

Appeal Proof of Evidence - Summary

Proposed Development for the erection of 44 retirement apartments for the elderly at the site of The Rise and Three Neighbouring Properties, Stanford Hill, Lymington SO41 8DE

LPA Reference 20/10481

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1. Introduction

1.1 This statement is a summary of the proof of evidence prepared by Laurie Marlow BA (Hons), BArch, PG Dip Arch, ARB registered Architect acting on behalf of David James Architects & Partners, who are the designers of the appeal scheme.

1.2 Within my proof I will take the reader through my briefing process; my design objectives; my contextual analysis of the site and surrounding area and how this led to an in-depth understanding of the constraints and opportunities that the appeal site presents. I describe the design evolution of the appeal scheme and how the design responds directly to both the constraints / opportunities and in doing so I set out evidence in support of the design-based issues, which are as follows:

- 1. Site layout**
- 2. Scale, Bulk and Mass**
- 3. Height**

2. Site Appraisal and Contextual Analysis

2.1 The appellant has assembled 4 plots, all of which are currently in residential use, to create the resultant appeal site. The application site is a large plot being considerably larger than all surrounding sites and lies not within but adjacent to and bordering the Lymington Conservation Area (Western zone). The appeal site is under-developed and presents a development opportunity to compliment the street scene, creating a positive contribution to the character of the area through the provision of high-quality new retirement apartments.

2.2 The surrounding buildings differ in size, height and footprint. Within the immediate area there are a mix of detached and terraced residential dwellings and considerably larger blocks of flats and detached houses. Whilst there are detached houses to the south, larger blocks of flats and terraced housing contribute to the

immediate character of the area north of the appeal site. Bucklers Court lies to the north of the appeal site and is a large 3 storey block of 39 retirement apartments including communal facilities and car parking accessed from Anchorage Way. The development is set over 3 stories plus a pitched roof over and has a substantial presence to Stanford Hill. It is located within the Conservation Area and marks the transition between the more densely laid out town center area and more open suburban residential feel further south. Bucklers Court is an important building and a material consideration for assessing the appeal scheme and establishes key principles that relate to the development of the appeal site which my proof will examine in detail.

- 2.3 The appeal site is in a transitional location being located between the more densely laid out sites to the north and the looser more relaxed residential settlements to the south. My proof of evidence explains how the design of the appeal scheme relates to both characters and how in doing so will become a successful addition to the street's scene.

3. Site Layout

- 3.1 My proof of evidence explains that when broken down into the set of individual relationships, the Appeal Scheme's siting accords with the character of the area and that of Stanford Hill. The frontage of the building (adjacent to Stanford Hill) sits within the established building line and the front façade is highly articulated and stepped in plan to respond to the shape of the road. In this way it responds to the site's locality and to the character of the area creating no harm.

4. Mass / Bulk/ Scale and Height

- 4.1 My proof of evidence demonstrates that when the appeal scheme is analysed by breaking it down into individual architectural elements, the scale and mass of the building is not at odds with the local and wider character of the area and one can

only conclude that the scale and mass would preserve the character of Stanford Hill. It is my opinion that the scale and design of the architectural elements, enhance and reinforce the mixed character of the area and street scene in a sympathetic manner. My proof of evidence explains that the primary scale (the mass) of the proposed building does exceed that of neighbouring buildings but is entirely appropriate when seen relative to the size of the Appeal Site and the spatial arrangement around it.

4.2 My proof demonstrates that the height of the appeal scheme is acceptable because the building sits comfortably within the street scene and creates a successful relationship with neighbouring buildings without causing harm to the character of the area. The building is lower than Bucklers Court and steps down effectively at the southern façade in response to the height of Concord, the neighbouring residential house.

5. **Appearance**

5.1 The external design and appearance of the scheme has been prepared taking into account the character of the surrounding area, the site's constraints and also its opportunities. The proposed design approach has been heavily influenced by residential developments in the surrounding area. The elevational appearance of the scheme is a reference to an evolving street scene achieved by breaking down the appearance of the whole into smaller chunks, that read as individual parts. There exists a run of properties at Highfield, a close by road, that are high quality examples of traditional buildings, some incorporate Georgian features. The visual aesthetic of the appeal scheme has solid foundations through references to buildings at Highfield that are positive contributors to the character of the area. The proposed appearance is sympathetic in its soft approach and by drawing reference from nearby buildings it reinforces local distinctiveness.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 A detailed contextual analysis of the appeal site's surrounding context and the identified transitional nature of the site's location informed the design concept in terms of footprint, scale, bulk, mass and design which are all well founded in terms of approach.
- 6.2 The proposed building sits comfortably within the plot and has a footprint sized proportionate to the size and shape of the plot which is significantly larger than surrounding plots.
- 6.3 The primary scale (the mass) of the proposed building does exceed that of neighbouring buildings but is entirely appropriate when seen relative to the size of the Appeal Site and the spatial arrangement around it.
- 6.4 A change in character has been identified at the appeal site's northern boundary which it shares with the Conservation Area and Bucklers Court. To some extent, the change in character identified simply shifts by 4 plots to the south, to the boundary between the appeal site and Concord, the residential dwelling that exists to the immediate south of the appeal site. Although this is a change, the change is not harmful, particularly when the complete planning balance is considered. The resultant location of the change in character is, however, not as obvious or dramatic as it currently exists between a very large structure (Bucklers Court) and a small bungalow (The Rise). In this way the appeal scheme creates a successful transition between the two 'character zones' by blending the scale of built form seen at Bucklers Court with the 'set back' nature and landscaped features of the less formal suburban area to the south. By doing this the appeal scheme achieves an efficient, much needed, development in a sympathetic manner. Change in itself is not a harmful concept and the change that would result to the street scene, as a result of the implementation of the scheme, would not be 'a change' but is in no way harmful.

6.5 The Appeal Site is sufficient to accommodate a type, scale, density and form of the Appeal Scheme that would preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the area. Overall, I maintain that Appeal Scheme can be readily accommodated into the character of the area and that the design of the appeal scheme is of high quality and will not result in material harm.