

1.0_INTRODUCTION:

1.1_Site Address:

Kent House and Invicta House
South Street
Meopham
Gravesend
DA13 0QA

1.2_Outline:

The purpose of this Design Appendix (DA) is to explain and justify how all the relevant matters relate to the design. This DA sets out how the design for the proposed new dwellings, the reconfiguration of the site, the external landscaping and how the issues relating to access have all been addressed.

DAP Architecture Ltd have been appointed to complete the following Design Appendix relating to submission of a planning application and is to be read in conjunction with all architectural drawings.

The proposal is to construct 7 new dwellings with associated parking and landscaping. Further details of the proposal are set out within the following sections making up this document.

This statement provides an appraisal of the site and context conditions and characteristics and demonstrates how the design reflects requirements and design objectives.

The unique site provides a great opportunity for redevelopment with increased visual interest. The contemporary high quality design will enhance the appearance of the site and identity of the local area.

1.3_Existing Site Use + Character:

The site is located within Meopham. Meopham is a large linear village and civil parish in the Borough of Gravesham. Meopham Green is home to a cricket pitch, where the sport has been played every summer since at least 1776, and which is one of Kent's idyllic settings for the game. Meopham Green Conservation Area forms the northern part of the site boundary. Since the 1920s, the main road through the village, the A227 (1), has become busier as a through-route connecting North Kent with the M20 motorway at the foot of the North Downs.

Meopham is one of the longest linear settlements in Europe, being 7 miles (11 km) in length and is home to The Meopham Windmill (2), which was built in 1801.

Meopham Railway Station, at the north end of the village, is on the Chatham Main Line which runs to Victoria Station in London. There are three state schools in the village along with a library, two primary schools a Grammar School and a local Public House - The Cricketers Inn (3).

The site is a rectilinear plot situated on the edge of South Street. The site rises from East to West and continues to rise further towards the non-designated heritage asset (Greenfields) (4). The site currently contains two properties that were once police houses. To the rear of the site is open farmland (5)

The site is located within an existing residential area within easy walking distance to local amenities and public transport links. We believe the site represents an opportunity to contribute towards the continued growth and success of Meopham.

The site area measures approximately 2060m².

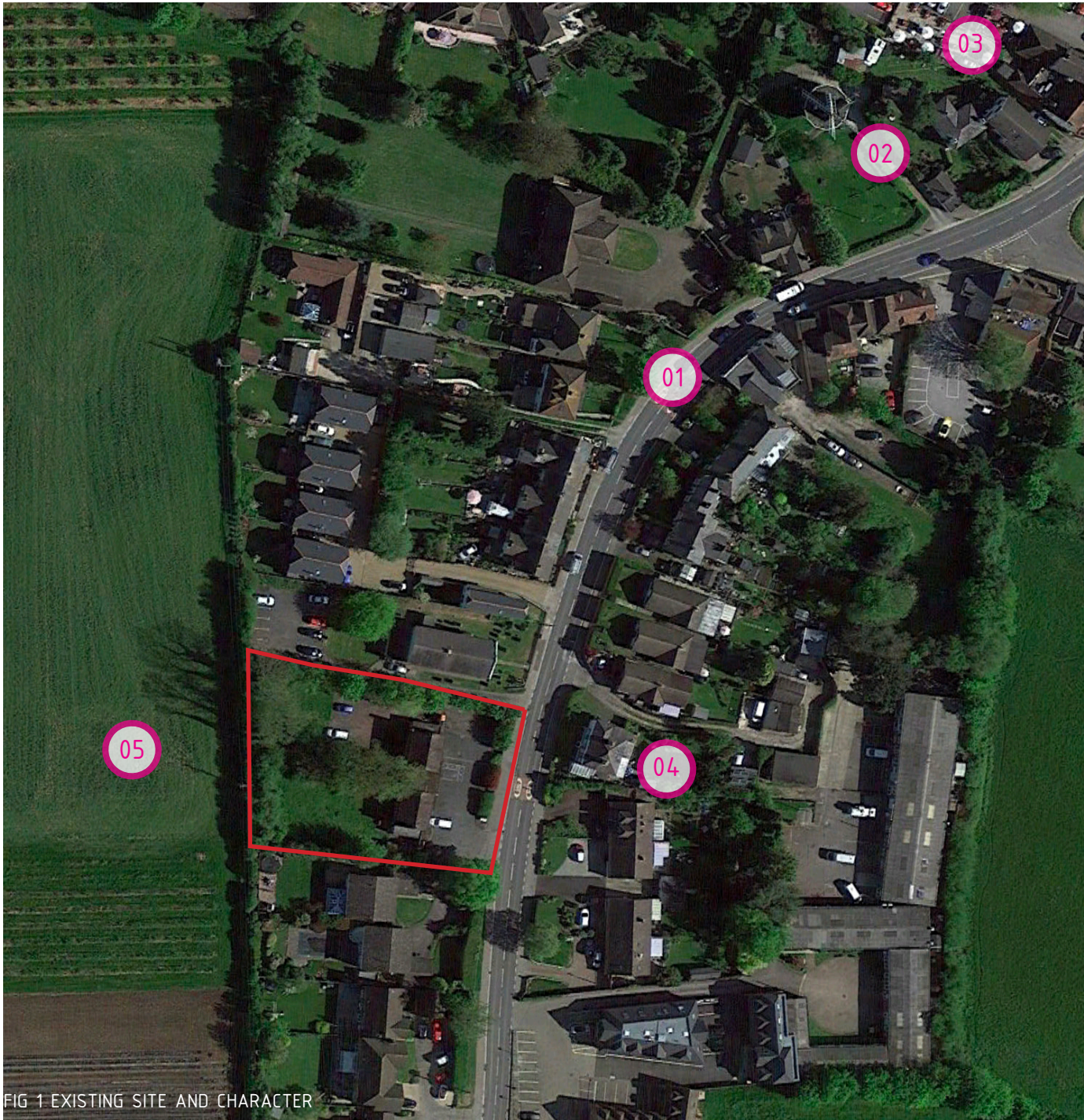


FIG 1 EXISTING SITE AND CHARACTER



FIG 2 - THE MEOPHAM WINDMILL



FIG 3 CRICKETERS INN



FIG 4 GREENFIELDS

2.0_DESIGN APPROACH:

2.1_Options and Pre-App:

DAP were appointed to undertake feasibility and brief development from RIBA stages 0-2 in order to evaluate with the rest of the design team an appropriate response to the site and what may be achievable within the sites context. Apartments were not considered to be appropriate so a housing mix that blended with the context was chosen.

The proposed development will make an important contribution to the rejuvenation of the site, especially in relation to providing high quality accommodation to serve residents.

From these initial massing diagrams and feasibility studies we progressed to pre-app with a refined proposal which included a sense of materials, scale, contextual relationship and design. The feedback from the pre-app was then encompassed in a revised scheme which this document now forms part of.

A ten dwelling option was chosen to take forward to pre-app. As the proposal would front onto the main highway of South Street a terrace was chosen as building typology to mirror the row of terraces to the north of the site. The neighbouring Meopham Green Baptist Church also sets a height and mass precedent that informed the pre-app proposal. Both blocks that formed the pre-app proposal were informed by Phase 2's planning appraisal carried out at the concept design stage. This deemed the most appropriate building typology to be traditional in form and design. Therefore traditional pitched roofs with dormers and gables were propagated through the approach.

Further to the north a recently approved and

completed set of four houses that forms infill. This again has been kept traditional in approach so a similar method of design was deemed acceptable at pre-app stage.

To the south of the site, a collection of two storey dwellings set back from the road forms the southern boundary and provides a visual line that was addressed to be the edge of the proposal by linking existing urban grain from North to South.

The strong side pitch also strengthened the case to continue the very linear approach of a terrace at the front of the proposal, that could also be lower in height making use of the roof space to provide smaller footprints and respect the rhythm of the streetscene. Maintaining a two story dwelling housetype would enable the proposal to fit in with the existing typology of the site that already contains similar pitched roof dwellings.

It was important to avoid overlooking into these properties from anything proposed on the site. All aspects were orientated to face south-east and north-west to avoid this possibility.

Visual breaks were preserved along both proposed blocks in order to create separation and to open up views to the countryside beyond. This also avoided an overbearing scheme that would act negatively on neighbouring properties.

Gardens were designed and orientated to maximise access to daylight, and allow for privacy.

The dwellings are orientated to face East-West to maximise access to daylight. Their orientation also helps with heating any proposed thermal mass to aid a sustainable approach to heating and cooling during the season and reduce energy consumption.

The pre-app drawings proposed that the development would have an access road into the middle of the site surrounded by a mixture of hard and soft landscaping with associated parking. House type 3 was designed to have integral car ports.

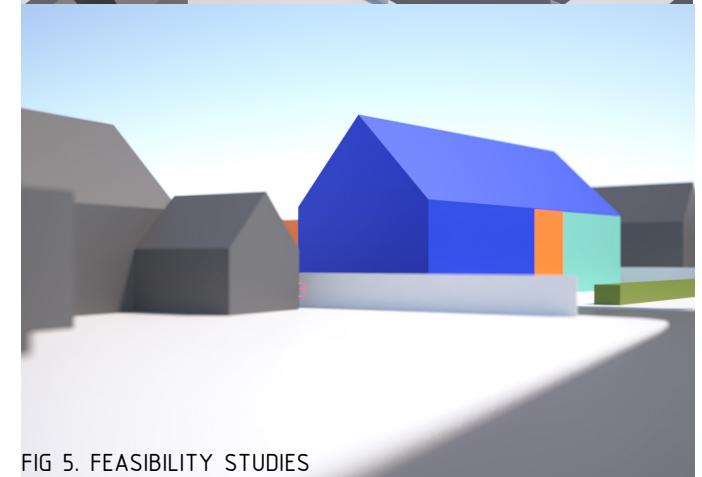


FIG 5. FEASIBILITY STUDIES

3.0_DESIGN:

3.1_Planning Proposal:

To address the issues raised from the pre-app response we have responded by amending the scheme to alleviate these potential issues in the following ways.

The proposed scheme has been designed to set blend in with the local vernacular by using traditional shapes and forms.

The proposed design of the buildings has been refined through a rigorous in house design methodology in order for it to harmonise and blend with the existing building typology and grain, whilst ensuring a high quality is achieved.

The proposed building forms a direct relationship to the scale and massing of the existing surrounding street and building residential forms. It was important to marry these two scales together during the concept design stages. It was also crucial to not break this relationship and the design mirrors the existing shape and form of nearby dwellings and new developments.

As part of the design team review process, the site was discovered to contain a drainage easement over an existing sewer at the rear of the site, underneath the rear block of the proposal. This constraint has led to amendments being made to the layout of the scheme and ultimately a reduction in the number of dwellings within the site boundary. This now also responds with pre-app advice received that the proposal was too dense and would benefit from a reduction in the number of units.

The scheme has now been revised down to comprise a terrace of 3 bed/5 person dwellings (Block A). To the rear (BLOCK A) the proposal has been revised down in unit number to a single dwelling house (3 bed/5 person) and two maisonettes (BLOCK B). In total this results in 7 dwellings on the site

This has allowed more amenity to be given to the dwellings. Block B has been set back and orientated to avoid overlooking of both the neighbouring property to the south and the proposed terrace to the south.

The proposal has maintained its traditional pitched roof form, set back from the road edge. The decision was also taken following feedback and study of the surroundings to continue to use brickwork and a timber rain-screen to cover the elevations in order to add character and interest that actively contributes to the area. This has been designed to tie in to the existing row of terraces to the north by using identical materials and white timber casements. This has also been done to respond to the conservation officers pre-app comments.

Block B has taken a more contemporary form. It will be unseen from South Street and will be obscured by the Block A terrace to the south. Although a traditional crown roof has been used, traditional style windows, and approach to materials aims to create a harmonious yet hybrid dwelling.

The proposed Block A aims to form an harmonious line across the site providing a continued sense of enclosure to the public realm of the street, whilst providing protection and privacy for the gardens. This orientation and configuration work extremely

well in terms of passive energy design, allowing a well insulated shell to the building. To the East and East, areas of glazing optimise the potential for solar gain.

The robust East facade of Block A gives the building a prominent presence in the settlement street scene whilst prescribing calculated punched fenestration to maximise solidity and privacy.

A high proportion of glazing makes the most of the views over the private gardens. Traditional casements add articulation and depth to the façades, allowing for an interplay of light and shadow, breaking up the elevation whilst allowing the internal spaces to maximise daylight and increase the quality of the internal spaces. The proposed dwellings meet or exceed minimum space standards.

The dwellings have been designed to offer large generous internal spaces on the ground floor with habitable spaces opening to the rear garden for the benefit of future occupiers.

Wide hallways and entrance lobbies provide the potential for future adaptability based on user needs with an entrance canopy to not only provide relief in the streetscene but to protect the entrance from the elements. Block A mimics the rhythm and scale of the existing row of terraces. Integral garages have been removed in response to Conservation concerns. Chimney stacks have been added where appropriate, along with small gardens to create defence-able space. A small palisade fence separates the street frontage whilst maintaining openness.