

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

MR J BRANT

PLANNING, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

**HEATHLANDS COTTAGE
HEATHLANDS ROAD
WOKINGHAM
BERKSHIRE
RG40 3AY**

Proposed erection of a detached car port

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This planning statement is submitted in support of a full planning application by Mr J Brant for the following:

'Proposed erection of a detached car port'

- 1.2 The statement is divided into the following chapters:

- Introduction
- Site and Surrounding Area
- Planning History
- Planning Policy Context
- The Application Proposal
- Design and Access
- Summary and Conclusions

- 1.3 This statement will set out how the proposal would not result in any material harm to the character and appearance of the countryside and that it would be appropriate in terms of its size, scale, bulk and design. It will also demonstrate that the proposal would not have any adverse effect neighbouring occupiers, trees and other landscape features. It will be concluded that the proposal is consistent with the objectives of Local and National Planning Policy.

- 1.4 Planning permission has recently been granted on the site (most recently in August 2024 under ref. 240442) for the erection of 1no. two-bedroom detached dwelling with associated bicycle store and access following the demolition of existing garage blocks. The dwelling is now substantially complete. This householder application seeks

permission for a detached car port, in the same location as the approved parking spaces, on an area of existing hardsurfacing where a garage was previously sited. Whilst permitted development rights were not removed (i.e. under Schedule 2, Part 1, Class E of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)), the car port is slightly forward of the wall forming the 'principal elevation' of the dwelling and planning permission is therefore required.

1.5 The following reports accompany the submission:

Planning, Design and Access Statement – Davis Planning Ltd – see below

Arboricultural Report – Mark Welby

2 THE APPLICATION SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

- 2.1 The application site is located on the eastern side of Heathlands Road. The site comprises of a recently constructed detached two bedroom dwelling (see Planning History) which was erected following the demolition of former garages under planning permission ref.240442. The dwelling is now substantially complete. The existing dwelling sits centrally within a landscaped plot, with mature trees at the far northern and southern ends. A number of these trees are protected by a Tree Preservation Order.
- 2.2 The site is located within land defined as 'countryside' in the adopted Proposals Map. Immediately to the north and east of the site is the main access serving Heathlands Court which is a large development comprising of 20no. dwellings. The adjacent Heath Ride provides a route into the nearby settlement of Crowthorne to the south-east. The St. Sebastian's CE Primary School lies a short distance to the south of the site.

3 PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 The application site has extensive planning history. The list below is a summary of the most relevant cases:

240442 – Full application for the proposed erection of 1 no. two bedroom detached dwelling with associated bicycle store and access following demolition of the existing garage blocks. Approved 6 August 2024.

230887 – Full application for the proposed erection of a detached dwelling with parking following the removal of existing garage blocks. Approved 20 November 2023.

F/2014/2865 – Erection of a two bedroom dwelling to include the construction of a new roof on the existing garage, following demolition and removal of existing garage block. Refused 6 February 2015.

F/2014/2081 – Proposed erection of a single storey detached dwelling, addition of pitched roof over retained single detached garage and blocking off of existing access and formation of a new access. Demolition of existing garage block. Refused 4 November 2014.

F/2000/1935 – Proposed demolition of existing garages and erection of a dwelling with garage. Refused 18 October 2000.

98/68309/F – Proposed erection of detached dwelling with double garage and demolition of existing garages. Refused 28 October 1998

4 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 4.1 Relevant planning policy guidance falls within the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) and the Development Plan which comprises of the Wokingham Core Strategy and the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan.

i) National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- 4.2 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies and how these should be applied. It confirms that applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise (paragraph 2).
- 4.3 Paragraphs 131 - 141 are concerned with achieving well-designed and beautiful places. Paragraph 131 states that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.
- 4.4 Paragraph 135 states that planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments:
- Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
 - Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
 - Are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increase densities);

- Establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
- Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development;
- Create safe and accessible environments which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

4.5 Paragraph 136 recognises the contribution trees make to the character and quality of urban environments. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in development, that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible.

4.6 Chapter 15 is concerned with conserving and enhancing the natural environment. Paragraph 187 states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by (among other things):

- Protecting and enhancing valued landscaped (para 187.a)
- Recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services (para 187.b)
- Minimising impact on and providing net gains for biodiversity (para 187.d)

ii) The Development Plan**a) Wokingham Core Strategy (2010)**

4.7 Relevant policies include:

4.8 Policy CP1 (Sustainable Development) requires that a number of criteria are met. These include maintaining or enhancing the high quality of the environment; providing attractive, functional, accessible, safe, secure and adaptable schemes; demonstrate how they support opportunities for reducing the need to travel particularly by the car; and contribute towards reaching zero – carbon development as soon as possible.

4.9 Policy CP3 (General Principles for Development) requires, amongst other matters, that new development is of an appropriate scale, mass, activity, built form, height, materials, character and design quality. Proposals should not adversely affect the amenities of neighbouring land uses. It also states that proposals should have no detrimental impact upon important ecological, heritage, landscaping or geological features or water courses.

4.10 Policy CP11 (Proposals outside of Development Limits (including Countryside). The policy states that in order to protect the separate identity of settlements and maintain the quality of the environment, proposals outside of development limits will not normally be permitted except where they meet certain criteria, including:

- It does not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings;

b) Wokingham Borough Managing 'Development Delivery Document (2014) (MDD Local Plan)

4.11 Policy CC01 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development) states that there will be a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Planning applications that accord with policies in the Development Plan will be approved without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where there are no policies

relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

- 4.12 Policy CC03 (Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping) sets out the Council's requirements for green infrastructure, trees and landscaping.
- 4.13 Policy TB21 (Landscape Character). States that proposals shall retain or enhance the condition, character and features that contribute to the landscape.

iii) Supplementary Planning Document - Wokingham Borough Design Guide (BDG)

- 4.14 The following non statutory guidance is of relevance:
- 4.15 R1 – Requires that development contribute positively towards and be compatible with the historic or underlying character and quality of the local area.
- 4.16 RD1 – New development and associated landscape should retain, incorporate and enhance features that contribute towards the landscape character and biodiversity of the area.
- 4.17 RD5 – New development in rural areas should respond to the typical forms of buildings in the village or locality.
- 4.18 RD6 - The elevations of new buildings must be well composed, well-proportioned and well detailed.
- 4.19 RD7 – New buildings should respond to the materials, details and colours that may be distinctive to a locality.
- 4.20 Page 57 states that garages should not be sited in front gardens and should not project forward of the building line of a property.

5 THE PLANNING APPLICATION

- 5.1 This householder application is for a detached car port on the southern side of the dwelling, on an area of existing hardstanding. The proposed garage is in the same position as the two driveway parking spaces approved under application ref. 240442 and is where one of the garages, now demolished previously stood.
- 5.2 As stated above, the site is within the countryside where CS Policy CP11 aims to protect the separate identity of settlements and maintain the quality of the environment. The main issue is therefore considered to be the impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside.
- i) Character and appearance, including the effect on the surrounding countryside and landscape
- 5.3 The proposed car port would be single storey and would provide covered parking for 2no. cars. The footprint of the proposed building would measure about 5.3m x 5.3m. It would have a hipped roof design with a low eaves height of 2.1m and a maximum height to the apex of 4.3m. The scale, form and height of the proposed garage would be subservient to the larger built form of the main two storey dwelling on the site which is now largely complete.
- 5.4 The proposed building would be enclosed on three sides and would be traditional in design and appearance. It would be constructed with a brick plinth with feather edge boarding to the sides and tiled roof. The bricks and tiles would match those on the main dwelling. It has a sympathetic approach to its locality and employs materials appropriate to the environment, landscape and countryside setting of the site. The proposal therefore complies with the requirements of CS Policies CP1 and CP3 as well as the general design guidance contained within the BDG and the NPPF (2021).
- 5.5 The proposed outbuilding would be sited to the side (south) of the existing dwelling, in a location that is partially screened from Heathlands Road by existing trees and

hedging. Whilst the building would project slightly forward of the main front elevation (although it is off-set to the side), a distance of over 3.5 metres would be retained between its flank elevation and the front boundary. The car port would benefit from screening from existing and new planting and views of it would be in the context of the existing dwelling with a treed backdrop beyond. It would not therefore appear incongruous or out of character with its surroundings as the dwelling sits on its own.

- 5.6 It is acknowledged that text within the BDG states that garages should not be sited in front gardens but should be to the side or rear of a dwelling and that they should not project forward of the building line of a property. In this case, the property is in a semi-rural location and does not fall within an established street scene as such. Therefore, the rigid application of the design guidance would not be appropriate in such circumstances. The Council have applied this guidance flexibly throughout the borough and treated applications on their individual merits.
- 5.7 In practice, the BDG is therefore treated by the Council as 'guidance' as there are numerous other examples with settlement and countryside locations where detached garages and ancillary buildings have been granted planning permission forward of the principal elevation.
- 5.8 The building would be sensitively sited with natural screening, and it would not adversely affect the openness, character or appearance of the countryside. In addition, given that the plot is heavily constrained by its treed nature and relatively shallow depth, it is not possible to access or position a garage deeper into the site. The existing property as constructed does not benefit from any garaging and the proposal would provide covered protection for 2no cars from both the elements and tree litter.
- 5.9 The proposed building is conveniently located in relation to the main dwelling, and it would not result in any encroachment or expansion away from the original buildings as required by Core Strategy Policy CP11. The objective of Policy CP11 to '*protect the separate identity of settlements and maintain the quality of the environment*' would not therefore be compromised.

- 5.10 It is therefore concluded that the proposed car port would not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings and would have no significant adverse effect on the character and appearance of the countryside. Accordingly, the proposal complies with the objectives of CS Policies CP1, CP3 and CP11 which seek to protect the countryside from inappropriate development and/or encroachment. It would also accord with Policies CC03 and TB21 of the MDD Local Plan which promote the protection of the green infrastructure of the Borough. There would also be no conflict with the BDG (which in any event is clearly treated by the Council as guidance) or Chapter 15 of the NPPF which is concerned with conserving and enhancing the natural environment

ii) Amenity

- 5.11 The existing dwelling is in a rural location, some distance away from any other residential dwellings. The proposal would not therefore raise any amenity issues and thus would comply with Policy CP3 of the CS and paragraph 130 (f) of the NPPF insofar as they seek to protect the amenity of existing and future users.

iii) Access and Parking

- 5.12 No changes to the existing access arrangement onto Heathlands Road are proposed. The car port would provide 2no. covered car ports in the same location as the 2no. existing parking spaces approved under application ref. 240442. There is ample space to the front of the car port for turning and maneuvering space.

iv) Landscape and Trees

- 5.13 Whilst there are several protected trees on the southern side of the dwelling, these would not be adversely affected by the proposed car port which would sit on an existing area of hardstanding. The application is accompanied by a Arboricultural Report which includes a tree Survey, impact assessment and method statement. This concludes that the application is of a low arboricultural impact and is thus acceptable. The proposals therefore meet MDDL Policy CC03 as the proposal will protect and retain existing trees, hedges and landscape features.

- 5.14 Furthermore, the proposal is sited substantially clear of the other landscape features along the boundaries of the site. Therefore, the landscape character of the site would be unaffected by the proposal, and the proposal complies with MDD Local Plan Policy TB21 in this regard.

6 DESIGN AND ACCESS

a) Use and Amount

- 6.1 The proposal is for the erection of a small car port for use in association with the host property, Heathlands Cottage.

b) Layout

- 6.2 The proposed layout is dictated by tree constraints and the original layout of the new dwelling on the site approved under application ref. 240442. The building would be sited on the southern side of the dwelling on an existing area of hardsurfacing where a garage once stood and in an area already approved for parking in association with the dwelling. The proposed car port would project slightly forward of the main front elevation of the dwelling. Given the constrained depth of the plot and its treed character, it is not possible to access or position a garage deeper into the side. The proposed building would be orientated with its main front elevation perpendicular to the front elevation of the dwelling and would be well related to it. It would be set back by at least 3.5 metres from Heathlands Road and would not be unduly prominent in the street scene due to this set back and the existing landscape features.

c) Scale

- 6.3 The scale, form and height of the proposed building would be appropriate having regard to its context, the prevailing character of the area and the size, scale and form of the existing dwelling on the site. The outbuilding would clearly be subservient in size and scale to the host dwelling.

(d) Appearance

- 6.4 The proposed building would be of traditional appearance comprising a brick plinth, feather edge boarding and a tiled hipped roof. The bricks and tiles would match those used in the construction of the dwelling on the site.

d) Landscaping and Trees

- 6.5 Whilst there are protected trees on the site, these would be unaffected by the proposal which would be sited on an existing area of hardstanding. (See Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Tree Protection Plan & Arboricultural Method Statement produced by Mark Welby). The landscape character of the site will be unaffected by the proposal.

e) Access and Parking

- 6.6 No changes to the existing access onto Heathlands Road are proposed. The building would provide 2no. covered parking spaces in place of the open parking spaces approved under application ref. 240442.

7 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 The application should be supported for the following reasons:

- i) The proposal is for a detached car port providing for 2no. covered parking spaces. The recently constructed dwelling does not currently benefit from any garaging and the proposal would provide 2no. vehicles with protection from the elements and tree litter.
- ii) The proposed building is sensitively sited in a well screened location to the side of the main dwelling. Whilst it would project slightly forward of the main front elevation of the dwelling, it would remain well set back from Heathlands Road and would not be visually prominent or harmful to the character and appearance of the area. The proposed building is conveniently located in close proximity to the main dwelling and would not result in any encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings as required by Core Strategy Policy CP11.
- iii) It is notable that the Council have applied their guidance on garaging forward of the building line in a highly flexible manner taking into account matters relating to character. On this occasion, the property is relatively self contained and sits as a standalone dwelling, and it is therefore the applicant's case that there are no properties sufficiently close by which should influence or restrict such a feature.
- iv) The proposed building is well designed and is in keeping with and subservient to the main dwelling on the site. Materials appropriate to the environment and landscape setting of the site are proposed. The proposal therefore complies with the design requirements of CS Policies CP1 and CP3 as well as the general design guidance contained within the BDG and the NPPF (2021).

- v) Sufficient turning space is provided within the site enabling vehicles to leave in forward gear.
- vi) The proposal would not raise any amenity issues in relation to the occupiers of any other residential dwellings which are distant from the site.
- vii) The proposal would not adversely affect any trees or other natural features of merit or harm the biodiversity of the site.