MINOR DEVELOPMENT PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT REF. NO. F/13/73423

DESCRIPTION/ ADDRESS	Erection of 2No. 4 bed detached dwellings following demolition of existing, new vehicular access, parking and landscaping (amended design) Woodland Cottage Botley Road Horton Heath Eastleigh SO50 7DT

SITE VISIT DATE	19.11.13
ARE PLANS ACCURATE?	Yes
HAVE ALL NECESSARY NEIGHBOURS BEEN CONSULTED?	Yes

THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF APPLICATION	As above. The existing plot would be sub-divided into two with both proposed dwellings fronting onto Botley Road and both with their own vehicular accesses. This amended scheme makes numerous amendments to the previously permitted scheme which can be generalised as follows: Introduction of brick detail on the corners of the front elevation, omission of one south facing dormer per property, altered fenestration design and positions, plot 2 now has a rear gable not hip, omission of vaulted ceilings, reconfiguration of internal layout.
SITE AREA	Approx 1630 sqm.
RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT DENSITY (NET)	Approx 12 dwellings per hectare.
TOPOGRAPHY	Relatively flat and level.
TREES	There are a number of trees along the rear boundary of the site which are to remain. There is also a group of large conifers along the northern boundary but in the ownership of the neighbouring property. None will be affected by the proposed works, although a couple of old fruit trees will be removed.
BOUNDARY TREATMENT	The site boundaries are made up of a mixture of treatments. To the front is a picket type fence and to the rear is a hedge which does need further planting, although the rear boundary also has a post and wire fence. To the northern boundary is a 1.8 metre close board fence towards the front half of the site, changing to an evergreen hedge with post a wire fence towards the rear. The southern boundary is marked by a hedge, the side wall of the neighbouring garage and a post and wire fence towards the rear.
SITE CHARACTERISTICS	Woodland Cottage is a small two storey red brick cottage

THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

	built in the 1860s and follows a design which is found throughout the wider area. While once a pleasant property it has seen better days and is beyond reasonable repair, as is the garden area which has been cleared of much of the overgrown shrubbery. There is a vehicular entrance in the south-east corner of the site next to the cottage and leading to a small garage. There are also two wells on site, one close to the cottage and one towards the north-west corner.
CHARACTER OF LOCALITY	While within the urban edge boundary the site looks over open countryside to the front and rear so has a rural feel and character, although Botley Road is a very busy main road.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION	DECISION
F/11/70160	Erection of 2No. 4 bed detached dwellings following demolition of existing, new vehicular access, parking and landscaping.	Permitted 18/04/2012

REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

SOURCE	SUMMARY OF CONTENT
Burton House, Botley Road	Objected to the proposal on the basis that the side window on plot 2 will overlook and result in a loss of privacy.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

CONSULTEE	SUMMARY OF RESPONSE
Fair Oak Parish Council	No objection
Head of Housing and Environmental Health	No objection subject to Amenity Protection conditions for dust, burning, and hours of work
Head of Transportation and Engineering	No objection.

POLICY CONTEXT

DESIGNATION APPLICABLE TO SITE
Within Built-up Area Boundary Within Established Residential Area Adjacent to designated Countryside

DEVELOPMENT PLAN SAVED POLICIES, EMERGING LOCAL PLAN POLICIES AND SPD'S

Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Review (2001-2011) : 28.ES, 34.ES, 59.BE, 101.T, 147.OS & 191.IN
Supplementary Planning Document : Quality Places
Supplementary Planning Document : Character Area Appraisals – Bishopstoke, Fair Oak & Horton Heath (BIFOHH 27)
Supplementary Planning Document : Residential Parking Standards
Supplementary Planning Document : Environmentally Sustainable Development

DEVELOPMENT PLAN SAVED POLICIES, EMERGING LOCAL PLAN POLICIES AND SPD'S

Supplementary Planning Document : Planning Obligations

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE

National Planning Policy Framework highlights that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people" (para 56) and goes on to state that decisions should aim to ensure that developments will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development (para 58).

POLICY COMMENTARY

The above policies combine to form the criteria against which this application will be assessed with particular regard to the principle of that proposed, its layout and design, impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties, environmental sustainability, parking and highway safety, as well as the street scene and character of the area.

COMMENT ON CONSULTATION RESPONSES

All comments are noted and recommended conditions included.

COMMENT ON REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

Noted and addressed within the main considerations section below.

PLANNING OBLIGATION/CONSIDERATIONS

In accordance with the requirements of Circular 05/05 and the guidance contained within saved Policies 101.T, 147.OS and 191.IN of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Review (2001-2011) and Supplementary Planning Document 'Planning Obligations', this application is subject to developer's contributions towards the provision of community infrastructure, off-site public open space and sustainable transport in the local area.

These obligations were secured by way of a completed and signed Unilateral Undertaking and the contributions were only recently paid. It is only possible to implement one permission on this site and it view of the fact this application simply regulates the development already carried out the contributions from the previous application have been transferred to this application and no further indexation has been applied.

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Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states:-

> *"If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."*

The proposal is considered to comply with relevant Development Plan policies.

In this case policy issues for consideration include:

Principle – As with the previous application, the site lies within the urban edge, albeit with

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designated countryside immediately in front and behind. The principle of development is therefore acceptable, with any planning approval being based upon the exact nature, design and impact of that proposed being considered appropriate and in accordance with the relevant local plan policies and supplementary guidance.

The main local plan policy in this case is saved Policy 59.BE which requires development to take full and proper account of the context of the site including the character and appearance of the locality and be appropriate in mass, scale, materials, layout, design and siting. It also requires a high standard of landscape design, a satisfactory means of access and layout for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians, make provision for refuse and cycle storage and avoid unduly impacting on neighbouring uses through overlooking, loss of light, loss of outlook, noise and fumes.

The previously permitted scheme (see history above) accepts the principle of development, the amount of development, siting, layout, design, parking, bin/cycle storage ect. The scheme has now largely been completed but has not been built in accordance with the approved plans. The amended scheme includes the introduction of brick corner detailing on the front elevation, omission of one south facing dormer per property, altered fenestration design and positions, plot 2 now has a rear gable not hip, omission of vaulted ceilings, and reconfiguration of internal layout. These changes are considered material and required a new planning application to regulate the development.

Layout & Design – As before, the application proposes to subdivide the current plot into two, each fronting onto Botley Road and each with their own access. Parking would be provided to the front of each unit, as well as a good size garden to the rear which overlooks fields beyond.

In terms of their appearance both dwellings have an almost barn like style with fairly steep plain clay tile roofs and deep eaves which sit down low. The main facing materials are red brick and horizontal timber cladding within an Oak frame, which is more prevalent to the rear of the dwellings where it is used to frame large areas of glass. While similar, each dwelling is slightly different in design and successfully provides a very rural aesthetic but with a modern twist. Whilst the amended design and fenestration has dumbed down the high quality of the original permission these changes are not considered to have a significant detrimental impact and are therefore considered acceptable.

In terms of their layout and design the proposed dwellings are considered to be acceptable and will result in a high quality development which will respect the locality and accords with saved Policy 59.BE.

Residential Amenity – The pair of dwellings have been designed in such a way so as to try and minimise impact on the amenity of existing neighbouring properties, as well as upon each other. The main outlook for each is to the front and rear – each property originally has a side (south facing) dormer however this has now been omitted as the rear fenestration has been altered and now allows fire escape for building regulation purposes. This has eradicated any previous concerns relating to overlooking southwards. The internal reconfiguration has however introduced new overlooking concerns on plot 2. The northern dormer window originally served a bathroom and was conditioned to be obscure glazed and with no opening parts below 1.7m. It now however serves a study, which if strictly conforming with building regulations should be a fire exit window and therefore would not comply with the applied conditions of the orginal consent. This window if plane glazed and openable, as installed allows direct overlooking into neighbouring property Burton House and would result in a loss of privacy. Having discussed this with Building Control officers I am advised that alternative fire exit windows are available (a fixed and obscured panel that can be entirely removed in the event of a fire can be installed) or enhanced smoke/fire detection technologies can be installed to overcome the building regs issues. In view of this and

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due to the concerns over overlooking and loss of privacy the condition for this window to be obscured and with no opening part below 1.7m has been recommended as part of this approval.

On the other amenity issues of loss of light and outlook, there are no particular concerns. This is due to the design of the proximity and orientation of the dwellings in relation to each other and their neighbours, as well as their design and form. Overall the proposed scheme raises no real amenity concerns and should result in a very pleasant living environment for its future occupiers whilst having minimal impact on its neighbours.

Environmental Sustainability – A pre-assessment estimator report has been submitted with the application which demonstrates that the proposed dwellings are capable of meeting Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3, as required by the Council's 'Environmentally Sustainable Development' SPD. The dwellings also have the potential to meet or at least get very close to level 4 should the applicant wish to do so. Conditions requiring a design stage report to be submitted prior to commencement and a post construction stage report to be submitted prior to occupation are recommended in order to ensure that the development meets the necessary sustainability requirements.

Parking & Highway Safety – As before, it has been highlighted by the Head of Transportation and Engineering's comments, the scheme can provide more than the minimum three off-road parking spaces for each dwelling, as well as secure cycle storage. There is also sufficient room to provide a turning area to the front of each dwelling to allow access and exit in a forward gear onto what is a busy main road.

A request has also been made that the front boundary of the site be pulled back 3.0 metres behind the kerbline, in order to improve sightlines and to allow provision of a wider combined footway/cycleway. While the provision of a cycleway is desirable, there is currently no scope to secure the frontages of other properties along the road in order to provide a continuous cycleway. It is therefore considered a little unreasonable to force the applicants in this case to provide an additional 1.2 metres of land at this stage. It would also result in a rather odd feature within the street scene when the remainder of the footway is only 1.8 metres wide.

However, the concerns with regards to improving sightlines are considered reasonable and a plan has been submitted showing the necessary visibility splays at each access point. A condition ensuring that no structures or landscaping over 0.6 metres be placed within these visibility splays is recommended.

Street Scene & Area Character – Considerable thought was given at the pre-application stage to how the proposed dwellings would fit in with the existing street scene and how they would preserve and enhance the rural character of the area. While fairly sizable properties, their height has been kept down by providing low eaves and the first floor mainly within the roof space. The main bulk of the dwellings run perpendicular to the road, with a subservient side element, thereby keeping the visual bulk and perceived width when viewed from the street to a minimum. The spacing present between existing properties has also been maintained with the proposed scheme so that the rhythm of development along the road is not interrupted. Although while modern the dwellings will use traditional materials but in a slightly more contemporary way. This should help them blend in well with surrounding buildings and the rural character of the area, and hopefully help them to stand the test of time and not date too quickly. The amendments introduce via this recent application are not considered to materially undermine the overall appearance of these properties and will not impact upon the street scene.

Overall, the proposed development is considered to be of an acceptable quality which respects the existing rural character of the area and the appearance of this section of Botley Road and

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accords with the 'Character Area Appraisals' SPD and saved Policy 59.BE of the local plan.

OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Also of relevance is the Revised Draft Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2011-2029. While not yet adopted it does carry weight by virtue of being intended as the current local plan's replacement. With regards to this application, the new policies essentially echo those of the current plan and are not considered to affect the recommendation put forward.

CONCLUSIONS

In view of the above this application is considered to comply with the requirements of saved Policies and SPD's and is therefore recommended for approval subject to conditions.