



Design & Access Statement

In support of the proposed development at:

Greenwood Lodge
Birchwood Road
Swanley
Kent
BR8 7QA

PL / 727 / 05

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Introduction

This Design & Access Statement has been prepared on behalf of our client, Ms. J. Creber, to accompany an outline application for the subdivision of the plot and erection of a new detached dwelling, for the property known as Greenwood Lodge, Birchwood Road, Swanley, Kent BR8 7QA. We are seeking approval for the matters of access and layout, with all other matters to be reserved for determination at a later date. This document should be read in conjunction with the submitted drawings OUT/727/01 and OUT/727/02.

Site Assessment

The application site is approximately 0.17 hectares in size and is located within the built confines of Swanley, to the northern edge of an established residential area. Open fields, which form part of the Metropolitan Green Belt, lie to the west, with residential dwellings abutting all other boundaries, resulting in the site not being visible from a public highway. The main body of the site can best be described as rectangular, sloping gently from east to west.



Indicative outline of application site (image taken from Google Maps)

Greenwood Lodge is a 2 bedroom, detached bungalow, which was built in the early 2000's, to replace a pre-fabricated property that had previously occupied the site. It is accessed via a public byway open to all traffic, off Birchwood Road, which also serves another five residential, detached properties.

The dwelling is positioned towards the rear of its plot, facing west, enjoying views over open fields. Due to the sloping nature of the site, Greenwood Lodge sits at a slightly elevated level. It benefits from a detached single garage, located forwards of the property and has a large wrap-around garden, with substantial grounds to the front and a long, private driveway which adjoins the public byway.

The application site is predominantly laid to lawn with a combination of 1.8m high close-boarded timber fencing and mature planting generally forming the boundaries. There are 3 TPO'd trees within the main body of the site, with an additional 2 positioned along the private access, as indicated below:



Location of TPO'd trees, as taken from Sevenoaks Council's District Planning Map

Greenwood Lodge is positioned towards the north-west of an established residential area. The immediate surrounding properties, to the north and east, are large, detached dwellings, of various ages and styles, which are all set within fairly extensive, wrap around gardens. By contrast, the properties on Pucknells Close, to the south of the site, appear to be more modern additions to the area. They are also large, detached properties, with good-sized rear gardens, but with smaller frontages, presenting a much denser form of development.

A diverse palette of materials can be seen locally, which includes red brick with combinations of vertical tile-hanging, weatherboarding and render, as well as slate or red / brown roof tiles.

Greenwood Lodge itself is built from red brick with dark weatherboarding to the front façade and red/brown concrete roof tiles.

Photographs of the site and surrounding area can be found in Appendix A of this document.

Relevant Planning History

A number of previous planning applications have been made on the site, with the most relevant being, as follows:-

09/00041/FUL – Proposed demolition of existing prefabricated 2 bed dwelling and replacement with new 2 bed bungalow – withdrawn 09/03/2009;

09/00622/FUL – Proposed demolition of existing prefabricated 2 bed dwelling and replacement with new 2 bed bungalow – refused 18/05/2009;

09/01755/FUL – Proposed demolition of existing prefabricated 2 bed dwelling and replaced with new 2 bed bungalow – approved 16/10/2009

PA/23/00109 – Pre-application advice meeting and follow-up written advice for the subdivision of the plot and erection of a new dwelling.

An on-site pre-application advice meeting took place on 19th June 2023 with the Planning Officer, Guy Martin, to discuss the proposals. The advice was generally positive and a copy of the written advice received is contained within Appendix B of this document.

Description of Proposals

The applicant is seeking outline permission, for approval of the matters of layout and access, to subdivide the curtilage of the existing property, known as Greenwood Lodge and erect one new residential dwelling.

The existing access and driveway will be retained and no alterations to this are proposed. Suitable parking and electric vehicle charging provision are proposed to serve the new plot.

Adequate vehicle turning space will be available to allow vehicles to enter and exit the site in a forward gear.

The new property will be positioned adjacent to the southern site boundary and west of Greenwood Lodge. Its principal elevation will face north, towards the driveway and the dwelling will benefit from a good-sized, private, wrap around garden.

Access & Sustainability

The application site is located within the urban confines of Swanley, to the north-west of an established residential area. Development within Swanley is generally accepted in principle, under Policy LO1 and Policy LO4 of Sevenoaks District Council's Core Strategy Local Development Plan 2011.

Swanley is accessible via the M25 and A20, which provide onward road links into other large, local towns, as well as Central London. Regular rail services to London and the coast operate from the station in Swanley town centre, which is within a 1.5 mile radius of the site. In addition, Birchwood

Road is on a public bus route, with stops being located either side of the highway, by the junction with the application site's access road.

A number of nurseries, primary and secondary schools are within a 2 mile radius of the application site, whilst a variety of shops and services are located within the town centre of Swanley.

Greenwood Lodge is accessed from the public highway via a public byway open to all traffic, which also serves an additional 5 properties. No alterations are proposed to this existing access and it is believed that the single, new property will not generate an excessive number of additional car journeys. The proposals, therefore, will not impact on highway safety.

Within the grass verge on Birchwood Road, adjacent to the public byway, is a Designated Heritage Asset, which is a Grade II Listed coal duty boundary marker. The position of this asset can be seen on the diagram on page 2 of this document, as denoted by the red circle. As the application is not proposing any alterations to the existing access, there will be no detrimental impact, or resultant harm, to this Heritage Asset.

In terms of environmental impact, it is anticipated that the new dwelling will incorporate thermally efficient measures to reduce heat loss and minimise solar gains. All light fittings will be low energy and water efficient sanitary / kitchen fittings and appliances will be installed in the building. An electric vehicle charging point will be installed to the front of the dwelling, with the possibility of erecting a lockable shed in the rear garden to provide secure cycle storage facilities.

Layout

During the design process, careful consideration was given to the local area character, as well as protection of the TPO'd trees within the plot.

The submitted scheme has been designed to ensure the new dwelling will link seamlessly into its surroundings, whilst protecting the amenity and privacy of the adjacent properties, as well as the new dwelling itself.

The proposed property will be located within the south-west section of the plot, to the west of Greenwood Lodge. The house will be orientated to face north, towards the access driveway, with its east side elevation facing onto Greenwood Lodge. The detailed design of the new dwelling is being reserved within this application for determination at a later date, however, it is assumed that no windows will be incorporated at first floor level on this elevation to protect the privacy of the surrounding properties.

The new house will be positioned approximately 2.1m from the narrowest point with southern site boundary, which abuts the rear gardens of residential properties on Pucknells Close. A separation distance of approximately 14m will exist between the rear elevation of the new house and its neighbour, to the rear, on Pucknells Close. This separation distance, coupled with the line of trees and hedging on this southern boundary, will protect the privacy of the neighbouring dwellings.

A large wrap-around garden will provide suitable private amenity space for future occupants of the proposed dwelling. The garden will be suitably fenced off from Greenwood Lodge to provide a secure, private area.

Two suitably surfaced off-road parking spaces will be provided to the front of the new dwelling, along with an EV charging point. Greenwood Lodge, would retain the existing garage to the front of the property.

The new dwelling will have a large rear garden, which is capable of accommodating an area of hardstanding, in order to provide a dedicated refuse bin storage area.

Scale / Appearance & Design / Landscaping

The matters of scale, appearance & design and landscaping are not included within this outline application and are being reserved for determination at a later date.

Use

The proposals seek permission for the subdivision of the plot and erection of one new residential dwelling, which is consistent with the surrounding properties and local area generally.

Planning Policy

This application should be determined in accordance with the following Planning Policies:-

Sevenoaks District Council Core Strategy Local Development Plan (2011)

- Policy LO1 – Distribution of Development
- Policy LO4 – Development in Swanley
- Policy SP1 – Design of New Development & Conservation
- Policy SP2 – Sustainable Development

Sevenoaks District Council Allocation & Development Management Plan (2015)

- Policy SC1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- Policy EN1 – Design Principles
- Policy EN2 – Amenity Protection
- Policy EN4 – Heritage Assets
- Policy T2 – Vehicle Parking
- Policy T3 – Provision of Electrical Vehicle Charging Points

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021

Sevenoaks' Core Strategy Policy LO1 & LO4

Policy LO1 states that:-

'Development will be focused within the built confines of existing settlements.

Swanley will be the secondary focus for development with the emphasis on maintaining and enhancing its role and promoting regeneration to meet the needs of the local community in accordance with Policies LO4 and LO5.'

Policy LO4 states that:-

'In Swanley provision will be made for approximately 660 dwellings (2006-2026) throughout the town on a range of sites suitable for residential use within the urban area.'

The application site is located within the built confines of Swanley, as part of an established residential area. It is bound on three sides by existing properties, where the density of development is varied. To the north, development is less dense, however, to the east and south the density increases substantially.

It is believed that the outline proposals are in accordance with policies LO1 and LO4 of Sevenoaks Council's planning policies.

Sevenoaks' Core Strategy Policy SP1 & ADMP Policy EN4

Policy SP1 states that:-

'The District's heritage assets and their settings, including listed buildings, conservation areas, archaeological remains, ancient monuments, historic parks and gardens, historic buildings, landscapes and outstanding views will be protected and enhanced.'

Policy EN4 states that:-

Proposals that affect a Heritage Asset, or its setting, will be permitted where the development conserves or enhances the character, appearance and setting of the asset.

Applications will be assessed with reference to the following:

- a) the historic and/or architectural significance of the asset;*
- b) the prominence of its location and setting; and*
- c) the historic and/or architectural significance of any elements to be lost or replaced*

A Grade II Listed coal boundary marker is located within the grass verge on Birchwood Road, to the west of the site's access point. As the planning proposals do not require any alterations to the existing access, the heritage asset will not be impacted in any way. The proposals, therefore, accord with Policies SP1 and EN4.

Sevenoaks' Core Strategy Policy SP2 and SC2 & NPPF 2021 Paragraphs 7 - 11

Policy SP2 of the Core Strategy states that:-

'The District will contribute to reducing the causes and effects of climate change by promoting best practice in sustainable design and construction to improve the energy and water efficiency of all new development and contribute to the goal of achieving zero carbon development as soon as possible.'

Policy SC2 of the ADMP states that:-

When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. The Council will work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area. Planning applications that accord with the policies in the Local Plan will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise - taking into account whether:

- *Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or*
- *Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.*

Although Sevenoaks District Council's planning policies have been reviewed and considered during the preparation of this outline application, it is to be noted that Sevenoaks cannot demonstrate an up to date 5 year supply of housing. Planning policy is, therefore, considered to be outdated and a presumption in favour of sustainable development exists.

The new dwelling will be built to a high standard, to meet the updated Building Regulations. There is scope within the detailed design to incorporate more sustainable heating / cooling methods and renewable energy, along with water saving devices, within the new building, in order to reduce its impact on the environment. In addition, the property will benefit from one electric vehicle charging point, to enable future occupiers to use more sustainable transport methods.

The local town centre, with its numerous shops and services, is within a 1.2 mile radius of the application site and is accessible by bicycle, or bus. The additional car journeys, that could potentially be generated by the net gain of one dwelling, will not have a significant impact on the local highway network and, with the possibility of travelling by bicycle, or electric vehicles, the impact could be further negated.

The local area would benefit from short term economic gains through the construction of the new dwelling and the employment opportunities which would arise. In addition, local shops and services could potentially benefit from increased footfall from both the construction workers and future residents of the new property.

It is therefore considered that the proposals accord with the principles of sustainable development in Sevenoaks Council's policies SP2 and SC2, as well as paragraphs 7 - 11 of the NPPF 2021.

Sevenoaks' ADMP Policy T2

Policy T2 states that:-

'Vehicle parking provision, including cycle parking, in new residential developments should be made in accordance with the current KCC vehicle parking standards in Interim Guidance Note 3 to the Kent Design Guide (or any subsequent replacement). (See Appendix 2).'

Two suitably surfaced parking spaces will be installed to the front of the new dwelling to provide adequate off-road parking. The rear garden is of a good size and is capable of housing a small shed, which could be used for secure cycle storage. The proposed development, therefore, accords with Policy T2.

Sevenoaks' ADMP Policy T3

Policy T3 states that:-

'Within new residential developments all new houses with a garage or vehicular accesses should include an electrical socket with suitable voltage and wiring for the safe charging of electric vehicles.'

One electric vehicle charging point will be installed adjacent to the parking spaces, thus, ensuring the proposals are in accordance with Policy T3.

Conclusion

In summary and, as demonstrated throughout this document, the proposals have taken into consideration the planning policies and supplementary planning guidance of Sevenoaks District Council, as well as the NPPF. It is acknowledged that Sevenoaks Council cannot demonstrate an adequate 5 year supply of housing, which means that the presumption in favour of sustainable development is applied.

The site is located within an established residential area and is not visible from the public highway. Adequate separation distances will exist between the proposed dwelling and the neighbouring properties. There will, therefore, be no detrimental impact on the street scene, or local area character, nor will any neighbouring properties be impacted by overlooking or loss of amenity.

It is, therefore, considered that, the proposals are completely appropriate in design and access terms and accord with the policies of Sevenoaks District Council and the NPPF. We would, therefore, respectfully ask that the application be supported by Sevenoaks District Council.

APPENDIX A

Photographs of the Existing Application Site

Key to Photograph Location Points





View 1- front elevation of Greenwood Lodge from the driveway, with garage just visible in the foreground



View 2 - garage and front elevation of Greenwood Lodge



View 3 - south west corner of the plot, with dwellings on Pucknells Close beyond the boundary



View 4 - south west to north east of the site



View 5 - private access leading down to Birchwood Road

APPENDIX B

Written Pre-Application Advice

Julie Creber
C/O Andrew Wells Architectural Planning &
Design Ltd
Hollywood House
76 Hollywood Lane
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Rochester
Kent
ME3 8AR

Tel No: 01732 227000
Ask for: Guy Martin
Email: DCNorth@sevenoaks.gov.uk
My Ref: PA/23/00109
Date: 19 June 2023

Dear Julie Creber

Pre-Application Advice Enquiry

Site: Greenwood Lodge Birchwood Road Swanley Kent BR8 7QA

Development: Subdivision of the plot and erection of a new detached dwelling.

I refer to the information submitted on 3 May 2023 for the above proposal and your meeting with Guy Martin on 19 June 2023. My apologies for the delay in organising the meeting.

Purpose of this letter

This letter will provide feedback on your scheme and set out some key information that may be helpful to you when considering your proposal. You are advised to seek your own independent advice on the issues raised in this email, to help you understand how planning policy may have an impact on your proposal. Appended to this letter is further information and website links, to help you research the planning issues in more detail, before submitting an application.

Summary of Pre-Application Advice

On the basis of the information submitted, the proposal may comply with current planning policy and has the potential to be granted planning permission, subject to the further advice and guidance referred to in this letter.

Planning Assessment

Based on the information submitted, the main issues relevant to your proposals are considered below.

Design and impact on character of the area and landscape

The proposed development should respond to the scale, height, materials and site coverage of the area and should respect the topography and character of the site and surrounding area. Policy SP1 of the Core Strategy and policy EN1 of the ADMP apply here.

The proposal would erect a new dwelling to the west of Greenwood Lodge. In the absence of a full set of plans it is not possible to provide a detailed response however there would appear to be potential for a new property within the site dependent upon an appropriately designed property that would be in keeping with the locality.

Impact on neighbouring amenity

The development should not result in excessive overlooking or visual intrusion or result in an unacceptable loss of privacy or light enjoyed by the occupiers of nearby properties.

In the absence of detailed plans it is not possible to provide a detailed response in respect to the impact of the proposal upon local amenities. It is noted that Greenwood Lodge is orientated to the west and in consequence I would advise you to design the property to ensure that there would be no overlooking of this property. To the rear lies two dwelling and dependent upon the height of the proposed dwelling, location of windows and height of the boundary there is potential that the proposal may overlook these properties.

It would appear that the proposal would be set far enough from the neighbouring properties to ensure that there would not be a loss of light. In the absence of a full set of plans a full assessment would be made if an application were to be submitted.

Tree Preservation Orders

There are three trees to the west of Greenwood Lodge and a further two trees on the access to the property that are covered by Tree Preservation Orders. I would advise you to provide an arboricultural report to show how the proposed building would be constructed and materials delivered without impacting adversely upon these trees.

Ecology

The site appears to incorporate a number of trees of which some are covered by Tree Preservation Orders. In carrying out the works there is the potential for the development to have an adverse impact upon protected species. I would accordingly advise you to carrying out a Preliminary Ecological Survey to assess the potential impact of the works prior to submission.

Dependent on when a submission was to be submitted the proposal may be subject to Biodiversity Net Gain.

Parking and Highways

Policy EN1 of the SDC Core Strategy states that the proposed development ensures satisfactory means of access for vehicles and pedestrians and provides parking facilities in accordance with the Council's approved standards.

From the information available the new dwelling would use the exiting access onto the site. I would advise you to ensure that the proposal incorporates sufficient parking and turning spaces for the existing and proposed dwelling. If planning permission were to be granted the inclusion of electric vehicle charging points would be sought.

Impact upon adjacent Designated Heritage Asset

A Designated Heritage Asset lies to the approximately 100m to the northeast of the site. SDC Conservation were consulted on the proposal and had the following comments:

“Significance

Pre-application advice is sought for the proposed subdivision of the plot and a new dwelling. The proposed house is approximately 130m (as the crow flies) from a Grade-II listed coal duty boundary marker. This is a designated heritage asset. The boundary marker is positioned on a grass verge at the side of Birchwood Road.

Impact assessment

The proposed dwelling itself would not have an impact on the special interest of this designated heritage asset due to the distance.

I note that the proposed drive would connect to the existing track that runs east-west and joins Birchwood Road; this is next to where the listed boundary marker stands. If no changes are proposed to the junction with Birchwood Road then there would unlikely be an impact on the special interest of the listed boundary marker. However, if any changes are proposed to the junction – such as increasing visibility splay – this may have an impact on the significance of the listed structure, possibly resulting in harm to the designated heritage asset.

Policy context

When considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building/structure or its setting, the Council has a duty under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building/structure or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses (Section 66(1)).

In addition, the National Planning Policy Framework advises that great weight should be given to the conservation of a heritage asset when considering the impact of proposed development on its significance, including any harm or loss of significance through development within their setting. The NPPF also states that planning should conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations. It should be noted that the Courts have held that 'preserve' means an absence of harm. The NPPF points out that harm can be either 'substantial' or 'less than substantial' and where harm occurs, it should be given

considerable weight as a material consideration in the assessment of planning applications and as part of the balance exercise and in ascertaining if any public benefits would outweigh that harm. This national policy intent is addressed policy EN4 of the Sevenoaks Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP), which seeks to conserve heritage assets”.

Conclusion

Please note that this letter is not intended to provide a comprehensive response of all issues which may be relevant. The advice refers to the issues we consider likely to be the most pertinent to the consideration of an application in the event of a submission along the lines presently proposed.

This advice is without prejudice to the decision-making processes of the local planning authority and in no way prejudices any future determinations or decisions made by the local planning authority.

Please review the additional information attached to this letter.

Yours sincerely

Guy Martin
Case Officer

APPENDIX

Planning Policy and Constraints

The planning constraints listed below may be of particular relevance to your proposal:

- Adjacent Metropolitan Green Belt
- Tree Preservation Orders
- Adjacent Designated Heritage Asset

You can find further information on other constraints that may be relevant to your proposal, by using the interactive map on our website:

<https://maps.sevenoaks.gov.uk/planning/>

Both national and local planning policy will be relevant to your proposal, if a planning application is submitted for the site. You can review these policies on the following websites:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

Sevenoaks District Council:

https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/info/20014/planning_policy

In particular, please refer to the policies in the Core Strategy 2011 and the Allocation and Development Management Plan (ADMP) 2015 and our Supplementary Planning Documents.

New Local Plan

Please note that Sevenoaks District Council is currently undergoing the process to adopt a new local plan. As such, dependent upon the time of any planning applications submission local policy considerations may have changed. Planning decisions will be based upon the adopted local policies at the time of the decision. The applicant is advised to review the proposed timetable for the adoption of the new local policies, please see link below:

https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/info/20014/planning_policy

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Please note under the terms of the Planning Act 2008 (as amended) and Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended), the Sevenoaks Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) may be chargeable on this development.

Applicants are recommended to take their own advice. For further information please see the planning portal website:

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/applications/howtoapply/whattosubmit/cil> and Sevenoaks District Council website:
<http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/services/housing/planning/planning-applications/community-infrastructure-levy-cil>

Consideration of this pre application response

The information and advice in this letter is not intended to provide a comprehensive response of all issues which may be relevant, but intends to set out those which I consider likely to be most pertinent to the consideration of an application in the event of a submission along the lines presently proposed.

Please note that this response is given at officer level, does not constitute a formal response or decision and should not be considered as binding on the Council in the event of a consequent planning application.

I would recommend that you research all relevant policies and guidance, which may change over time, and consider how they apply to your proposal before submitting any planning application. You may also wish to discuss your proposals with adjoining properties prior to submission as the Council will notify them of the application and you may be able to address their concerns prior to submission.

As a final note, please be advised that Planning Validation Requirements and application forms can be found on the planning section of our website. You do not need to fill out the validation list, but it will help guide you as to what information

should be submitted to ensure swift validation of your application.