are generally recently built two storey residential dwellings.

Landscaping:

The garden area to the new dwelling is to be landscaped as detailed in the supplied Landscaping Scheme.

It is proposed that three trees (two Apples, one Cyprus) are removed from the site as indicated on the provided plans.

It is proposed that a small section of an existing hedge is removed due to the position of the dwelling however, it is anticipated that where possible as much of the hedge will be retained.

The driveway to the property will be well defined and finished with a surface suitable for wheelchair users.

Community Safety

The proposed dwelling sits alone on an individual plot of land, natural surveillance is provided from windows overlooking the site entrance and parking area.

The shared access road to the dwelling will be clearly defined and segregated from the adjacent existing dwelling to provide a sense of ownership and security.

Environmental Sustainability

The proposed new dwelling will sit on what is currently the existing garden of Hillcrest, where there are no important habitats or other biodiversity features to be disturbed.

The new dwelling will be designed to reduce energy consumption and maximise energy conservation through the use of appropriate materials, design, layout and orientation to conform with Policy GDP1 (c) (Development Objectives) of the Unitary Development Plan.

- The new dwelling will be fitted with solar panels on the roof as an alternative means of heating the water, which will improve the buildings energy efficiency and minimise the energy demand and carbon emissions. The solar panels will be orientated in a southerly direction to maximise the efficiency of the system.
- The new dwelling will be constructed to comply with the current Building Regulations. It will meet the energy performance requirements set out in them for the construction elements, heating, energy efficient lighting and ventilation.
- As Planning Consultants, we have made our Clients aware of the importance of using sustainable materials for the construction of the dwelling.
- Our Client is aware that the construction elements should include recycled and reclaimed materials where possible, as well as using locally sourced materials to reduce transport emissions.

Suitable space and facilities will be provided for storage and segregation of recyclable waste and non recyclable waste.

The surface water drainage would be taken to a new soakaway located within the boundaries of the site. This will reduce the demand on any storm water drains/sewers in the area.

Dual Flush Toilets would be fitted within the dwelling and careful consideration given to appliances, taps and sanitaryware for water efficiency.