

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Hatchgate End Project

Replacement Dwelling

2nd June 2025

Ref: 1335



**PLANNING & ARCHITECTURAL
CONSULTANCY**

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A Design and Access Statement produced by
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on behalf of Mr and Mrs Hart relating to
Hatchgate End, Hatchgate Lane, Cockpole Green,
Wargrave, RG10 8NE
Ref: 1335

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1. INTRODUCTION & SUMMARY

- 1.1. The site lies within the village of Cockpole Green which sits approximately 2.5 miles east of Henley-on-Thames and 2.7 miles north of Wargrave. The site is indicated on the Proposals Map accompanying the Local Plan as being sited within the Green Belt. The site is not however in an area at risk of flooding, an AONB or a Conservation Area. In addition, none of the trees on or near to the site are the subject of a TPO. The property benefits from a front verge, with the dwelling forming part of a row of similar properties along Hatchgate Lane.
- 1.2. The original building, namely the pair of semi-detached dwellings, was constructed prior to 1947 and it is not the subject of any conditions restricting its permitted development rights. It was converted to form a single dwelling in about 1989.
- 1.3. Whilst the dwelling subject to this application was originally constructed as a pair of semi-detached dwellings, the dwelling has operated as a single unit for many decades. This was a matter which was the source of some disagreement within prior applications, however the matter is now resolved with the matter being accepted by the Council.
- 1.4. This formal detailed Planning Application seeks consent for the demolition and replacement of the existing dwelling. The most recent history includes pre-application advice made in the summer of 2020 under reference 201883, a formal application in the summer of 2022, a subsequent Appeal determined the following year and finally a second pre-app the year after in 2024. This submission is therefore a culmination of a vast amount of work with the Council and the scheme now presented is a result of extensive engagement from the Applicant to seek an acceptable solution for the site.



Proposed front elevation

2. PLANNING HISTORY

App No.	Description	Decision/Date
06734	Garage, workshop, laundry, greenhouse and lobby	Conditional approval on 25/08/1971 ¹
31936	Two storey rear and side extension	Application withdrawn
BRA 6382	Building regulations application for alterations and extensions to provide 1 dwelling	Approved - 08/12/1988
32737	Change of use of agricultural land to the rear of the dwelling to garden	Refused - 10/05/1989
34238	Barn and stables (on the paddock to the rear of the residential curtilage)	Approved - 22/11/1989
F/1996/63798	Double garage with studio over and link to dwelling	Refused - 20/06/1996
FP99/8536	Building regulations application for the erection of 3 bay garage	Approved - 16/03/1999
172206	Householder application for proposed erection of two storey front extensions to dwelling, first floor demolition of existing dormer wing and alteration to existing windows.	Application withdrawn - 09/10/2017
182314	Householder application for proposed erection of two storey front extensions and first floor rear to dwelling, following demolition of existing two storey rear element and bay window.	Approved - 15/11/2018 - implemented
190757	Application for the prior approval for 2 proposed larger home extensions which would extend beyond the rear wall of the original house by 8m for which the maximum height would be 4m and the maximum height of the eaves 3m.	Deemed consent – out of time 26/04/2019 - implemented
191455	Proposed Lawful Development Certificate for the erection of: two storey front extensions single storey side extensions two storey rear extension 2no single storey incidental outbuildings (triple garage/garden store & summer house/pool)	Refused – 29/07/2019

¹ Condition 4 included restriction on PD rights. However, the permission was not implemented.



192214	Proposed Lawful Development Certificate for the erection of: two storey front extensions single storey side extensions two storey rear extension 2no single storey incidental outbuildings (triple garage/garden store & summer house/pool)	Refused – 14/10/2019
200591	Proposed Lawful Development Certificate for the erection of 2 no. two storey front extensions, 2 no. single storey side extensions, a two storey rear extension and 2 no. single storey incidental outbuildings (triple garage/garden store and summer house/pool).	Refused – 01/05/2020
201922	Application for a certificate of existing lawful development for use of agricultural land as residential garden and use of buildings as a single dwelling house.	Approved – 27/10/2020
203366	Application for submission of details to comply with the following conditions of planning consent 182314 dated 15/11/2018. Condition 5 Bat Licence and 6 Tree protection.	Approved – 13/01/2021
213050	Application for a certificate of lawfulness for the proposed erection of an outbuilding with 2 no. rooflights to house an indoor pool and gym, and a single storey rear extension to garage.	Approved - 05/11/2021
223792	Full application for the proposed erection of 1 no. five bedroom detached dwelling with attached carport, gates and associated works including boreholes following demolition of the existing dwelling and change of use of agricultural land for siting of solar panels	Refused – 28/04/2023

3. SITE & SURROUNDING AREA

- 3.1. The site lies within the village of Cockpole Green which sits approximately 2.5 miles east of Henley-on-Thames and 2.7 miles north of Wargrave. Development along Hatchgate Lane and indeed the surrounding area generally is linear in form. The application site, along with the other development in the area, sits on the western side of Hatchgate Lane.
- 3.2. A boundary hedge and 4m deep verge separates the front of the property from the highway. The property itself is a large dwelling positioned within a large plot, which is typical of the surrounding area, save for some semi-detached properties which naturally sit within from smaller plot sizes.
- 3.3. There is no prevailing architectural design within the local area, with the majority of properties bearing no resemblance to those around them.



Aerial view of site

4. USE

- 4.1. The application site has an established residential use, and the proposed works would not alter this use. As explained above, the dwelling was originally constructed as a pair of semi-detached properties that were later amalgamated into a single property. The garden of the property had also been enlarged without the benefit of planning permission. Both changes occurred several decades ago which has been accepted by the Council.²
- 4.2. A very small area of the field to the rear of the site would be used for the siting of solar panels, purely for the sole purpose of heating the property. This small area would not be located within the residential curtilage of the replacement dwelling but is the best location for the panels. Importantly, they would not be visible from any residential property.



Photo of existing property dated 1989. This photo was taken after all the works had been completed, merging both semi-detached properties to one single dwelling.

² See page 2 of the Councils Pre-application response under reference 201883 and 201922 generally



5. SCALE & AMOUNT

- 5.1. The existing dwelling has been surveyed, and an accurate volume and footprint figure has been derived from that. We are aware that previous architects have made “assessments” on the volume and footprint of the existing dwelling in the past without the benefit of a survey and these calculations, although of overall similar dimensions were regrettably inaccurate as a result. A full measured survey of the existing property has now been undertaken, and we now have the confidence that the revised figures can be relied upon in presenting this Statement.
- 5.2. Furthermore, we are aware that there has been some disagreement between the Applicants and the Council over measurements of both the existing and proposed dwelling. Likely in truth, because of errors of both parties at some point in time. This matter was never resolved at the Appeal, and at the most recent pre-app response, the Council refers to the original dwelling benefitting from a volume of 740m³ and the existing dwelling benefitting from a volume of 779m³.
- 5.3. As has been explained to the Council on numerous occasions, the 740m³ arises from as far back as 2018 in relation to application reference 182314, where an Officer included in their report an “estimated volume” of the existing building at 740m³. For some reason, this estimation 7 years ago has evolved into a statement of fact despite the reliable survey data now confirming an accurate volume of the building as being 779m³. This issue was raised with the Officer³ who provided the pre-application response, and they confirmed they had simply copied the 740m³ figure from an earlier officer report in 2022. Before stating the matter was practically irrelevant given, they still considered the pre-application scheme to be too large.
- 5.4. As the proposal has now been designed with a volume of no greater than 35% of the original dwelling to be policy complaint, the matter of the size of the original dwelling is now of upmost importance. We trust that the Council will be happy to accept the volume figures calculated using accurate survey data, as opposed to a guess, and leave the incorrect 740m³ in the past.
- 5.5. Given the issues which occurred previously regarding measurements of the proposed dwelling, we have ensured that the proposed drawings benefit from marked measurements. The proposed dwelling has also been modelled using 3D technology, and therefore both the existing and the proposed figures listed below are as accurate as can be modelled using the technology available.

³ The full email exchange is available at Appendix 1

	Existing	Proposed
Volume (m ³)	779	1051

- 5.6. As the proposed development now seeks only a 35% volume increase over and above the volume of the original dwelling at the site, the matter of the fall-back position which could be constructed is of much less importance than it was under previous proposals. However, it is still worth confirming the fact that a fall-back position which would permit the construction a dwelling with a volume of 1859m³ is available.



Illustration of front of proposed property



6. LAYOUT

- 6.1. The proposed replacement dwelling would be located marginally deeper into the site than the existing (although still on the footprint of the existing building), away from the road to follow a building line identical not only to the one created by the other dwellings along the road, such as at Laburnum Cottage (now Mulberry House), which also involved the replacement of the existing dwelling under planning reference 162149. In that case, the Council permitted the replacement dwelling to extend deeper into the site, beyond the rear wall of the dwelling it was replacing. But more importantly, in relation to the houses to the north which the Inspector suggested the site related to the most.
- 6.2. The property immediately to the north is set back from the highway by 19.24 metres, with the proposed replacement dwelling sitting back from the highway by 18.9 metres. Given the comments of the previous Inspector, it could not be suggested that the siting of the proposed dwelling would be inappropriate, or that it would result in the proposal having a greater effect on the Green Belt than if the proposed dwelling was sat further forward in the site. Indeed, a suggestion that pushing the dwelling further into the site would result in a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt is fundamentally flawed. Wherever the building sits on the site, it is its volume which generates a spatial impact on the Green Belt, its siting being irrelevant to that. Whereas when considering its visual impact, the only area which the property is visible from is Hatchgate Lane. With that in mind, the deeper into the site which the proposed dwelling sits, the smaller it would appear from Hatchgate Lane (given it would be further away), and as a result, a deeper siting would only reduce its visual impact. It should also be worth noting that this issue is one that has only recently been raised by WBC and is not a consistent point raised under the previous applications at the site. Rather, the dwelling is set back a distance consistent with neighbouring properties.
- 6.3. From a policy position, it should also be noted that R2 of the Borough Design Guide requires development to respond to context, including incorporating existing features, taking advantage of landform and orientation, relating to neighbours and minimising amenity, iconological and drainage impacts Policies R3 and R4 require housing to relate to the existing network of streets and spaces. In this respect, to comply with these relevant policies, the development should respond to the existing set-back distances of the properties to the north, which the site sits within the context of.
- 6.4. Considering all the above, and primarily in the context of the depth of the properties to the north, the siting of the proposed replacement dwelling is considered to be entirely acceptable. It is noted that the Council also previously raised issues with the proposed hardstanding at the site, despite this being capable of being provided under Permitted Development Rights. However, in order to secure agreement from the Council, the hardstanding at the site within the proposed scheme has also been substantially reduced from that which currently exists. With the existing dwelling benefitting from 543m² of hardstanding, and the proposed development requiring only 487m².

Considering the harm which the Council has continually attributed to the prior increases in hardstanding at the site, we trust that the Council will agree a reduction of circa 10.4% would represent a substantial improvement to the openness of the Green Belt which should be afforded substantial weight in the consideration of the application.

- 6.5. Access into the site would be retained as currently exists, with a pedestrian access through the hedge directly in front of the dwelling, and a vehicle access to the south. The outbuildings would remain as they are, and no new outbuildings are proposed under this application.
- 6.6. The proposed solar panels would be located within the far field to the rear of the property. The panels would be separated from the existing dwelling by another small paddock, and they would not be located within the residential curtilage of the replacement dwelling. The siting of these panels would be discreet, and not visible from any residential property.
- 6.7. The 42 panels, supplied by Solarport, would be set in two rows of equal length (approx. 18m) one behind the other. The panels would be placed at a slight angle to the hedge to achieve the most sunlight possible during the day. The panels themselves are mounted on frames, with 8 panels to a frame. The frame measures 1.2m in depth and 7.2 metres in length, with a maximum height of 1.9 metres when the panels are at full extension. Although naturally the height of the frame would change as it repositions to follow the route of the sun.



Proposed Site Layout



7. CHARACTER & APPEARANCE

- 7.1. The design of the proposed replacement dwelling at this site has been through various iterations between all the previous pre-application and formal application stages. The current design is, from a design position, identical to that which the Council agreed as being acceptable in their most recent pre-app response. With Officers noting the following:

It is noted that the design of the replacement dwelling has been revised to relate more to the neighbouring properties, including gabled front porch, brick detailing under the eaves, chimney and traditional brick and tile design, all of which reflect the overall style of surrounding properties within this rural setting. Whilst there is nothing of interest in terms of the design, which appears somewhat uninteresting, it is recognised that it responds to the points made by the Inspector that the previous scheme with mock Tudor detailing appeared highly incongruous and out of place with its surrounds. On this basis, purely from a design perspective the revised proposal is considered acceptable.

- 7.2. Naturally, given the proposed dwelling presented to the Council at the pre-app stage benefitted from a volume of circa 1450m³ and the current proposal sits at a much smaller 1051m³, the proposed dwelling has been revised. However, these revisions only reduce the size of the dwelling, its style, character, appearance and use of details and materials remains as at the pre-app stage. With that in mind, we trust that from a design perspective the Council continues to agree that the proposal is acceptable and compliant with Policy CP3 of the Councils Core Strategy and R1 of the Borough Design Guide SPD.
- 7.3. With respect to the solar panels, these would be well screened by existing vegetation and due to their low-lying nature, would not be seen from any private property along Hatchgate Lane or from any public vantage points. Indeed, a new hedge has been planted on the adjoining boundary to assist with screening further.

8. ACCESS & PARKING

- 8.1. The access and parking arrangements to the site would remain unchanged, with the only access to the site remaining in its current location, and with ample parking provision provided to serve the replacement dwelling. As explained above, hardstanding at the site has been reduced substantially at the site and in accordance with the advice included within pre-application the parking areas to the northern side of the site has since been removed.
- 8.2. In accordance with the latest Building Regulations, an electric charging point would be provided within the new car port.
- 8.3. Access to the solar panels would also be provided by an existing gravel track that currently provides vehicle access to the fields at the rear of the property.



Illustration of rear of proposed property

9. LANDSCAPING & TREE PROTECTION ORDERS

- 9.1. The site is not covered by any Tree Protection Orders nor is the site within a Conservation Area that would similarly protect existing trees on the site. Notwithstanding that, only a single, small tree would be removed, which will be relocated within the site, if possible, whilst all other trees would be retained. The most notable trees in the immediate surrounding area are those located on the highway frontage verge along Hatchgate Lane, which are all unaffected by the development.
- 9.2. A tree protection plan can be conditioned if the Council consider it necessary, although given the distance between these retained trees and the proposed development, it is hoped this can be avoided. Similarly, with the site already consisting of a single residential dwelling within a well-maintained residential garden, it is not considered that a full planting and landscaping scheme is necessary.



Existing garden

10. TREES

- 10.1. As noted above there are no Tree Protection Orders in place on the site, regardless, the application is submitted with a Tree Survey which has assessed the existing trees on the site. No Tree Protection Plan has been provided at this stage however one can be secured by condition if it is considered necessary.
- 10.2. The Tree Survey has identified that there are no trees on the site of notable value, with all the trees classified as being within the B, C or U category. Whilst it is acknowledged the tree report refers to a previous scheme at the site, the grading of the trees would clearly remain the same. Unlike as specified in the report, only one tree is proposed to be removed, T18 (B category), which would be translocated to another area of the site. All other trees would remain unaffected.
- 10.3. If the Council considers it necessary, a Tree Protection Plan featuring the updated development can be secured by condition.



Illustration of proposed Bedroom 2

11. ECOLOGY

- 11.1. The proposal involves the demolition of the existing dwelling, and the works therefore have the potential to impact bats and their habitat. The site has been subject to a number of bat surveys over recent years. An updated report, including bat emergence & re-entry surveys has been provided in support of the application and demonstrates that there would be no issues in obtaining the relevant licenses from Natural England. A supporting addendum regarding Great Crested Newts is also provided which details mitigation measures to be adopted during construction. This was accepted by the Council previously.
- 11.2. There would be very limited impact to the ecology of the existing site, with only a single small tree being removed. The Application is not subject to the provisions within the Environment Act 2021 as the proposed development meets the '*self build*' exemption criteria. As a result, it is not necessary to provide any BNG documentation or provide a 10% biodiversity net gain.
- 11.3. The PPG confirms that the statutory provisions take precedence over the local policies and are an important material consideration. The PPG specifically states that a policy which required a gain of at least 10% from new developments should no longer apply when determining applications for planning permission subject to the mandatory BNG.
- 11.4. The construction of the solar panels would cause no permanent harm to the paddock.



Illustration of proposed living space



12. SUSTAINABILITY & SAFETY

LOCATION

The proposal relates to a replacement dwelling on a slightly altered location within the residential curtilage of the existing property and, as such, the application site is considered to be previously developed land.

REFUSE AND RE-CYCLING OF WASTE

Bin storage and recycling provision is to be located within a small shed by the main gate.

CARBON FOOTPRINT

The proposed replacement dwelling has been designed by Oakwrights, the proposal being for a new-build house, using sustainable materials. Oakwright's 'post and beam' oak frame, which comprises an oak frame structure within the building, wrapped using Oakwright's energy efficient encapsulation system, achieving excellent U-values.

Utilising the principles of "Fabric First", the proposed dwelling is to employ superior wall, floor and roof systems in conjunction with fenestration well in excess of the efficiency required for Building Regulations. This will provide a highly insulated, well-detailed envelope that will give the dwelling a high level of energy efficiency and internal comfort. The majority of the systems proposed are to be manufactured off-site in their factory, which reduces waste and improves quality, thus reducing the build time, processes, associated noises and to reduce the negative impacts on the environment. A safe, clean, considerate and environmentally conscious site would be operated where noise, vibration and air quality are actively controlled. The waste hierarchy of reducing, reusing and then recycling waste would ensure that minimum volumes of materials are used.

WrightWall provides a slim and efficient wall build up, designed to accommodate multiple external finishes. WrightWall is designed to ensure a fully integrated process between frame and shell, using the same innovative software employed to design the oak frame means the two fit seamlessly together resulting in exemplary airtightness. WrightWall is also manufactured off site, within a factory environment ensuring excellence. The prefabricated large components, as well as negating cold bridging, also reduce onsite construction time, which in turn reduces the need to travel to and from site and reduces carbon during construction. The specialist site team who will assemble the system, ensuring the highest level of attention to detail throughout the process. The WrightWall encapsulation system provides exceptional thermal performance, ensuring an energy efficient, warm home.

Oakwright's encapsulation system provides good airtightness in order to minimise energy consumption. The use of heating systems designed with variable output from renewable



resources to meet only the required demand will be installed. The very high fabric performance (in excess of Building Regulation requirements) ensures that the house can either be built with a range of integrated renewables or they can be readily added or upgraded in the future, allowing the house to adapt to changing energy/renewables mix as technology progresses.

Natural light has been considered throughout the layout of this home, the design maximises the dappled light on the north elevation and allows shading to the south elevation, which protects the elevation from solar overheating.

The proposed solar panels would reduce the dwellings dependence on fossil fuels and make a positive contribution to the environment by installing a small scale solar PV system. The electricity produced will be used by the replacement dwelling, as well as being directed towards the electric charging point within the proposed car port.

The solar frames are adjustable through the seasons (winter position of 60 degrees and summer position of 15 degrees) in order to utilise as much available sunlight as possible. The winter position produces 15% more energy through the winter months at the steeper angle.

Compared to the existing dwelling, all of the considerations referenced above will work to reduce the carbon footprint of the construction and operation of the replacement dwelling. Given the Councils declaration of a Climate Emergency in July 2019, the significant benefits achieved through the scheme should be given significant weight.

MATERIALS

Materials will be sourced locally and sustainably in the new construction wherever possible, precise details of materials are not yet available and the Applicants would accept a condition requiring details to be provided at a later stage.

CRIME & COMMUNITY SAFETY STATEMENT

It is not considered that the proposal would raise any new or significant crime or community safety issues.

13.2. The site is not located within an area at risk of surface water flooding and is within a Flood Zone 1.



Flood Zone Map



14. PLANNING POLICY

- 14.1. A replacement dwelling has been chosen as the appropriate route forward at the site, with the existing dwelling being of no architectural merit in and of itself, and with a poor internal layout created through the combination of the two previously separate dwellings, resulting in a number of small, badly connected rooms. Due to the age of the building, it is also energy inefficient and suffering from land slippage issues due to its shallow foundation design derived from its age of construction. The choice to replace the building is clearly the correct one to meet the needs of the family and as a replacement, it can be provided within the overall planning policy approach which allows for a degree of enlargement.
- 14.2. The proposed works represent a simple concept, demolishing an existing dwelling of no merit and replacing it with a new highly sustainable dwelling of a much-improved design and appearance. Both local and national policies support such development subject to certain restrictions, especially in areas covered by Green Belt designations, such as this application site. Further, previous, larger applications, benefitted from the support of the Parish Council, and raised no local objections.
- 14.3. As partly delved into above, previous applications on this site have revolved around many disagreements between the Council and the Applicants relating to numerous matters such as the size of the existing and proposed developments, the status of the existing dwelling, the extent of the curtilage, the existence of applications which form part of a fallback position and the existence of the concept of the fallback position itself.
- 14.4. Aside from the issue surrounding measurements of the existing and proposed development, which is discussed above and will not be repeated, all the other matters are considered to be either irrelevant or already resolved for the purposes of this application. The current proposal does not rely on the existence of a fallback position in order to be considered acceptable (although it still exists) and the matters relating to the status of the existing house and curtilage are considered to have been resolved adequately by applications approved several years ago⁴.
- 14.5. As the Council sets out within its most recent pre-application response, Core Strategy Policy CP12 as well as MDD Local Plan Policy TB01 are central policies relating to developments within the Green Belt. Policy CP12 however, does not fully reflect the wording of the NPPF in relation to very special circumstances and this limits the weight

⁴ Under reference 201922



which can be attached. Policy TB01 further clarifies the Local Plan position regarding development within Green Belt. It states that:

Within the Green Belt, development for the purposes set out in the National Planning Policy Framework will only be permitted where they maintain the openness of, and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in, the Green Belt. The alteration and/or extension of a dwelling and the construction, alteration or extension of buildings ancillary to a dwelling in the Green Belt over and above the size of the original building (s) shall be limited in scale.

The supporting text goes on to state:

Proposals shall be assessed against the original building as defined in the NPPF.

With the definition of limited set out under Policy TB01 as a:

cumulative increase of generally no more than a 35% increase in volume over and above the original dwelling

- 14.6. It is noted that Policy TB01 does not refer to replacement dwellings specifically, but that the Council use the same 35% figure for assessing replacement dwellings in any case as they considered that to be appropriate. We would not wish to challenge that approach.
- 14.7. As set out within the scale and amount section above, the proposed replacement dwelling would not have a volume of more than 35% above the original dwelling. The assessment is therefore a particularly easy one. The development is compliant with the volume restrictions included within Policy TB01, it is therefore considered to be appropriate development within the Green Belt and as a result compliant with Policy CP12. With this in mind, it is not necessary to consider any *very special circumstances* as the development is not inappropriate development within the Green Belt.
- 14.8. Notwithstanding the modest 35% increase in volume and compliance with Policy TB01 and CP12, it should also be noted that the proposed replacement dwelling is also no higher, nor any wider than the existing dwelling. Further demonstrating that the proposed replacement would be appropriate development within the Green Belt.
- 14.9. Given all of the above, the proposal is therefore considered to represent development that can be considered acceptable within the Green Belt.

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- 14.10. Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy aims to protect neighbouring amenity. R15 of the Borough Design Guide SPD requires the retention of reasonable levels of visual privacy to habitable rooms, with separation of 22-30m to the rear and 10-15m to the street. R16 of the Borough Design Guide SPD requires separation distances of 1.0m to the side boundary and 11m to the rear boundary. R18 of the Borough Design Guide SPD aims to protect sunlight and daylight to existing properties, with no material impact on levels of daylight in the habitable rooms of adjoining properties. Considering the proposed replacement dwelling would sit within a generous plot, and it would be sited directly in line with the property to the north, the proposal would not result in any harm to the neighbour's amenity. The proposal would also not cause any overbearing or overshadowing impacts, nor would there be any issues arising from overlooking.
- 14.11. Policy TB07 of the MDD Local Plan states that proposals for new residential units should ensure that the internal layout and size are suitable to serve the amenity requirements of future occupiers. This is reiterated in R17 of the Borough Design Guide SPD which requires adequate internal space to ensure the layout and size achieves good internal amenity for future occupiers.
- 14.12. The Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standards 2015 (as amended) sets out minimum standards for different types of accommodation. For a two-storey dwelling the minimum standard for a 5no bedroom six-person unit is a gross internal floor area of 110sqm with 3.5sqm of built-in storage. In terms of bedroom sizes, the Technical Housing Standards requires that a dwelling with more than one bedroom should have a main bedroom (double), which is to have a minimum area of 11.5sqm. Secondary of single bedrooms should have a minimum area of 7.5sqm, and there should be provision for storage.
- 14.13. The size of the proposed replacement dwelling is more than adequate to ensure compliance with Policy TB07, and the supporting Technical Housing Standards.
- 14.14. R18 of the Borough Design Guide SPD requires sufficient sunlight and daylight to new properties, with dwellings afforded a reasonable dual outlook and southern aspect. The dwelling has been sited to take advantage of sunlight in the early morning to mid-afternoon and this approach is considered acceptable as set out by the Councils most recent pre-application response.
- 14.15. With regard to the proposed solar panels, these are proposed solely to support the proposed replacement dwelling and would ensure that very little, if any electricity is required to be drawn from the national grid. The use of the panels has never been raised as an issue and would ensure compliance with Policy CC04 of the MDD, which seeks to secure high quality sustainably constructed development. In addition to Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy, which seeks to secure a wide range of carbon reducing technologies and energy saving design approaches.



14.16. The final policy it is necessary to discuss is Policy CP11 of the Core Strategy which applies to proposals outside *development limits* and the countryside. The relevant part of the Policy to this proposal comes at sub-paragraph 5, which requires proposals for replacement dwellings to:

- i. Bring out environmental improvements; or
- ii. Not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building.

14.17. Through the consideration of previous submissions, there remains some uncertainty regarding how the Council intends to apply this Policy in practice. The Applicants have consistently put forward the view that the inclusion of solar panels would contribute to environmental improvements by reducing reliance on fossil fuels. However, during the formal application process, this potential benefit appeared to receive limited consideration, or in some cases, such as within the Inspector's assessment, was not acknowledged. That cannot be the correct approach given the clear sustainability benefits of reducing reliance on non-renewable fuel sources.

14.18. Under the most recent pre-application submission, this environmental improvement was confusingly dismissed without explanation, before an assessment of part ii was made, which concluded that the pre-application design *could comply*, but that *the higher consideration is the Green Belt location*. Whilst it is not made clear, it seems to be the suggestion that the proposal at that time did comply with part ii, in that it was appropriate in scale, form and footprint, but that in the context of the Green Belt the development was in fact too large and failed with respect to other policies.

14.19. Taking that assumption forward, given the proposal is now even smaller than what was considered at the pre-application stage, so much smaller that the proposal now falls to be considered appropriate development in the Green Belt in compliance with Policy TB01. The only conclusion that can be drawn is that the proposal now presented would not result in an inappropriate increase in the scale, form or footprint of the original building and therefore that the proposal is compliant with policy CP11.

15. CONCLUSION

15.1. In conclusion, the scheme submitted at this time has been heavily revised, especially in respect of design, following the pre-application advice that was provided by the Council. It has also been substantially reduced in size from that which the Council reviewed previously. The issues which the Council now need to consider have changed substantially as a result from those previous submissions. With all the prior submissions relying on a *very special circumstances* argument in order to be considered acceptable, this application does not rely on that argument and is considered to be appropriate development in and of itself.

15.2. Given all the above, we respectfully request that the application be approved.



Illustration of proposed dining room