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## **Planning, Design & Access Statement** **Glendale House, Aldington**

Mr C Moore

November 2023  
OK/32711



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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 PURPOSE OF STATEMENT

- 1.1.1 This Statement has been prepared by DHA Planning on behalf of the applicant, Mr C Moore, in support of a detailed planning application for the demolition of the existing buildings on site and the erection of 4no. dwellings on the site at Glendale House, Aldington, Ashford
- 1.1.2 The application follows on from previous application ref. 21/01374/AS which approved the erection of 3no. dwellings on site. This revised application seeks permission for 4no. residential units, proposing the same development as that approved previously, albeit with one of the buildings subdivided to create two dwellings, and minor changes to the internal parking courtyard.
- 1.1.3 This Statement provides an overview of the site, its context and the relevant planning history; and a review of all applicable Development Plan documents. The merits of the proposed development are discussed having regard to this context and policy framework and subsequently concludes the proposal is appropriate in planning terms. Accordingly, we request that planning permission is granted.

## 1.2 APPLICATION DOCUMENTS

- 1.2.1 This Statement is to be read alongside the suite of application documents listed below.

PLAN/DOCUMENT	REFERENCE
Site Block Plan	20-52-32
Existing Site Elevations	20-52-33
Site Roof Plan Proposes	20-52-34 A
Site Elevations Proposed	20-52-35
Plots 1 and 2 Elevations and Floor Plans	20-52-36
Street Elevation	20-52-37
Plots 3 and 4 Elevations and Floor Plans	20-52-38
Site Location Plan	20-52-21
Visibility Splays	15245/H-01
Report on Commercial Viability & Condition	July 2021
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal	6729//09/2021
Bat Emergence Surveys	6729//09/2021
Arboricultural Impact Assessment	5896/21/02 Rev -

## 2 THE SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

### 2.1 APPLICATION SITE

- 2.1.1 The site is located to the west of Coopers Lane within the hamlet of Aldington Frith, a suburb of the village of Aldington.
- 2.1.2 Approximately 1,490.48m<sup>2</sup> in size the site currently comprises vacant office premises and surrounding hardstanding. The site was originally in residential use however in 1983 was converted for use as commercial premises. This use has since ceased and the site has remained vacant for nearly four years. Direct access to the site is from Coopers Lane to the east which leads to a parking and turning area.



FIGURE 2.1: APPROXIMATE SITE LOCATION PLAN (GOOGLE EARTH)

### 2.2 SURROUNDING AREA

- 2.2.1 Neighbouring the site to the north and south lies two detached residential properties, Yonder and The Frith. To the site's rear western boundary lies a commercial yard. The site's eastern boundary is formed by Coopers Lane and agricultural fields lie beyond this.

- 2.2.2 Aldington Frith is characterised mainly of detached residential properties which are arranged around the hamlet's main crossroad of Coopers Land and Frith Road. Frith Road provides access to the A2070 to the west and Lyme and Hythe to the west.
- 2.2.3 Two bus stops lie a short distance from the site along Frith Road which provide services between Aldington and Ashford. Aldington, the closest village, provides services and facilities including convenience store, café, post office and primary school.
- 2.2.4 The site is located in Flood Zone 1 and is not subject to any environmental designations or restrictions.

## 2.3 PLANNING HISTORY

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- 2.3.1 According to Ashford Borough Council's website the site has been subject to the following planning applications:
- 83/01090/AS. Conversion to Offices. Approved October 1983;
  - 21/01374/AS. Demolition of existing units and hardstanding and erection of 3no. detached dwellings with associated access, parking, landscaping and infrastructure. Approved August 2022.
- 2.3.2 This application follows on from this previous approval, seeking a broadly similar development however subdividing the rear plot to create two dwellings, providing a total of 4no. dwellings on the site.

## 3 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

### 3.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

3.1.1 The proposed development seeks full planning permission for the following:

*"Demolition of the existing buildings and the erection of 4no. dwellings with associated access, parking, landscaping and infrastructure."*

3.1.2 The proposal seeks to provide 2no. detached dwellings and 2no. semi-detached dwellings. The footprint of the buildings would remain the same as that approved under application ref. 21/01374/AS however the rear building would be subdivided to create 2no. 3-bedroom homes. Internally, the site layout remains broadly the same as that approved under the previous application, albeit with an additional parking space provided, allowing for the uplift in unit numbers. The below images provide a comparison of the previously approved development and the revised proposals.



FIGURE 3.1: PROPOSED SITE LAYOUT

3.1.3 The proposed site plan demonstrates that the quantum of development can be appropriately accommodated on site without appearing cramped or overdeveloped. Each dwelling has been designed to meet Nationally Described Space Standards and ample garden space provided in line with Ashford's policy requirements.



- 3.1.4 The scheme proposes a comprehensive landscaping scheme, providing enhanced planting to both the northern and southern boundaries of the site, as well as framing the internal parking court. Further tree planting is proposed within rear and front gardens. This provides significant betterment to the site which is currently dominated by hard standing. The enhanced landscaping will therefore assist the development in assimilating into the surrounding area, softening it in the context of the surrounding street scene.
- 3.1.5 The development will be limited to 2-storeys in height to the front of the site, matching the building height of adjacent properties, and reduce to 1.5 storeys to the rear where the site borders more open countryside. This ensures the development sits comfortably within the street scene, respecting existing building heights and patterns. The layout of the scheme has been considered in the context of the two adjacent residential units, and carefully placed to avoid any overlooking or privacy issues between existing and future occupiers.



FIGURE 3.3: PROPOSED STREET VIEW FROM COOPERS LANE (PRIME FOLIO)

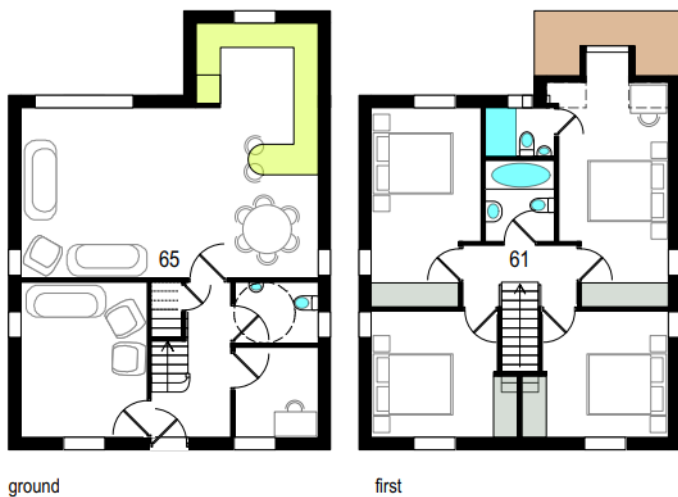


FIGURE 3.4: PLOTS 1 & 2 PROPOSED FLOOR PLANS (PLOT 1 HANDED) (PRIME FOLIO)

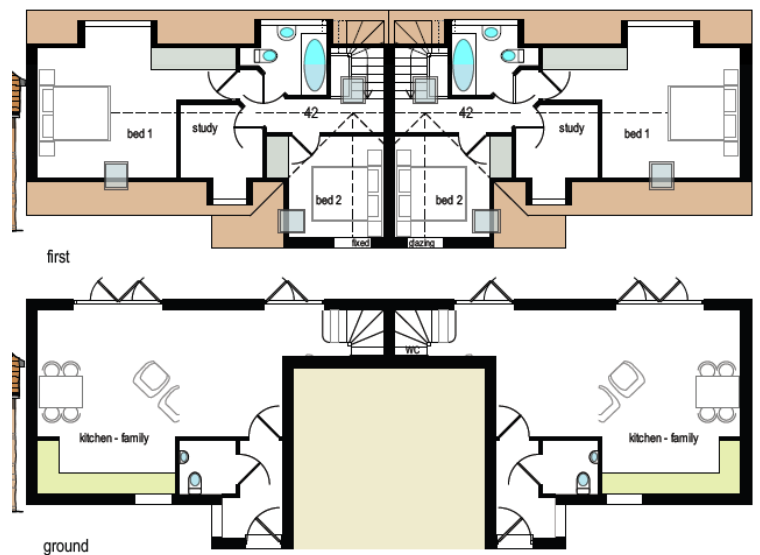


FIGURE 3.5: PLOTS 3 & 4 PROPOSED FLOOR PLANS (PRIME FOLIO)

3.1.6 The development proposes the following accommodation:

- Plot 1: 4-bedrooms
- Plot 2: 4-bedrooms
- Plot 3: 2-bedrooms
- Plot 4: 2-bedrooms

3.1.7 Each property comprises an open plan kitchen/living/dining room, study, WC and separate living room to ground floor. To the first floor plots 1 and 2 comprise four double bedrooms, one with ensuite and a family bathroom. To the first floor of plots 3 and 4 lies two double bedrooms, family bathroom, and study.

3.1.8 Access to the site will remain from Coopers Lane to the east of the site as per the existing situation. The access will be 4.5m wide and sufficient visibility splays are provided in line with KCC Highways requirements. Each dwelling is provided with parking in line with KCC and Ashford Borough Council standards and 1no. visitors space is provided.



## 4 PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

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- 4.1.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.1.2 The statutory development plan in this case comprises the Ashford Borough Council Local Plan 2030. The Local Plan was adopted in February 2019 and takes the Borough through to 2030.
- 4.1.3 In addition to the development plan, there are other material considerations including the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and other supplementary planning guidance and standards.

### 4.2 ASHFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL LOCA PLAN 2030 (2019)

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- 4.2.1 Policy SP1 outlines the strategic objectives for the Borough. These form the basis of this Local Plan's policy framework, as well as providing the core principles that planning applications are expected to adhere to.
  - a. To focus development at accessible and sustainable locations which utilise existing infrastructure, facilities and services wherever possible and makes best use of suitable brownfield opportunities;
  - b. To conserve and enhance the Borough's natural environment including designated and undesignated landscapes and biodiversity and promote a connected green infrastructure network that plays a role in managing flood risk, delivers net gains in biodiversity and improves access to nature;
  - c. To conserve and enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets and the relationship between them and their settings in a way that promotes distinctive places, proportionate to their significance. Placebased heritage will be a key principle underpinning design and spatial form of development;
  - d. To create the highest quality design which is sustainable, accessible, safe and promotes a positive sense of place through the design of the built form, the relationship of buildings with each other and the spaces around them, and which responds to the prevailing character of the area;
  - e. To ensure development is supported by the necessary social, community, physical and e-technology infrastructure, facilities and services with any

necessary improvements brought forward in a co-ordinated and timely manner;

- f. To promote access to a wide choice of easy to use forms of sustainable transport modes including bus, train, cycling and walking to encourage as much non-car based travel as possible and to promote healthier lifestyles;
- g. To provide a mix of housing types and sizes to meet the changing housing needs of the Borough's population including affordable homes, self build and custom build properties, specialist housing for older and disabled people, accommodation to meet the needs of the Traveller community, spacious, quality family housing and for newly forming and downsizing households;
- h. To provide a range of employment opportunities to respond to the needs of business, support the growing population and attract inward investment; and
- i. To ensure new development is resilient to, and mitigates against the effects of climate change by reducing vulnerability to flooding, promoting development that minimises natural resource and energy use, reduces pollution and incorporates sustainable construction practices, including water efficiency measures.

4.2.2 Policy SP2 outlines the strategic approach to housing delivery. A total housing target of 13,118 net additional dwellings applies for the Borough between 2018 and 2030.

4.2.3 Policy SP6 promotes high quality design and demonstrate a careful consideration of and a positive response to each of the following design criteria:

- a. Character, distinctiveness and sense of place
- b. Ease of movement
- c. Legibility
- d. Mixed use and diversity
- e. Public safety and crime
- f. Quality of public spaces and their future management
- g. Flexibility and liveability
- h. Richness in detail
- i. Efficient use of natural resources

4.2.4 Policy HOU5 highlights that residential windfall development adjoining or close to the existing built up confines of Ashford's towns and villages will be acceptable providing the following criteria is met:

- a. The scale of development proposed is proportionate to the size of the settlement and the level, type and quality of day to day service provision currently available and commensurate with the ability of those services to absorb the level of development in combination with any planned allocations in this Local Plan and committed development in liaison with service providers;
- b. The site is within easy walking distance of basic day to day services in the nearest settlement, and/or has access to sustainable methods of transport to access a range of services;
- c. The development is able to be safely accessed from the local road network and the traffic generated can be accommodated on the local and wider road network without adversely affecting the character of the surrounding area;
- d. The development is located where it is possible to maximise the use of public transport, cycling and walking to access services;
- e. The development must conserve and enhance the natural environment and preserve or enhance any heritage assets in the locality; and,
- f. The development (and any associated infrastructure) is of a high quality design and meets the following requirements:-
  - i. it sits sympathetically within the wider landscape,
  - ii. it preserves or enhances the setting of the nearest settlement,
  - iii. it includes an appropriately sized and designed landscape buffer to the open countryside,
  - iv. it is consistent with local character and built form, including scale, bulk and the materials used,
  - v. it does not adversely impact on the neighbouring uses or a good standard of amenity for nearby residents,
  - vi. it would conserve biodiversity interests on the site and / or adjoining area and not adversely affect the integrity of international and national protected sites in line with Policy ENV1.

Residential development elsewhere in the countryside will only be permitted if the proposal is for at least one of the following:

- Accommodation to cater for an essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;
- Development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;
- It is the re-use of redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting;
- A dwelling that is of exceptional quality or innovative design
- which should be truly outstanding and innovative, reflect the highest standards of architecture, significantly enhance its immediate setting and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area;
- A replacement dwelling, in line with policy HOU7 of this Local Plan.

4.2.5 Policy HOU12 requires all residential development to meet Nationally Described Space Standards.

4.2.6 Policy HOU15 requires private external gardens for houses, as a starting point be calculated as the width of the dwelling (m) x 10. This standard can be flexible providing it can be adequately demonstrated that alternative solutions provide a sufficient area of usable private outdoor space which contributes positively to the character and appearance of the area and ensures a high standard of living conditions can be achieved.

4.2.7 Policy EMP2 discusses the loss or redevelopment of employment sites and premises. Within Tenterden and the villages Proposals for the loss or redevelopment of existing employment sites or premises within the confines of Tenterden or the villages listed in Policy HOU3a, or adjoining/close to a settlement listed in policy HOU5 will not be permitted, unless one of the following criteria apply;

- a. The site is no longer appropriate for the continuation of the previous or any other employment use in terms of its serious impact on the neighbouring occupiers or environment;
- b. The premises are replaced with the same-sized or larger sites or premises within or adjoining the same rural settlement, or at the nearest rural service centre, or;
- c. It has been shown that the unit has remained unlet or for sale for a substantial period for all appropriate types of B class employment uses or

other suitable employment generating uses, despite genuine and sustained attempts to let or sell it on reasonable term.

### 4.3 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (NPPF) (2023)

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- 4.3.1 The NPPF was originally published in March 2012 to provide a single overarching national policy document. A revised NPPF was published in 2023 and is a material consideration when determining planning applications.
- 4.3.2 Paragraph 7 of the NPPF highlights the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised of meeting the needs of the present without comprising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 4.3.3 In order to achieve sustainable development, the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and must be pursued in mutually supported ways. These objectives are as follows:
- a. an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordination the provision of infrastructure;
  - b. a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of the present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect the current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
  - c. an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigation and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 4.3.4 So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 4.3.5 Section 5 outlines delivering a sufficient supply of homes. Paragraph 59 states that 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, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.

- 4.3.6 As outlined in Paragraph 69 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.
- 4.3.7 Paragraph 79 seeks to promote sustainable development in rural areas. Housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.
- 4.3.8 Paragraph 119 states that planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously developed or 'brownfield' land.
- 4.3.9 Section 12 discusses achieving well-designed places. Paragraph 130 outlines a list of criteria that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:
- a. 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;
  - b. are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
  - c. 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 increased densities);
  - d. 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;
  - e. optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
  - f. create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

## 5 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

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- 5.1.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires application for planning permissions to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.1.2 It is considered that the following issues are important to be considered as part of the proposals:
- 1) Principle of Development;
  - 2) Fallback Position;
  - 3) Sustainability;
  - 4) Design and Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area;
  - 5) Residential Amenity
  - 6) Loss of Employment Use
  - 7) Landscaping and Trees;
  - 8) Ecology;
  - 9) Highways, Access and Parking; and
  - 10) Stodmarsh & Nutrient Neutrality

### 5.2 PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

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- 5.2.1 The proposal seeks the demolition of the existing buildings on site and their replacement with 4no. dwellings. The site already benefits from extant planning permission ref. 21/01374/AS for the demolition of the existing buildings on site and their replacement with 3no. dwellings. The proposals remain the same on the whole as that of the extant consent, however the rear dwelling is split into two houses and 2no. additional parking spaces are proposed.
- 5.2.2 The principle of development is therefore considered acceptable given the site already has planning permission for re-development for residential purposes.
- 5.2.3 Policies SP1 and SP2 of the Local Plan seeks to focus development in sustainable areas and development in rural settlements will need to take account of accessibility, facilities, services and environmental constraints. Policy SP1 further



confirms development should make best use of suitable brownfield sites and the preamble to the policy confirms suitable brownfield sites for reuse may be in the countryside.

- 5.2.4 Policy HOU5 discusses residential windfall development in the countryside and the first part of the policy lists a number of settlements where proposals adjoining or close to settlement confines would be allowed. Aldington Frith is not included in this list and therefore the proposed development would need to be considered under the second part of the policy which only allows for residential development elsewhere in the countryside where the proposal meets one or more of a list of criteria. As agreed by officers in their assessment of the previous application, the re-development of this site would partially meet one of these criteria given it would remove poor quality buildings, redeveloping a brownfield site for residential use (of which there is a longstanding former use) and result in an overall environmental enhancement to the site and surrounding area. For these reasons the proposals are considered to meet policies HOU5 and SP1.

### Housing Land Supply

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- 5.2.5 Allied to the above, regard must also be had to housing need in Ashford Borough, which is a significant material consideration that weighs in favour of the grant of planning permission.
- 5.2.6 Paragraph 74 of the NPPF requires that local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their local housing requirement set out in adopted policies. Currently the Council are unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply as required by the NPPF. The Council's most recent monitoring report published in 2021 identifies a housing land supply position of 4.54 years, however as agreed in a recent appeal the supply is now somewhere within the range of 3.5-4.45 years. This is unlikely to change anytime soon, given the ongoing requirement for developments within the Stour River Catchment to demonstrate nutrient neutrality.

### Summary

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- 5.2.7 With this in mind, the benefits of the scheme are the provision of four additional homes in an area of unmet housing need. The proposal further makes efficient use of a brownfield site (paragraph 11 of the NPPF), and already holds planning permission for residential re-development for three dwellings.
- 5.2.8 Therefore, the Council's lack of housing land supply, coupled with the re-use of previously developed land, bettering the current appearance of the site, weighs in significant favour of approving the proposed development. This was agreed by the Council when approving previous application ref. 21/01374/AS. The proposed development is therefore considered entirely acceptable, subject to the following assessment.

### 5.3 FALLBACK POSITION

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- 5.3.1 Given the site's current lawful use as offices, it benefits from Part 2 Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 for conversion under prior approval from commercial, business and service uses to dwellinghouses.
- 5.3.2 Furthermore, previous planning permission ref. 21/O1374/AS remains extant, with over 18 months before the permission would need to be implemented. There is therefore still a realistic prospect that this development will come forward.
- 5.3.3 This is an important matter to consider as part of determining the application, as it demonstrates the site will be acceptable for a change to residential use (subject to prior approval for the permitted development approach) and is still capable of being redeveloped for residential use under application ref. 21/O1374/AS.

### 5.4 SUSTAINABILITY

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- 5.4.1 The proposal has been assessed in terms of its sustainability in line with the NPPF, and is considered to bring economic, social and environmental benefits that would outweigh any perceived harm the proposal may bring.

#### Economic Role

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- 5.4.2 Housing development on this site would provide employment for local construction work, generate an increase in gross value of the site and would provide the opportunity for the use of local materials. Additionally, household expenditure generated by the future occupiers would support economic activity in the local area.

#### Social Role

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- 5.4.3 From a social perspective the proposal would provide an attractive residential development on a vacant brownfield site which would cater for the provision of houses in a borough that cannot demonstrate a five year housing land supply

#### Environmental Role

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- 5.4.4 The introduction of well-designed houses providing a quality layout, appropriate design and suitable materials would ensure development assimilates well on site.
- 5.4.5 The development would be viewed wholly within the context of the existing development on Coopers Lane and would be sympathetic to the character and appearance of the area with no adverse impact upon the visual amenity of the location.

- 5.4.6 The proposal would make efficient use of previously-developed land, and result in a reduction in both built form and hardstanding on site. The introduction of new planting on a site with no existing soft landscaping will further enhance the visual amenity of the area.

## 5.5 DESIGN AND IMPACT ON THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE AREA

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- 5.5.1 Built form is currently found across the majority of the site comprising a 2-storey building to the front and two single storey buildings to the rear. The existing development in Aldington Frith has no overarching pattern in terms of plot size, scale of dwellings or architecture, and so the proposed design would not be inconsistent with the variation of development in the locality.
- 5.5.2 The proposed development comprises two, 2-storey detached dwellings to the front of the site (plots 1 & 2) and a pair of semi-detached 1.5 storey dwellings to the rear (plots 3 & 4).
- 5.5.3 Plots 1 and 2 are set back slightly from the road, on the same building line as the existing building on site, sitting slightly behind 'The Frith' to the south. This ensures a suitable presence on the road and surrounding street scene, as well providing space for an area of frontage landscaping. At 2-storeys in height, these units respond to the surrounding building context, matching the existing building on site, and others in the surrounding area. Plots 3 and 4 are limited to 1.5 storeys in height remaining subordinate to the frontage dwellings and preventing any overbearing impact on the surrounding area.
- 5.5.4 The built form on site remains of the same, traditional character and appearance, scale, and design as that approved under application ref. 21/01374/AS however the rear building has been subdivided into two dwellings. The only external change relates to the north and south elevations where side windows are now doors which provide an entrance to each house. No other external changes are proposed.
- 5.5.5 Internally the site provides a parking court with allocated parking for each dwelling. This follows a similar design and proposed previously, albeit with additional parking spaces given the slight uplift in unit numbers. Two further parking spaces are provided within the rear building as car barns. These will act in tandem with the space to the front.
- 5.5.6 The accompanying street scene drawings demonstrate that the development can be easily accommodated within the street scene, responding positively to the character and appearance of the locality, assimilating the properties into the area without harm to its more rural character.
- 5.5.7 The proposals are therefore considered to meet policies SP1, SP6 and HOU5 of the Local Plan and Paragraph 130 of the NPPF.

## 5.6 RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

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- 5.6.1 Policies HOU12 and HOU15 of the Local Plan and paragraph 130 of the NPPF requires decisions to secure a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupiers. The design, layout and siting of the proposed dwellings has been carefully considered to respect neighbouring occupiers, with dwellings set back from the site boundaries as much as possible, and carefully chosen landscaping to provide a buffer between existing development.
- 5.6.2 Windows have been carefully placed so not to give rise to any loss of amenity, and window positions have not changed from those approved as part of the previous application. Houses are further limited in height with 2-storeys to the front and 1.5 storeys to the rear, to prevent any overbearing impact.
- 5.6.3 In terms of future occupiers, each of the proposed dwelling would be provided with a private garden in line with policy HOU15 as well as generous spacing and landscaping between each plot providing sufficient separation. Each dwelling further complies with nationally described space standards in line with policy HOU12.
- 5.6.4 The proposed development would therefore have no significant harm to the amenity of neighbouring or future occupiers in terms of privacy, sunlight, outlook or overbearing. The proposals therefore comply with policies HOU12, HOU15 and the NPPF.

## 5.7 LOSS OF EMPLOYMENT USE

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- 5.7.1 There is no policy in the Local Plan which protected employment sites in the countryside. Policy EMP2 covers the redevelopment of employment sites however this directly applies to sites within the confines of Tenterden or the villages listed in policy HOU3a or adjoining/close to a settlement listed in policy HOU5. As part of the previous application the Planning Officer advised that policy HOU5 would not apply to the redevelopment of this site, as it is considered detached from the nearby settlement of Aldington. Therefore, it is submitted that the proposed development is not required to be assessed against policy EMP2. Nevertheless, for completeness this application is accompanied by a report on the commercial viability and condition of the site.
- 5.7.2 The report finds that the shed buildings on site are not capable of restoration and do not meet the minimum Category E requirement of an Energy Performance Certificate which is required for all commercial buildings. The main house has long suffered from poor maintenance and includes a number of building defects which would be costly to repair. The report concludes the premises are incapable of being restored to a lettable condition and the site has no viable commercial potential.

- 5.7.3 A marketing exercise was nevertheless undertaken in 2021 prior to submission of the previous application however there were no forthcoming offers. Given the current economic climate and the increase in working from home, it is not considered that this lack of interest would have change, particularly given the current state of the buildings and lack of viable commercial potential.
- 5.7.4 Further to this, the loss of employment use on this site has already been accepted by the Council when approving application ref. 21/01374/AS.
- 5.7.5 It is therefore demonstrated that the site is not suitable for restoration back into commercial use, which was accepted by the Council when assessing the previous application. It is therefore considered an appropriate re-use of the land to redevelop this brownfield site and restore it back to residential use.

## 5.8 LANDSCAPING AND TREES

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- 5.8.1 A comprehensive landscaping scheme is proposed on the site which is currently dominated by hardstanding.
- 5.8.2 Hedge planting is proposed to the southern boundary of the site with property 'The Frith' which provides a natural separation between the two plots. Additional hedge planting is provided within the northern boundary of plot 4, providing a further buffer with existing development to the north.
- 5.8.3 Further trees and hedging are proposed around the site's internal access courtyard, softening the overall appearance of the development. Introducing this level of soft landscaping to a site which is dominated by only hardstanding will provide a significant betterment to the site, helping to assimilate it into the surrounding area.
- 5.8.4 An Arboricultural Impact Assessment accompanies this application which identifies one tree group is proposed for removal to the front of the site. This is however category 'C' and its removal would not impact upon the site's amenity value or wider landscape character.
- 5.8.5 The crowns of further trees will require some minor pruning however this would not significantly impact upon the trees physiological condition and/or overall amenity value. The report recommends a number of tree protection measures.
- 5.8.6 The scheme is therefore considered to comply with policies SP1, SP6, ENV1 and paragraph 130 of the NPPF

## 5.9 ECOLOGY

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- 5.9.1 The application is accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. The report identified that there was a moderate potential for bats within the existing building

with some potential bat roost features. Accompanying Bat Emergence Surveys however found no bat emergence activity. As part of the previous application a condition was attached requiring a bat mitigation strategy, and it agreed for this condition to be attached as well. No other protected species were recorded within the vicinity of the site.

- 5.9.2 The proposals are therefore considered to comply with policy ENV1 of the Local Plan and the NPPF.

## 5.10 HIGHWAYS, ACCESS AND PARKING

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- 5.10.1 It is proposed to take access from Coopers Road as existing. This provides direct access to a central parking and turning area. The accompanying plans, including the highway visibility plan demonstrates that access from here can be achieved with suitable viability splays.
- 5.10.2 Given the site's current lawful use for employment purposes, specifically offices, the change of use to residential would reduce the number of cars accessing the site on a daily basis. Nevertheless, the additional vehicle trips from 4no. dwellings is considered to be minor. Furthermore the highway impact from the proposals for 3no. dwellings was considered to be minimal as part of the previous application, an uplift in this by 1no. dwelling is not a significant enough change to alter this assessment.
- 5.10.3 The proposals are therefore considered acceptable in line with policy TRA3a and the NPPF.

## 5.11 STODMARSH & NUTRIENT NEUTRALITY

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- 5.11.1 Stodmarsh SAC is a designated area of conservation of international importance lying on the River Stour, north-east of Canterbury. A survey of the Stodmarsh SAC in 2020 by Natural England identified that parts of it are in unfavourable conservation status, resultant from residual high levels of phosphorus and nitrogen in treated effluent from sewage treatment works being discharged into the River Stour. Another significant source of phosphates and nitrogen in the catchment results from agriculture.
- 5.11.2 In 2018, the European Court of Justice ruled that any additional nutrient loading to Special Areas of Conservation that are already in an unfavourable condition would not be permissible by law, and that any developments in their respective catchments would have to demonstrate that there would be no 'likely significant effect' from the development on the downstream designated site. This means that new development must not increase the level of nutrients from an existing site i.e., achieve and demonstrate nutrient neutrality in respect of nitrogen and phosphorous. This affects all residential within the Stour catchment.

- 5.11.3 The site lies outside of the catchment of the River Stour and is therefore not directly captured by this. There are no foul sewer assets in the area, and the site is located outside of any Southern Water WWTW service catchment and so the development would install a package treatment plant for foul sewage. Effluent would then drain the same way as surface water and any sludge left in the package treatment plant would be disposed of outside of the Stodmarsh catchment area. The proposed development is therefore not caught by Stodmarsh.



## 6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

### 6.1 SUMMARY

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- 6.1.1 The Planning Statement has been prepared by DHA Planning on behalf of Mr C Moore in respect of a detailed planning application for the construction of 4no. residential dwellings with associated parking, landscaping and infrastructure at Glendale House, Aldington Frith.
- 6.1.2 Given that the Council currently cannot demonstrate a five-year housing land supply, the titled balance set out in paragraph 11 of the NPPF is engaged and it is considered in this case it is clear the harm from the proposal does not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.
- 6.1.3 Whilst the site's lawful use is for employment purposes it is submitted and supported by the accompanying marketing report that the site is no longer viable for employment purposes. In an increasing state of disrepair, the units are not in a lettable state and restoration would be too costly to be viable. Furthermore, the site's more rural location means it is not an area in high demand for commercial use. As such it is considered a residential use is wholly acceptable for this site.
- 6.1.4 The proposed dwellings have been carefully designed to respect the surrounding area, and a limited scale and height ensures the scheme matches the prevailing development pattern to the site's frontage, and a limited height to the semi-detached building at the site's rear limits impact on the surrounding area, comfortably fitting within the locality.
- 6.1.5 The proposal follows on from application ref. 21/01374/AS which approved residential development for 3no. units on site in August 2022. The proposed scheme remains the same overall as that proposed as part of this application, albeit the rear dwelling has been subdivided into two units. This previous application was considered acceptable by the Council and it is therefore considered that this revised scheme would remain in this regard.
- 6.1.6 The scheme would make appropriate use of a previously developed site and contribute 4no. dwellings in an area of unmet housing need. The proposals are therefore considered to be wholly acceptable.

### 6.2 CONCLUSION

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- 6.2.1 In summary, the proposals deliver a high quality development that accords with both local and national planning policy. We therefore respectfully request that planning permission be approved without delay in accordance with paragraph 11c of the NPPF.