

Design & Access (inc. Heritage) Statement: Proposed new bungalow: land adjacent to 57 Chestnut Avenue, Belper.

1.0 Introduction and Heritage

The planning department returned comments to reject the initial proposal (Dec 2021) but have indicated they would be happy to consider a more contemporary design. Other comments received responded to the proposed roofline not being in character (with the estate) citing Neighbourhood Plan, items NPP12 and 15 (ref: 6.0: Appendix Info: Town council comment 14.10.21).

After further correspondence with the case officer, it was felt that the vernacular of the estate would be undermined by the previously submitted design, the estate here presents a series of two storey semi-detached properties and to insert a similarly constructed building but at a single storey height perhaps just looked odd?

A contemporary design showing a strong character can stand alone as a unique intervention that fulfils its design intention of modernity with excellent environmental intentions and with its contrasting nature does not imitate historical legitimacy.

We hope that this proposal with angular cladding and render (front elevation) will inject a dynamic element to the site without detracting from the Buffer zone status. Having received planning's unfavourable comments, we need to prove the development sits comfortably within planning policies and other Borough Council and Government objective and this document will provide evidence that we have thought through this proposal in the context of the location and development plan policy.

2.0 Proposal and Design

This infill plot demands an exciting design to fulfil this brief within budget constraints for this estate setting. The footprint has been changed to address the concern that the initial proposal was mimicking the vernacular of the estate but perhaps at an inappropriate scale (single storey) and therefore looked clumsy and downgraded the streetscape.

The changes embrace a dynamic approach to the infill plot with the intention of contrasting a high-quality design and environmentally considered house (NPP items) within the established estate language of design.

I have been involved with several interventions of similar impact (see app. 4.0 Examples) within and around AVBC conservation areas and believe that a strong design that can be successful in a WHS setting can equally be applied to an established estate that is perhaps not noted for its architectural appeal but has an historical character and is an area of Buffer zone to the WHS.



A new dynamic design has brought a change to the materials and external look of the new building, to reflect the 'green' construction use of a building system (Isotex) with its environmental accreditation. Largely finished with a clean render finish but with a front feature cladding in a brick coloured palette of sympathetic red/orange metal sheeting either to rust (corten steel) or a PPC corrugated sheet.

The flat roofline height is sympathetic to the typically lower side extensions and garages that frequently flank these detached two storey council built semi's that populate the estate (ref. 6.1 Physical Characteristics of the Site).

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The new design continues to retain the interest of community and space provision as previously intended, there are areas for refuse bins and courtyard to provide a considerate layout for the neighboring property. The layout now respects the Right to Light issues that were highlighted by planning correspondence, additionally, a bungalow design means that upper windows to the existing house can remain as originally built – there is now no need to relocate a window to the front elevation.

UPVC windows & doors (double glazed) and UPVC rainwater goods. An EPDM flat roof complete the contemporary style and further reduces garden shadowing and leaves unimpeded views from the upper story windows that face onto the proposal from the existing house, and no windows exist to the north elevation looking back. Equally no habitable rooms view out onto the path area between the old and new house.

80sq.m of flat roof provides an excellent opportunity to include a large expanse of solar panels to really combine with a ‘green’ construction technique and hopefully push this build to a very high level of environmental consideration. A building regulations application will be sought after a successful application, with the intention to secure a design that achieves **high environmental standards of class A** (EPC rating).

The bungalow footprint remains at nominally 80sq.m with 140sq.m of front and rear garden area that comprises the proposed curtilage for the development.

Off-road parking is offered with little change required as this was previously the drive for number 57. In addition, we apply for off-road parking in front of number 57 as part of this application. This arrangement has commonly been implemented, many of the fronts now accommodate a double-parking space. Fence heights will be maintained to protect visual splays.

3.0 Additional

The proposals are detailed in the drawings which accompanies this statement and include:

- L01 location and Block Plan
- E01 Existing Elevations
- E02 Existing and Proposed layout plan (within curtilage)
- P01 Proposed Elevations
- P02 Proposed Plans

A Flood Risk Assessment was deemed unnecessary as the site is not situated within a Flood Risk Area.

It is not considered that this site is of particular ecological importance and therefore an Ecology Survey has not been undertaken. Likewise, the land is not contaminated consequently a Contamination Survey was not carried out.

The impact of the development should not alter the local noise climate or local lighting levels.

Refuse collection and recycling will be the same as for the adjacent dwellings.

All regulated by the securing of building regulation approval subsequent to gaining planning approval. There are no changes to existing access, and will not affect Emergency Services Access to the property or adjoining buildings.

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4.0 Examples of existing buildings

Ladygrove, Sawmills (Belper)



Chapel Street, Belper (WHS)



View from Chapel Street (De Bradelei Mill)



Garden View

The 'A-house' at Laund Nook, Three cornered rec, Belper. (WHS Buffer zone) – by others.



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5.0 Adherence to Policy and Guidelines

I would like to concentrate on the design process that has been fully considered during the re-design of the building proposal: with reference to AVBC **Supplementary Planning Document** Residential Development (Oct 2007).

6.0 DESIGN OF NEW DEVELOPMENT:

Current guidance from the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) and English Heritage guidance steers towards contemporary, honest new development, rather than pastiche or replica. The design guidance in this section is as applicable to new development in historic or sensitive locations such as here: a WHS 'Buffer zone'. Further advice continues:

"When designing a new building or extension in an existing settlement, the temptation may be to mimic the style of the neighbouring buildings". Although it is possible to replicate successfully the materials and craftsmanship of the type of building in this location, it would not help future generations 'read' the story of a new building and its context.

"A well-designed 21st century home will likewise express something about the lifestyle, concerns and building methods of its time and locale".

6.1 Physical characteristics of the site

Any new development must consider how it will fit in with the wider landscape. 'The Landscape Character of Derbyshire,' published by Derbyshire County Council, has advice on the different landscapes in Amber Valley. Consideration must be given to landscape character, e.g. the shape and pattern of existing settlements and the adjacent pattern of woodlands and field enclosure.

This is a view of the approach to the site (Chestnut Ave); clearly defines a regular spacing of detached housing separated with usually a side garage or single storey extension. A rhythm is developing: highlighted in red dashed line below:



Moving along to the actual street scene of the site address (below); this pattern continues before changing to a simpler version (no side extensions or garages) of regularly spaced two storey homes.



To accord with the streetscape rhythm, a detached bungalow is proposed to inhabit the infill site thus adhering to the physical characteristics of the street.

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6.2 Environmental sustainability: AVBC acknowledge homes and extensions built to be low or zero carbon are *“likely to look different from traditional homes, expressing in their form, materials and elevations one of the major concerns of the age”*.

6.3 Respecting established patterns: the rhythm described previously identifies many flat roofed garages and lean-to garages, policy dictates *“it is not necessary or desirable to copy other roofs, but it is important to understand the contribution that a new roof may make to the overall streetscape”*.

6.4 Variety and interest: *New development should seek to enliven and enhance the area in which it is located. Appropriate, sensitive variations help give character to a development. Variations from or interpretations of prevailing neighbouring patterns and features are likely to be successful if they are informed by a sound understanding of context.*

6.5 Landmarks: *“It may be appropriate to design a new house or development that differs markedly from its surroundings”*. There is a public accessed alley to the side of the proposed site, a landmark building would help denote this connection to other parts of the estate, reinforcing mental maps and local knowledge.

There are numerous other headlines: Materials, scale form, obviously considered from the drawings that accompany the application. However, I would mention one other significant heading **6.11 Adaptable homes:** *“As a population ages, it is important that new homes are built to accommodate potential changes in lifestyle to which a bungalow by definition lends itself”*.

Lastly, to highlight some of the Policy wording appropriate to the case regarding this new design;
Policy EN17 All developments should:

- a) be in scale and character with their surroundings and have a distinctive sense of character
- d) in respect of residential development, provide adequate space for the storage of increased recycling receptacles (including community recycling schemes where appropriate) and access for refuse collection vehicles
- e) not unduly affect the amenities or privacy of adjoining or adjacent properties, including through loss of light, external lighting, overshadowing, overlooking or by residential tandem development immediately behind existing properties sharing the same access
- f) in respect of residential development, provide for private outdoor space where practicable
- g) take account of the relationship between the development proposals and neighbouring buildings and the spaces between and around those buildings
- h) use natural or high-quality modern materials that reflect those used in the local surroundings

The AVBC require all new housing development to be at a density that respects the character and appearance of the locality and makes the most efficient use of land, I hope to have demonstrated that there are significant constraints to develop the proposal as a two-storey property as indicated in post-submission communications from the planning department. Circumstances here provide the opportunity to improve the character of the area through thoughtful development at a density that differs from the established development.

David Guy (Jan 2022)

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6.0 Appendix information

Neighbourhood Plan for Belper Civil Parish (NP4B) - NPP12 & 15 were cited by Town council (Andrew Mott 14.10.2021).

NPP12; point 4: *Well-designed buildings should be appropriate to their location and context, this may include innovative and contemporary design solutions provided they positively enhance the character and local distinctiveness.*

Point 5: *Innovative approaches to the construction of low carbon homes which demonstrate sustainable use of resources and high energy efficiency levels will be supported. Examples would include but would not be limited to*

- *the use of high quality, thermally efficient building materials;*



Example of infill: bungalow development Thornton's Way. The bungalow development is an example of recent development of smaller market housing suitable for older people. The houses were part of an infill scheme and the house design is an example of the sort of development that would be supported by the community.

We trust this Design and Access document demonstrates an ambitious level of design commitment to producing a highly environmentally and energy efficient building that very much reflects its time and era, and can sit comfortably within this buffer zone setting.

