

# Design & Access Statement - Revision C



**proposal** : Modification of existing chalet bungalow, demolition of outbuildings. Erection of a 3 bed detached bungalow to include associated parking spaces and a new access driveway.

**on land at** : Gilridge, Brighton Road, Handcross, RH17 6BZ

**job number** : 23.114

**date** : 08.02.2024

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L2 Adaptable to changing needs and evolving technologies

L3 A sense of ownership

## Context

### **CI Understand and relate well to the site, its local and wider context**

Brighton Road is residential in nature with all buildings to the south of the application site being 2/3 storey residential dwellings.

The plot to the north of the application site and immediately adjacent is currently occupied by a company offering security products (safes, shelving, retail security etc) and has a number of large warehouses and an associated service yard. Planning consent was granted but not implemented for 7 dwellings on this plot in July 2017 - REF DM/17/0587.

Further to the north of this lies a small cluster of single storey and two storey light industrial units that back on to a pair of dwellings fronting onto Horsham Road.

Heading further north the building mix becomes more nuanced with a selection of various dwelling types (detached, semi-detached, terraced) along with commercial premises. A public house, butchers, convenience store, vehicle sales and newsagents etc that are strung out along the village high street.

Residential units are also found above a number of the domestic scale commercial facilities.

The buildings are predominately brick 2 / 3 storey (room in roof space) with either on street parking or small gardens / driveways to the front.

The development density is reasonably high although strung out and linear in nature with the plot and with the property sizes generally increasing the further you travel from the centre of the village.

### **C2 Value heritage, local history and culture**

Handcross is a small village approximately 6 miles north west of Haywards Heath.

The village boasts a large number of Victorian buildings, and has two of the finest gardens in Southern England. The first is Nymans, a National Trust garden arranged around the shell of an old manor house. At the heart of Nymans is a Victorian walled garden created by noted designers Gertrude Jekyll and William Robinson. The house and gardens were developed by three generations of the Messel family, who lived here from 1890. Free access is available to Nymans for local village residents.

A short distance away is High Beeches Garden, a privately owned garden composed of 20 acres of woodland and water gardens, with rare plants as well as traditional wildflower meadows.

On the edge of the Nyman's estate is Nyman's woods, a beautiful area of ancient Wealden woodland crisscrossed by footpaths. One path leads along a medieval trackway, and others pass through bluebell woods.

The village itself, it is the largest of four villages in Slaugham parish and has a variety of small shops as well as two schools a primary school and Handcross Park School, a private co-educational establishment on the Old Brighton Road.

There are also two churches, both Victorian. On Horsham Road is All Saints Church of England parish church, built in 1885. On High Street is the Zoar Baptist Chapel, rebuilt in 1887 on the site of an earlier mid-18th-century chapel.

There is one remaining pub, The Red Lion on the High Street.

The village crest incorporates a coach and horses, and you can see the symbol on several properties around the village.

A stable population in good quality housing with associated facilities is required for this to remain a buoyant and thriving community.

## Identity

### **II Respond to existing local character and identity**

Whilst there are significant numbers of Victorian properties within the village boundaries, there has been a steady turn over of conversions, infills and replacement dwellings over the years so the mix has become a lot broader, particularly once you move away from the village high street.

There have been three recent small residential developments to the south of the application site and more significant sized developments to the north of the village on both sides of the public park. These new additions have helped bring a further degree of diversity and mix of dwellings to the village whilst also replacing some of the more dilapidated or sub-standard dwellings that preceded them.

### **I2 Well designed high quality and attractive places and buildings**

Recent additions have been broadly vernacular in style and have taken cues for the scale and details from some of the existing housing stock the exception being the recent addition to the north of the public park which is generally larger and more suburban in scale, more contemporary in nature with a slightly alien palette of materials when compared with the majority of properties.

For the development site it is proposed to use a tight mix of broadly traditional materials with a few nods towards contemporary living where appropriate. A good quality facing brick is proposed with simple, unfussy and subtle detailing to include a double dentil course and arched brick soldier coursing above the ground floor windows. Clay tiles to the roofs and a good quality low brick wall to the front of the plot rather than a fence and all softened with a comprehensive landscape plan.

### **I3 Create character and identity**

The proposed dwelling is of a scale and quality that will sit comfortably within the immediate context and the quality materials should elevate the design sufficiently without overwhelming the adjacent dwelling. Care has been taken to use the site appropriately and the proposal will allow for some modest improvement of the existing chalet bungalow, which will extend its lifespan and reduce the kerbside visual sprawl of the existing.

## Built Form

### **B1 Compact form of development**

The proposed dwelling comfortably exceeds the statutory minimum space standards but without being profligate.

The new dwelling is a 3 bed single storey unit of 88.3m<sup>2</sup> gross internal area (national minimum standard is 74 - 86m<sup>2</sup> dependent upon bed space arrangement).

The height of the proposed units has been kept down to suit the context but care has been taken to ensure that the ground floor and first floor ceiling heights are kept at 2.4m so as to be more generous than the minimum and enhance the interior space.

Generous wardrobe space is provided along with storage space beneath the staircase and home study / office space allowed for as well.

## **B2 Appropriate building types and forms**

Brighton Road is broadly residential in nature with a mixture of dwelling types (mostly 2-3 storey / room in roof) semi-detached or detached with front and rear garden space. The properties on the western side of the road generally are set back further and behind low walls or fences whereas the properties on the eastern side are set much closer to the road and in some instances front directly on to the rear of the pavement.

All the dwellings in the immediate vicinity have pitched roofs, either gabled, hipped or barn-hipped and are predominantly under clay or concrete tiles although there are also a few slate roofed dwellings further to the south.

A number of older properties have driveways to the front or side which typically involves revering out on to Brighton Road, whereas all the more recent additions have pushed car parking to the rear of units facing the road to facilitate turning and safe exit. This can be seen at the recent St. Georges Cottages development 3 doors down from the application site and also at Walters Mews ( development of a similar, but slightly larger scale) further to the south on the eastern side of Brighton Road.

With respect to materials the predominant one is brick, although there are a couple of rendered dwellings and a number of the recent additions have either tile hanging, cedar / timber cladding at first floor level.

## **B3 Destinations**

Brighton road is entirely residential in nature to the south of the application site, however to the north the built form becomes more complex and mixed use in nature. This has been covered under Context (C1) above.

## **Movement**

### **M1 A connected network of routes for all modes of transport**

The application site is well serviced by the road network with the A23 being directly accessible for north / south travel and the B2110 Horsham Road providing east west links. In addition approximately 1 minute to the north is the Red Lion bus stop that is served by the 271 and 273 Metrobus routes that provide a broadly hourly service between Crawley to the north and Brighton to the south. There is no rail provision in Handcross with the most convenient service running from Haywards Heath some 6 miles to the southeast. Some cycle infrastructure and broadly safe pavements run through Handcross Village which is mostly 30mph speed restricted.

### **M2 Active travel**

There is some cycle infrastructure such as national route 20 nearby and the cycle path that runs alongside the A23 both of which are functional if not particularly pleasant.

The Village centre and limited facilities lie a short walk to the north (approx 5 minutes).

### **M3 Well-considered parking, servicing and utilities infrastructure for all users**

It is proposed that the development offers 7 parking spaces (2 per dwelling) + 1 visitor and 4 EV charging points provided.

## Nature

### **N1 Provide a network of high quality, green open spaces with a variety of landscapes and activities, including play**

The modest nature of the application site provides little scope for this but there are good quality facilities at the northern end of the village with a large public park and play area that is easily accessible. In addition the nearby trails around Nymans are easily accessible and the gardens themselves allow free access to residents during opening hours.

### **N2 Improve and enhance water management**

The proposal includes measures to restrict water usage and wastage as set out in the submitted sustainability statement (low flow taps & showers, dual flush wc's etc). Each dwelling will be fitted with a water meter as well.

It is proposed that the access drive and parking areas are constructed to a standard of high permeability and surface water will be disposed of via a soak away with a suitably sized attenuation tank to slow down run off in periods of heavy / persistent rain.

Each dwelling will have a 210 litre rainwater collection butt installed in the rear garden for the purpose of garden watering.

### **N3 Support rich and varied biodiversity**

The limited site area does restrict the possibilities somewhat but given the existing rear garden is broadly just turf there is some scope for improving diversity.

The submitted landscaping plan aims to significantly increase the amount of planting within the site boundary and has been chosen to offer a mix of species to suit pollinators and to act as a backbone to individual additional planting that residents may wish to adopt without being too prescriptive. It is also proposed that each dwelling is fitted with a pair of "bee bricks" and a pair of Schwegler Swift Bricks at high level on each flank elevation.

## Public Spaces

### **P1 Create well-located, high quality and attractive public spaces**

This is a small scale development and as such there is no capacity for the provision of additional public space. The proposed dwellings however will be constructed of good quality materials and be more aesthetically pleasing than the existing chalet bungalow which looks incongruous in this context.

### **P2 Provide well-designed spaces that are safe**

The new dwelling is sited back from the roadway and provided with an enclosed rear garden. The arrangement of the plots is in keeping with the linear pattern of development along Brighton Road and scale of other dwellings in the immediate vicinity.

### **P3 Make sure public spaces support social interaction**

The domestic scale of the proposals is in keeping with the broader context and low walls / open spaces to the front of properties helps to encourage chance / local interactions.

## **Uses**

### **U1 A mix of uses**

The small scale of this proposed development does not allow for a mix of uses and subsequently only provides dwellings which given the context is the most appropriate type of development in this location. There are other locations in the nearby vicinity that are best suited for alternative uses.

### **U2 A mix of home tenures, types and sizes**

In this instance due to the scale of development and that this is an owner led application there is only one proposed tenure which is commercial marketed homes. The modest scale of the site allows for a mix of 2 & 3 bed units only.

### **U3 Socially inclusive**

The proposed development is commercial in nature by virtue of being homes to purchase, so there is a degree of social exclusion, but given the small scale nature of the site and the funding options open to the applicant this is unavoidable. However the proposed dwellings are simple in form and could be adapted internally to suit alternative layouts if specifically required.

## **Homes & Buildings**

### **H1 Healthy, comfortable and safe internal and external environment**

Care has been taken to ensure that the dwellings have good levels of natural lighting and generous floor to ceiling heights to enhance the feeling of spaciousness within the available building envelope.

Triple glazing is proposed for its enhanced thermal and acoustic performance given the proximity of road infrastructure.

Natural ventilation is proposed but can be supplemented by attenuated mechanical ventilation with heat recovery as outlined in the submitted acoustic report. Plot 3 has been reduced to a single storey unit to ensure a reduced acoustic impact upon the living spaces which are well shielded by the proposed acoustic fence.

### **H2 Well-related to external amenity and public spaces**

Each plot has its own private external amenity space.

The application site is within easy walking distance of Nymans Gardens, which has free public access to parish residents and the Village park, playground and parish hall all lie within walking distance to the northern edge of the village.

### **H3 Attention to detail: storage, waste, servicing and utilities**

Each property is provided with identified dedicated space for the storage and collection of both recycling and refuse. Dwellings will also have electricity, water and high speed data connections provided. Foul water will be discharged to the foul mains network that is currently connected to the site and runs under Brighton Road.

All properties are to be provided with a high security enclosed cycle store to the rear garden, adjacent to the rear gate and all plots are sufficiently large enough to also accommodate a small garden shed (subject to planning or permitted development rights if not restricted).

Each rear garden is also provided with a 210l rainwater collection butt for the purpose of garden watering.

## **Resources**

### **R1 Follow the energy hierarchy**

In line with best practice the proposed energy strategy for this development follows the principals of the energy hierarchy. The energy hierarchy has three priorities, seeking to reduce energy use before meeting remaining demand by the cleanest means possible:

- 1) Be lean - use less energy: Improve the building fabric, glazing and structure to reduce energy consumption in the first instance by using low U-Values and good air tightness and by ensuring that active systems run as energy efficiently as possible.
- 2) Be clean - supply energy efficiently: Further reduce carbon emissions through the use of decentralised energy where feasible.
- 3) Be green - use renewable energy: when the above design elements have been reasonably exhausted, supply energy through renewable sources where practicable.

This is set out in the submitted sustainability statement.

### **R2 Careful selection of materials and construction techniques**

A mix of good quality and resilient building materials have been chosen and sufficient build-up space has been allowed for a building fabric that will significantly exceed the current building regulations. In addition dense materials and higher spec'd glazing (triple) are proposed in order to address the potential acoustic impact of adjacent roadways.

### **R3 Maximise resilience**

The proposed materials for the building fabric have been picked for resilience and durability, they should be long lasting, weather well and stand the test of time as well as having the potential for reuse / recycling at the end of the dwellings lifespan.

## **Lifespan**

### **L1 Well-managed and maintained**

The selected materials have been chosen for durability and long life and it is intended that all space within the site curtilage is to be allocated between the dwellings to avoid the need for a separate management company and shifting responsibility to the owners / occupiers. This should help instil a greater sense of ownership, belonging and community.

### **L2 Adaptable to changing needs and evolving technologies**

The internal layouts which are broadly established and defined by non-load bearing construction so should allow for comparatively easy adaption and conversion to alternative interior layouts particularly of the ground floor spaces. Given the modest scale of the proposals however the degree of flexibility is somewhat limited to modest functional changes rather than wholesale alternative rearrangement. The key ground floor spaces and facilities are all accessible and level thresholds are provided throughout. Provision for the addition of stair or platform lift has been considered and could potentially be incorporated but given the very modest gross internal area would be to the detriment of the principal habitable rooms.

### **L3 A sense of ownership**

Each plot is clearly defined and offers an area of private external space as well as frontage to both public and shared spaces allowing for both privacy and social interaction.