
The Parsonage, Borough Green

Planning, Design and Access Statement

March 2018



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1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement (PDAS) has been prepared by Savills, on behalf of the Diocese of Rochester (DoR), to accompany an outline planning application, submitted to Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council (TMBC). The description of development is as follows:

“Demolition of garage and erection of dwelling with associated car parking and landscaping”.

- 1.2 The purpose of this PDAS is to explain the design of the proposal and how it accords with relevant planning policy.

About the Applicant

- 1.3 The DoR is one of 41 dioceses of the Church of England and was established by St Augustine in 604AD. Geographically, the DoR covers North and West Kent and the London Boroughs of Bromley and Bexley and comprises 216 parishes with 239 churches serving a population of 1.3 million.

Report Structure

- 1.3 This report sets out the planning context for the proposed development, including a description of the site as existing and an analysis of the planning policies that the application will be assessed against. It goes on to describe the proposals in terms of Use, Amount, Layout, Scale, Landscaping, Appearance, and Access. It concludes by setting out the case for development, providing an assessment against relevant planning policies.

Application Documentation

- 1.4 In addition to this report, the application submission comprises the following:
- Application Form;
 - Existing Site Plan @ 1:500 ; and
 - Indicative Site Layout Plan @ 1:200.

Pre-Application Consultation

- 1.5 A pre-application enquiry was previously lodged, with TMBC’s written response (ref. TM.17.02035/FINF), and the Council considered that:

“it would appear that the development of a detached two-storey dwelling would not be likely to harm the local area and can in principle be supported”.

2.0 Description of Existing Site

- 2.1 The application site (hereafter referred to as 'the site') consists of an existing dwelling (The Parsonage) located off Maidstone Road, Borough Green. The site also contains a garage and a large amount of garden space. A driveway and associated car parking is provided in front of the house (to the north of the site). There are also a number of trees on the perimeter of the site, which provide screening.
- 2.2 The site is located approximately 320 metres from Borough Green High Street. It is well served by public transport with a number of bus stops in close proximity to it (approximately 2 minutes walk).
- 2.3 The surrounding context of the site is largely residential in character, and the scale of the surrounding houses is predominantly two storey. The site is situated within the settlement boundary of Borough Green.

Access

- 2.4 Vehicular and pedestrian access is provided direct from Maidstone Road.

Planning History

- 2.5 The site's planning history has been reviewed using TMBC's online planning register. The following planning applications have been identified at the site:
- *Kitchen enlargement and alterations to form W.C. cloaks and porch. Approved Ref. 75/10042/FUL;*
 - *Demolish existing garage, provide new garage, enlarge drive for Rochester Diocesan Soc, and Board of Finance. Approved Ref. 72/10912/OLD.*
- 2.6 The majority of planning applications in the wider local area range from small scale domestic alterations to conversion of buildings.

3.0 Planning Policy Context

- 3.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires all development proposals to be decided in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The following section provides an overview of the planning policy context affecting the site.

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

- 3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was adopted in 2012 and includes a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Annex 1 of NPPF is important in determining the weight to be attached to both existing and emerging Development Plan policies.
- 3.3 Paragraph 215 of the NPPF makes it clear that saved local plan policies should only be afforded weight relative to their degree of conformity with the NPPF.

Status of Planning Policy in The Tonbridge and Malling Borough

Adopted Planning Policy

- 3.4 The adopted Development Plan in TMBC includes the saved policies of the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Local Plan (1998), the Core Strategy (2007), the Development Land Allocations Plan (2008) and the Managing Development and the Environment Development Plan Document (2010).
- 3.5 The policies within the Tonbridge and Malling Development Plan pre-dates the NPPF. This means any saved policies must be assessed to determine the degree of conformity. Paragraph 14 of the NPPF state that planning permission should be approved that where policies in the Development Plan are out of date unless:
- any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF; or
 - specific policies in the NPPF indicate that development should be restricted.

Emerging Planning Policy

- 3.6 TMBC has prepared their draft Local Plan, and are in the process of continuing to complete and update evidence where necessary. The Council anticipate presenting a revised Local Plan timetable to the Planning and Transportation Advisory Committee in March 2018. A Draft Local Plan is likely to be presented to Committee in June 2018.

4.0 Proposed Development

4.1 This section sets out the design of the proposal and how it responds to its context. The description of the proposed development is:

“Demolition of garage and erection of single dwelling with associated car parking and landscaping”.

Use

4.2 The proposed use is residential.

Amount

4.3 A single dwelling is proposed.

Layout

4.4 An indicative site plan has been submitted in support of this outline planning application, which shows the current design intent for the layout of the proposed dwelling. The proposed development has been located to create minimal impact on the existing dwelling (The Parsonage) and surrounding residential properties.

Scale

4.5 This planning application is submitted in outline with the details of scale reserved for future determination. However, it is likely that the proposed dwelling will be commensurate in height to dwellings in the surrounding area at two storeys.

Landscaping

4.6 This planning application is submitted in outline with the details of landscape reserved for future determination. The current design intent is that the landscape will be used to sensitively integrate the proposed dwelling within the curtilage of the existing site.

Appearance

4.7 This planning application is submitted in outline with the details of appearance reserved for future determination. The current design intent is that the dwelling will fit with the local vernacular in terms of their architectural style.

Access and Parking

4.8 Access to the site will be provided via the existing access point from Maidstone Road. This will result in a shared access point between the proposed development and the existing Parsonage.

4.9 The new dwelling will have its own car parking spaces, the exact layout of which will be determined through the submission of reserved matters applications.

5.0 Planning Assessment

- 5.1 This section explains how the proposal is in accordance with adopted planning policy. This includes as assessment of the degree of conformity of saved Development Plan policies, against the NPPF.

Principle of development

- 5.2 The site is located within Borough Green, which is designated under Core Strategy Policy CP12 as a Rural Service Centre. Policy CP12 permits housing development within the confines of Rural Service Centres.
- 5.3 It is noted that the application site consists of private residential garden land, which is excluded from the definition of brownfield land in the NPPF. However, the site constitutes a sustainable location close to public transport, shops and services. It will also result in a material increase in the local housing supply, which is supported by paragraph 47 of the NPPF.
- 5.5 Development on greenfield land needs to be balanced against other policies, including the need for new housing in the Borough. There is support for housing within rural service centres. The provision of a new dwelling can also be achieved without compromising the amenity of adjacent dwellings while providing sufficient amenity space for the existing Parsonage, and the proposed dwelling. This is discussed further below.
- 5.6 The pre-application advice (ref. TM.17.02035/FINF) confirms that the development for a detached two-storey dwelling would not likely harm the local area and can in-principle be supported.

Layout and Amenity

- 5.7 Core Strategy Policy CP24 (Achieving A High Quality Environment) seeks to ensure that new development must be well designed, fit for purpose and locally distinctive. It also requires development to be appropriate in terms of scale, density, layout, siting, character and appearance to the surrounding environment. Policy CP24 also states development which, by virtue of its design, would be detrimental to the built environment, amenity or functioning and character of a settlement will not be permitted.



No.s 16 and 18 Maidstone Road



No. 33 Maidstone Road



Relatively Modern Design at Fox Lea, Opposite



façade along the southern side of Maidstone Road, to the east of the Property

- 5.8 This application seeks outline planning consent with all matters reserved. The design and layout will therefore be determined through the submission of reserved matters applications. An illustrative site plan is submitted with the application, which shows the proposed dwelling setback from the existing Parsonage so as to minimise any overlooking between the two properties. The existing Parsonage has first floor obscure glazed windows on its west elevation (where it faces towards the site) and ground floor utility room windows, which are not habitable rooms.
- 5.9 The buildings of the property to the east of the site (no. 28 Maidstone Road) do not have habitable windows on their western elevation, which means that there will be no overlooking between no. 28 and the proposed dwelling.
- 5.10 The existing garden plot is generous and can accommodate two dwellings whilst also providing sufficient private amenity space. The proposed development therefore complies with policy CP24.

Transport and Access

- 5.11 Core Strategy Policy CP2 (Sustainable Transport) explains that development must not generate a significant number of vehicular trips and must be located near suitable public transport with access to local centres.
- 5.12 The site is located approximately 300 metres from Borough Green train station which has regular services into London and Ashford International. There are a number of bus stops located near the site with regular services to Sevenoaks and Maidstone. The site is also located close to shops, services and employment opportunities, so constitutes a highly sustainable location.
- 5.13 In addition, as recognised in the pre-application response, the provision of an additional dwelling on the land at the Parsonage will not generate any significant additional vehicular trips and will have a negligible impact on the local highway network. The proposed development provides adequate car parking with suitable and safe vehicle access from Maidstone Road.

Trees

- 5.14 Policy NE4 (Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland) in the Managing Development and the Environment Development Plan states where possible development proposals should seek to retain the existing trees on the site to provide appropriate screening. The proposal seeks to retain the existing trees on the site boundary and reinforce with new planting to provide appropriate screening. The proposal is therefore in accordance with policy NE4.
- 5.15 An Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA), dated 8th November 2017, has been prepared by Arbeco to assess significant trees at the site. It concludes that there is no arboricultural reason why the development cannot go ahead by taking appropriate protective and mitigation measures so that all retained trees can be adequately protected, preventing any negative impacts to those trees.

Ecology

- 5.16 Policy NE3 (Impact of Development on Biodiversity) in the Managing Development and the Environment Development Plan states proposals must make provision for the retention of the habitat and protection of wildlife links. Existing vegetation on the site is predominantly amenity space with little ecological value. The proposal seeks to retain the existing trees on the site, which means that there will be minimal ecological impacts.
- 5.17 An Ecological Assessment was undertaken on 8th November 2017, which identified that no further surveys were deemed necessary for impacts on various species. It has been recommended that a precautionary approach be adopted for site clearance works in relation to breeding birds and reptiles. The Ecological Assessment concluded that the proposed development site is considered to have low ecological value. The development is therefore in accordance with Policy NE3 (Impact of Development on Biodiversity).

6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1 The principle of development, which this outline application seeks to establish, is made out, and encouraged through Core Strategy Policy CP12 (Rural Service Centres). The proposed development is sustainably located within the settlement boundary, and will materially increase the local housing supply.
- 6.2 The proposed development has been carefully designed in order to respond positively to the qualities of the site, whilst not having a negative impact on residential amenity.
- 6.3 The proposal complies with relevant planning policy and guidance. It also amounts to sustainable development in the context of Paragraph 14 of the NPPF. With reference to Paragraph 14 of the NPPF, the proposed development:
- Is sustainably located close to public transport, shops, services and local facilities
 - Will increase the supply of housing, and make efficient use of an unused piece of land;
 - Can be designed to a high standard of design quality that is appropriate to the surrounding context, including the adjoining properties;
 - Will not have any detrimental impact on trees or ecology; and
 - Appropriate off-street car parking can be provided via a safe access.