

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Elizabeth Huggins Trust Cottages, Gravesend, DA11 7LD

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report accompanies the current planning application for 5 new dwellings upon the Elizabeth Huggins Trust Cottages site in Gravesend. The application has been submitted and prepared in accordance to recent discussions with the Local Planning Authority.

The new layout addresses historic concerns that the previously approved scheme was underdeveloped. Within the recent documented planning history of the site, the Planning Officer mentioned in the committee report that there was concern as the scheme of 34 units was an under development of the site.

It stated: - *'Concern is raised that the development only achieves a density of 34 dwellings per hectare (dph) and the developer needs to justify why 40 dph cannot be achieved on the site.'*

Currently there is approval for 36 units, and with this new application for 5 more units this would result in a total of 41 new units, meaning the site is no longer underdeveloped.

2.0 SITE

The site falls on the corner junction between Cross Lane West and Wortham Road and historically had 10 bungalow cottages upon it. Currently a number of the bungalows have been demolished to make way for phase 1 (Block) of the previously approved scheme. Demolition of the existing buildings is proposed in stages to minimise the inconvenience to existing tenants.

The surrounding roads largely consist of 2 storey dwellings although the architectural detailing across these is varied, meaning there is no clear local vernacular.

Access to the site is from the cross roads on the sites north west corner.

In terms of housing density, the site is far less dense than the local surrounding area.

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

The application site has a relatively complex planning history, with a number of applications of differing types over recent years. Numerous meetings and conversations have also taken place between the Trust and the LPA, with that correspondence also having been documented to date.

The following applications are noted as relevant to the current proposals and should help to form a narrative as to why the current application is appropriate:

- *Approved Application Ref: 20130801-To provide social housing for ex-service personnel. Demolition of existing bungalows in phases and construction of new dwellings in phases to provide: 4 no three bedroom two storey houses, 8 no single bedroom flats, 12 no two bedroom flats, 9 no two bedroom cottages, 1 no three bedroom maisonette for warden, car parking and cycle storage.*

- *Approved Application Ref: 20210333- Application for non-material amendment to planning permission reference 20130801 to allow a change in the approved description of development from: To provide social housing for ex-service personnel. Demolition of existing bungalows in phases and construction of new dwellings in phases to provide: 4 no three bedroom two storey houses, 8 no single bedroom flats, 12 no two bedroom flats, 9 no two bedroom cottages, 1 no three bedroom maisonette for warden, car parking and cycle storage; to change to: Provide social housing to ex service personnel to provide a mix of 3 bedroom 2 storey houses, single bedroom flats, 2 bedroom flats, 2 bedroom cottages and a 3 bedroom maisonette for warden, car parking and cycle storage - with associated additional condition with accommodation schedule.*
- *Approved Application Ref: 20210672- Application for the variation of condition 2 attached to planning permission reference number 20130801 to provide social housing to ex service personnel to provide a mix of 3 bedroom 2 storey houses, single bedroom flats, 2 bedroom flats, 2 bedroom cottages and a 3 bedroom maisonette for warden, car parking and cycle storage; to allow amendment of the design of Block D, an increase in the number of flats from 12 to 14 and for all the flats to be 2 bed apartments.*
- *Approved Application Ref: 20220135- Application for variation of condition 2 attached to planning permission reference no. 20210672 to provide social housing to ex service personnel to provide a mix of 3 bedroom 2 storey houses, single bedroom flats, 2 bedroom flats, 2 bedroom cottages and a 3 bedroom maisonette for warden, car parking and cycle storage; to allow a reconfiguration of the Blocks A, B, F and G, car parking layout and refuse and cycle store locations.*

The 4 aforementioned applications have been the result of ongoing discussions between the Elizabeth Huggins Trust and the Local Planning Authority, with a developed design brief that has ensured the site maximised it's development potential and provides the best future facility for the charity going forward.

The most recent of these applications Ref: 20220135 was submitted as a Minor Material Amendment (again under the guidance of the LPA) and allowed for an improved road layout within the site, as well as additional parking. Other internal floor plan layouts improvements were also included. These revised layouts have provided the opportunity for the current application for 5 new dwellings, as there is now additional space for the further housing.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY

The planning policy for an application upon this site and of this nature is a simple summation. Policies at both local and national level have remain unchanged since the previous MMA application, and as such still promote maximising the development potential of this brownfield site.

The previous approvals have established that development of this type and scale is appropriate to the site context, and that a greater density than that historically approved was preferred and has been promoted by the LPA. This application is therefore planning policy compliant

5.0 ACCESS

Site access remains from the sites North West corner onto the crossroads junction. The internal (already approved) road layout allows for both refuse and fire tender turning. Parking spaces are positioned appropriately to the proposed units and will allow for new residents to easily navigate the housing development. The current application for 5 new units does not alter the road/parking or access layout, as there was already additional parking provided in foresight.

The proposed site provides 53 resident spaces and 4 visitor spaces. 8 of the spaces provided are identified as disabled parking.

6.0 DESIGN

The five new units are accommodated on site by making additions to the approved Blocks A, B and F.

Firstly, blocks A and B are now combined into a single terrace of housing with a further 3 x 3 bed units being added to that which were already approved. The house type remains unchanged, as do the footprint positions of the historically approved units, with those new units simply slotting into the space to each side of Block A.

Secondly, 2 x 2 bed units are also added to the east end of Block F. These are again identical to the Block F house type aesthetic and scale that are already approved.

There is sufficient space to accommodate all of the five new units proposed, with separation distances to surrounding properties within policy guidance. The neighbouring properties will suffer no loss of privacy upon their private amenity as a result of this application, nor will the new dwellings impact on their right to light.

7.0 SUMMARY

It has been concluded that the proposal will not result in any significant or demonstrable adverse impacts in terms of design, residential amenity or highway safety which would outweigh the benefits of providing additional dwellings in a sustainable location.

The proposal has been laid out to make best use of the land available with regard to the extant approved use. The setting and surrounding roads correspond to the adjusted unit footprints and allow for better vehicle manoeuvring.

Each house has good garden provision relative to size of the property and all dwellings meet the criteria set out in Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard.

The proposal is a logical and reasonable evolution of the previously approved scheme. It takes full account of the relevant planning issues, and specifically those discussions in relation to an appropriate site density that have taken place with the LPA to date.