

Additional Statements for Highcroft, Wye View Lane Symonds Yat West.
Proposed demolition of existing house and erection of detached eco-house.

Need for proposal

- The existing house occupying the site is dilapidated and could not be considered an asset to the location. A newly constructed house will provide accomodation more suited to our times and needs and offers the possibility of achieving considerably better energy efficiency.

Planning and AONB Policy:

- Where relevant all national, regional and local level planning policies and requirements have been consulted to ensure the proposal is compliant.
- We believe the proposed falls within the spirit of the National Planning Policy Framework and is congruent with its aims in respect to its position within an AONB.

It states: *'Great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty'*. [Policy 115]. Whilst it states that planning should be refused for major developments, we believe the scale and design of the proposed is respectful and does not challenge or hinder the quality of the environment.

- We believe it is agreement with those aims set out in the Wye Valley AONB Management Plan 2009-14 which requires that any development *'should favour conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape. In all cases the environmental effects of new proposals will be a major consideration'* [Section 6.2.1]. The proposed, we believe will have negligible -if any - detrimental impact on the AONB. The proposal does not involve the removal of existing walls or hedgerows and will have little effect in terms of altering drainage as it is a replacement, and not new structure. The shielded environment with substantial tree cover, materials use and 'low'key' nature of design and massing mean the prosed retreats into its landscape and is arguably more respectful than the existing building.

We have consulted the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan, with particular reference to Chapter 4, Development Requirements and Chapter 9 Natural and Historic Heritage, given the site's location.

Chapter 4's main aim are to

'ensure that development proposals take advantage of the opportunities that are available to contribute to sustainable development' and 'provide for the sustainable conservation, protection and enhancement of natural environmental resources such as water, air, land, biodiversity and tranquillity'. [4.2.1]

It also states:

- 4.4.4 *'...Development proposals should serve to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness, having regard to the setting of the site and its key characteristics. Particular regard will be given to design factors in areas recognised for their landscape or townscape value, including Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and conservation areas.*
- 4.4.5 *Within this overall context the aim is to encourage good design with recognised scope for sensitive and responsible modern approaches.'*

Policy DR1 Design, states

'Where relevant to the proposal, all development will be required to:

- promote or reinforce the distinctive character and appearance of the locality in terms of layout, density, means of access and enclosure, scale, mass, height, design and materials;*
- retain and where possible incorporate existing site features contributing to the quality of the local environment, including landscape, historic and natural elements such as wildlife habitats and species;*
- respect the context of the site, taking into account townscape and landscape character and topography, including the impact of the proposal on urban vistas, longer distance views and ridgelines;*
- include measures that address health and safety, the conservation of energy and water, and avoids nuisance and pollution...'*

Chapter 9, which aims include to *'conserve and enhance the natural and historic heritage of the County, whilst promoting change that contributes positively to people's quality of life'* [9.2.1] sets out a number of objectives to achieve these, with particular reference to the county's two AONBs

Policy LA1 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, states:

Within the Malvern Hills and Wye Valley Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, priority will be given to the protection and enhancement of the natural beauty and amenity of the area in the national interest and in accordance with the relevant management plans. Development will only be permitted where it is small scale, does not adversely affect the intrinsic natural beauty of the landscape and is necessary to facilitate the economic and social well-being of the designated areas and their communities or can enhance the quality of the landscape or biodiversity.

Given the reasons outlined previously, in terms of the proposal's position on site, its materials use, its scale and design, its use of sustainable building materials and techniques (and Passivhaus compliance) we believe the aims of the proposed are fully congruent with these various plans, guidelines and policies.

Sustainable Development / Environmental Assesment

- The proposal is intended to meet passivhaus standards and has been subject to a design stage Passivhau assement (PHPP) which was passed. 'Passive House' is the fastest growing energy performance standard in the world with 30,000 buildings realised to date with the majority of those since the turn of the century. The Passivhaus standards strengths lie in the simplicity of its approach; build a house that has an excellent thermal performance, exceptional airtightness with mechanical ventilation. (source: Passivhaus.org.uk).

Virtually every component, material and constructional method used in the manufacture and assembly of the proposed building is selected with the environment in mind, below is a summary of some of the 'green' features:

Foundation System

- Mini Pile system or screw pile system with minimal ground disturbance and spoilage.

Walls and Roof construction

- Structural Insulated Panel System (SIPS) to upper floors.**
- Timber from certified, sustainable sources.
- 80% recycled insulation.
- Airtight, lightweight construction.
- Low U-values

Glazing

- Reclaimed stone for ground floor walls from existing house.**
- Hgh performance triple glazed (or high-spec double glazed to Passivhaus standards)
- High performance coated Low E double glazed units.
- Argon filled.
- Fully draught sealed.

External Cladding

- Western Red Cedar from Sustainable sources (FSC and PEFC certified).
- Oiled or left to silver naturally.
- No toxic surface treatment.

Services

- Class-A rated equipment.
- Low energy lighting systems.
- Air-Source heat pump space heating to provide background heating