

# Wye Planning

## Planning Supporting Statement

### Application for:

Demolition of two storey house and outbuildings and construction of replacement single storey dwelling with detached garage/store/workshop

Glen Ridge, Hawkers Lane, Fownhope, Herefordshire, HR1 4PZ



By: Vicky Simpson BSc, MSc, MRTPI

Date: December 2021

Wye Planning, Bayton Farm Bungalow,  
Phocle Green, Nr Ross on Wye, HR9 7TS

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This planning statement has been written by Vicky Simpson (MRTPI). It is submitted in support of the planning application submitted on behalf of Mr. S. and Mrs. R. Foster (the applicants).
- 1.2 The planning application seeks the grant of full planning permission for the demolition of a two storey house and outbuildings, and the construction of a replacement single storey dwelling with detached garage/store/workshop.

## 2. The application site

- 2.1 The application site, which has an area of circa 0.13 hectares is located in an open countryside location approximately 1.3km to the east of Fownhope. It is accessed via a private drive off Hawkers Lane. The site boundaries are identified on the submitted site location plan. The plan at figure 1 below indicates the approximate site boundaries superimposed upon a 'Google Earth' aerial image.

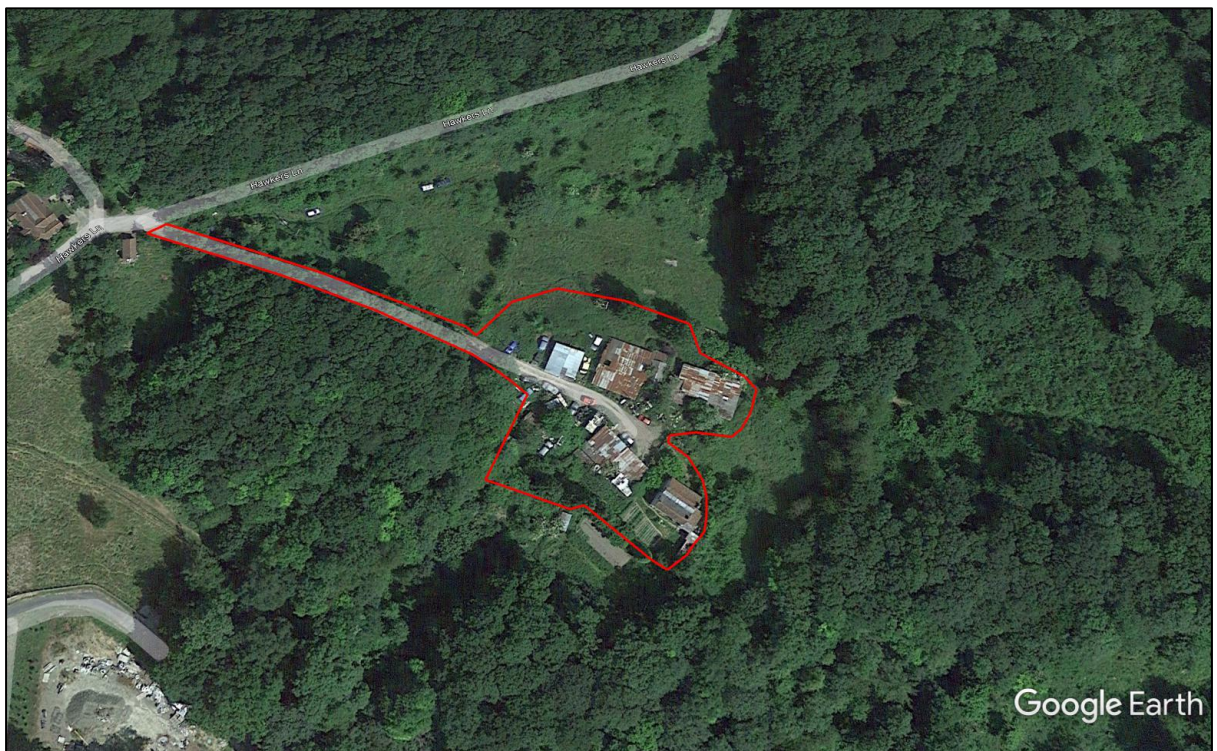


Figure 1 – Google earth extract with application site area approximately outlined in red

- 2.2 Within the site is located a fairly substantial two storey cottage. It is understood that the cottage has been unoccupied since July 2017, but that prior to this it was lived in as a dwelling house. The cottage does not appear to have benefitted from regular maintenance or investment for a considerable period of time, and as such it is now in poor condition.

- 2.3 Much of the application site and the wider land holding has historically been used for the storage of salvaged goods and scrap metal, either in the open or within one of a number of makeshift / more substantial structures. Within the last year the applicants have removed and properly disposed of a considerable volume of scrap material from the site including scrap metals, vehicles, trailers and tyres. They have also removed a number of unsafe structures from the site.
- 2.4 The site is within the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). It is not identified as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), albeit that areas of woodland to the south and east form part of the Lea and Pagets Wood SSSI.

### **3. The proposed development**

- 3.1 The development subject of this full planning application is for the demolition of a two-storey house and outbuildings, and the construction of a replacement single storey dwelling with detached garage/store/workshop.
- 3.2 The submitted scheme has been informed by pre-application advice received from Mr Simon Withers who was broadly supportive of the development proposals, as well as from the findings of the following surveys and documents:
- Topographic Survey
  - Preliminary ecological assessment
  - Bat survey
  - Arboricultural survey report
  - Geo-environmental (contamination) report
  - Soakaway assessment
- 3.3 The resultant planning application comprises the following plans, reports and assessments:
- 01173\_001 (Site location plan)
  - 01173\_002 (Existing site plan)
  - 01173\_003 (Proposed site clearance plan)
  - 01173\_005 (Proposed block plan)
  - 01173\_006 (Existing and proposed site plan)
  - 01173\_007 (Proposed plans)
  - 01173\_008 (Proposed roof plan)
  - 01173\_009 (Proposed elevations sheet 1)
  - 01173\_010 (Proposed elevations sheet 2)
  - 01173\_013 (Proposed garage)
  - Preliminary ecological assessment – Dave Smith
  - Bat survey – Dave Smith
  - Arboricultural impact assessment – David Gardner
  - Phase I and II Geo-environmental assessment – Unity Environmental
  - Design, visual impact and access statement – Randall Architecture
  - Percolation test results – Colin Thomas
  - Percolation test locations plan

- Soakaway calculations – Onn point engineering
  - Proposed drainage layout plan 21-OP-1187 A1/001 dated 06/12/2021 – Onn point engineering
  - Climate change checklist
  - Notes to read alongside climate change checklist – Randall architecture
  - Biodiversity and ecology checklist
- 3.4 It is proposed that the existing cottage be demolished, and a new dwelling house be constructed. The cottage which is to be demolished has accommodation over two storeys, with a total floor space of 172m<sup>2</sup>. The outbuildings which currently remain on site have a cumulative floor area of 222m<sup>2</sup>.
- 3.5 The proposed dwelling would have a contemporary appearance and finish. The design brief was for a highly accessible single-storey three-bedroom property, which would have a low visual impact, and low carbon requirements, to replace the existing dwelling, along with a new garage/workshop.
- 3.6 Externally the dwelling will have burnt black vertical cedar cladding to the walls, a mix of grey corrugated metal and calcareous grass roofs and a mix of timber framed 'Hereford' style doors and windows and powder coated aluminium framed doors. The bulk and massing of the dwelling will be minimised by the introduction of a disrupted roof form comprising a mix of calcareous grasses and corrugated metal sheeting.
- 3.7 Internally the dwelling would have a footprint of 191m<sup>2</sup>, comprising; an entrance hall, kitchen, dining room, living room, lobby, utility room, three bedrooms (one en-suite) and a bathroom. It is also proposed that a detached single-storey garage/workshop/ store be constructed. It would have a footprint similar to the existing dilapidated outbuilding to the north of the existing dwelling.
- 3.8 The applicants would be willing to accept the imposition of a condition requiring the demolition of the existing dwelling prior to the first occupation of the replacement dwelling.
- 3.9 Parking and manoeuvring space for three vehicles are proposed on an area of ground to the west of the dwelling. Additional covered car parking for at least two cars is to be provided within the open sided part of the proposed garage/store building. No alterations to the access on to Hawkers Lane are proposed.
- 3.10 It is proposed that surface water be disposed of to soakaways and that foul water be disposed of to a package treatment plant. Both the surface water soakaway and the package treatment plant with associated drainage fields would be located on land under the applicant's control.

#### **4. Planning History**

##### **4.1 No relevant planning applications**

- 4.2 Pre-application advice was provided by Mr Simon Withers on 19th June 2020 (ref 193837/CE) within which general support was given to the principle of a replacement dwelling within the site. Advice was also provided regarding the need for specific supporting surveys and assessments.

## 5. Principle of Development

- 5.1.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 require that planning applications be determined in accordance with the provisions of the local development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.1.2 The Herefordshire Core Strategy forms part of the development plan and provides the overarching vision for development within the County until 2031. The Fownhope Neighbourhood Development Plan was made on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2016. The policies contained within these two documents comprise the development plan in so far as this application is concerned.
- 5.1.3 Core Strategy Policy RA3 is relevant to proposals for replacement dwellings in open countryside locations. Policy RA3 requires that:

*“In rural locations outside of settlements, as to be defined in either neighbourhood development plans or the Rural Areas Sites Allocations DPD, residential development will be limited to proposals which satisfy one or more of the following criteria:*

*....*

*3. involves the replacement of an existing dwelling (with a lawful residential use) that is comparable in size and scale with, and is located in the lawful domestic curtilage, of the existing dwelling; or.....”*

- 5.1.4 Policy FW11 of the Fownhope Neighbourhood development plan, similarly allows for the principle of the replacement of existing dwellings on land outside of the Fownhope Settlement Boundary.

- 5.1.5 Within the amplification of Core Strategy RA3 the following is stated:

*“4.8.25 Replacement dwellings will only be permitted provided that the existing building has established and continuing residential use rights and has not been abandoned. Proposals should ordinarily be sited in a similar position as the original dwelling unless there is technical justification to consider an alternative location within the existing lawful domestic curtilage. To safeguard the character and appearance of the rural landscape from the visual impact of large buildings, the size of any replacement dwelling will be of a comparable total cubic volume (measured externally) to the existing dwelling. To minimise the impact of the proposal on the surrounding area, the design of the dwelling and any associated development should respect the local character of the area and/or make a positive contribution to the rural landscape. As such the*

*mass, scale, height and external appearance of the resultant development should be taken into account. Permitted development rights may be removed from replacement dwellings.”*

- 5.1.7 Whilst there are no apparent planning records for the property, the lawful use of the house as a residential property would not appear to be in question, with it having been occupied as a dwelling until July 2017.
- 5.1.8 The internal floor space to be created within the proposed replacement dwelling is just 11% greater than that within the existing house, and in this respect the accommodation is clearly comparable in size, as required by Core Strategy Policy RA3.
- 5.1.9 The extent of the lawful residential curtilage of Glen Ridge is somewhat unclear. Though it is accepted that the proposed siting of the replacement dwelling may not necessarily be within the lawful residential curtilage of Glen Ridge, it is suggested that the re-siting of the proposed dwelling to lower ground than the existing house will mean that it is able to better nestle into the existing topography resulting in it having a lower visual impact than a replacement dwelling in the position of the existing dwelling. This, when combined with the fact that the development proposals will also secure the remediation of the site and the removal of the old sheds, and that the proposed replacement dwelling is single storey only would, it is suggested, outweigh the slight potential policy conflict regarding the existing residential curtilage.

## **5.2 Design and amenity**

- 5.2.1 Paragraph 131 of the Framework states that:

*“In determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help to raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings”.*

- 5.2.2 It is contended that the innovative design of the proposed dwelling, is of a high standard which will help to raise the standard of design in the area. The utilisation of cladding harvested from trees onsite, air source heat pumps, and grass roofs will mean that the carbon footprint of the dwelling, both at construction stage and in use, will also be lower than a house not seeking to utilise such materials and products.

## **5.3 Ecology and Biodiversity**

- 5.3.1 A preliminary ecological assessment undertaken by an appropriately qualified ecologist is submitted in support of the planning application. The following conclusions were made within the Preliminary ecological appraisal:

*“Glen Ridge contains habitats of high conservation value and is suitable for some European protected species, namely Bats and Hazel Dormice. However, the development footprint is mostly bare ground and devoid of suitable habitat due to removal of hundreds of old tyres, derelict sheds and scrap metal the recommended in the Geo-Environmental Assessment. The house which is due to be demolished and the area immediately around it contain the only suitable habitats within the proposed development area.”*

5.3.2 A series of biodiversity enhancement measures were identified at paragraph 5.2 of the Preliminary ecological appraisal, as duplicated below:

*“In addition to any features incorporated into the new building/s, additional measures can be taken to produce a biodiversity net gain.*

- Installation of bat boxes, dormouse boxes and bird boxes in the two areas of woodland and along the northern boundary with Hawkers Lane*
- Creation of a native wildflower and grass area on the bare ground after the building is complete. Exact location to be decided at development planning stage.*
- Planting of local variety fruit trees within bare ground or newly planted grass area. Exact location to be decided at development planning stage.*
- Log habitat piles to be created around the edges of the newly created grass/wildflower areas.*
- Management of existing grassland to gradually reduce the bramble cover and restore the wildflower element of this habitat.”*

5.3.3 The applicants would be willing to accept the imposition of a planning permission upon any grant of planning permission to ensure the delivery of the mitigation and enhancement measures identified within the preliminary ecological assessment and bat survey.

5.3.4 Notwithstanding the fact that no evidence of bats was found by the ecologist when undertaking the initial survey work, a key recommendation within the preliminary ecological assessment was that a specific bat (emergence) survey of the house be undertaken.

5.3.5 The survey was duly appointed, and emergence surveys were undertaken on 10<sup>th</sup> July, 25<sup>th</sup> July and 9<sup>th</sup> August 2021. Within the bat survey report produced following these surveys the ecologist concluded the following:

*“On completion of the surveys and after analysing the data from data logger, the assessment is that Glen Ridge is used by very low numbers of lesser horseshoe bats *Rhinolophus hipposideros* (potentially only one), as a night roost and also as a day roost for low numbers of common and soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* & *P. pygmaeus* (4 & 8 respectively).*

*All roosts will be lost as a result of the demolition; therefore, it is necessary to obtain a ‘Bat Mitigation License’ from Natural England under the provisions of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.*

*The design of the proposed new build is single storey and not suitable for lesser horseshoe bat accommodation. Therefore, all bat mitigation has been designed to fit into a garage/workshop space which is separate to the living accommodation. A purpose built ‘Bat loft’ has been designed to fit into the roof space of this building for lesser horseshoe bats, and bat boxes are to be fitted to*

*the exterior walls to accommodate the pipistrelle bats. The garage/workshop construction will have no external lighting interfering with the new bat roosts and will be situated within a meadow and orchard setting adjacent an ancient woodland."*

- 5.3.6 Given the proposed implementation of the biodiversity enhancement measures identified at paragraph 5.3 of the preliminary ecological assessment, and the proposals to establish a bat loft within the garage/workshop building and to install bat boxes on the outer walls of the garage/workshop, it is respectfully suggested that the development proposals would comply with the requirements of Core Strategy Policies LD2 – Biodiversity and geodiversity.

## 5.4 Arboriculture

- 5.4.1 Within the arboricultural impact assessment report submitted in support of the planning application it is confirmed that 12 individual or small groups of trees would be either felled or part felled in order to facilitate the development proposals (as indicated within appendix 4 of the arboricultural impact assessment). However, it was concluded that all of the affected trees are of either low quality (category C2) or poor quality (Category U).

- 5.4.2 In order to protect the trees which are to be retained both on and adjacent to the development site during the construction works, it is proposed that barrier fencing be erected around the retained trees in the locations marked within appendix 4 of the Arboricultural Impact Assessment Report.

- 5.4.3 Having regard to the requirement of Core Strategy LD1 for appropriate replacement of trees lost through development and new planting to support green infrastructure, it is proposed that six small groupings of orchard trees be planted on the land/bank to the north of the application site, as indicated on plan ref 01173\_006.

### 5.4.4 Tree Planting specification and maintenance schedule

A minimum of 22 fruit trees will be planted from the selection listed below:

Cider	Desert	Cookers	Perry
Md'or Major Ashton Jersey Brown Harry Masters Jersey Yarlington Mill Bramtot Strawberry Norton Tom Putt Hereford Redstreak Genet Moyle Sweet Alford Frederick Hagloe Crab	Cox Orange Pippin Pitmaston Pineapple D'Arcy Spice Orleans Reinette Beauty of Bath Ribston Pippin Classic Blenheim Orange Claygate Permain Brandy Apple Ashmead Kernal	Norfolk Beefing Golden Noble Newton Wonder Peasgood Nonsuch	Teddington Green Rock Thompson Pear Yellow Huffcap Buerre Superfin Oldfield Thorn Butt Tumper White Longdon

Le Bret Cap of Liberty Dabinett Major Foxwhelp (Broxwood) Stoke Red Balls Bitterseet King of the Pippen (C or DA) Cowarne Red Kingston Black Court of Wick (C or DA) Knotted Kernal Royal Wilding Browns Apple Medaille d'or Nehou White Beach Old Dymock Red			
--	--	--	--

Trees to be planted in the dormant period (October – March). To be planted with supporting canes, and rabbit/deer guards.

If at any time within five years of the commencement of the development the tree plants become damaged then they will be repaired or replaced. Any such plants that die or become diseased within the first five years of planting shall be re-planted with a similar non-diseased tree within the next dormant period.

## 5.5 **Landscape and Visual Impact**

- 5.5.1 The application site occupies an elevated ridge location within the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It is also within the South Herefordshire and Over Severn National Character Area.
- 5.5.2 Amongst other things, Core Strategy Policy LD1 – Landscape and Townscape, requires that development proposals demonstrate that the character of the landscape has positively influenced the design scale and nature of the development proposals and that it would conserve and enhance the natural, historic and scenic beauty of important landscape and features including Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 5.5.3 One of the key objectives within the design brief was for a house which would have a low visual impact, which would sit comfortably within the landscape.
- 5.5.4 An assessment of views of the site from public vantage points have been undertaken by Randall Architecture and the results are contained within the Design and Access Statement. It is concluded that the site is not easily visible from public vantages, and that any such views are largely interrupted by trees within the surrounding woodland. To minimise any visual impact arising from the development proposals it is proposed that the house be re-sited onto lower

ground than the existing dwelling, the exterior construction materials have been carefully selected, (including the burnt cedar cladding), and the calcareous grass roofs have been proposed, which taken together will effectively camouflage the building within its setting.

- 5.5.5 The remediation of the site and the removal of the scrap materials has and continues to have a significant positive impact upon the landscape. The proposal to tuck the replacement single storey dwelling into the lower ground, and to interrupt the roof plains with sections of calcareous grass roofing will, it is envisaged, ensure that overall, the development proposals will have a positive visual and landscape impact.

## **5.6 Contamination**

- 5.6.1 Given the former use of parts of the site for the storage of scrap and other materials, and following the pre-application advice from Mr Simon Withers, a phase I and II Geo-environmental assessment was undertaken. The resultant report is submitted in support of the planning application and the recommendations made within have been incorporated into the development proposals.
- 5.6.2 In summary, the site was found to have two pockets of unacceptable contamination, and recommendations have been made for either the removal of soil or capping of the two areas. The applicants are willing to accept conditions upon any planning permission requiring the implementation of the remediation measures identified within paragraph 11.1 of the Geo-environmental assessment.
- 5.6.3 The implementation of the development proposals involving the capping of parts of the site, as recommended within the Geo-environmental assessment will therefore lead to a significant enhancement of the site from a contamination perspective.

## **5.7 Flood risk and drainage**

- 5.7.1 The application site is at low risk from both surface waterflooding and from flooding from rivers and/or the sea, and as such no Flood Risk Assessment is submitted in support of the application.
- 5.7.2 To demonstrate that it is possible for surface waters and outfall from the package treatment plant resulting from implementation of the proposed development to be dealt with in an appropriate manner, a soakaway assessment has been undertaken. The assessment concludes that ground within the application site is suitable to accommodate both foul field drains and surface water soakaways. Drainage calculations and a drainage plan are also provided as part of the application submission, which identify the proposed size and locations of both the surface water soakaways and the package treatment plant (with associated field drains).

## **6. Conclusion**

- 6.1 The development proposals represent an opportunity to achieve a significant betterment to the condition of the application site. The proposed replacement dwelling is of a high standard of design which is sympathetic to its location and setting and will help to drive up the quality of design within the area, and as such it is respectfully suggested that planning permission should be granted for the development subject of the planning application.