Redevelopment of 2 Mill Lane , Horsemans Green, SY13 3EA

No. 2 Mill Lane is a small 2 storey (50m2 total internal area) cottage and attached to no.1
The ceiling height at ground floor is less than 2.0m with beams at less than 1.8m
It is dilapidated and beyond sensible repair and refurbishment with an EPC rating of G
The land around the curtilage of no2 is owned by no.1

It is intended to demolish no.2 Mill Lane, rebuild the gable wall to no. 1 and build a replacement dwelling within the existing curtilage of no.2

No.1 Mill Lane was redeveloped some 30 years ago (HAN 18652 05/12/1990) with some small recent additions completed in 2018 on planning app P2017/0536.

In their original form nos. 1 and 2 were of identical dimensions and it is intended that no.2 be redeveloped to a similar (no larger) footprint to that of no.1 as is.
Despite the existance of the one third guideline, In 1992 the enlargment of no.1 was considered to be practical in affording reasonable modern standards and further in 2017 permission was granted to further increase no.1 by a small margin.The total added dimensions of no.1 are now an increase of 250% of the original dwellings footprint, which creates a comfortable but modest dwelling with enough room to live and breath and store the neccesities of life

The proposed design of no.2 seeks to be of similar design and style to no.1 and of similar brick with a natural slate roof with some small interventions of rough -cast render to minimise massing of brickwork and it will form an homogenous grouping with no.1 with no detriment to the character of the local landscape and given the condition of no.2 and with mature planting will improve it.

The siting and aspect of the proposal is intended to distance the 2 dwellings to the maximum within the plot and thereby provide maximum privacy of both by minimising overlooking windows this will be in compliance with the respective policy and guidelines providing a minimum of 22m between windows in habitable rooms thereby avoiding any loss of amenity for either dwelling. In addition a screen of small trees to be planted adjacent to the boundary fence as per the Green Infrastructure planting Drg 009

Ceiling heights at both floors are kept to 2.3m to minimise ridge height. And the site is to be excavated as per drg. 004 and demonstrated in 005 elevations in order to reduce the effective height from the road (north and west elevations)

Parking and turning is provided for 2 cars.
The position of the drive provides maximum visibility splays available

A tree planting scheme which has been paused due to existing trees not counting as mitigation will recommence and a minimum further 50 native trees will be planted in the surrounding field to the west which is owned by no.1.

A Solar PV system is to be installed and may include a heat pump and battery storage subject to a detailed efficacy study.

It is intended that the construction of no.2 be to informally achieve very high eco standards of sustainability and we will work on the details of that when PP is secured .

An improvement in foul water discharge will be provided by the inclusion of a modern package treatment plant as evidenced in the nutrient Budget Calculator and specification of the same . the treatment plant will be managed and maintained as per the manufacturers instruction.
The ecological environment will be enhanced as described in the Green Infrastructure Statement and plan.

In conclusion, we are aware of the previous comments of the planning officer regarding the siting and scale of the proposal.

1 Siting.

The opportunity exists to create a more harmonious grouping (v1 Drg 010) of two dwellings which will afford the occupants of both,the amenity of space between their homes as opposed to that frequently provided by the cramming in larger scale developments where profit or a requirment to squeeze in an allocated number of dwellings per acre is the overiding factor, and therefore this seems an opportunity which can be grasped by a relaxation of policy now and will not occur again in the forseeable future

Reference to Drg 010 siting alternatives v2 demonstrates that by placing the proposal 50% on the existing footprint as suggested by planning demonstrates a reduced distance between dwellings kitchen windows and difficulties of vehicular access. The proposed v1 driveway is not now viable and access would be on the north west corner, however due to the the level changes below road (1.2m at that point) which have been introduced to reduce the visual impact of the building from the roadside amongst other reasons, the drive would drop 1.2m over a distance of 1m which is not viable.
This will also be the case if the building were redesigned as suggested by planning to not be “L”shaped but a simple rectangular layout sitting 50% on the existing footprint
Observance of policy to site the proposal within the existing footprint would clearly be to the detriment of both buildings in a number of ways and to the visual amenity of the area which will become obvious if a site visit is made rather than the usual desktop study.

2 Scale.

As outlined above, we propose to follow the redevelopment of no.1 in scale and style.
No.1 is generally considered a success locally and sits comfortably in its landscape.
The question of proportion raises the question of “proportion to what”, there are in the local area a number of dwellings that have existed for 100 years or more, that exceed the proposal in scale by a large margin and yet sit perfectly well and are accepted visually without a second consideration.

Proportion to the existing no.2 is to a building that will not exist and therefore the comparison will be meaningless. No.2 was built some 300 years previously where no consideration was made of the occupants other than basic shelter from weather. The only comparison in scale therefore becomes no.1
The addition of no.2 as proposed will create a neat and tidy grouping and will be in proportion to no.1. and with appropriate planting and landscaping the pair will become a part of the landscape.

Whilst we are aware that precedent is not policy I would draw your attention to the following statement of The High Court in similar circumstances where on appeal against an LPA decision to refuse an application the Court backed the Inspector

"In the exercise of planning judgement a relavent consideration may be the local authorities own approach to similar applications in the locality. Public law principals demand consistancy in the application of policies unless there are good reasons to be contrary. Consistancy is required as a broad principal of good administration and derives from general principals of fairness in the treatment of citizens."

We suggest that a site visit is performed whereby we are confident that the proposal will become tangible and a good use of flexibility of process,