

Proposed Housing at Haslemere Preparatory School



PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT on behalf of Twist Heights Ltd

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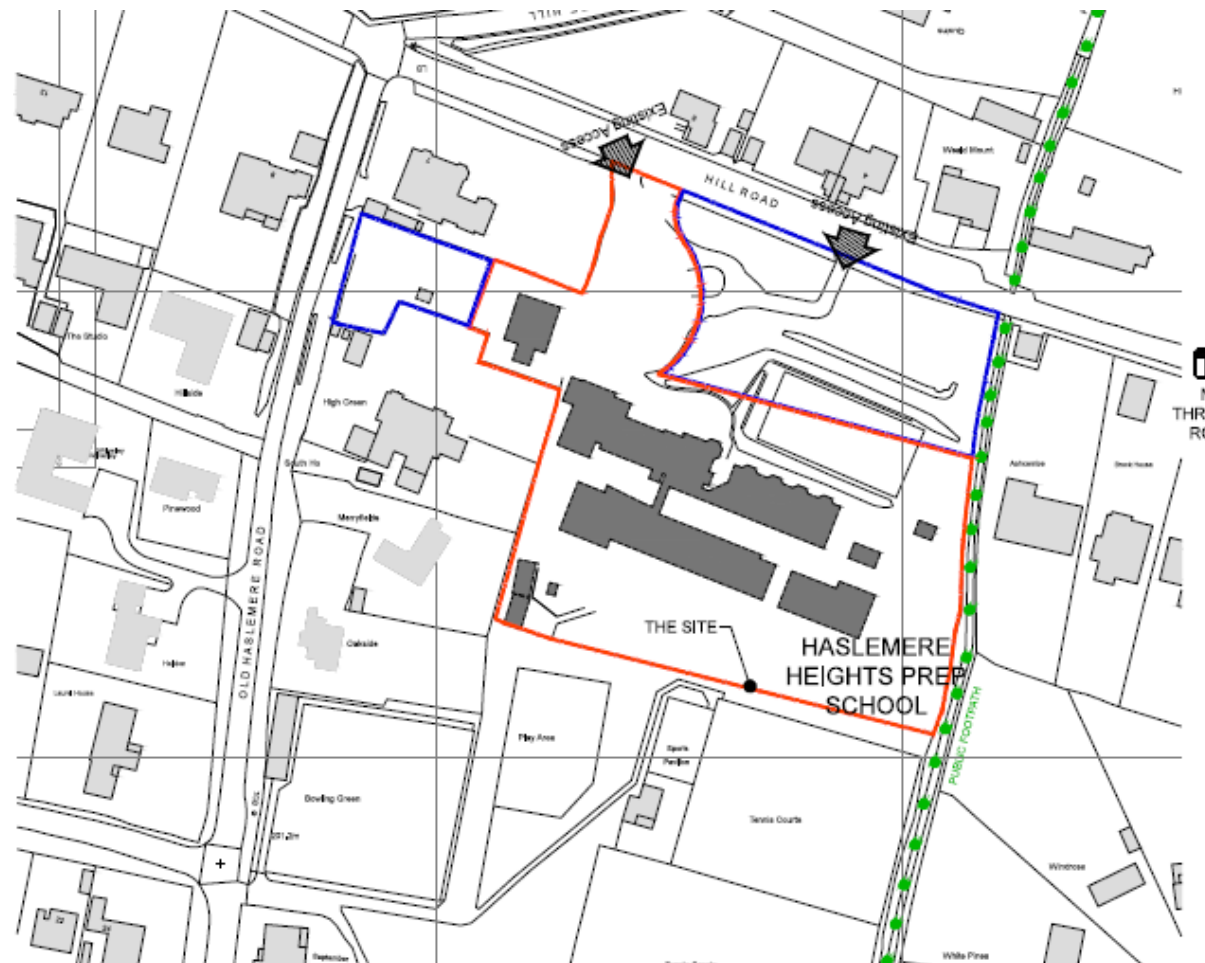
May 2019

1.00 INTRODUCTION

1.01 This Planning, Design & Access Statement has been prepared by Grant Consultancy to assist the Council in assessing proposals for the development of the rear parts of Haslemere Preparatory School to provide a total of 20 residential units comprising 6 three-bedroom houses and 14 flats. Four of the residential units will be affordable housing. This statement presents the policy background to the proposals as set out within the adopted and emerging Waverley Local Plans and National Planning Policy Framework July 2018 (NPPF) and describes how the proposed development of the site complies with that guidance.

The following consultants have assisted Twist Heights Ltd in formulating these proposals:

- Grant Consultancy (Planning)
- Smalley Hales (Architecture)
- Bellamy Roberts (Traffic and Highways)
- Lockhart Garratt (Arboriculture)
- Arbtech (Ecology)
- Right of Light Consultancy (Sunlight & Daylight)
- Your Environment (Contamination)
- Heritage Collective (Heritage)
- Landscape Collective (Landscaping)
- Archaeology Collective (Archaeology)
- Drainage (IDL)



ORDNANCE SURVEY LICENCE 100048957

Figure 1. The site edged red; it does not include land at the frontage to Hill Road which is the subject of a separate application

1.02 The remainder of this Statement is arranged under the following headings:

- **THE SITE AND HOW ITS CHARACTER WAS ASSESSED**
- **PLANNING POLICY**
- **DESIGN PRINCIPLES**
- **AMOUNT AND LAYOUT**
- **SCALE**
- **APPEARANCE**
- **ACCESS**
- **ECOLOGY**
- **CONTAMINATION**
- **HERITAGE AND ARCHAEOLOGY**
- **DRAINAGE**
- **CONCLUSIONS**

1.03 The following documents are submitted as part of this planning application and have informed the architects who have designed the scheme:

1. Local Character Assessment and Supplementary Character Assessment both prepared by *Landscape Collective*
2. Plans, elevations and cross sections of the proposed development prepared by *Smalley Hales* in response to that Character Assessment
3. Report on Sunlight & Daylight prepared by *Right of Light Consultancy*
4. Arboricultural Report and survey prepared by *Lockhart Garratt*
5. Contamination Report prepared by *Your Environment*

6. Biodiversity Report by *Arbtech*
7. Bat Survey by *Arbtech*
8. Statement of Heritage Significance by *Heritage Collective*
9. Report on Archaeology by *Archaeology Collective*
10. Traffic Assessment by *Bellamy Roberts*
11. Drainage Assessment by *Infrastructure Design Ltd*

2.00 THE SITE AND HOW IT'S CHARACTER HAS BEEN ASSESSED

- 2.01 The site is located close to the town centre of Haslemere, on the south side of Hill Road. The centre of Haslemere lies just 450 metres to the Northwest and about 8 minutes' walk away. Access is from Hill Road, which is a cul-de-sac in the vicinity of the site. The site slopes downwards from south to north with the existing extensive range of school buildings at a higher level from the road.
- 2.02 To the immediate west and east lie residential properties, the gardens of which border directly onto the school's boundary. To the north lies more housing and to the south and beyond the site lies Haslemere Recreational Ground. Part of the site includes a detached house, the site generally located in an established residential district of Haslemere.
- 2.03 The site is surrounded by tree and hedge planting along most of the boundaries, although there is little meaningful mature vegetation within the site itself due to the extensive range of former school buildings and hard surface areas. A detailed tree survey has been undertaken by *Ian Keen Ltd & Lockhart Garratt* to assess the condition of the trees and advise on any likely works required. The site's topography is characterised by a series of terraces that exploit the rising levels with the main school building complexes at the middle and

higher levels. There are also large expanses of the hard surfacing within the site previously used for car parking, play grounds and hard surface tennis courts and other sports uses.

- 2.04 A full analysis of the townscape and character of the area is found in the accompanying document *Local Character Assessment* and “*Supplementary Character Assessment*” both prepared by *Landscape Collective*. Together with the *Haslemere Design Statement*, these documents have informed the architects on the design principles to be adopted. The purpose of the character assessment is to give an understanding of the distinct appearance and feel of the area around the site. The Character Assessment divides the area around Haslemere Heights into seven ‘character areas’. Each character area has a recognisable and consistent pattern of elements that mark that particular area as being different from another part of the town. Inevitably the Assessment finds that there are some overlapping characteristics between areas, as well as variations within areas.
- 2.05 The Assessment advises that the form and layout of the proposed residential development would need to be consistent and complementary with the form and layout of existing development within the townscape and reflect the characteristics of the surrounding character areas (in particular *Character Area 1*). The detail design of the built form and the exterior spaces should make reference to features and materials already present in the local area so as to ensure that the proposals are distinctive and of their place. There is a thread of common elements and features that have been identified through the appraisal of the surrounding area that, to a lesser or greater degree, make a consistent and positive contribution to the character of the town. Incorporating some or all of these elements and features into the design of the proposed development’s layout and associated buildings will be important in helping to create a new development that reflects and responds to, and potentially enhances, the overall existing character of this area. The diagram on following page shows the existing and proposed ‘linear’ and ‘terraced’ built form which has informed the architects on the design and layout of the proposals.



Figure 2. Plan illustrating that the location of the new housing follows the grain of existing development located on terracing as the topography rises north to south.

Proposals

- 2.06 It is in the light of the advice and guidance given in the Local Character Assessments, the Haslemere Design Statement and the Planning Officer's report that led to the refusal of planning permission for the larger scheme, that the proposals have been formulated. It is proposed to demolish the existing buildings and redevelop the site with a variety of housing comprising 6 semi-detached houses and 14 apartments. This means that the proposals meet policy guidelines in respect of housing mix as well as respecting the character of the area. The housing is located on each of the two existing 'terraces' that characterise the topography of the site, with the proposed development broadly sited over the 'footprint' of the existing school buildings.
- 2.07 The existing access to Hill Road will be much improved with better road geometry and visibility to Hill Road. Traffic analysis carried out by *Bellamy Roberts*' traffic engineers show that the traffic movements in the vicinity of the site are very low, being in the region of 15 movements in the morning peak hour period and 12 movements in the afternoon peak hour period. With regards to the 85th %ile speeds, these are found to be 18.5mph eastbound and 18.7mph westbound.
- 2.08 As referred to below, the existing school use would have generated approximately 148 vehicle movements in the AM peak hour, 15 vehicle movements during the PM network peak hour (1700-1800) and 113 vehicles during the school afternoon peak (1500-1600), and some 423 daily vehicle movements. In contrast, the proposed residential use would generate approximately 10 vehicle movements during each network peak hour and 93 daily vehicle movements. This is a substantial reduction when compared to the previous traffic flows. It is noteworthy to mention that there were no objections from the Highway Authority on traffic safety grounds on the previous application for 25 units.
- 2.09 In the light of the council's decision in respect of application WA/2018/1771 the Planning officer's report that led to the decision gives useful guidance as to the acceptability of a number of the elements of the scheme. In particular, the concerns raised in that report focus

on the impact of the frontage development facing Hill Road. This aspect has now been omitted from this planning application. Furthermore, the Planning Officer's report confirms the following:

- The proposed flats (plots 12-21), whilst they would represent the largest amount of continuous built form on the site, the proposed buildings are of an appropriate scale and would be separated well back from Hill Road and would not therefore appear overly dominant if viewed in isolation.
- The design of these flats is considered to be appropriate.
- No specific concerns or objections are raised in respect of the design and layout of either the affordable units or the 6 semi-detached houses.

3.00 PLANNING POLICY.

Waverley Local Plan 2002

3.01 The following policies within the adopted and emerging Local Plan have been taken into account in formulating the proposals. The relevant policies from the 2002 Local Plan were as follows although those marked with an * have now been superseded by the recently adopted Part 1 Local Plan:

- Policy CF1 – Retaining Existing Community Facilities*
- Policy H9 – Conversion and Sub-division
- Policy BE4 – Haslemere Hillsides
- Policy D1 – Environmental Implications of Development
- Policy D4 – Design and Layout
- Policy D7 – Trees, Hedgerows and Development

- Policy 10 - Amenity and Play Space*
- Policy M14 – Car Parking Standards*
- Policy LT8 Sports Grounds and Playing Fields*

Policy CF1 - Retaining Existing Community Facilities

3.02 Whilst this policy is no longer of effect, it is important to assess the implications of the loss of the school facility. This policy seeks to resist the loss of community facilities, unless it can be demonstrated that (a) there is no longer a need for the facility and that no other community facility can be accommodated on the site; or (b) that adequate alternative facilities are provided nearby.

Examples of community facilities are provided in the amplification to the policy, and include village schools, doctors' surgeries, village halls and day centres. These facilities are defined by the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 as Class D1 (non-residential institutions). The school buildings and the site (other than the detached house and its curtilage) fall into this definition.

3.03 To address part (a) of the policy, a marketing exercise over a 12-month period would usually be required. If no suitable alternative educational or community uses were found, then a change of use, or redevelopment for residential, could then be considered. Alternatively, evidence could be provided to address part (b) of policy CF1, namely that *“adequate alternative facilities are provided at locations readily accessible to the population served”*. The wording of the policy requires either (a) or (b) to be addressed, not both.

3.04 Haslemere Preparatory School closed February 2017. Falling numbers and rising costs in recent years meant that the school had become unviable. Although several options were explored to enable it to continue, these were unsuccessful. The Trustees of the charity that run the school advertised the availability of the school premises in the Estates Gazette. No interest or offers were received from other D1 users. *Bruton Knowles*, Chartered Surveyors were then instructed to advise the school and similarly undertook a marketing campaign, again with no interest shown from other community (D1) users.

- 3.05 Moreover, there is also compliance with CF1(b) in that there are more than adequate alternative facilities available nearby and elsewhere in Haslemere. As part of the marketing campaign the Trustees commissioned a survey of alternative schools in the neighbourhood. This analysis showed that there is in the region of 20 independent schools within the vicinity of the site that may well account for the lack of interest from other D1 users in acquiring the site and also illustrates that there are adequate alternative facilities nearby.

Policy BE4 – Haslemere Hillsides

- 3.06 This policy recognises that the wooded hillside to the south of Haslemere High Street acts as an important backdrop to the conservation area. It is a residential area that has seen infill development in the past, but many of the houses are screened by the tree cover, which contributes to an attractive green foil to the historic centre. The policy requires that the preservation of the green appearance of the hillside remains important to the attractive character of Haslemere town centre.
- 3.07 The proposals represent a real and significant opportunity to bring in much more indigenous tree planting to the site and thus improve the setting of the town centre within the context of the surrounding wooded hillsides. Landscape experts, Landscape Collective, give specific advice as to how this can be done, the plans indicate in broad terms how this can be achieved indicating with new tree planting of 23 native species in appropriate locations around the site.

Policy D1 – Environmental Implications of Development

- 3.08 This policy states that the Council will have regard to the environmental implications of development and will promote and encourage enhancement of the environment. It requires that development does not adversely impact on important landscape features and the surrounding setting. The remainder of the policy relates to the impact of development on neighbouring properties in terms of loss of light, privacy and the possibility of noise and vibration emanating from the proposal development. As referred to above, the introduction of

significant soft landscaping will improve the landscape of the Haslemere Hillside and improve longer distance views of the site from the neighbouring hillsides. The report from *Rights of Light Consultancy* confirms that daylight and sunlight to neighbouring property will not be adversely affected by these proposals.

Policy D4 - Design and Layout

3.09 The Council will seek to ensure that development is of a high-quality design, which integrates well with the site and complements its surroundings. The architects, cognisant of the findings of the Character Assessment and advice in the Haslemere Design Statement, have planned a sensitive layout that follows the 'linear' grain of neighbouring development. The scheme respects the spacious character of established housing, particularly along the Hill Road frontage where the layout reflects appearance of established housing found along Hill Road and elsewhere in the neighbourhood. In terms of design, the new housing evokes an 'Arts & Crafts' style which is a design feature in a number of the more established houses in the near vicinity. No objections were raised by the council regarding the design and appearance of the residential units in the previous application.



Figure 3. South elevation of proposed flats (facing the recreation ground)

Policy D7 – Trees, Hedgerows and Development

3.10 This policy seeks to retain and protect important trees, or groups of trees, and hedgerows. A detailed tree survey has been undertaken by *Ian Keen Ltd* in order to assess the condition of the trees and advise on any likely works required. The planning application is accompanied by relevant arboricultural information, showing relevant trees/hedges and providing details as to how they will be protected during development. Significant weight should be attributed to the protection of trees and hedges on the site, and their importance is also highlighted under policy BE4 referred to above.

Policy H10 – Amenity and Play Space

3.11 This policy has also been superseded, but the applicants consider it important to consider its implications in terms of the overall layout of the development. The policy said residential development will be required to incorporate amenity space adequate to meet the needs of residents, for example a usable outdoor area, the plans indicate that each of the houses have more than sufficient private outdoor amenity space whilst the flats not only have large areas of communal open space and private balconies but there is a direct pedestrian access from the site to the neighbouring recreation ground.



Figure 4. Photographs of the memorial recreation grounds – Direct pedestrian access is available to the neighbouring recreation grounds

Policy M14 - Car Parking Standards

3.12 Whilst Policy M14 of the Plan is now out-dated (referring to Government planning policy guidance note PPG3 (housing) and PPG13 (transport) that have been superseded by the NPPF) it has also been deleted following the adoption of the Part 1 Local Plan. SPD has been adopted for new car parking standards which has been addressed in the layout and design of the development where the development will make appropriate provision for the parking of motor vehicles with spaces for residents and visitors. Based on the number and mix of houses, the scheme should provide a minimum of 39 spaces (rounded up). The scheme provides a total of 50 spaces. (36 allocated and 14 visitor spaces). This would ensure that on-street parking would not occur from the redevelopment. The proposal fully complies with the Council's car parking guidance and provides additional spaces.

Policy LT8 Sports Grounds and Playing Fields

- 3.13 This policy has also been deleted but during 'pre-application discussions, the Planning Officers asked the applicants to consider the implications of this policy. NPPF and Policy LT8 of the Local Plan state that the loss of sports grounds and playing fields should not be permitted unless suitable alternative provision can be made, or it is shown that the sports ground or playing fields are surplus to requirements. It is necessary therefore to demonstrate that the proposal meets one of the exceptions to *Sport England* Policy set out in "A sporting future for the playing fields of England Planning Policy Statement". This report advises that it is important to be clear about the key terms used in the policy, and how *Sport England* will interpret them. "Playing field" is defined as the whole of a site which encompasses at least one playing pitch". "Playing pitch" is defined as "a delineated area which, together with any run off area, is of 0.2 hectares or more, and which is used for association football, American football, rugby, cricket, hockey, lacrosse, rounder's, baseball, softball, Australian football, Gaelic football, shinty, hurling, polo or cycle polo."
- 3.14 In this regard, *Smalley Hales* have advised as to the size of the playing pitch at the former school. There was a hard-surfaced playing pitch although the playing surface was removed when the school vacated the site. The area of the playing pitch amounted to just 515sqm - well below the 0.2ha (or 2000sqm) referred to in the *Sport England* policy statement. Even if the playground hard surface area at the top of the site were included (despite *Sport England's* advice saying otherwise) the total area of playing surfaces at the school only amounted to 1505sqm - again significantly below the definition set out in *Sport England's* policy statement.
- 3.15 In the light of this analysis, it does not appear that it is at all necessary to formally consult *Sport England* over the proposals. Nevertheless, the applicants taken the precaution of asking the former Bursar whether there was any public use of the school's limited sports facilities and the response received is that the sports area was neither used or rented to private individuals or local sports clubs as each was too

small to be of practical value with the immediately adjoining recreation ground to the rear being a far more attractive option.

Local Plan Part 1: Strategic Policies and Sites

3.16 The Local Plan Part 1: Strategic Policies and Sites adopted in February 2018 is one of the documents that will form the new Local Plan for the Borough. It sets out the strategic policies relating to the development and use of land in Waverley and development proposals for the strategic sites identified within it. The Local Plan Part 1 will guide and direct new development in the Borough for the period up to 2032.

3.17 The relevant policies from the new Local Plan are as follows:

- Policy ICS1: Infrastructure and Community Facilities
- Policy AHN1: Affordable Housing on Development Sites
- Policy AHL1: The Amount and Location of Housing

3.18 In relation to Policy ICS1, any infrastructure considered necessary to support new development must be provided either on-or off-site or by the payment of financial contributions through planning obligations and/or the Community Infrastructure Levy.

Policy AHN1: Affordable Housing on Development Sites

3.19 The Council will require a minimum provision of 30% affordable housing on all housing developments where at least one of the following applies:

- In designated rural areas, developments providing a net increase of 6 dwellings or more.

- In non-designated rural areas developments providing a net increase of 11 dwellings or more.
- Developments that have a maximum combined gross floor space of more than 1000 sq. m.

- 3.20 Therefore, any redevelopment of the site involving a net increase in 11 dwellings, or more, will be expected to provide 30% as affordable units. The policy also requires a mix of dwellings to reflect the local need. The current need is identified in the Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment. The most up to date information indicates that the greatest need is for small dwellings. The Council will apply this policy to single use or mixed-use schemes, and to all types of residential development including private retirement homes, sheltered accommodation, extra care schemes and other housing for older people where these fall within Use Class C3.
- 3.21 An appropriate level of affordable housing is provided as part of the proposed development having regard to the requirements of the *Vacant Buildings Credit* set out following the Court of Appeal decision where the Written Ministerial Statement made on 28 November 2014 (and subsequently revised on 27 February and 26 March 2015) has been reinstated as lawful policy. Likewise, the relevant paragraphs (21 to 23) of the National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) have also been reinstated. NPPF 2018 now makes specific reference to this aspect as well (see para 3.25 below).

Policy AHL1 The Amount and Location of Housing

- 3.22 The recently adopted Policy ALH1 of the Part 1 Local Plan has increased the requirement for additional housing in Haslemere. This particular site can therefore make a significant contribution towards that additional requirement especially bearing in mind that it is in a sustainable location within the urban area, close to town centre and otherwise unconstrained by policies that restrict housing density which is a feature of other residential areas in the town.

National Planning Policy Framework July 2018

- 3.23 At the heart of the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay. To support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed (para 59).
- 3.24 Paragraph 68 states that small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area and are often built-out relatively quickly. To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should:
"Support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions –giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes"
- 3.25 Planning policies and decisions should promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained, and available sites could be used more effectively (para 118) whilst Local planning authorities should also take a positive approach to applications for alternative uses of land which is currently developed but not allocated for a specific purpose in plans, where this would help to meet identified development needs (para 121). Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account, *inter alia* the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change (para 122). Para 123 continues:
Where there is an existing or anticipated shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs, it is especially important that planning policies and decisions avoid homes being built at low densities, and ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of each

site.

Vacant Buildings Credit (VBC)

- 3.26 National policy provides an incentive for brownfield development on sites containing vacant buildings. Where a vacant building is brought back into any lawful use or is demolished to be replaced by a new building, the developer should be offered a financial credit equivalent to the existing gross floor space of relevant vacant buildings when the local planning authority calculates any affordable housing contribution which will be sought. Affordable housing contributions may be required for any increase in floor space.
- 3.27 The stated policy intention is to incentivise brownfield development - such as this site - including the reuse or redevelopment of "empty and redundant buildings".
- 3.28 Where there is an overall increase in floor space in the proposed development, the local planning authority should calculate the amount of affordable housing contributions required from the development as set out in their Local Plan. A 'credit' should then be applied which is the equivalent of the gross floor space of any relevant vacant buildings being brought back into use or demolished as part of the scheme and deducted from the overall affordable housing contribution calculation. This will apply in calculating either the number of affordable housing units to be provided within the development or where an equivalent financial contribution is being provided. The existing floor space of a vacant building should be credited against the floor space of the new development. The example given in the PPG is where a building with a gross floor space of 8,000 square metre building is demolished as part of a proposed development with a gross floor space of 10,000 square metres, any affordable housing contribution should be a fifth of what would normally be sought.
- 3.29 The vacant building credit applies where the building has not been abandoned. The policy is intended to incentivise brownfield

development, including the reuse or redevelopment of empty and redundant buildings. In considering how the vacant building credit should apply to a particular development, local planning authorities should have regard to the intention of national policy.

Haslemere Design Statement

3.30 The Haslemere Design Statement was adopted by the council in July 2012 and is therefore a material consideration to be taken into account in planning decisions. One of the aims of the Statement is *“The document seeks to ensure that when new development takes place it takes account of the local character of the area”*. In the light of this, the applicants considered it appropriate to commission a Local Character Assessment focussing on the site and surrounding area and this assessment as well as the Design Statement have informed the design and layout of the scheme.

3.31 Of particular relevance of the Design Statement is the advice in Section 6 which sets out detailed design guidance that is proposed to apply to all areas of Haslemere. They are intended to enhance and maintain the character and scale of the town. Detailed guidance is then given to each of the 8 identified areas of the town, Area 2 ‘South of Town Centre’ being of special interest since it includes the application site. This identifies a number of key characteristics of the area to the south of the town centre, *inter alia*:

A variety of housing in age, size and style ranging from large country houses in substantial acreages to smaller terraced properties and apartments.

- *Large Victorian houses in large plots.*
- *Other Victorian and post-war houses in smaller plots.*
- *Many houses are individually designed.*
Building material is predominantly brick, with a variety of elevation treatments, including rendering, and most having tiled roofs.
Steep hillsides - many houses have commanding views over the town and beyond.
- *High number of mature trees in gardens contribute to the impression of a rapid transition from town to country.*



Figure 5. Photographs of existing housing in the Character Area

4.00 DESIGN PRINCIPLES

4.01 In the light of the advice set out in the NPPF, emerging and adopted Local Plans and the design guidance referred to above, we set out below how the design and layout of the project has been informed by the need to ensure that the proposed development would not have a greater impact on the openness of site and its surroundings, meets sustainability objectives and is consistent with policy guidelines. There is also a need to ensure that the development reflects local distinctiveness and is in keeping with the character and appearance of this part of the Haslemere having regard of the need to enhance the hillsides that surround it. As well as the advice in the Haslemere Design Statement, the following key characteristics of the surrounding area, as identified by the *Local Character Assessment*, have been considered in designing the scheme:

- *High hedges to the majority of property boundaries, especially adjacent to roadsides.*
- *A large number of mature trees that include deciduous and coniferous species.*
- *The vast majority of the properties were built in the first half of the 20th century. Further construction was completed on Denbigh Road by the 1970s and along the eastern end of Hill Road by the early 1980s.*
- *Property frontage is often taken up by parking areas sometimes with a small area of lawn and/or shrubs.*
- *Mainly large detached or semi-detached properties 2 -3 storeys with some bungalows.*
- *Variety in building design, although many of the properties have hung tiles on the upper house frontage with brick or rendered brick for the lower part of the walls. Other design features include mock Tudor timber details sometimes with brick detail.*
- *A variety of roof style with hipped and gable design often in combination.*



Figure 6. Proposed street scene - plots 6 to 11 (middle 'terrace' of houses).

Amount and Layout

- 4.02 It is a policy requirement that developments such as this make full and efficient use of land and is in sympathy with the character and appearance of the area in terms of, layout and siting, both in itself and in relation to nearby buildings, spaces and views. The proposals, strike the right balance between making efficient use of a brownfield site whilst at the same time respecting the density, form and layout of neighbouring buildings.



Figure 7. Proposed layout

- 4.03 The layout and arrangement of the new houses on site has been influenced by the location of neighbouring buildings. As referred to above, the layout follows the linear and terraced grain of existing development that makes up the character and appearance of the area. The proposed housing is located over the footprint of the existing school buildings which are broadly located on two terraces. The image following para 2.05 (figure 1) above demonstrates that the location of the new housing follows the grain of existing development located on terracing as the topography of the area rises north to south.
- 4.04 In terms of the amount of new housing, the site is located within the urban area of Haslemere and unlike other residential parts of the town, it is not designated as a low-density policy area. Para 6.24 of the 2002 Local Plan says that densities below 30dph should be avoided in order to make efficient use of brownfield land in urban areas, the site is 0.69ha in size and the density of the proposed development equates to 35dph. This density reflects the site characteristics, local character and policy requirements in both the Local Plan and NPPF regarding making efficient use of land.
- 4.05 The layout and arrangement of the new houses on site has been influenced by the location of not just neighbouring buildings but the location of the existing school buildings, which are broadly located on terraces of the site. As referred to above, the layout follows the linear and terraced grain of existing development that makes up the character and appearance of the area. Both 'terraces' of buildings are therefore located in a similar position and sit over the 'footprints' of the school buildings. The following analysis shows how the proposed scheme will have a comparable building footprint to the existing buildings whilst at the same time significantly increasing soft landscaping by 9.9% whilst there will be a corresponding decrease in hard surfacing in the order of -31.5%.

Area Analysis	Existing	Proposed			Diff	
	sq.m	sq.m			sq.m	%
Site Area	7222	7222			0	
Building Footprint	1461	1308.3			-152.7	-11.7%
Hard Landscaping	3731	2836.7			-894.3	-31.5%
Soft Landscaping	2030	3077			305	9.9%

Figure 8. Area Analysis

4.06 As to the mix of housing, it is proposed to provide 4 x 1-bed units, 10 x 2-bed units, and 6 x 3-bed units, which meets the requirements of former Policy H4 as well as the acknowledged need to provide housing for smaller households.



Figure 9. Proposed flats 'nestles down' in the existing topography (note existing hedgerow to the rear)

Scale

- 4.07 The scale of the new houses and flats have been informed by both *Local Character Assessments* and Haslemere Design Statement and reflect the scale of existing housing in the area, which comprise a mix of predominantly 2 and 3 storey dwellings. The cross section below gives a good impression that the scale of the new housing is characteristic of the area with not only significant gaps between the houses but the separation distances as well. The new development therefore takes its cue in terms of scale from both the established Edwardian housing in the area as well as later and more modern developments. This means the scale of building forms an acceptable relationship

not only between nearby buildings in Hill Road but from views further afield where there may be glimpses of the site from neighbouring hillsides.



Figure 10. Proposed flats south elevation, this is the rear elevation of the flats shown in Figure 9 above.

- 4.08 Due to the topography of the site - sloping some 15m over 90m (which equates to a 1:6 slope) it can be appreciated that the site lies in the steepest part of Hill Road. The existing topography is therefore arranged in 'terraces' to accommodate the existing built form. The design has been informed by use of these existing 'terraces' and the proposed development comprises 2 storey buildings with undercroft garaging (2 bedroomed flats) which makes good use of the slope of the site. The resultant design makes efficient use of the footprint of each building by effectively providing garaging /parking under the proposed 2 storey buildings.

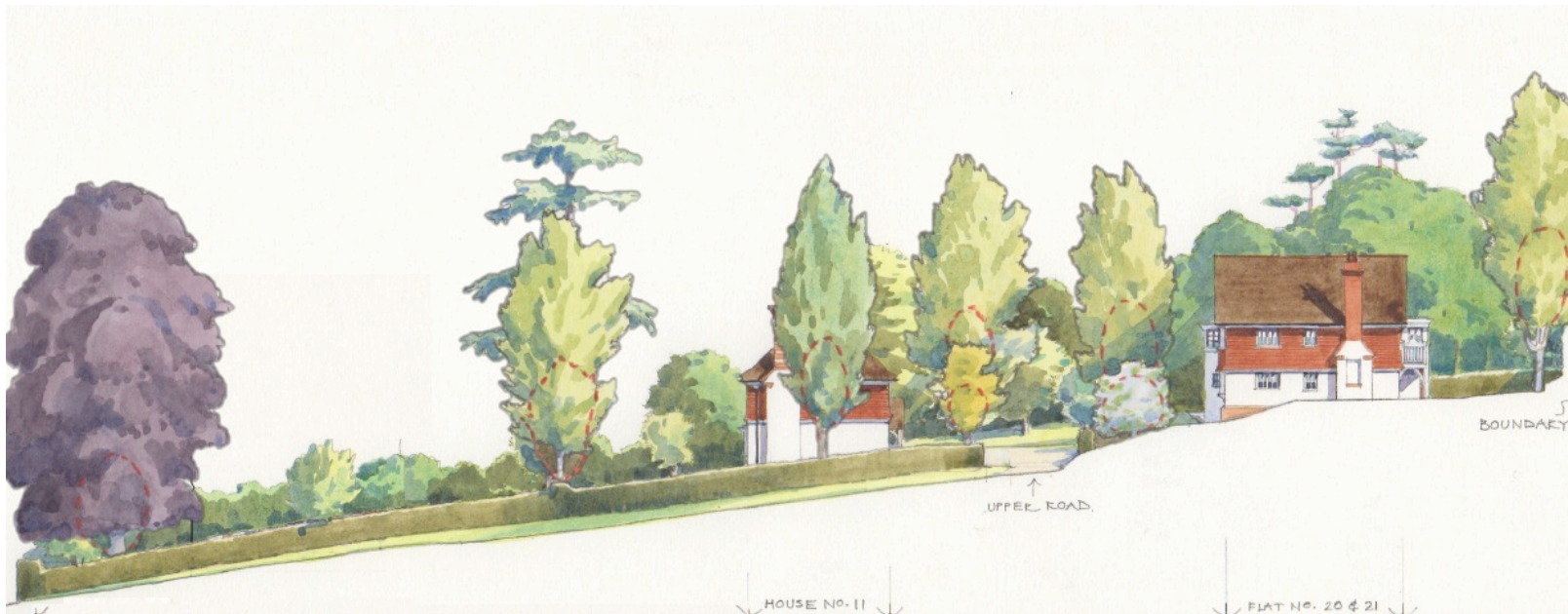


Figure 11. Cross section through the proposed development

- 4.09 When viewed from Hill Road, the three pairs of semi-detached houses will be seen with the apartments beyond largely obscured from view. From the recreation ground to the south, the view will be of the south elevation of the flats (see figure 9 above) although there is an intervening beech hedgerow along the southern boundary of the site that will screen much of the proposed development.

Appearance

- 4.10 Having regard to the findings in the *Local Character Assessment* and advice in the *Haslemere Design Statement* the architects have adopted a design style that evokes many of the features that are found in nearby Edwardian buildings that make up the character of much of the surrounding area. The detailing of the houses reflects many of the characteristics of the 'Arts and Crafts' style that was prevalent during this period (see image below).



Figure 12. Proposed Plots 10 & 11

- 4.11 In relation to the building materials to be used in the construction of the new houses, it is likely there will be a mix of brickwork and render for the walls and plain clay roof tiles. The fenestration also is of traditional style and design constructed of timber.

The Haslemere Design Statement advises *inter alia* that:

- *Any new building or extension in the area should complement the local vernacular style.*
- *Haslemere traditionally uses tile-hanging as a wall cladding to the upper storeys of properties and this practice should be continued in appropriate locations.*
- *Where appropriate and in keeping with the street scene, pitched roofs should preferably be pitched at not less than 45 degrees, providing they tie in with the existing building.*
- *Where new buildings are intended to maintain a particular stylistic tradition, it is important that this is consistent and the design shows a proper understanding of the tradition. Details such as eaves, chimneys, window openings, external joinery and porches all play a large part in that tradition.*
- *New buildings should respect and respond to the context of the site. They need not imitate the buildings in the vicinity but if they do then care should be taken to fully understand and replicate detailing especially at roof eaves, verges, ridge, hips and valleys.*

It will be noted that this advice is reflected in the design and appearance of the new houses.

Access and Parking provision

4.12 *Bellamy Roberts*, Traffic Consultants, have advised in relation to traffic generation, road geometry and car parking. In terms of traffic generation, an earlier planning application stated there were 250 pupils attending the school and this figure has been used in assessing the traffic generation. The school has been categorised as “education-primary” within TRICS. The existing use can generate approximately 148 vehicle movements in the AM peak hour, 15 vehicle movements during the PM network peak hour (1700-1800) and 113 vehicles during the school afternoon peak (1500-1600), and some 423 daily vehicle movements. In contrast, the proposed would generate approximately 10 vehicle movements during each network peak hour and 93 daily vehicle movements. This is a substantial reduction when compared to the flows generated by the existing use on the site.

4.13 In terms of road geometry, the existing access, which serves the school, is to be adjusted with its geometry and layout will be improved. The road will be 5m wide with pedestrian footpaths. The internal layout has been assessed using the *AutoTRACK* computer programme

which illustrates that the site can accommodate a refuse vehicle and fire tender. The Council has produced specific parking guidelines for residential development in response to local circumstances and taking account of the guidance in the NPPF and drawing initially on the County Council's 2012 Guidance. As stated previously the proposal is for 20 units, consisting: -

- 4No 1-bed unit - 1 space/unit
- 10No 2-bed units - 2 spaces/unit
- 6 No 3-bed units - 2.5 spaces/unit

Bellamy Roberts advises that in accordance with adopted car parking standards, the scheme should provide a minimum of 39 spaces in total. They say the scheme provides a total of 50 spaces (36 allocated and 14 visitor spaces). The proposal fully complies with the Council's car parking guidance and provides additional spaces as recommended.



Landscaping and Tree Protection

- 4.14 As can be seen from the accompanying documents the site is bereft of any meaningful soft landscaping or vegetation within the site with existing mature vegetation focussed along the site boundaries. There are therefore opportunities to introduce new planting to supplement the existing boundary landscaping whilst fulfilling the objectives of the Hillsides policy, which looks to improve and maintain the verdant setting of the town centre. Accordingly, the redevelopment of the site presents a real opportunity of introducing soft landscaping to both within and along the boundaries of the site. The landscaping is shown in indicative terms on the site plan and is envisaged to comprise a mix of new trees appropriate to the area and shrub and boundary hedging. The proposed landscaping scheme will positively contribute to the treed nature of the surrounding hillsides.
- 4.15 Arboricultural experts *Lockhart Garratt* have advised on the appropriate tree protection to meet the requirements of BS5387. It is the intention to plant numerous new semi-mature trees thus meaning that this proposal will preserve and enhance the Haslemere Hillside (ASEQ). Other than Class U specimens the proposal will preserve all existing trees and existing boundary treatments.



Figure 14. Aerial view showing absence of vegetation in the centre of the site

4.16 As referred to above, the development will be enhancing the site by planting some 29 specimen trees and mature evergreen hedges characteristic of the locality. There will also be the significant benefit arising from the consequential reduction of the existing footprint of hard landscaping therefore increasing the 'green' areas. Figure 8 above shows the difference between the existing and proposed hard surfaced areas resulting in a 31% reduction of hard surfacing and an increase of 9.9% in soft landscaping which in turn provides an increased area to add tree planting which will enhance the wooded appearance of the hillside and result in a significant gain in tree cover therefore positively addressing Policy BE4.



Figure 15. Plan showing 29 trees to be planted within and around the proposal

Ecology

- 4.17 Since the existing buildings are to be demolished, the applicants have taken the precaution of surveying the existing buildings for the presence of bats. The report forms part of the application documents. As to the likely presence of bats, the report concludes that no evidence of bats was discovered. Similarly, a wider and separate biodiversity survey was undertaken with no significant issues arising, other than a recommendation to negate the risks to any reptiles that may be present on site during any works, that a supervised clearance is recommended.

Contamination

- 4.18 Contamination experts *Your Environment* have concluded that the proposed development is unlikely to pose a significant risk to site end users and the other receptors considered in their report, particularly given the former historic usage of the site. No significant sources of ground gas have been identified and/or from historical or current land uses in the surrounding environs suggests there are no viable pollutant linkages present. A watching brief be undertaken during the groundwork's stage but based on the results of their study no intrusive site investigation is proposed.

Heritage

- 4.19 Heritage Collective have assessed the importance of the site and their report is part of the planning application documents. Their conclusions are as follows:
"It is self-evident that the demolition of the building will physically remove it, and that any significance it might have will no longer be present."

Even the “original core” of the school, leaving aside the extensions, falls into the substantial majority of heritage assets that are not material considerations in the planning process. It is not of sufficient interest or merit to be considered as a non-designated heritage asset, and there is no evidence that it should be treated as such. The Council has not nominated the building as a locally listed building or as a building of local merit. It is relevant here that Waverley Borough Council is an authority with an extensive local list and considerable experience of dealing with heritage matters, and that the building has not been identified as a building of local merit, unlike other buildings in Haslemere.

Insofar as the demolition of the building will cause harm, it will be negligible harm in heritage terms. It will affect a building that is of so little heritage interest that, to use the language of the NPPF and National Planning Practice Guidance, should not be treated as a heritage asset (non-designated heritage asset).

Conservation is about taking forward the good things from the past into the future. No compelling evidence has yet been advanced by Council officers to suggest that the building has been legitimately identified as a non-designated heritage asset, and it is not locally listed or nominated as being a building of local merit.

In conclusion, there is no heritage policy basis for the preservation of the former school building”.

Archaeology

4.20 An archaeological desk-based Assessment was undertaken by *Archaeology Collective* in January 2018. The full report is part of the application; however, the following is an extract from the conclusions:

“Proposals are being formulated to redevelop the site of the former Haslemere Preparatory School, situated on ‘The Heights’ overlooking the town of Haslemere.

In line with the policies of the local planning authority and national government guidance as set out in the NPPF, an archaeological desk-based assessment has been undertaken to clarify the archaeological potential of the Site and assess the level of impact the development proposals may have on any archaeology present.

This archaeological assessment concludes that the Site does not contain any designated archaeological assets such as world heritage sites, scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens, or registered battlefields where there would be a presumption in favour of

their physical preservation in situ and against development.

There are no designated archaeological assets (scheduled monuments) within the 1km radius study area, whose fabric, significance or setting would be adversely affected by the redevelopment of the Site.

Based on the information within the HER, supplemented by historic mapping from the beginning of the 18th century onwards, the Site has been shown to have been open farmland until the construction and landscaping of the grounds of the house known as 'The Heights' in 1900.

The mid-20th century enlargement and extensions to provide a preparatory school would doubtless have resulted in significant truncation of any underlying archaeological deposits, particularly as the Site stands on steeply sloping ground, which has necessitated the construction of several building terraces. It is therefore concluded that there is a low potential for archaeological deposits of greater than low significance to be encountered within the Site.

On the basis of available evidence, it is considered that the proposed development accords with current heritage legislation, planning policies contained within the NPPF and the policies of the Waverley Borough Council Local Plan which relate to archaeology”.

Drainage

- 4.21 In terms of foul drainage, an existing 150mm diameter adopted foul water is located approximately 60m to the east of the existing site access. However, it has been determined via survey, that there also exists, a further 150mm diameter sewer which drains the existing site, located within the existing access bell mouth. Whilst not shown on the sewer records, the Private Transfer Regulations 2011 now prescribe this sewer as 'adoptable' from the point where it enters the public highway. Within the site there are 100mm diameter combined sewers which will be rendered redundant by the new development. The new development will discharge *via gravity* into this existing foul water sewer located at the existing site entrance. The pumped flow will discharge to the existing foul sewer located at the site entrance.
- 4.22 In relation to surface water drainage/SuDS, the existing school site is drained via a system of combined drainage, which discharged to the existing 150mm diameter foul sewer at the existing site access. The entire new development will discharge via infiltration methods of storm water disposal, following the soakaway tests at two locations, each returning viable infiltration rates of 9.4×10^{-6} and 1.1×10^{-5}

m/s respectively. The design has been prepared so as to prevent on and offsite flooding for any storm event, up to and including a 1 in 100-year event, plus an allowance for the potential effects of climate change (+ 40%). Similarly, by extension, the site will not flood for any events up to and including the peak 1 in 30-year event. The SuDS Hierarchy has been duly considered. All runoff from roads and parking areas will benefit from a SuDS treatment stage in the form of permeable paving. In addition, some roof runoff will also be discharged to the porous paving systems. Any remaining roof areas will discharge directly to individual soakaways. As a precautionary measure over and above the requirements referred to above, new gulley's will be provided at the bellmouth to the site entrance. Thus, there will be no discharge from the site for events up to and including the critical 100 year plus a 40% allowance for climate change.

CONCLUSIONS

- 5.01 The NPPF puts a high priority on sustainable development. This application accords with the aims of the NPPF in providing a sensitive redevelopment of a brownfield previously developed site which will be developed supporting the concept of sustainable development. Moreover, NPPF places much weight upon the need to secure high-quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future residents of land and buildings. In this respect, the design of the project has evolved having regard to the site and its context.
- 5.02 This is a straight forward application for residential development which has been informed by a detailed assessment of the site and its environs with input from a range of consultants and experts with relevant experience.

- 5.03 As such, the proposal has been carefully considered in the light of such factors as bulk, scale, neighbouring amenity, views and its location within Haslemere Hillsides policy area.
- 5.04 The proposal fully accords with local policy and the site's redevelopment will bring about an improvement to the appearance of the immediate area. Moreover, it accords with NPPF. For all these reasons, there does not appear to be any impediment to the principle of new housing or the grant of planning permission.