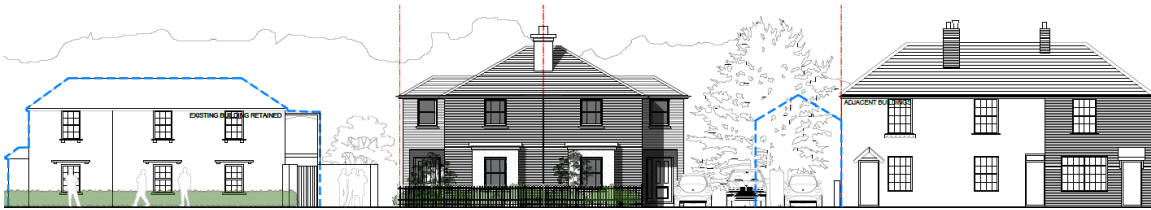


Planning, Design & Access and Heritage Impact Statement



95 Dartford Road
Sevenoaks
TN13 3TF

Prepared for

QW Development 2 Ltd

January 2019

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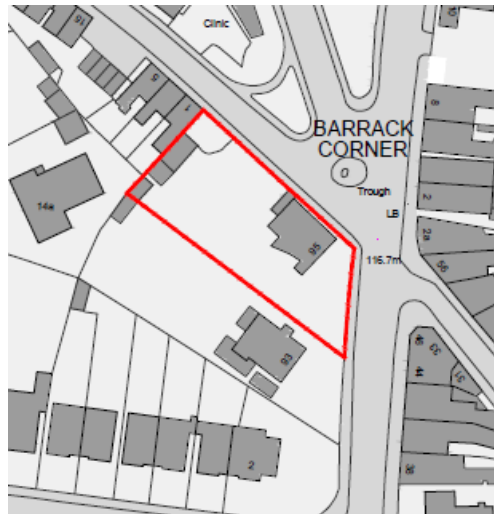
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Hedley Clark are instructed by the QW Development 2 (“the applicant”) to submit a full planning application to Sevenoaks District Council (“the Council”) for the erection of a pair of semi-detached dwellings bedroomed dwellings with associated landscaping, access and parking (“the Proposal”) at 95 Dartford Road, Sevenoaks, Kent, TW13 3TF (“the Site”).
- 1.2 The purpose of this Statement is to illustrate the key factors that have influenced the design of the proposals and to demonstrate how they accord and comply with the principles and policies established by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and development plan requirements. In particular, a detailed appraisal is provided as to the development’s impact upon the retained property (a non-designated heritage asset), the adjacent Conservation Area and neighbouring properties.
- 1.3 This statement is intended to address the Council’s validation requirements. It should be read in conjunction with the drawings prepared by Open Architecture and the vehicle tracking plans prepared by Motion Consultants.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The Site extends to 0.1ha and comprises a detached two storey dwelling, known as 95 Dartford Road, its ancillary outbuildings and associated residential curtilage. The property dates from c1840s and is located on the western side of the junction between Dartford Road, Bradbourne Road, Hollybush Lane and St John's Hill. The property is included in the Councils Local List and is considered to be a 'non-designated heritage asset'.



- 2.2 The principal frontage of the existing property faces north onto Bradbourne Road and is set behind low railings and a hedge (please see photograph below). The garden extends to the north west and sits behind a brick wall.



- 2.3 To the rear of the existing property and located along the north west boundary are 2 detached outbuildings, dating from late 19th and 20th Century. Photographs of these buildings are shown over page.



- 2.4 There is an existing dropped kerb access located to the east of these buildings, providing vehicular access onto Bradbourne Road.
- 2.5 To the west lies Bradbourne Road which consists of predominantly 2 storey dwellings, finished with brick or timber and slate roofs. The properties on the western side of Bradbourne Road are typically arranged in short terraces and many have been altered over time, including replacement windows, porches and rooflights. No.25a Bradbourne Road is an extension of the terrace and is distinctly contemporary in its execution whilst mimicking the scale and proportions of the period properties it is read against. Examples of the character, scale and appearance of properties along Bradbourne Road are shown over page.



10-14a St John's Hill; 2.5 storey terrace



1-5 Bradbourne Road; 2 storey terrace



2-8 St John's Hill; 3 storey parade



11-14 Bethel Road; 2 storey terrace

2.6 The Site is located within the St John's Road Residential Character Area. It is not within a designated Conservation Area but is adjacent to the Hartsland Conservation Area.

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 The existing property underwent substantial re-modelling works in 1956. Since that time there have been further additions and alterations in the form of a new roof structure (which overlays the original roof), modern conservatories, replacement of all windows and doors together with a porch.
- 3.2 Planning permission for the re-development of the Site to include the demolition of the 'host' property and the construction of a terrace of 6 units was dismissed at appeal (APP/G2245/W/17/3185154). In dismissing the appeal, the Inspector found the total loss of the existing dwelling (locally listed) to be unacceptable and not outweighed by the benefits of the scheme. The Inspector also found the number of units, the number of rear facing first and second floor windows and the extent to which the rear windows extended along the boundary of the rear garden of no.93 to cause harm by reason of overlooking.
- 3.3 The Inspector found, however, that the scale, form and materials of the appeal scheme to sympathetic to the local character. A copy of the appeal decision is appended hereto (appendix 1) and referred to within this statement, where relevant.

PRE-APPLICATION ENGAGEMENT

- 3.4 Following the dismissed appeal, the Applicants have given careful consideration to the Inspectors findings and in accordance with the NPPF they have engaged the Council about the development opportunities for 2no. dwellings within the Site which enables the retention of the host property.
- 3.5 A scheme for 2no. dwellings was presented to the Council at the pre-application stage and the Council's advice can be summarised as follows:
- In view of retaining the existing house, the proposed development would be acceptable in principle.
 - The scale, form and materials proposed are sympathetic to the local character and appearance of the area.
 - The proposed dwellings pick up on some of the distinguishing characteristics and features of the existing buildings in the area and are considered to relate appropriately to the prevailing pattern and character of development in the area.
 - The proposal would not overwhelm its setting or the neighbouring conservation area.
 - The site layout is considered suitable in terms of form and layout.

- Whilst some overlooking may occur from the rear facing windows, this would be towards the far end of the rear garden of 93 Dartford Road and would neither be significant nor extend across a substantial portion of the rear garden area.
- Plans should be included to demonstrate how effective the vehicle access and parking arrangements would be, with appropriate visibility splays.

3.6 Highway consultants, Motion Planning, have conducted extensive pre-application engagement with KCC Highways regarding parking and access. This has resulted in revisions to the car parking arrangements, as originally presented to SDC at the pre-app stage. KCC Highways have confirmed that the layout and parking arrangements now proposed (and as reflected in this submission) are acceptable.

4.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The Inspectors decision to dismiss the appeal for the re-development of the Site has been carefully considered and the Site reappraised to determine its development potential.
- 4.2 The Proposal retains the existing property and the western end of the plot would be sub-divided to provide a pair of semi-detached dwellings (each extending to 126m²), with associated access, parking and amenity space. A replacement car parking space is also proposed for the host property. The scheme relies on re-using/adapting the existing access arrangements that serve the site. The site layout is shown in the plan extract below.



- 4.2 The proposed dwellings would set back from Bradbourne Road and would benefit from a single parking space. The parking is located at the western end to enable the use/adaption of the existing dropped kerb. Each property would benefit from its own pedestrian access from Bradbourne Road with private amenity space to the rear.
- 4.3 Each property would have its main entrance on the front elevation and would benefit from a recessed two storey 'wing'. Three bedrooms are provided at first floor level. The layout of the properties are shown on the plan extracts over page.

5.0 PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

National Planning Policy Framework (2018)

- 5.1 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF (2018) confirms that decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking this means, *“...approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless: the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole”*
- 5.2 Para. 59 reinforces the Government’s commitment to significantly boost the supply of housing. Para.68 recognises that small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirements of an area and are often built out quickly. It goes on to state that in order to promote development comprising a good mix of sites, Local Planning Authorities (LPA’s) should amongst other matters support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions, giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes.
- 5.3 Para.109 states that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 5.4 Para.117 requires planning decisions to promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes while safeguarding and improving the environment. Para. 123 seeks to avoid homes being built at low densities and to ensure developments make optimal use of the potential of each site.
- 5.5 Para. 124 confirms that *‘Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps to make development acceptable to communities’*. Para. 127 confirms that decisions should ensure that developments are: *“sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change”*.
- 5.6 Para 131 goes on: *“In determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings”*.

- 5.7 Section 16 deals with conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Para.193 notes that great weight should be given to a designated heritage assets conservation, and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.
- 5.8 Para. 197 states that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. It goes onto state that a balanced judgement is required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset.

Development Plan

- 5.9 The development plan for development control purposes comprises the Sevenoaks Core Strategy (2011) and the Allocations and Development Management Policies document. The following policies contained within the Local Plan are relevant to the consideration of this Proposal:

Core Strategy (2011)

- LO1 Distribution of Development
- SP1 Design of New Development and Conservation
- SP2 Sustainable Development
- SP7 Density of Housing Development

Allocations and Development Management Policies (2015)

- EN1 Design Principles
- EN2 Amenity Protection
- EN4 Heritage Assets
- TP2 Vehicle Parking

6.0 ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSAL

NPPF

- 6.1 As set out in Section 5.0, para. 11 of the NPPF confirms that planning decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development which for decision taking means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan, or where there are no relevant development plan policies or where those most important for determining the application are out of date, granting planning permission unless policies in the Framework which protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a clear reason for refusing permission, or the adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies of this Framework taken as a whole

Sustainable Development

- 6.2 Policy LO1 of the Local Plan Part 1 confirms that the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development consistent with para. 11 of the NPPF.
- 6.3 Para. 8 of the NPPF sets out three overarching objectives for the planning system to achieve sustainable development. The application proposal achieves net gains in respect of each of these objectives as set out below.

Economic Objective

- 6.4 The proposed development will contribute towards the local economy through its support of the construction industry.

Social Objective

- 6.5 The proposed development provides much needed well-designed dwellings which will contribute to local housing need. They will contribute towards an inclusive community and meet the needs of future occupants.

Environmental Objective

- 6.6 The development will enhance the natural environment by providing sensitively designed dwellings which will mitigate and adapt to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy, through its use of sustainable construction techniques.
- 6.7 The application scheme provides net gains in respect of each of the three objectives identified in the NPPF such that it can be considered a sustainable form of development. As such there is a presumption in favour of approving it, in accordance with national planning policy and Policy LO1 of the Local Plan.

PRINCIPLE OF HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

- 6.8 The Site lies within the Sevenoaks Urban Area and provides an opportunity to secure the efficient use of urban land in close proximity to the town centre, main line station and other modes of sustainable travel including bus routes. The Proposal is compliant with NPPF 2018 which seeks to optimise the efficient use of land in such locations and Policies LO1, LO2 and SP5 which deal with the location of new housing development. This conclusion was confirmed by the Council in their pre-application advice.

DENSITY

- 6.9 The NPPF 2018 reinforces the Government's commitment to boost the supply of housing and promotes the effective use of land. It goes on to state that where there is an existing shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs, as is the case in Sevenoaks authority, it is particularly important for planning decisions to ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of each site.
- 6.10 The existing Site provides a density of 12 dwellings per hectare (dph), significantly below the expected density range for the urban areas and indeed the wider context of the Site. For example, Bradbourne Road varies between 125dph (15-23 Bradbourne Road) to 90 dph (1-5 Bradbourne Road).
- 6.11 The Proposal would result in a density of 38dph. The Proposal retains the distinctive character of the Site and the setting of the host property and consequently provides an appropriate balance between optimising the use of the land and protecting character. The Proposal is accordingly compliant with the NPPF Policy SP7 in this regard. These conclusions were reflected in the Council's positive pre-application advice.

DESIGN – CHARACTER OF THE AREA

- 6.12 Bradbourne Road is characterised by short terraces or pairs of period properties, examples of which are shown overpage.

2 Bradbourne Road



12 Bradbourne Road

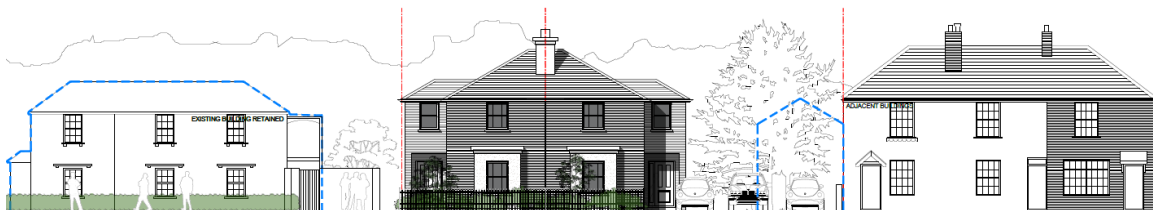


16 Bradbourne Road



6.13 The Proposal has been designed to broadly align with the front building line of 95 Dartford Road and to step back from the building line of the short terrace to the north west (1-5 Bradbourne Road). This siting allows the provision of a landscaped frontage and enables 1-5 Bradbourne Road to remain visible in views from Dartford Road. The siting of the Proposal and the spatial arrangement is thus determined to be entirely appropriate and compatible with the urban grain of development.

6.14 The ridge height of the Proposal is stepped slightly below the adjacent terrace (please refer to the plan extract below) and slightly above 95 Dartford Road – this provides an appropriate height transition between the existing built form of the ‘host’ property and those to the north west and ensures the scheme doesn’t interrupt the rhythm of development in this regard.



- 6.15 The Proposal has a hipped roof reflecting the treatment of both 95 Dartford Road and the properties along Bradbourne Road. The design of the roof thereby draws on local distinctiveness and provides an appropriate design solution having regard to the established character of the immediate area.
- 6.16 The recessed two storey side 'wings' for each unit appear subordinate to the main two storey core of the dwellings in terms of their height, width, mass and bulk. This element of the design reflects that of a number of properties along Bradbourne Road and reinforces this locally distinctive feature.
- 6.17 The detailing and materials of the Proposal respond to the characteristics of original properties along Bradbourne Road and include
- Mixed yellow stock brick
 - Modest bay windows at ground floor level
 - Stone window headers and cills
 - Sash windows
 - Slate roof
- 6.18 The Council agreed in their pre-application response that the traditional appearance, pitched roofs, scale and form of the properties reflected other terraced blocks of properties on the locality.
- 6.19 Following extensive liaison with KCC Highways, car parking is provided at the western end of the site in order to utilise the existing dropped kerb. Having regard to the extent of road frontage, the parking spaces would not dominate the frontage of the Site and would enable landscaping/railings to be incorporated along the remainder of the frontage to reflect existing treatments. It is further noted that the provision of parking to the side of dwellings reflects the arrangement of parking for other properties along Bradbourne Road. In this regard, the parking arrangements would not dominate or detract from the character or appearance of the area.
- 6.20 The siting, design, scale, height, materials and site coverage all respond to the local context and established characteristics thereof. The scheme is accordingly responsive to and compatible with local character, is visually attractive and fits well with the overall pattern and urban grain of development in the area. The Proposal is consistent with the objectives of the NPPF and compliant with policies EN1 and SP1 and the NPPF.

IMPACT ON NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS - 95 DARTFORD ROAD

- 6.21 The NPPF makes clear that the level of weight that should be afforded an asset's conservation should be proportional to its significance. Para.197 of the new NPPF requires the effect of development on non-designated heritage assets to be taken into account, with a balanced judgment required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
- 6.22 It is therefore appropriate to consider the significance of the non-designated heritage asset potentially affected by the Proposal (95 Dartford Road) and the impact of the development in order to reach a "*balanced judgment*".
- 6.23 The host property, known as 95 Dartford Road, is included in the Council's 'Local List' and it is therefore considered to comprise a 'non-designated' heritage asset. It is noted that the existing outbuildings and frontage wall are not explicitly referred to in the Local List. Furthermore, in the assessment of appeal APP/G2245/W/17/3185154, the Inspector raised no concern about the loss of the outbuildings or the frontage wall (in terms of impact on non-designated heritage assets or in any other respect) but dismissed the appeal to the loss of the heritage asset which was identified as the main dwelling on site. It is on this basis that the non-designated heritage asset is deemed to comprise the detached host dwelling.
- 6.24 In the assessment of appeal APP/G2245/W/17/3185154 the Inspector finds at paragraph 9 that "*...the appeal property derives its significance from its local architectural and historical interest.*" The issue is therefore whether the Proposal would cause harm to this identified significance.
- 6.25 The Proposal retains 95 Dartford Road, without extension or other alterations. In this regard the local architectural and historic significance of the property is not harmed. The retained property would continue to benefit from generous gardens that would sweep around it on 3 elevations. A generous separation distance would be retained between the side elevation of the property and that of the Proposal. The host property would not appear cramped in its setting and its identified significance would not be unduly harmed by the Proposal. The Council raised no objection to the scheme in relation to its impact on the locally listed property during the pre-application process.

IMPACT ON DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSET – HARTSLAND CONSERVATION AREA

- 6.26 The Hartsland Conservation Area includes properties on the opposite side of Dartford Road. By reason of the siting, height and design of the Proposal, it would not interrupt any views into or out of it. The design of the dwellings is responsive to the character of Bradbourne Road and they would appear wholly subordinate to the scale and character of those properties along Dartford Road that lie within the designated area. The sensitive design and detailing of the properties thus ensure no harm to the setting of the Hartsland Conservation Area.

IMPACT ON RESIDENTIAL AMENITIES

- 6.27 Policy EN2 of the ADMP requires development to provide adequate amenities for existing and future occupants and to safeguard outlook, privacy, light and visual amenities of neighbouring properties.
- 6.28 The Council's SPD titled Residential Extensions 2009 provides guidance of design matters including the need to preclude overlooking/loss of privacy to rear gardens, the principles of which are relevant to this assessment. Paragraph 5.2 of the SPD states;

"The District Council will normally calculate the private amenity area as a depth of 5m from the back of the property"

93 Dartford Road

- 6.29 The dwellings would front Bradbourne Road and the rear elevations would face towards the generously sized rear garden of 93 Dartford Road. In the assessment of appeal APP/G2245/W/17/3185154 the Inspector raised concern about the number of dwellings, the inclusion of rear facing windows at first and second floor level and the fact that the dwellings would extend across a substantial proportion of the rear garden area including the first 5m closes to 93 which the Inspector found to be *"more likely to be used for sitting out."*
- 6.30 The Inspectors concerns have been carefully considered and addressed in this amended scheme. The number of dwellings has been reduced to 2, both of which are located at the most western end of Site, significantly away from the more intimate garden area of 93 Dartford Road. No second floor windows are proposed with only 1 bedroom window proposed on the rear elevation of each unit at first floor level (the other window would serve a bathroom).

- 6.31 The rear facing bedroom windows would be approx. 8m distant from the rear boundary with 93 Dartford Road. This coupled with the significantly greater distances to the more intimate parts of the garden (taken as the 5m depth from the rear elevation of no.93, as advocated in the Council's SPD) ensure no significant overlooking or loss of privacy would result.
- 6.32 The oblique relationship and distances between the proposed rear facing windows of the Proposal and the rear facing windows of 93 Dartford Road ensure no mutual overlooking between rooms would result.
- 6.33 This conclusion was supported by the Council in their pre-application advice which explicitly noted *"Whilst some overlooking may occur...it would be towards the far end of the rear garden of 93 and this would not be significant and would not extend across a substantial portion of the garden area."*
- 6.34 The built form would not appear visually intrusive or result in a loss of light. Overall, the amenities of 93 Dartford Road are protected, in compliance with policy.

1-5 Bradbourne Road

- 6.35 No.1 Bradbourne Road has a flank window that is obscure glazed and appears to serve a bathroom. No flank windows are proposed on the north west elevation and no overlooking would arise in this regard.
- 6.36 The rear facing bedroom window would permit oblique views towards the garden of no.1. However, this relationship is not unusual in an urban context and does not give rise to overlooking or loss of privacy concerns.
- 6.37 The alignment of the Proposal ensures no critical angles are obstructed and no visual harm or loss of light would result.

95 Dartford Road

- 6.38 The siting, height and design of the Proposal ensures no harm would arise for the occupiers of 95 Dartford Road.

RESIDENTIAL STANDARDS

- 6.39 The proposed dwellings would exceed the Technical Housing Standards in terms of rooms sizes and overall floorspace, with the three bedroom properties extending to 126m². Each habitable room would benefit from appropriate natural light and ventilation. Appropriate provision is made for private amenity space, with the rear gardens level, accessible, functional and proportionate to the size of the dwelling it would serve. Future occupants would experience a good standard of amenity.

PARKING STANDARDS

- 6.40 The site is located approximately 600m from the Bat and Ball train station and 700m from Sevenoaks train station and the area is served by a number of bus routes. It is accordingly considered an edge of centre location and is accessible by a number of public transport links. Interim Guidance Note 3 (IGN3) requires 1 parking space per dwelling for 2 and 3 bedroom houses. The Proposal would provide 1 off street parking spaces for each of the proposed units and the host property. The level of parking provided is compliant with parking standards and has been agreed with KCC Highways at the pre-application stage. There is adequate space to provide secure cycle storage to the rear of each unit and this could be secured by condition.

- 6.41 Bin storage would be provided to the rear of each unit.

ACCESS

- 6.42 Following extensive liaison with KCC Highways, the existing dropped kerb at the northern end of the site would be retained and widened. KCC Highways have confirmed they have no objections to the access arrangements.
- 6.43 The submitted plans include vehicle tracking to demonstrate the access arrangements are safe and do not compromise highway safety.

7.0 WEIGHING THE PLANNING BALANCE

- 7.1 This application proposes two dwellings with associated access and parking on land at 95 Dartford Road, Sevenoaks together with the provision of replacement parking for the retained host property. The proposals have been prepared having regard to the findings of the Inspector following an earlier appeal, the NPPF, adopted development plan policies and the specific characteristics of the site and the surrounding area.
- 7.2 The Proposal comprises a sustainable form of development for which there is a presumption in favour. This weighs heavily in support of the Proposal.
- 7.3 Good design is a key component of sustainable development and it has been demonstrated that the location, plot size and pattern of development is appropriate and compliant with policy. The proposed layout, height, scale and design respond to the characteristics and local distinctiveness, ensuring the optimum use of the site whilst reinforcing local distinctiveness. The Proposal would contribute to the quality of the built environment.
- 7.4 The Proposal would not result in material harm to neighbouring amenities and the proposed dwellings would benefit from high standards of amenity. Appropriate parking and access is provided.
- 7.5 In light of these considerations it has been demonstrated that the scheme is entirely consistent with development plan policies and should be approved 'without delay' unless material considerations dictate otherwise.
- 7.7 No other material considerations have been identified that would outweigh the benefits of approving this sustainable form of development which accords with up to date development plan policy and accordingly, permission for the development should be granted, 'without delay', in accordance with para. 11 of the Framework.