

Date of Meeting	24 th October 2013
Application Number	13/01926/FUL
Site Address	15 Greengate Road, Wedhampton, Devizes, Wilts, SN10 3QB.
Proposal	Erection of attached dwelling and extension to existing dwelling (resubmission of withdrawn application E/13/0202/FUL)
Applicant	Mr David Morrison
Town/Parish Council	URCHFONT
Grid Ref	405869 157759
Type of application	Full Planning
Case Officer	Rachel Yeomans

Reason for the application being considered by Committee

This application has been called to Committee at the request of Cllr Philip Whitehead.

1. Purpose of Report

To consider the recommendation that the application be approved with conditions.

2. Report Summary

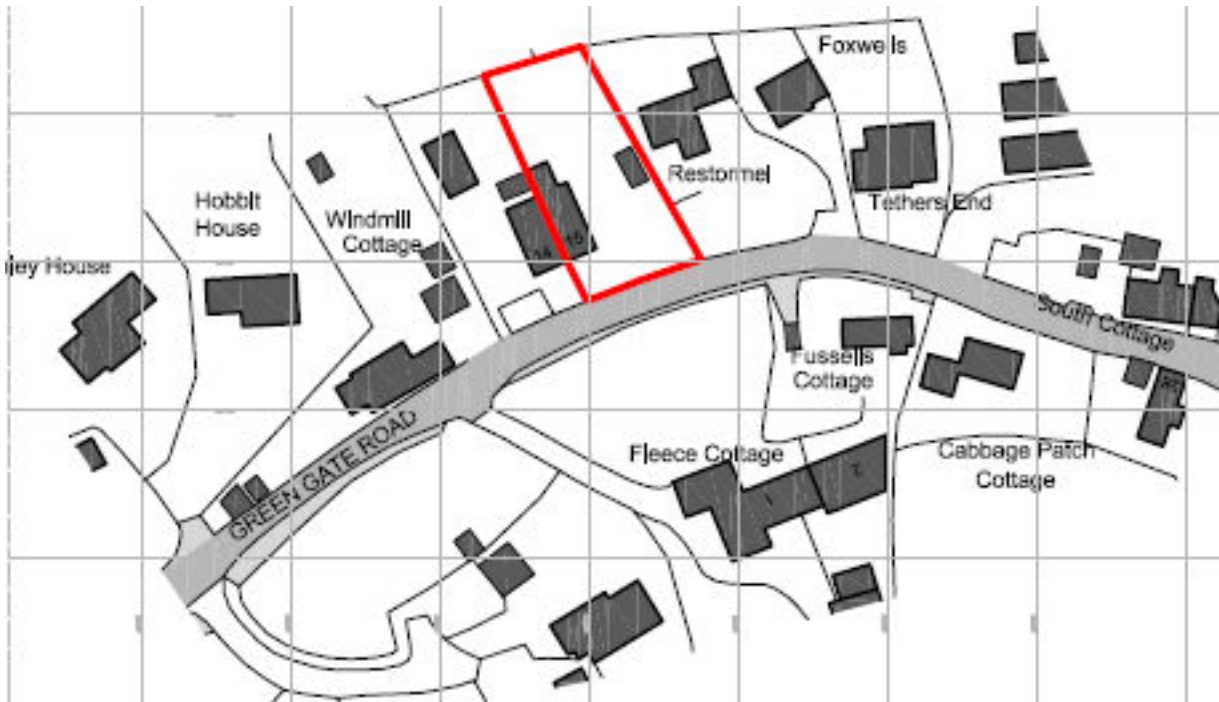
The key issues for consideration are;

- The principle of the proposed dwelling in this location
- Design, the visual amenities of the area, including impact on the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and whether the proposals would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area
- Neighbour impact
- Highway safety
- Ecology
- Drainage

3. Site Description

The application site lies within the built up area of the village of Wedhampton. It lies on the principal access road into the village and can be found by proceeding from Devizes south along the A342. Proceed for a few miles past the turning for Lydeaway Old Potato Yard and take the next left turning signed for Wedhampton. The site can be found a few hundred yards along on the left hand side. The village is quite compact and contains properties of a wide variety and styles, from historic farmyard properties constructed from traditional materials to modern detached properties. Some are set back from the road and are detached and set within large gardens whilst others adjoin other properties or front almost directly onto the roadside.

The application site includes one of a pair of traditional semi-detached red brick properties associated with the former farmyard. These properties occupy a position elevated from the roadside and are constructed from red brick under a double Roman clay tiled roof. The application site includes the right hand semi which currently benefits from a sloping access driveway and parking towards the east of the site. Once beyond the sloping driveway/ roadside banking, the site is relatively level and benefits from vegetation to the rear of the site.



Site Location Plan

4. Planning History

The current application follows a previous attempt to gain planning permission for a two storey extension and a single detached dwelling set back between number 15 Greengate Road and ‘Restormel’ a more modern, fairly non-descript property set further back to the northeast. During the course of that application, officers expressed concerns about the compatibility of the proposed detached dwelling on this site and sought its omission from the proposals (reference E/2013/0202/FUL). The proposed two storey extension was considered acceptable and was granted planning permission.

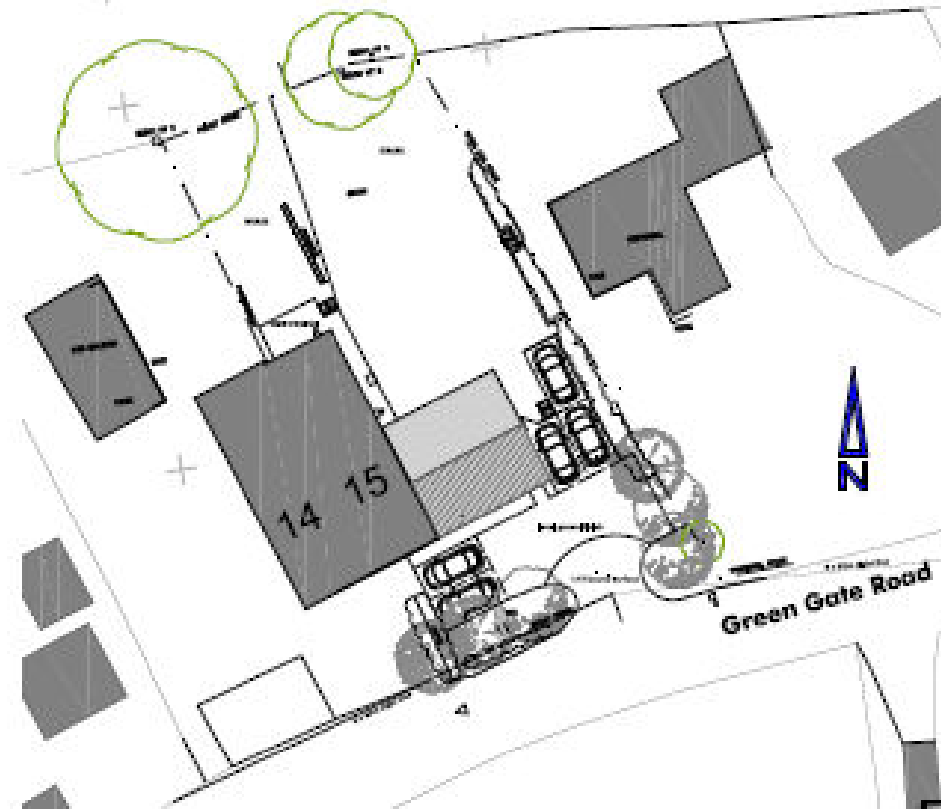
The case officer considered it likely that some form of dwelling may be capable of being accommodated on the site and engaged in further discussions about how best this may be achieved. This is part of the normal pro-active service the local planning authority are required to provide in accordance with Government requirements. This does not pre-empt the outcome of a subsequent application which must be the subject of consultation but provides a professional planning opinion as to the likely outcome of any subsequent planning application when considered against planning policy.

- E/2013/0202/FUL Erection of extension to existing dwelling;
- K/38064 Retention of outbuilding.
- K/38310 Garden room extension, kitchen extension and first floor roof alteration.
- K/38612 Extension and alterations to existing barn to form summer house.
- K/39935 The erection of a single storey kitchen extension.

5. The Proposal

The current application comprises of two parts; firstly, it seeks a similar two storey extension to that previously approved, albeit that side elevation windows would not be possible as this is where the attached dwelling is proposed and; secondly, it proposes an attached dwelling, to follow the ridge and eaves lines and general design of the existing cottages to form a terrace. The terrace would give the appearance of a central double fronted cottage, with matching mirrored smaller cottages each side to maintain the symmetry. The application includes small amendments to the

access in order to improve visibility and provides 5 parking spaces plus a driveway for turning at the front of the existing and proposed property. The application also provides for the retention of the majority of the existing beech hedging to the front.



Proposed Block Plan



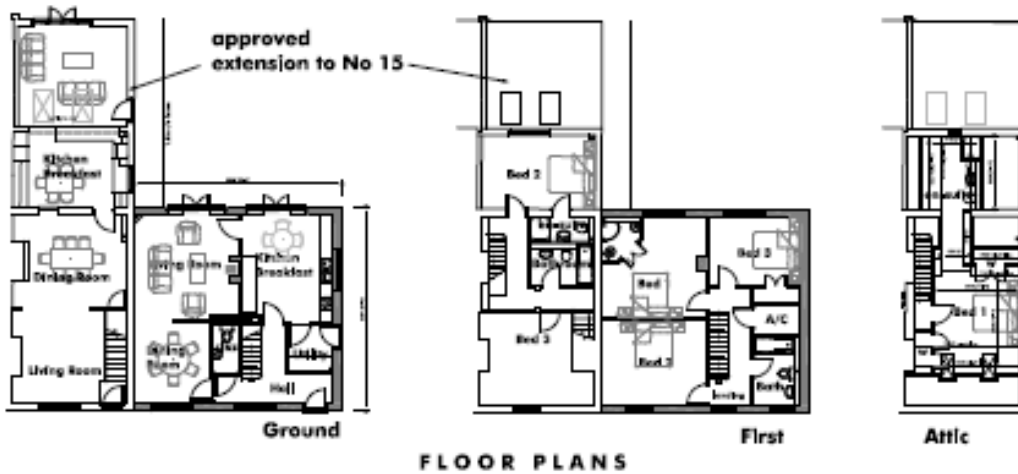
Existing Front Elevation



Above: Proposed Front Elevation Streetscene Drawing



Above: Proposed Rear and Side Elevations



Proposed Floor Plans

6. Planning Policy

Kennet Local Plan - Policies HC24 and PD1 are applicable as is the adopted Conservation Area Statement for Wedhampton.

The National Planning Policy Framework is relevant and Chapters 6: Delivering a Wide Choice of High Quality Homes, 7: Requiring Good Design, 11: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment, 12: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment.

7. Consultations

Wiltshire Council Conservation Officer – The proposed extension to the pair of cottages with another cottage of the same style/design, is actually the preferred option (to that originally proposed under application E/13/0202/FUL), discussed with the previous case officer at the time of consultation. This is slightly different, as the proposed cottage is larger than the existing, but the character is the same and the scale is not disproportionate or visually damaging to the streetscene.

There are no objections to the proposal from a Conservation point of view, subject to conditions.

Wiltshire Highways –The suggestion of an attached dwelling is a far better option and frees up more room for parking and turning. No highway objection is raised subject to conditions. The recommended gradient condition has since been clarified as set out below.

Wessex Water – No objections

Parish Council-

1. The content of the application appears in several respects to be at odds with the Conservation Area Statement (CAS) and in our view represents overdevelopment in this designated Conservation Area and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
2. The conversion of two elevated and prominent semi-detached farmer's cottages into a high and wide terrace, which is very nearly double the width of the existing, is considered too overpowering and will make a significant change to the established street scene of the area. This is exacerbated by the proposed attached dwelling being a double fronted new build in contrast to the single fronted existing semi-detached farm cottages. This we believe to be contrary to the views expressed in the Design and Access Statement para. 11.12 "*The proposed development.....is in harmony in terms of its scale and character*" and at 12.2 "*.....proposed dwelling and the proposed extension can be successfully accommodated on the site without having any detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the designated conservation area and the amenities of the occupiers of the adjacent dwellings*".
3. The negative effect on the amenity available to and enjoyment of the two existing cottages, namely no direct access to the rear of No 15 in particular and the lack of space for storage of waste/recycling bins for No 15 and the proposed new attached dwelling. Car parking /manoeuvring space is very restricted and will in itself restrict access to the back of the property(s). The proposed removal of a Beech hedge and bank to change the access and provide limited parking space appears at odds with CAS criteria.
4. The design of the No 15 extension has been changed from that approved in an earlier application (E/2013/0202/FUL) but is referred to in the Design & Access Statement (para. 5.7 and 8.5) as 'almost identical' to that approved. However, it is three storeys with loss of windows along the side to facilitate the new attached dwelling with resulting significant loss of internal light.
5. There are inconsistencies between the Design and Access Statement and the plans for the new attached dwelling, for example it quotes a two storey development when the plans clearly show four Velux windows in the roof space which appears to have no permanent access. This does suggest further development at a later stage.

Note: We will be writing separately to our local WC Councillor, Philip Whitehead, regarding the planning process and the potential implications of some references in the Design and Access Statement with regard to prior interaction with the WC Planning and Highways Officers.

6. We have been made aware of the fact that bats are resident close by and maybe within the two existing cottages, on this basis we would have expected a full ecological survey to have been provided. (Post UPC Planning Meeting Note: We are advised that there is also a colony of small black and white bees in the greensand bank of no.15 facing Greengate Road.)

8. Publicity

The application has been publicised by means of a site notice, neighbour letters and an advertisement in the local press.

A total of 10 letters of objection have been received in response to this application. The Parish Council's comments are reported in full above as they cover almost all of the key issues raised in the letters of neighbour objection. These letters can be viewed in full on the Council's website.

In addition, the following points are made;

- This is a narrow lane which is well trafficked and cannot accommodate parking or the

additional traffic generated by this dwelling, its visitors and deliveries and increase likelihood of accidents to pedestrians and other road users.

- The dwelling would be uncomfortably close to neighbours and would harm their amenities.
- The removal of the beech hedge and bank is at odds with Conservation Area criteria.
- The purpose of this is for commercial gain only and is not in the interests of the Wedhampton community.
- Drainage of rainwater in Greengate Rd is already an issue.
- Neighbour's views would be obstructed
- Sewerage system is already at capacity
- The site has poor access and shared parking which is not appropriate.
- Would prefer to see a smaller detached property.
- Skylights should match those in number 14 to be more in harmony.

9. Planning Considerations

9.1 Principle of the additional attached dwelling

The application site currently lies within the built up area of a village identified as suitable for limited additional housing according to the criteria set out in Policy HC24 and which includes infill development with a single dwelling. The National Planning Policy Framework encourages development within sustainable locations and the delivery of a wide choice of good quality homes. It is considered that HC24 is compatible with the NPPF and therefore the principle of the proposal is acceptable provided that;

1. The proposal does not consolidate an existing sporadic, loose knit area of development;
and
2. The development is in harmony with the village in terms of its scale and character.

In assess the first criterion above, whilst there is no regular and distinct grain of development, the village is well contained, with dwellings situated along the lanes in a relatively close knit way albeit that most are situated within reasonably sized gardens and the site lies within this well-contained area of development. The area in which the site is located is not considered sporadic or loose knit which the development proposal would consolidate and the application therefore complies with this criterion.

The second requirement is considered in more detail below.

9.2 Whether the proposal represents harmonious development which would preserve the conservation area and the visual amenities of the area

The semi detached properties are identified within the Wedhampton Conservation Area Statement as being 'significant unlisted buildings,' likely because of their agricultural links to the former farming traditions of the village and their attractive appearance. They appear as a single symmetrical pair set amongst a variety of styles of detached houses in the immediate vicinity. In fact, the Conservation Area Statement sets out that 'for the most part of Greengate Rd, 20th century development borders the north of the hamlet that makes little contribution to Wedhampton's rural character'.

The previously proposed single detached property would have introduced a further more modern style of property within very close proximity of both 15 Greengate Rd and Restormel. However, the current application proposes an attached dwelling to follow the design principles established in the existing pair of dwellings and increases the gap between it and the neighbouring detached dwelling over the previous scheme. The way in which the proposed new dwelling has been designed would increase the built form from a modest matching pair of semis to a small terrace. However, the pleasing symmetry of the existing cottages is followed through by proposing a frontage which would appear as a central double fronted cottage with matching mirrored modest cottages to each end. The eaves and ridge lines and positioning of the frontage would also follow the existing with the new fenestration and design features including red/orange bricks and profiled clay tiles in keeping with the existing properties.

The addition of an attached dwelling would increase the presence of the properties within the streetscene. However, set back from the lane to the front and seen in the context of such a variety of properties, its sympathetic scale and design which follows the attractive elements of the existing terrace would result in a building which preserves the character and appearance of the conservation area, and which would not dominate or overdevelop the site or streetscene. The greater sense of space to the northeast as a result of the attached property would help to ensure its compatibility with the area. The elevations, plans and details provided are sufficient to demonstrate that the proposals would not result in any significant detrimental impact to the visual amenities of the area but would enable important landscape features to be retained and the attractive character to be replicated. This opinion is shared by the conservation officer.

The proposal would be well contained within the settlement of Wedhampton and would not have any significant impact on the wider AONB landscape. Retained trees and hedges and control over final details would ensure there is no particular conflict between the proposal and the AONB.

Consequently, the application is considered in harmony with the village in terms of its scale and character and would preserve the character and appearance of the Wedhampton Conservation Area.

9.3 Residential amenity and waste

The application allows for suitable amenity space for each dwelling in excess of the 50 square metres required by Supplementary Planning Guidance: Community Benefits from Planning. This would be sufficient for both properties to meet the day to day needs of the householder. Bin storage has not been specified within the application however sufficient space clearly exists for the proposed new property.

For waste water disposal, the application proposes to connect to the mains sewer which neighbours advise is at capacity. Wessex Water have raised no particular concerns regarding the proposed new dwelling and it should also be noted that the site is sufficiently large to accommodate a package treatment plant/ septic tank should this be necessary and is not therefore considered a sufficient reason to withhold planning permission. Surface water drainage would need to comply with Building Regulations but can also be covered by a planning condition in the event Members are minded to grant planning permission.

Turning to the amenities of neighbouring occupiers, the dwelling would be positioned such that it would not affect the amenities of number 14. The most affected property would be Restormel. However its positioning further forward than its neighbour, the gap of 8 metres between the properties and the positioning of fenestration mean that the proposed dwelling would not be overbearing or overshadowing so as to warrant refusal of planning permission on this basis. No first floor windows are proposed to the side elevation and the impact on privacy would therefore be limited, mostly restricted to oblique views over the hedging from first and second floor windows, which would not be significant.

One neighbour has mentioned that the dwelling would result in obscured views from neighbouring dwellings however it should be noted that this is not a material planning consideration.

9.4 Highway safety

The proposed site layout would better allow for suitable means of access, parking and turning areas for five vehicles, whilst enabling a reasonable amount of soft landscaping to be maintained and provided. The parking provision accords with adopted parking standards and highway officers have raised no concerns about the principle of the location of the proposed dwelling nor the proposed access, parking or turning arrangements and advise no objection.

9.5 Ecology

The presence of bats in the local vicinity is cited as a reason necessitating a full bat survey however the proposed works will have only a limited impact on the existing property, the existing

garden is well cultivated and the application does not involve the removal of buildings or large trees. It is not therefore considered that a protected species survey is warranted in this instance as the proposals are unlikely to harm protected species or their habitats. This would not override any statutory protection afforded under the Habitats Directive.

9.6 Two storey extension

The windows serving the roofspace and gable above first floor level for the original part of number 15 would remain the same. In view of the existing extant permission for the existing extension, the only material difference in this part of the proposal for consideration would be the lack of fenestration which could now be provided to the side elevation. However, the front and rear rooms would continue to benefit from windows in the front and rear elevations, leaving the central dining area only without a window. This space could be lit using borrowed light techniques but given the proposed open plan arrangement it is not considered reasonable to raise objection on these grounds.

10. Conclusion

The site offers a suitable location for the development of a single dwelling. The scheme proposed would enlarge the frontage of the existing dwellings into a terrace but in a manner which would be sympathetic to their scale and character. Its proposed positioning, set back from the road in line with the existing pair of dwellings together with the gap between the proposed dwelling and Restormel are sufficient to ensure the visual amenities of the streetscene are not harmed and the dwelling would only have a broadly neutral impact upon the character and appearance of the conservation area. The scheme would provide an additional high quality dwelling which would make a modest contribution to the Government's requirements within the NPPF to significantly boost housing supply, whilst being in harmony with the village. No further issues identified would cause concern sufficient to warrant a refusal of planning permission and approval of the application with conditions is recommended.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve with conditions

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2 No development shall commence on site until details and samples of the materials to be used for the external walls and roofs have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: In the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area.

- 3 The eaves and verge detailing, porch canopy, window headers, cills, window reveals, chimney and rainwater goods to be used on the new dwelling hereby approved shall be finished to match the detailing on the existing dwelling, known as 15 Greengate Road, unless otherwise first agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

REASON: In the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area.

- 4 No works shall commence on site until details of all new external window and door joinery have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted details shall include elevations at a scale of not less than 1:10 and horizontal/vertical frame sections (including sections through glazing bars) at not less than 1:2. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and all external window joinery shall be painted to match the existing dwelling.

REASON: To secure harmonious architectural treatment in the interests of preserving the character and appearance of the conservation area.

- 5 No development shall commence on site until a scheme of hard and soft landscaping has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, the details of which shall include :-

- a) location and current canopy spread of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land;
- b) full details of any to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of development;
- c) a detailed planting specification showing all plant species, supply and planting sizes and planting densities;
- d) means of enclosure;
- e) all hard and soft surfacing materials;
- f) refuse storage areas and any housing;

REASON: To ensure a satisfactory landscaped setting for the development and the protection of existing important landscape features.

- 6 All soft landscaping comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding season following the first occupation of the dwelling or the completion of the development whichever is the sooner; All shrubs, trees and hedge planting shall be maintained free from weeds and shall be protected from damage by vermin and stock. Any trees or plants which, within a period of five years, die, are removed, or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority. All hard landscaping shall also be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme to be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure a satisfactory landscaped setting for the development and the protection of existing important landscape features.

- 7 Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any Order revoking or re-enacting or amending that Order with or without modification), there shall be no additions or extensions to the new dwelling hereby approved.

REASON: In the interests of the amenity of the area and to enable the Local Planning Authority to consider individually whether planning permission should be granted for additions and extensions.

8 The development hereby permitted shall not be first occupied until the first five metres of the access, measured from the edge of the carriageway, has been consolidated and surfaced (not loose stone or gravel). The access shall be maintained as such thereafter.

REASON: In the interests of highway safety.

9 The gradient of the access way shall not at any point be steeper than 1 in 15 for a distance of 4.5 metres from its junction with the public highway.

REASON: In the interests of highway safety.

10 No part of the development hereby permitted shall be first occupied until the access, turning area and parking spaces have been completed in accordance with the details shown on the approved plans. The areas shall be maintained for those purposes at all times thereafter.

REASON: In the interests of highway safety.

11 No part of the development shall be first occupied, until the visibility splays shown on the approved plans have been provided with no obstruction to visibility at or above a height of 900mm above the nearside carriageway level. The visibility splays shall be maintained free of obstruction at all times thereafter.

REASON: In the interests of highway safety

12 No development shall commence on site until a scheme for the discharge of surface water from the site (including surface water from the access/driveway), incorporating sustainable drainage details, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be first occupied until surface water drainage has been constructed in accordance with the approved scheme.

REASON: To ensure that the development can be adequately drained.

13 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

1412-planning, Design and Access Statement and Planning Supporting Statement, Block Plan, Elevations and Floor Plan drawings, House and Site Surveys all received on the 17th July 2013.

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.