



Application by RBC Property Developments Ltd, Mr Colin Neal and Mr Malcolm Allison
Erection of 4 detached dormer bungalows with access from Kingsmead following the demolition of No 19 Kingsmead (resubmission following refusal of S6/2014/226/FP)
Land at Hill Rise, Plough Hill and Kingsmead, Cuffley

Planning Report, incorporating Design & Access Statement of Mark Williams BA (Hons), MA, MRTPI

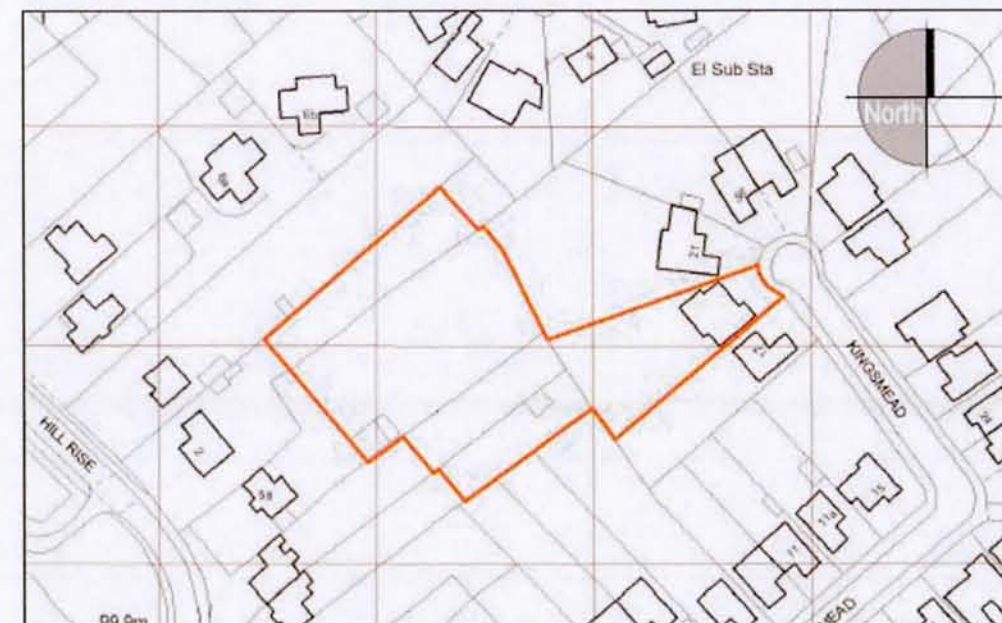
DLA Ref: 13/159B

July 2014

The evidence which I have prepared and provided for this proposal in this report is true and has been prepared and is given in accordance with the guidance of the Royal Town Planning Institute and I confirm that the opinions expressed are my true and professional opinions.

Table of Contents

Section	Subject	Page No
1	Introduction	2
2	Site & Context Appraisal	2
3	Relevant Planning History	3
4	Policy Context	4
5	Description of Development	4
6	Consultations	5
7	Evaluation	6
8	Conclusions	9
9	Appendices	9



The application site outlined in red

COPYRIGHT

The contents of this document must not be copied or reproduced in whole or in part without the written consent of DLA Town Planning Ltd



1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report relates to a proposal for the erection of 4 dormer bungalows and a new access road from Kingsmead following the demolition of No 19 Kingsmead. The site comprises land at Hill Rise, Plough Hill and Kingsmead. This is a resubmission following the refusal of S6/2014/226/FP.

1.2.0 Summary

The proposal has addressed the previous reasons for refusal in the following circumstances:

- 1) The proposed dwellings have been considerably reduced in size. The provision of dormer bungalows would reflect the pattern of development in the surrounding area.
- 2) The scale of the dwellings would ensure that they do not appear as overbearing to the occupiers of neighbouring properties.
- 3) The access arrangements have been amended to provide greater separation between the access drive and No 21 Kingsmead. The proposal also includes sound attenuating fencing to the boundaries with both of the neighbouring properties.
- 4) The proposal includes a drainage strategy for the disposal of surface water. The implementation of this scheme would ensure that the flow of water would not be exacerbated onto adjoining land.

2.0 SITE & CONTEXT APPRAISAL

2.1.0 Site Location

The application site is located to the north-east of Plough Hill / Hill Rise and to the west of Kingsmead. The site is within the defined settlement of Cuffley.

2.2.0 Site Description

The site of some 0.38ha comprises the curtilage of No 19 Kingsmead and part of the rear gardens of several other properties. No 19 is a detached bungalow sited towards the head of the cul-de-sac. The land falls from the south-west to the north-east.

2.3.0 Proposals Map Notation and Other Relevant Designations

The proposals map of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan shows the site within the urban area of Cuffley.

2.4.0 Adjoining Uses

The application site is surrounded by the residential curtilages of existing properties. To the north and north-east are the cul-de-sacs of Orchard Close and Kingsmead respectively. To the north-west is the rear garden of No 4 Hill Rise and beyond this are Nos 6a and 6b, two recent infill plots. To the south-west the site abuts properties in Hill Rise and Plough Hill and to the south-east are further properties in Kingsmead.

2.5.0 Surrounding Area

As noted above, the surrounding area is residential in character. There is a variety of dwelling types and design styles. As well as Nos 6a and 6b Hill Rise, an infill development has also been permitted at No 16 Tolmers Gardens and land to the rear of Nos 10, 12 and 14 Plough Hill.

2.6.0 Accessibility

The site is within 1km of Cuffley railway station. The site is also within easy walking distance of a wide range of retail outlets and local services.

3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

3.1.0 Application Site

3.1.1 LPA Ref No: S6/2007/1466/FP

The site for this application was smaller than the current site and involved a different access arrangement. A proposal for the erection of 4 detached dwellings was refused planning permission in a decision notice dated the 27th November 2007. A subsequent appeal was dismissed in a decision letter dated the 29th October 2008. The Inspector concluded that the proposed development would appear as an over-intensive form of development with a disproportionately small amount of green space. He also found that the proposal would have had an unacceptable overbearing impact on neighbouring occupiers.

3.1.2 LPA Ref No: S6/2014/226/FP

This application for the erection of 4 detached dwellings with access from Kingsmead following the demolition of 19 Kingsmead was refused in a decision notice dated the 24th March 2014 for the following 4 reasons:

"1. The proposed development would result in an unduly prominent form of development harmful to the character and appearance of the locality and the visual amenities of neighbouring properties due to the excessive size, bulk, mass and height of the proposed dwellings. This would represent an over intensive form of development out of character with the established open spacious green character of the surrounding area. This fails to meet the requirements of Local Plan Policies D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and the Supplementary Design Guidance (February 2005).

2. The proposed development would harm the residential amenity of adjoining neighbours at Nos 21 Kingsmead, Nos 5 & 7 Kingsmead, No 2 Hill Rise and No 58 Plough Hill due to the new dwellings having an over dominating impact on these properties outlook due to the new dwellings excessive height, scale and proximity. In addition, there would be perceived overlooking and light pollution to the rear of No 21 Kingsmead from the new access driveway due to its elevated position and open rear boundary to this property. This would result in an unacceptable loss of residential amenity to the occupiers of these neighbouring properties. The proposed development

would therefore be contrary to Policy D1 of the Welwyn Hatfield Plan 2005 and the Supplementary Design Guidance (February 2005).

3. The proposed development would, by reason of the close proximity of the proposed new vehicular road to the front main bedroom of No 21 Kingsmead, result in an unacceptable amount of noise and light disturbance to this neighbouring residential occupier from vehicular movements associated with the new development. The proposed development is therefore contrary to Policy D1 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and the Supplementary Design Guidance (February 2005).

4. The site is identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (May 2009) by Scott Wilson for Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council as being an area of potential overland flow. No drainage strategy has been submitted to demonstrate that surface water flow will not be exacerbated onto adjoining land. The proposal therefore fails to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework which requires new development not to increase flood risk elsewhere."

3.2.0 Other Relevant Sites

3.2.1 No 16 Tolmers Gardens and land to the rear of 10, 12 and 14 Plough Hill, Cuffley

An outline application for the erection of 4 detached houses (S6/2005/1359/OP) was refused planning permission, contrary to the Officer's recommendation, in a decision notice dated the 15th December 2005. A subsequent appeal was allowed in a decision letter dated the 1st June 2006. The proposal involved the demolition of an existing dwelling at the head of a cul-de-sac and the continuation of the cul-de-sac to allow 4 new dwellings.

4.0 POLICY CONTEXT

4.1.0 Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005

I consider the following policies to be directly relevant to this application:

Policy No	Title
SD1	Sustainable Development
GBSP2	Towns and Specified Settlements
D1	Quality of Design
D2	Character and Context
D8	Landscaping
H2	Location of Windfall Development
R3	Energy Efficiency
R17	Trees Woodland and Hedgerows
R19	Noise and Vibration Pollution
M14	Parking Standards for New Development

4.2.0 Supplementary Planning Guidance

The following documents are relevant to this application:

- Supplementary Design Guidance February 2005
- Supplementary Planning Guidance Parking Standards January 2008

4.3.0 The National Planning Policy Framework

This sets out the Government's planning policies for England. Of particular relevance to this application are Chapters 6 Delivering a wide choice of quality homes and 7 Requiring good design.

5.0 DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Layout

The existing dwelling at No 19 Kingsmead would be removed to facilitate the new access drive. The proposed dwellings would be arranged in a loose courtyard layout. The minimum gap between the properties would be 4m. All of the dwellings would have rear garden areas of over 150m².

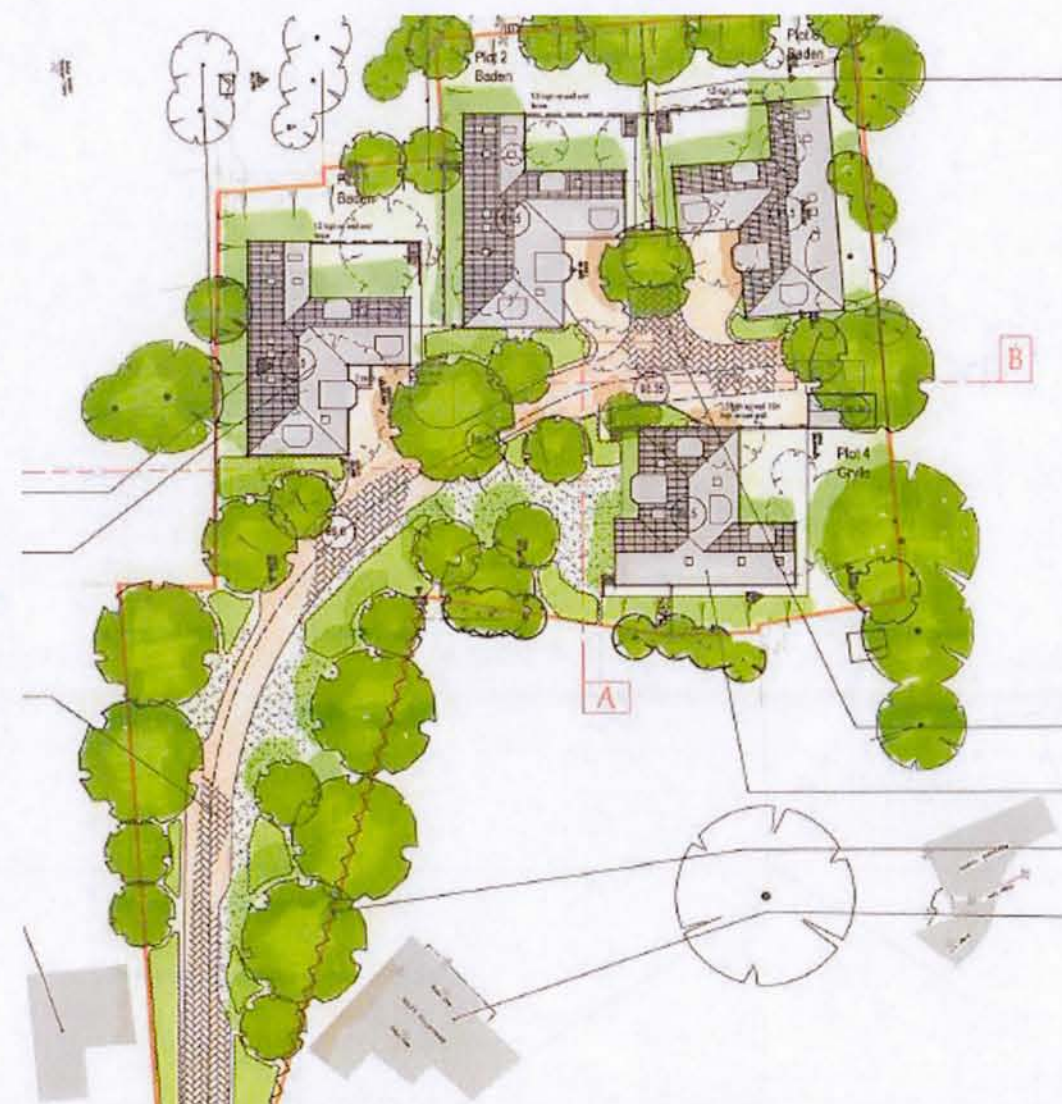


Figure 5.1 Proposed layout - Extract from drawing 1374/3pl 01 (not to scale)

5.2 Design

The proposal is for 4 dormer bungalows. Each would have a pitched roof and a maximum ridge height of 6.96m. The rooms in the roof would be lit by a combination of dormer windows and rooflights. The stairs would be set within a 1.5-storey glass protruding bay. Materials would include yellow London stock brick and grey slates. Plots 1, 2 and 3 would have the same design. Plot 4 would differ, albeit it would share very similar design characteristics.

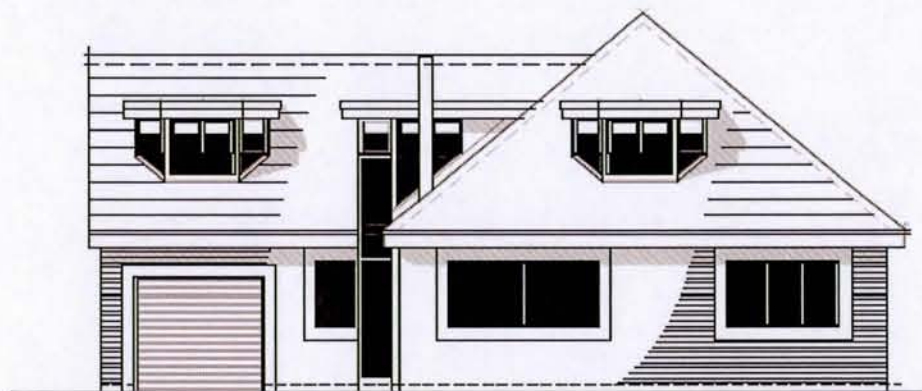


Figure 5.2 Front elevation of Plots 1, 2 & 3. Extract from drawing 1374 3pl 08 (not to scale)

5.3 Landscaping

A number of trees would be removed to facilitate the development. As shown on the site survey, these are predominantly fruit trees and are of limited amenity value. The proposal includes comprehensive additional tree planting to mitigate this loss and to provide an attractive setting for the development.

5.4 Site Access

Access to the site would be via Kingsmead following the demolition of the existing bungalow at No 19. The access drive would be 4.1m wide, narrowing in places to 3m with two 1m service strips.

5.5 Parking

Each of the dwellings would have a garage and a total of three off-street car parking spaces.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

6.1.0 Following the refusal of the previous application, amended drawings were forwarded to Peter Jefcoate and Andrew Mangham. These showed a revised scheme incorporating 1.5 storey dwellings. Mr Jefcoate advised in a telephone conversation that he remained concerned about the scale of the proposed dwellings. Mr Mangham similarly advised that officers would be more likely to support a scheme involving dormer bungalows.

6.1.1 Mr Jefcoate has since left the Council and Matthew Heron has been appointed as the new case officer. A meeting was held with Mr Heron on the 4th July 2014 to discuss a revised scheme for 4 dormer bungalows (Appendix 1). Mr Heron acknowledged that the scale of the proposed dwellings better reflected the character of the area and would have less impact on neighbouring occupiers. However, he felt that greater separation should be provided in between properties.

6.1.2 The application scheme has been amended further following this feedback. The minimum distances between the bungalows have been increased and the maximum ridge height reduced from 7.9m to 6.96m. The pre-application scheme also included basements which have now been removed.

7.0 EVALUATION

Based on the analysis set out in sections 2 to 6, I consider that the application proposal raises the following 6 issues, which I will consider in turn below:

1. Principle
2. Layout & Design
3. Landscaping
4. Highway Safety
5. Parking
6. Drainage

7.1.0 Issue No 1: Principle

The application site is shown on the proposal maps as being within the urban area of Cuffley, a village which is defined as a Specified Settlement by Local Plan Policy GBSP2. The Policy advises that within the Specified Settlements limited development will be allowed which is compatible "with the maintenance and enhancement of their character". The supporting text to GBSP2 notes that the Specified Settlements provide an opportunity for sustainable development.

7.1.1 Local Plan Policy H2 relates to windfall residential development and lists 5 criteria against which proposals will be assessed. I will consider each of these in turn below.

7.1.2 **Criterion (i) The availability of previously developed sites and/or buildings** The site comprises garden land and, as such, is not classified as previously developed land by the NPPF. Nonetheless, the NPPF does not preclude the development of garden land and Welwyn Hatfield District Plan does not contain any policies which seeks to prevent development on gardens in Cuffley. The Council also raised no objection to the principle of additional dwellings in this locality when determining the previous application.

7.1.3 **Criterion (ii) The location and accessibility of the site to services and facilities by transport modes other than the car** The site is within 600m of Station Road, wherein there is a good range of shops, including a post office, a supermarket, a bakers and a pharmacy. The site is also within 800m of a doctor's surgery, a dentist, a library and a bank. The nearest schools are also within easy walking distance. Furthermore, Cuffley railway station is located

less than 1km to the south-east of the site, and which provides a regular service to Hertford and Stevenage to the north and London to the South. Future occupiers would therefore be able to access a range of shops, services and employment opportunities by walking, cycling and public transport.

7.1.4 **Criterion (iii) The capacity of existing and potential infrastructure to absorb further development** The net increase of 3 additional bungalows would not have an unacceptable impact on local infrastructure. There have not been a significant number of new dwellings built within Cuffley in recent years.

7.1.5 **Criterion (iv) The ability to reinforce existing communities, including providing a demand for services and facilities** The additional dwelling would contribute towards the viability of existing shops and services.

7.1.6 **Criterion (v) The physical and environmental constraints on development of land** I will discuss this factor in more detail under Issue No 2 below. The proposal has sought to address previous concerns in respect of the prominence of the dwellings and their relationship with neighbouring properties.

7.1.7 Conclusion

To conclude this issue, there is no policy restraint against additional residential development on the application site provided that the character of the area is maintained. The site has good access to shops, services and public transport links, such that the proposal would make a positive contribution to the goal of sustainable development. The proposal would therefore comply with Local Plan Policies GBSP2 and H2.

7.2.0 Issue No 2: Layout & Design

The Local Plan's principle design policies are D1 Quality of Design and D2 Character and Context. These seek to ensure high quality developments which respect local context and maintain or enhance the character of an area. More detailed guidance is provided in the Supplementary Design Guidance 2005. I will consider the application proposal in respect of context and design, the impact on neighbouring occupiers and private amenity space provision. Taking each of these factors in turn below.

7.2.1.0 1) Context and Design

Whilst the Officer acknowledged that the previous proposal was an improvement on the 2008 appeal scheme in respect of scale and density, he concluded the height, bulk and mass would still be out of character with the surrounding area. This amended proposal has greatly reduced the scale and bulk of the buildings. The dwellings proposed would not exceed 7m in height. This would reflect the scale of many properties in the immediate vicinity and would be less than the revised height of No 17 Kingsmead allowed recently by planning permission S6/2014/0227/FP. The Council did not object previously to the principle of new dwellings in this location, the character of the area being partly defined by a number of infill developments.

7.2.1.1 As noted in Section 6, the applicant was advised by Officers that the provision of dormer bungalows would be more in keeping with the surrounding pattern of development. The provision of dormer bungalows with traditional roof forms would therefore adhere to this advice.

7.2.2.0 3) Impact on Neighbours

The previous reasons for refusal referred to a detrimental impact to the occupiers of Nos 5, 7 and 21 Kingsmead, No 2 Hill Rise and No 58 Plough Hill. I will consider the impact of the revised scheme on each of these dwellings.

7.2.2.1 **Nos 5 and 7 Kingsmead** The Officer's report for the previous application stated that by reason of its height, scale and proximity to the boundary, the flank wall on Plot 1 would appear overdominant when viewed from the rear garden of these properties. The dwellings have been substantially reduced in size and would now have an eaves height of 2.6m and a maximum ridge height of 6.96m. The dwelling on Plot 1 would be located 3m from the side boundary. I consider that these alterations would ensure that the development does not appear overly dominant to the occupiers of Nos 5 and 7 Kingsmead.

7.2.2.2 **No 2 Hill Rise and No 58 Plough Hill** For the previous scheme one of the dwellings would have been located 2m from the common boundary with these properties. The layout has been reconfigured, such that there would now be a minimum separating distance of 7m to the boundary. Again, the reduction in height and the introduction of dormer bungalows would limit any potential impact on the neighbouring occupiers.

7.2.2.3 **No 21 Kingsmead** Concern was raised previously in respect of both the size of the proposed dwellings and the impact of the new access road. Whilst the nearest dwelling would be located

closer to the common boundary than proposed previously, the reduction in size is substantial. The nearest section of the dwelling facing No 21 would have a ridge height of 5.9m. The higher ridge of 6.96m would run away from the neighbouring property. These heights are significantly reduced from both the previous application and the 2008 appeal. I consider that these amendments would ensure that an acceptable relationship is maintained between the new dwellings and No 21 Kingsmead.

7.2.2.4 The access road has been amended to provide an extra 1m gap to No 21. This would allow for additional landscaping to help reduce any noise and headlight glare. The plans also indicate that sound attenuating fencing would be provided to further reduce the impact. I also note that No 19 Kingsmead currently has a garage sited directly adjacent to No 21 with a driveway located to the front of this. Whilst the proposal would undoubtedly generate more traffic than existing, it would also provide the opportunity for landscaped buffer zone which currently does not exist.

7.2.2.5 Previously, at the rear of site part of the access road ran directly towards No 21. This would no longer be the case with the current proposal. It is in any case considered that any problems with headlight glare could be overcome through the provision of appropriate boundary treatments.

7.2.3 4) Residential amenity of future occupiers

The Council's design guidance does not set specific amenity space requirements; rather it advises that gardens should be functional and usable in terms of orientation, width, depth and shape. The proposed dwellings would have conventional rear gardens which would be usable in respect of their size and shape. All of the properties would have garden areas of over 150m² and which would provide a good level of amenity space for future occupiers. The dwellings themselves would provide a high standard of living accommodation, with generous sized rooms and natural light to all the main habitable space.

7.2.4 Conclusion

To conclude this issue, the substantial reduction in size and alterations to the access arrangements have overcome previous concerns in respect of the impact on the character of the area and neighbouring occupiers. The proposal would therefore comply with Local Plan Policies E1, D2 and D8 and the Supplementary Design Guidance.

7.3.0 Issue No 3: Landscaping

The Officer did not raise any concerns previously in respect of trees to be removed and concluded that the balance between soft landscaping and buildings would be acceptable. Whilst the building footprint has increased from the previous scheme, the dwellings themselves would be considerably less prominent. There is still ample room for replacement planting which would ensure an attractive, landscaped scheme.

7.4.0 Issue No 4: Highway Safety

The County Highway Engineer advised that a road width of 4.1m would be acceptable as it would allow to vehicles to pass each other. The width of the access has therefore been reduced to 4.1m, narrowing to 3m in places. There was no reason for refusal previously in respect of the highway safety or the ability of the surrounding road network to accommodate the additional traffic generated by 4 additional houses.

7.5.0 Issue No 5: Parking

The Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance Parking Standards advises that 4-bedroom properties in the urban area of Cuffley should provide 3 off-street car parking spaces. The proposal would meet this requirement and would therefore ensure that there is not an unacceptable demand for on-street parking.

7.6.0 Issue No 6: Drainage

The Council's fourth reason for refusal refers to the absence of a drainage strategy. A strategy has now been produced and is included as part of this application. A CCTV drainage survey was unable to locate any surface water sewers, which suggests the likelihood that soakaways are present. The owner of No 58 Plough Hill has confirmed that his own plot has a soakaway to deal with surface water. It is therefore proposed to provide a system of soakaways to catch the surface water from the dwellings and the access road. The provision of soakaways would be subject to intrusive ground testing and which could be controlled by condition.

7.6.1 An engineer from a company which specializes in deep bore drilling has advised that the geology of the area is brown clay and flint gravel which overlies Lewes Nodular Chalk. The chalk is considered the best geology to accept water as it contains large fissures particularly in the first few metres. Typical geological maps suggest that the clay and flint gravel layer is no more than 10m, but the engineer advised that this could go as far as 20m. A deep bore

soakaway could be provided even between 20m and 30m, so the geology is not considered to prevent the use of a soakaway system.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

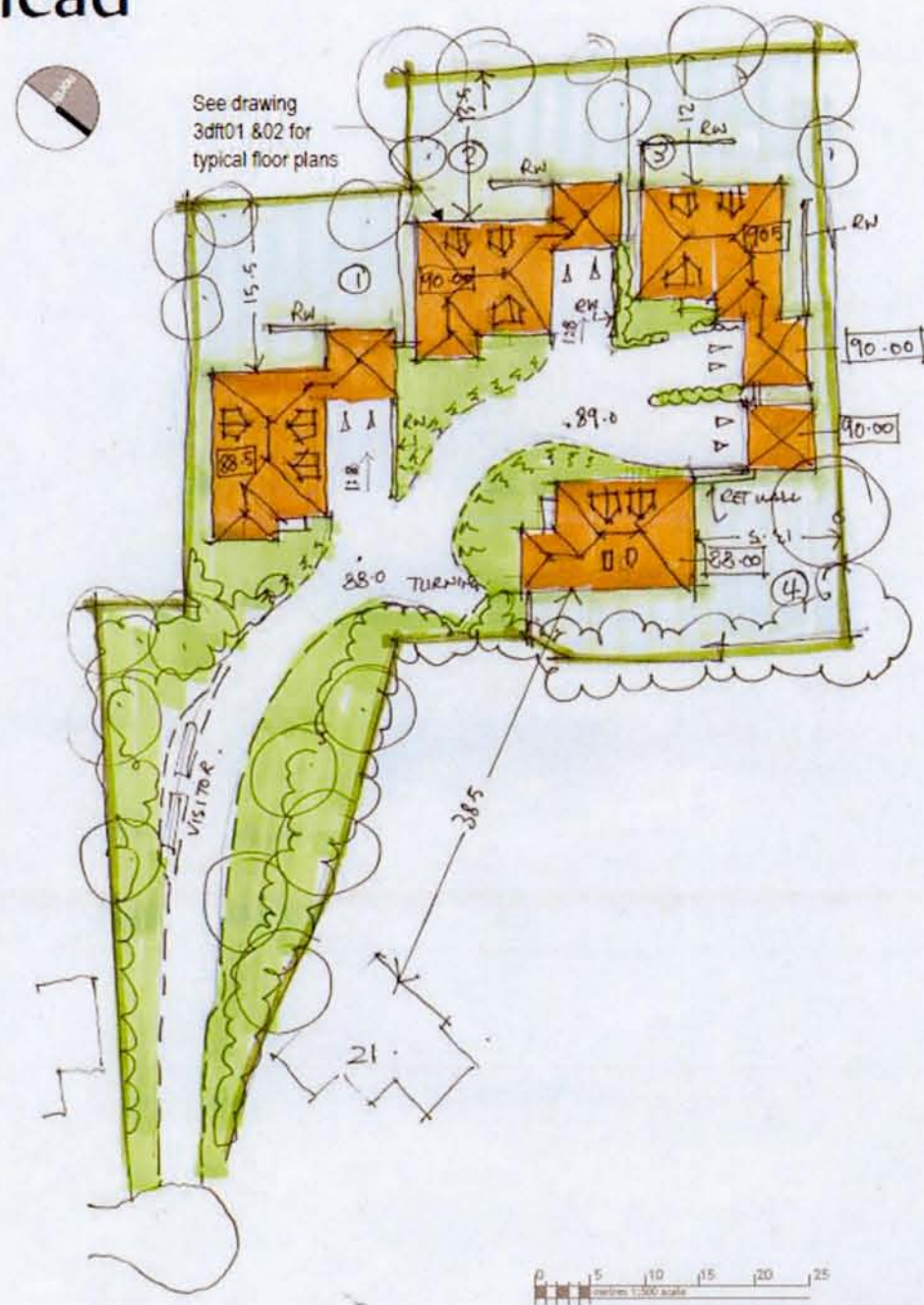
This report relates to a proposal for the erection of 4 dormer bungalows and a new access road from Kingsmead following the demolition of No 19 Kingsmead, on land at Hill Rise, Plough Hill and Kingsmead.

- 8.1 There is no policy restraint against additional residential development on the application site provided that the character of the area is maintained. The site has good access to shops, services and public transport links, such that the proposal would make a positive contribution to the goal of sustainable development. The proposal would therefore comply with Local Plan Policies GBSP2 and H2.
- 8.2 The substantial reduction in size and alterations to the access arrangements have overcome previous concerns in respect of the impact on the character of the area and neighbouring occupiers. The proposal would therefore comply with Local Plan Policies E1, D2 and D8 and the Supplementary Design Guidance.
- 8.3 The proposal would ensure safe access for vehicles onto the highway network. The car parking provision would comply with the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- 8.4 A system of soakaways would ensure that surface water flow would not be exacerbated onto neighbouring land.

9.0 APPENDICES

- 9.1 Appendix 1 – Scheme submitted for informal advice

Land off Kingsmead Cuffley



DRAFT

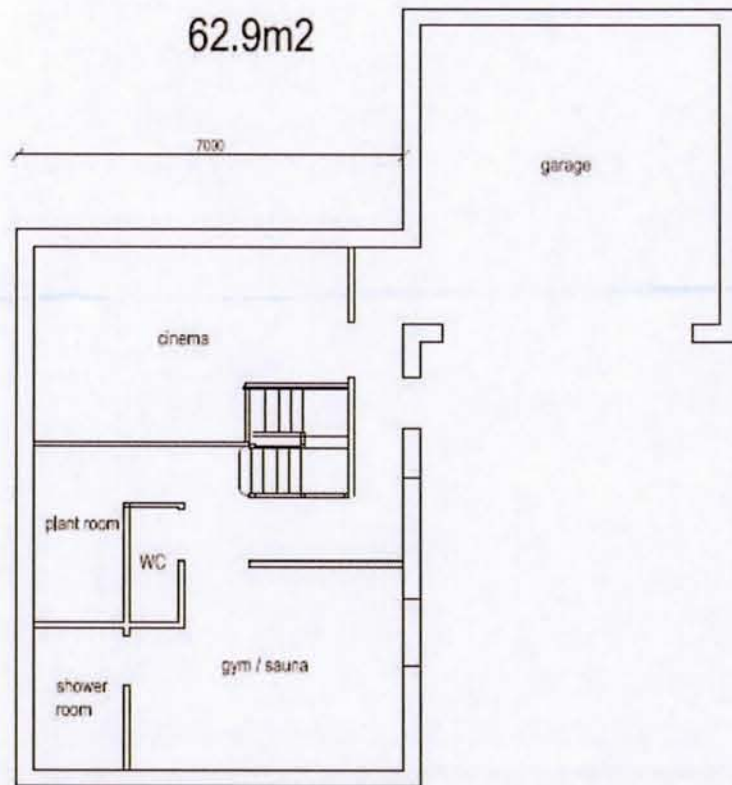


A 18.06.2014 cross reference added

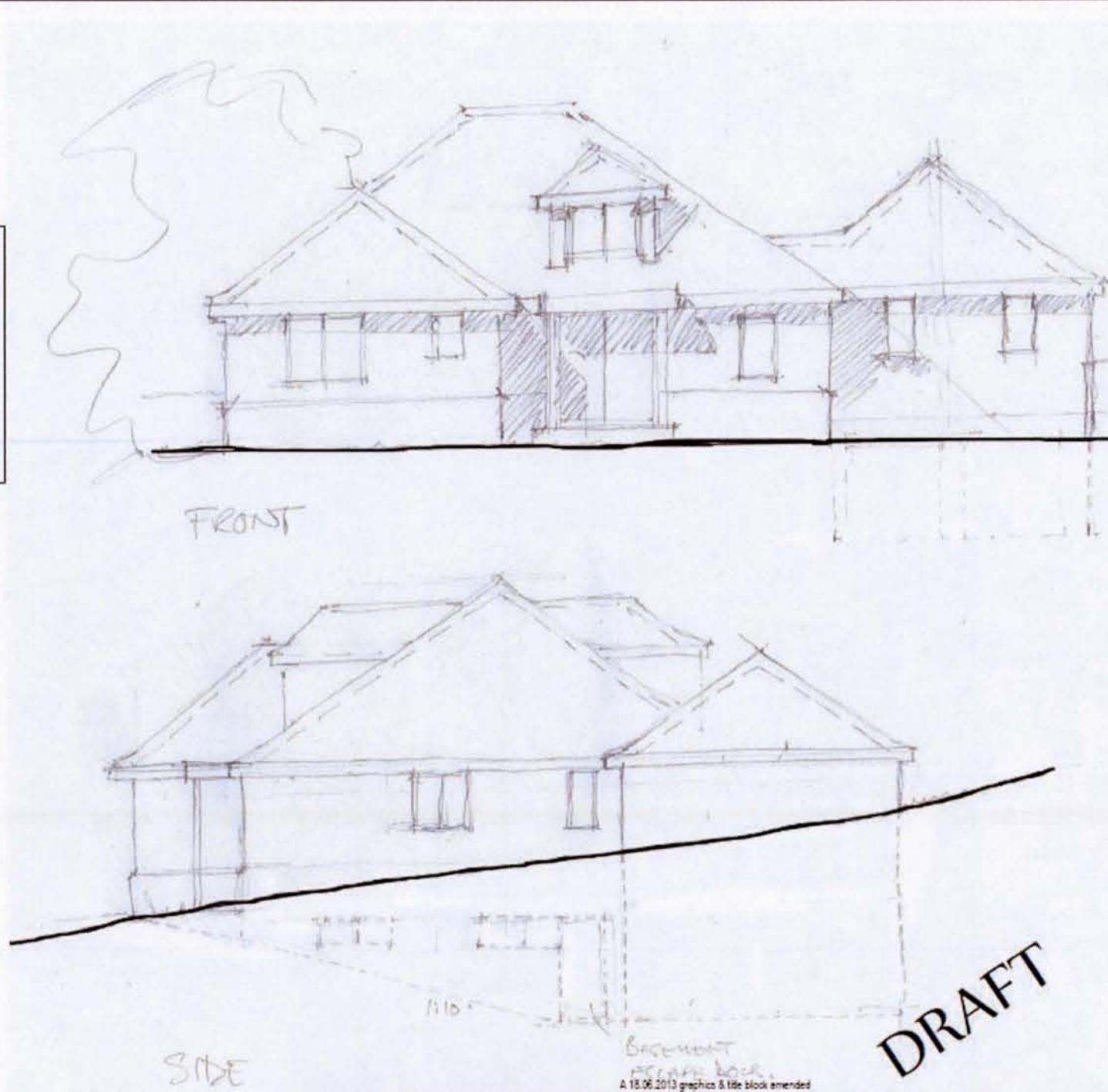
nettassets Architectural Design & Development Consultants www.nettassets.co.uk	Title Land of Kingsmead, Cuffley	Detail DRAFT - BLOCK PLAN	
	nett assets The Studio, 141 New Road, Croydon Green, Herts. WD3 3DN Tel: 01833 792117, 07531 134028 Web: www.nettassets.co.uk	Date Jun 2014	Job Ref 1374
		Drg No. 3dft 03	Rev. A

Land off Kingsmead Cuffley

62.9m²



basement



 nettassets Architectural Design & Development Consultants	Title Land off Kingsmead, Cuffley	Detail TYPICAL BUNGALOW DESIGN AS PLOT 2	
	New Assets The Studio, 141 New Road, Cradley Green, Herts, WD3 3BN Tel: 01438 243117, 07531 154528 Email: www.nettassets.co.uk	Date Jun 2014	Job Ref 1374