



Planning Statement

Submitted on behalf of:

ROK Residential Ltd

Application for:

Proposed demolition of the existing dwelling & the construction of a semi-detached pair of dwellings.



At site address:

91 Queens Road

Buckhurst Hill

Essex

IG9 5BL



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The Site

The application site is two storey detached dwelling from the 19th century fronting Queens Road, a linear street within an urban setting. The property has a deep footprint with later single storey additions to the side and rear. The property also maintains a detached garage. The house occupies a large, wide and deep plot measuring approximately 15.2 metres x 60 metres. The plot includes front and rear gardens. The front garden benefits from dropped kerb and the rear garden is laid to lawn. There is a Strawberry tree within the front garden of this property that is protected by a Tree Preservation order. The site is currently vacant.

Figure 1: Location plan



The site lies approximately at the midpoint of Queens Road, 0.3 miles from Buckhurst Hill underground station. The dwelling is not Listed, Locally Listed or set within a Conservation Area. It is not located in a Flood Risk Zone. Queens Road runs West to East where the West end is characterised by terraced and detached dwellings and where the East end is characterised by mixed uses comprising residential, offices, restaurants, shops and local amenities. The buildings on Queens Road are predominately 2-3 storeys in height.

Figure 2: Existing Streetscene

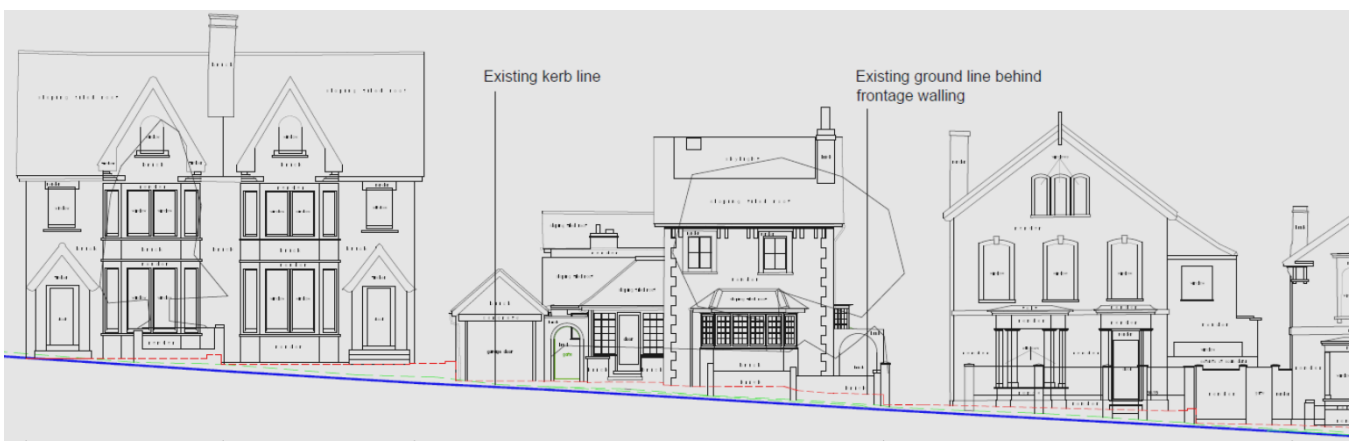


Figure 3: Existing Aerial Photo



Property History

EPF/2441/19	Proposed demolition of the existing dwelling & the construction of x 8 no. new dwellings.	Refused
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Reasons for Refusal

- 1) The proposed building, by reason of its scale, bulk, mass and form, constitutes an inappropriate form of development in the context of the site and its surroundings. The building would be visually prominent in the wider context and would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the area, contrary to policies CP2, CP7, DBE1, DBE2, DBE3 and DBE9 of the adopted Local Plan and Alterations, policies DM9 and DM10 of the Local Plan Submission Version (2017) and the NPPF.
- 2) The proposed development results in a poor standard of accommodation and amenity for future occupiers, as evidenced by the cramped form of the internal accommodation, introduction of single aspect units, poor access and location of amenity space, and a vehicle dominated environment to



the rear of the building. As such, the proposal is contrary to CP2, CP7, DBE1, DBE2, DBE3, DBE8 and DBE9 of the adopted Local Plan and Alterations, policies SP1, T1, DM9 and DM10 of the Local Plan Submission Version (2017) and the NPPF.

- 3) The proposed development would have a severe and unacceptable impact on the living conditions of surrounding residential residents by reason of noise, general intrusion overlooking and loss of privacy from the intensive character of the proposed level of occupation and therefore contrary to policies DBE2 and DBE9 of the Adopted Local Plan and Alterations, policies DM9 and DM10 of the Local Plan Submission Version, and the NPPF.
- 4) The application does not provide sufficient information to satisfy the Council, as competent authority, that the proposed development will not adversely affect the integrity of the Epping Forest Special Area for Conservation and there are no alternative solutions or imperative reasons of overriding public interest why the proposed development should be permitted. In the absence of such evidence, and of a completed Section 106 planning obligation to mitigate against the adverse impact that it will have on the Epping Forest Special Area for Conservation in terms of recreational pressure and air pollution, the proposed development is contrary to policies CP1 and CP6 of the Epping Forest Local Plan (1998) and Alterations (2006), policies DM2 and DM22 of the Epping Forest District Local Plan Submission Version, the NPPF and the requirements of the Habitats Regulations 2017.

The Proposed Development

Following the recent refusal, this application seeks permission for demolition of the existing dwelling and replanned scheme to provide for the construction of a semi-detached pair of family homes, akin to the development on neighbouring sites.

Figure 4: Proposed front elevation



The revised scheme provides for a mirror pair of family homes, with accommodation spread over ground floor, first floor and in the loft space. From the rear the properties propose projections to provide the family accommodation that is anticipated for modern family living. The rear outshots are greatest at ground floor level to accommodate open plan living space.

Figure 5: Proposed rear elevation



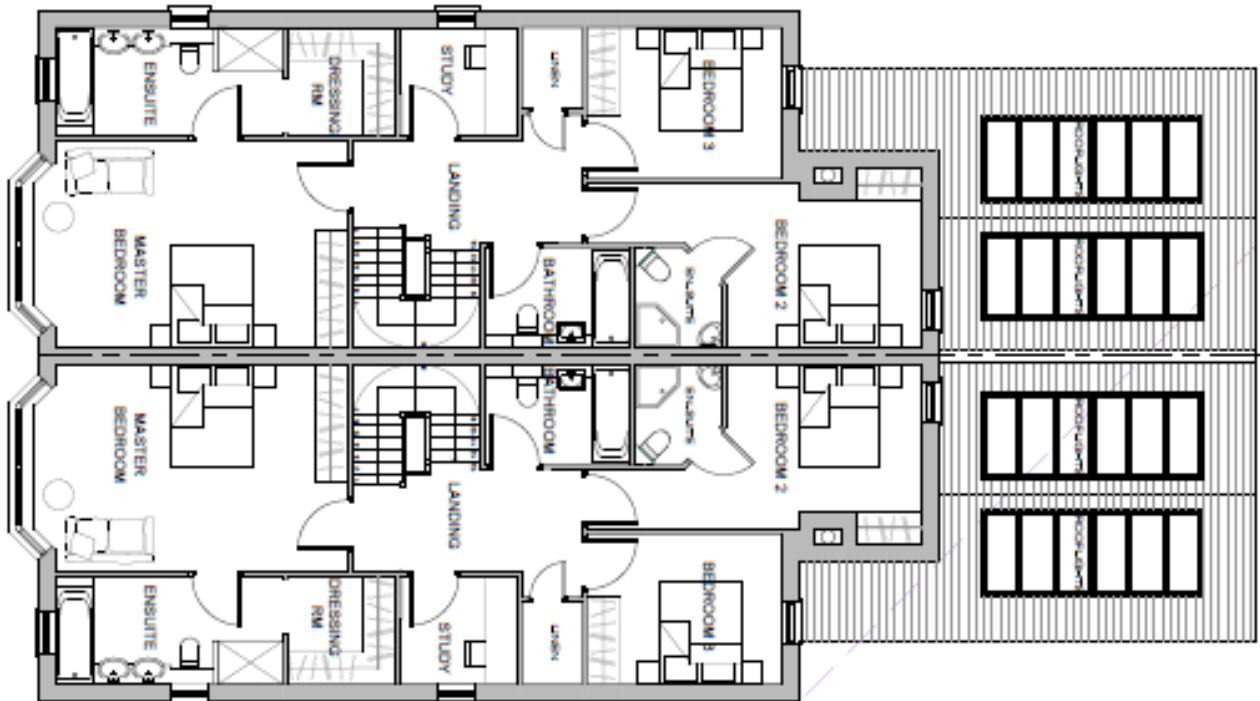
The proposed properties would provide a ground floor reception/living area at the front, with a central utility area and stairs before a larger open living area including kitchen and dining areas.

Figure 6: Proposed ground floor plan



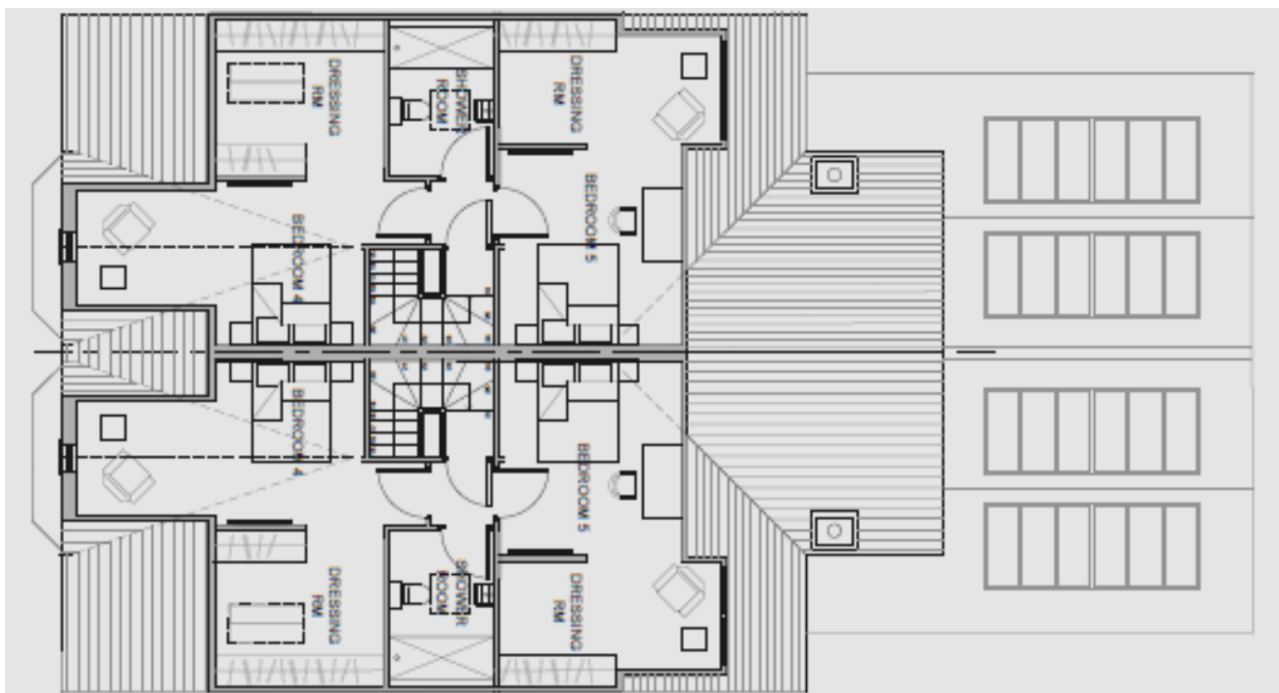
At first floor a master suite on the front will be accompanied by two smaller rear facing family bedrooms with central study space and bathroom area.

Figure 7: Proposed first floor



The loft will accommodate two final bedrooms with dressing areas and a shared bathroom. Elements of the loft will include reduced head height as is commonplace.

Figure 8: Proposed loft space.





Relevant Policies

National planning policies are set out within the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (The NPPF).

Local planning policies are set out within the Epping Forest District Local Plan (1998) and the Local Plan Alterations (2006). The Submission Version Local Plan (2017) is also relevant. The relevant policies from these documents are detailed below. The following policies within the current Development Plan are considered to be of relevance to this application:

NPPF (February 2019)

The revised NPPF is a material consideration in determining planning applications.

As with its predecessor, the presumption in favour of sustainable development remains at the heart of the NPPF.

Paragraph 11 of the NPPF provides that for determining planning applications this means either: -

- (a) Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
- (b) Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - (i) The application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - (ii) Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.

The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making but policies within the development plan need to be considered and applied in terms of their degree of consistency with the Framework.

In addition to paragraph 11 the following paragraphs of the NPPF are considered to be of relevance to this application:



Section 2 - Sustainable development

Section 3 - Core principles for plan making and strategic policies

Section 5 - Delivering a sufficient supply of new homes

Section 7 - Ensuring the vitality of town centres Section 8 - Promoting healthy and safe communities

Section 9 - Promoting sustainable transport

Section 11 - Making an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses.

When deciding planning applications, local planning authorities should: -

- (i) Consider fully the importance of national planning policies aimed at fostering economic growth and employment, given the need to ensure a return to robust growth after the recession;
- (ii) (ii) Take into account the need to maintain a flexible and responsible supply of land for key sectors, including housing;
- (iii) (iii) Consider the range of likely economic, environmental and social benefits of proposals; including long term and indirect benefits such as increased consumer choice, more viable communities and more robust local economies (which may where relevant, include matters such as job creation and business productivity);
- (iv) (iv) Be sensitive to the fact that local economies are subject to change and so take a positive approach to development where new economic data suggests that prior assessments of needs are no longer up to date;
- (v) (v) Ensure that they do not impose unnecessary burdens on development.

‘In determining planning applications, local planning authorities are obliged to have regard to all relevant considerations. They should ensure that they give appropriate weight to the need to support economic recovery, that applications that secure sustainable economic growth are treated favourably (consistent with Policy PPS4) and that they can give clear reasons for their decisions’.

Epping Forest Local Plan 1998 and 2006 Saved Policies

CP1 Achieving Sustainable Development Objectives

CP2 Protecting the Quality of the Rural and Built Environment



CP3	New Development
CP4	Energy Conservation
CP5	Sustainable Building
CP6	Achieving Sustainable Urban Development Patterns
CP7	Urban Form and Quality
H2A	Previously Developed Land
H3A	Housing Density
DBE1	Design of New Buildings
DBE2	Effect on Neighbouring Property
DBE3	Design in Urban Areas
DBE8	Private Amenity Space
LL10	Adequacy of landscape protection
ST1	Location of Development
ST2	Accessibility of Development
ST4	Road Safety
ST6	Vehicle Parking

Epping Forest District Local Plan (Submission Version) 2017

Although the LPSV does not currently form part of the statutory development plan for the district, on 14th December 2017 the Council resolved that the LPSV be endorsed as a material consideration to be used in the determination of planning applications.

Paragraph 48 of the NPPF provides that decision-takers may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to: -

- 5) The stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced the preparation, the greater the weight that may be given).



- 6) The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- 7) The degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the NPPF (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

The LPSV has been submitted for Independent Examination and Hearing sessions were held on various dates from February 2018 to June 2019. The appointed Inspector has indicated an intention to provide advice to the Council by 12 July 2019; this advice will be given without prejudice to the Inspector's final conclusions.

The following policies in the LPSV are considered to be of relevance to the determination of this application, with the weight afforded by your officers in this particular case indicated.

POLICY	WEIGHT AFFORDED
SP1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development	Significant
T1 – Sustainable Transport Choices	Significant
DM2 – Epping Forest SAC and Lee Valley SPA	Significant
DM9 – High Quality Design DM10 – Housing Design and Quality	Significant
DM16 – Sustainable Drainage Systems	Significant
DM19 – Sustainable Water Use	Significant
DM22 – Air Quality	Significant

Previous Refusal

The previous proposal for 8 units was refused for reasons as set out on pages 4 and 5. The revisions now under consideration have significantly altered the scheme. Demolition of the existing property remains, however instead of 8 units within two floors, a loft and basement with parking at the rear, the proposed now seeks to erect a semi-detached pair in a design akin to the adjacent pair at 93-95 Queens Road.

The previous front and side elevations are compared below for ease;

Figure 9: Proposed front elevation

Previous proposed front elevation under EPF/2441/19



Figure 10: Proposed side elevation



Figure 11: Previously refused side elevation under EPF/2441/19



These revisions intend to overcome previous concerns as follows ;

1) Scale, bulk, mass and form resulting in adverse impact in character.

The revisions reduce the scale of accommodation, removing units, the basement removed entirely, the rear car parking and basing the proposals on an existing adjacent semi-detached pair. The redesign also reduces the overall depth of the upper accommodation by 1m and removes sunken terrace areas. The front dormers are removed, the crown roof and loft level rear outshot and the front refuse store. At ground floor further additions have been made within the centre of the plot offset from the boundaries. The front elevation is now completely different and better reflects neighbouring development in design and form.

Figure 12: Review of changes to refused scheme, red indicating removed elements, blue the addition



2) Poor standard of accommodation and amenity for future occupier.

The revised scheme replaces the previous 8 units with varied outlook and configurations with a mirror pair of semi-detached homes with generous accommodation spread over 3 floors. The rear provides traditional garden areas to each property with a detached outbuilding akin to those provided throughout the district. Provision for future occupiers now exceeds space standards and reflects neighbouring properties.



3) Impacts to neighbours from noise, intrusion, overlooking and loss of privacy.

The revisions have reduced occupancy on site significantly and omitted vehicle movements to the rear. The resulting family homes would marginally increase in on site disturbance within parameters experienced from other neighbouring sites. The degree of noise and disturbance is now expected to be within policy requirements and everyday expectations.

4) The EFDC Special Area of Conservation

Following previous concerns the Applicant is willing to undertake to meet any necessary contributions in respect of the impacts arising from the additional dwelling on site and impacts to the Special Area of Conservation that is Epping Forest. It is understood there will likely be a dual requirement to meet needs arising from increased visitor pressure and for increased pollution mitigations.

Local Consultation

Whilst no direct local consultation has been undertaken in respect of the revised scheme, the Council have published a summary of neighbouring comments in their report on the previous application. This clearly identified a number of key issues that it is hoped the revisions now overcome;

- Flats being out of character and associated noise and disturbance arising
- Increased on street parking pressures from eight units
- Impacts from the rear parking provision
- Impacts on light to number 93 due to the southerly position of the plot to this neighbour.

The loss of flatted units from the scheme it is hoped overcomes the concerns regarding the intensification of development on site. The property as presently exists maintains a generous frontage and arguable occupies a double plot which this proposal now proposes to fully utilise to accommodate a pair of homes.

Parking pressure is significantly reduced by the revised scheme for two homes which incorporates two parking spaces for each home on front driveways, reflecting local provision on neighbouring properties and removing the rear parking.

The southerly orientation of the plot relative to number 93 is unchanged as this can not be overcome, however, the depth and scale of two storey development is now reduced, thus the bulk reduced, and projections to the rear are centrally located or at ground level, resulting in reductions in overshadowing, however impacts are not possibly to completely omit whilst developing on site. The relationship is now akin to other dwellings further along the street where a north-south relationship continues.

Design Character and Appearance

The previous crown roof has been removed, the front elevation now reflects that at 93-95 Queens Road and the ridge height sits between the height of the neighbouring properties. The proposals as now presented are designed to seamlessly integrate into the existing character of the area with a façade akin to 93-95 Queens Road.

Figure 13: Proposed Streetscene



Residential Amenity

The removal of the basement, reduction in scale from 8 units, revision in design to reflect neighbouring properties and removal of rear parking has vastly altered the impacts on residential amenities of the development. Noise and disturbance from the number of units is resolved, overlooking relationships are returned to those normally experienced in residential areas and whilst it is noted the site is South of number 93 and as such a development impact remains, the scale of impact now reflects that which is common place locally.



Policy DBE2 of the saved Adopted Local Plan requires that development does not have a detrimental effect on neighbouring properties and the proposals now meet this test. Draft policy DM10 requires that new development takes account of privacy and amenities of neighbouring uses and we consider the revisions now incorporated do this.

Amenity of future occupiers

The proposed new dwellings exceed the Nationally prescribed Space Standards and the Council's policies regarding provision of amenity space. The properties represent generous, high standard family homes fit for function for many years to come.

Parking and Highways

Parking has been relocated to the frontage and provision offered for two spaces per home. Two spaces meets the Essex Parking Standard requirements for dwellings with 2 or more bedrooms. The site benefits from excellent access to surrounding facilities and public transport, therefore this provision is considered acceptable.

The existing dropped kerb will require alteration for which appropriate consents will be sought from the Highway Authority. Should any street equipment/bays require relocating, this will also be undertaken and the applicant is willing to undertake this commitment via s106.

Landscaping

The proposed two dwellings incorporate a high level of landscaping comparative to the previous scheme, however as a family home it is hoped extensive landscaping restrictions can be reduced to enable owners to adapt the space to reflect personal tastes. To the front the Strawberry Tree is protected by a TPO. The accompanying tree appraisals demonstrate how the crossover and parking can be achieved without root compaction and the Method Statement demonstrates protection during construction.

Refuse and cycling

The homeowners are able to store cycles in the outbuilding provided.



The proposal incorporates generous garden areas with side access easily achieved to enable storage of refuse to the rear.

Planning Obligations

As a proposal resulting in only one new dwelling most contributions do not apply as the proposal is under the threshold. Notwithstanding this, the EFDC SAC issue impinges on the development and as such the developer is willing to contribute via S106 agreement to the mitigation of impacts on Epping Forest from increased visitor pressure and increased impacts arising from pollution associated with increased vehicle movements.

In addition, the applicant is happy to commit to undertake the relocation of any street furniture to facilitate the driveway access.

Summary and Conclusion

The site is situated in a highly sustainable location, in the heart of Buckhurst Hill with excellent access to services, facilities and public transport. The development would make better use of this existing residential site to deliver two family homes to contribute towards the Council's housing need in the area.

We consider that the revised proposal has overcome the Council's reasons for refusal in 2019. The revised scheme now includes two family homes as oppose to 8 flats and the redrafting has significantly improved the bulk and mass of the building and removed rear vehicular access. It is therefore anticipated that the proposal will receive a favourable response. However, if any further information or clarification is required during the course of the pre-application, please do contact the Agent.