

## Planning Development Management Committee

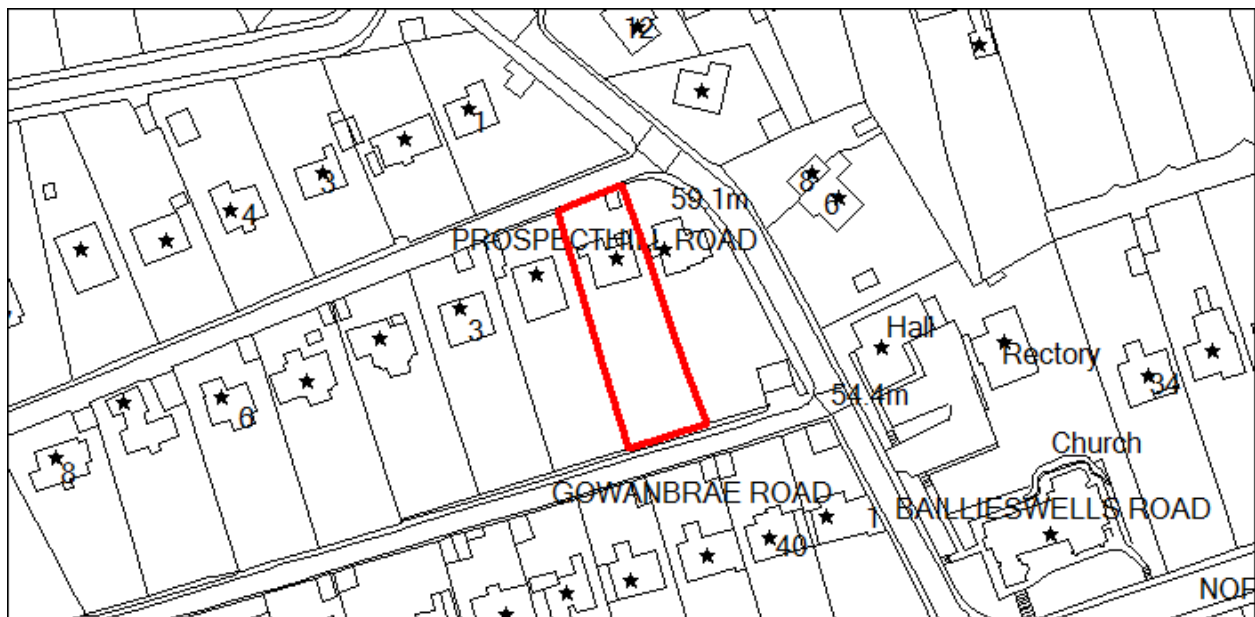
THE COTTAGE, 1 GOWANBRAE ROAD,  
BIELDSIDE

DEMOLISH EXISTING HOUSE AND ERECTION  
OF REPLACEMENT HOUSE

For: Mr R Openshaw

Application Type : Detailed Planning Permission  
Application Ref. : P141543  
Application Date: 05/11/2014  
Officer: Dineke Brasier  
Ward : Lower Deeside (M Boulton/A Malone/M  
Maik)

Advert :  
Advertised on:  
Committee Date: 12/02/15  
Community Council : No response  
received



### RECOMMENDATION:

Approve subject to conditions

## **DESCRIPTION**

The property at 1 Gowanbrae Road is a traditional one and a half storey detached granite-built house with a hipped slated roof. The property has been extended to the rear and to the side. The dwelling is set in the rear part of a large plot with a long front garden facing south with mature trees and planting. Vehicular access is to the rear from Prospecthill Road. A small single garage fronts that road.

The site is located within a residential area in Bielside. This part of Bielside is characterised by linear development with long front gardens and vehicular access to the rear. The relatively modest dwellings are set in generous plots with wide spacing between the properties. This pattern is repeated along North Deeside Road, Gowanbrae Road and Prospecthill Road.

## **RELEVANT HISTORY**

There is no planning history for 1 Gowanbrae Road.

In 2012 a planning application for the removal of the existing roof, extension to the rear and formation of a new roof across the entire footprint of the house at 2 Gowanbrae Road was granted unconditional approval under 121038. This permission has not been implemented, but remains valid until 18 November 2015, and is therefore a material consideration in respect of this application.

## **PROPOSAL**

Detailed planning permission is sought for the construction of a replacement dwelling at 1 Gowanbrae Road, Bielside. The replacement dwelling would be significantly larger than the existing property on the site. The design shows four distinct parts to the dwelling: a rear section containing a kitchen/ dining/ family area; a link section with a utility room and landing; middle section with a bedroom with en-suite, study, wc and lounge; and a double garage to the front. The first floor contains four bedrooms, one with en-suite bathroom and a family bathroom. The front section measures 11.3m by 7.2m, the middle section measures 15m by 7.2m and the double garage measures 6.6m by 6.6m. Thus, the overall dimensions of the house would be 23.0 metres by 15.0 metres. The rear and the middle section will have fully pitched roofs with gable ends. The eaves height is set at 2.2m with an overall ridge height of 6.7m. The design includes three dormers to the south elevation, two dormers on the north elevation and a further dormer on the south elevation of the middle section. A number of rooflights would be inserted in the roof slope in the link section to provide additional daylight into the landing area.

The dwelling would be set at the rear of the plot and would front Prospecthill Road. A clearance of 2m has been kept from each side boundary. The granite from the existing dwelling would be reused in the north and south elevation of the

proposed dwelling, whilst the west and east elevations would be finished in roughcast render. The roof would be slated and doors and windows would be constructed of timber.

The proposal has been amended throughout the application process to reduce the overall scale and massing of the development. Specifically, the overall width of the house has been reduced by approximately 1.2 metres, thus increasing the distance from the side boundaries. The height of the garage has been reduced by lowering the ridge of the roof by 1 metre. The position of the house on the plot has also been adjusted. It has been moved approximately 2.5 metres to the north.

### **Supporting Documents**

All drawings and the supporting documents listed below relating to this application can be viewed on the Council's website at

<http://planning.aberdeencity.gov.uk/PlanningDetail.asp?ref=141543>

On accepting the disclaimer, enter the application reference quoted on the first page of this report.

Bat Survey  
Tree Survey  
Design Statement

### **REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE**

The application has been referred to the Planning Development Management Committee because a total of 10 written representations were received. Accordingly, the application falls outwith the scope of the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

### **CONSULTATIONS**

**Roads Projects Team** – The five bedroomed property will have provision for at least three off-street parking spaces. The information provided on parking and access arrangements are considered acceptable to Aberdeen City Council guidelines.

**Environmental Health** – No observations

**Enterprise, Planning & Infrastructure (Flooding)** - No observations

**Community Council** – None received

### **REPRESENTATIONS**

10 letters of objection have been received. The objections raised relate to the following matters –

Size and massing of the proposed dwelling: The proposed property is too large when compared to the surrounding housing stock, being significantly larger than the adjacent dwellings and dwarfing the neighbouring property at 3 Baillieswells Road. It represents an overdevelopment of the site. The dwelling is significantly higher than other properties in the street, which is further accentuated by different ground levels.

Out of character with the existing housing stock: Although a number of large replacement houses have been built in the surrounding area, in this case, the proposed property is out of character. The existing dwelling is a good, relatively unaltered example of traditional architecture and is pleasing to the eye.

Replacement of a modest dwelling with a very large property: The proposal would alter the mix of dwellings within the area, removing a more affordable dwelling from the mix. The house is more than four times the size of the existing property and is an overdevelopment of the site. There are sufficient modern developments with large houses in nearby Cults and West Milltimber for the applicants to secure such a property.

Precedent: This proposed development would set an unacceptable precedent for large replacement dwellings in this immediate area.

Property extends beyond the existing building line on Gowanbrae Road: The property would extend beyond the front and rear building lines that have been maintained along Gowanbrae Road. It also comes nearer the side boundaries with 3 Baillieswells Road and 2 Gowanbrae Road.

Loss of existing dwelling: This type of property is characteristic for this part of Bielside, and the reason why many residents bought their own property. The proposed redevelopment would erode this traditional character of the street.

Road safety: Prospecthill Road and Gowanbrae Road are used as ratruns. The large volume of traffic using these roads is dangerous for pedestrians as pavements are only narrow. This situation would be aggravated by construction traffic. The access should be located at the western side of the plot.

Impact on residential amenities: The plot is relatively narrow, and this house cannot be accommodated without unacceptable intrusion, overlooking and loss of amenity for adjacent and nearby properties. The garage extension would have an unacceptable impact on 3 Baillieswells Road. Windows in east gable would overlook 3 Baillieswells Road. The height of the building would result in a loss of light to the rear garden of 3 Baillieswells Road. All dormer style windows should be rooflight windows to prevent overlooking, intrusion and loss of amenity to neighbouring properties.

All bedrooms and the patio of 2 Gowanbrae Road would suffer from a loss of privacy, sunlight and visibility.

The development would impact on views from 1 Prospecthill Road.

Front first floor windows would overlook 46 North Deeside Road.

Drainage: The footprint of the proposed new house and patio area would impact severely on the sloping site towards Gowanbrae Road. This over-development of the site is not compatible with drainage as proposed. Due to inadequate existing drainage, water has entered the rear garden and basement of the properties at 46 and 48 North Deeside Road. The drainage proposal as submitted will only deteriorate this situation.

Removal of trees: Various mature trees have been removed from the front garden. Tree protection fencing must be erected before any demolition, site preparation or construction work commence.

## **PLANNING POLICY**

### **Aberdeen Local Development Plan**

D1 – Architecture and Placemaking: New development must be designed with due consideration for its context and make a positive contribution to its setting. Factors such as siting, scale, massing, colour, materials, orientation, details, the proportion of building elements, together with the spaces around buildings, including open space, landscaping and boundary treatments will be considered in assessing that contribution.

D2 – Design and Amenity: In order to ensure the provision of appropriate levels of amenity the following principles will be applied:

- Residential development shall have a public face to a street and a private face to an enclosed garden or court;
- All residents shall have access to sitting-out areas;
- Individual houses shall be designed to make the most of opportunities offered by the site for views and sunlight.

D4 – Aberdeen’s Granite Heritage: The City Council will encourage the retention of granite buildings throughout the City, even if not listed or in a conservation area. Where a large or locally significant granite building that is not listed or in a conservation area is demolished, the City Council will expect the original granite to be used on the principal elevation of the replacement building.

H1 – Residential Areas: Within existing residential areas, proposals for new residential development will be approved in principle if it:

- Does not constitute overdevelopment;
- Does not have an unacceptable impact on the character or amenity of the surrounding area;
- Complies with SG on Curtilage Splits and Redevelopment.

NE5 – Trees and Woodlands: There is a presumption against all activities and development that will result in the loss of or damage to established trees that contribute significantly to local amenity.

NE6 – Flooding and Drainage: Where more than 100m<sup>2</sup> floorspace is proposed, the developer will be required to submit a Drainage Impact Assessment. Surface water drainage associated with development must:

- Be the most appropriate available in terms of SuDS; and
- Avoid flooding and pollution both during and after construction.

NE8 – Natural Heritage: Development that has an adverse effect on a protected species will only be permitted where it satisfies the relevant criteria in Scottish Planning Policy.

R7 – Low and Zero Carbon Buildings: All new buildings, in meeting building regulations energy requirements, must install low and zero-carbon generating technology to reduce the predicted carbon dioxide emissions by at least 15% below 2007 building standards.

### **Proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan**

The following policies substantively reiterate policies in the Adopted Local Development Plan as summarised above:

D1 – Quality Placemaking by Design

D5 – Our Granite Heritage

H1 – Residential Areas

NE5 – Trees and Woodlands

NE6 – Flooding, Drainage and Water Quality

NE8 – Natural Heritage

R7 – Low and Zero Carbon Buildings, and Water Efficiency

### **Supplementary Guidance**

Subdivision and Redevelopment of Residential Curtilages SG – Provides general guidance on redevelopment of residential plots.

Transport and Accessibility SG – Provides guidance on parking standards and access

## **EVALUATION**

Sections 25 and 37(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) require that where, in making any determination under the planning acts, regard is to be had to the provisions of the development plan and that determination shall be made in accordance with the plan, so far as material to the application, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

### Principle of development:

The site is located within a residential area. Policy H1 (Residential Areas) sets out that, in principle, new residential development will be acceptable in existing residential areas if the proposal does not constitute overdevelopment; does not have an adverse impact on residential amenity of neighbouring dwellings; and complies with all other relevant planning policies from the Adopted Local Development Plan and Supplementary Guidance. These will be discussed in detail below.

The proposal involves the demolition of a granite building. Policy D4 (Aberdeen's Granite Heritage) sets out that the City Council will encourage the retention of granite buildings throughout the city, even if not listed or within a conservation area. In this case, the site is located outside a conservation area. Even though the demolition of the granite house is regrettable, the house cannot be considered large or locally significant as it is a common house type throughout this part of Bielside. Furthermore, the proposal incorporates the re-use of granite from the existing building in the front and rear elevations of the replacement dwelling. This is sufficient to comply with the criteria of this policy in this instance.

Impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area:

The proposal is for the construction a large detached dwelling with attached double garage on Gowanbrae Road to replace the existing house on the plot. The dwelling would be set at the rear of the large garden, and would face Prospecthill Road.

Since the planning application was lodged the dimensions of the proposed house have been reduced, as noted earlier in this report. As a result, its overall scale and massing and its impact on the surrounding area have been reduced. The most significant change has been to the double garage, which initially had a ridge height of 6m and a dormer facing 2 Gowanbrae Road. This height has been reduced to 5m and the dormer has been removed and replaced by a small rooflight window. Furthermore the overall width of the dwelling has been reduced by approximately 1.2 metres, increasing the distance from the side elevations to the side boundary on either side to 2m.

This part of Bielside is characterised by linear development with long front gardens and wide spacing between individual properties. The majority of dwellings along Gowanbrae Road are original and constructed in the first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Throughout the years, many of these have been altered with single storey flat roof side and rear extensions. The front elevations facing Gowanbrae Road have largely been retained as originally constructed.

Despite all these alterations, the main original features defining the character and appearance of this street and many surrounding streets such as North Deeside Road and Prospecthill Road have been maintained: the wide spacing between the properties and a fairly straight building line to especially the south (front) elevation.

It is acknowledged that the proposed house is significantly larger than the existing dwelling, and most other dwellings along this stretch of Gowanbrae Road. This proposal would result in a dwelling of an overall much larger scale and massing than present in this general area. Notwithstanding, the design of the house is such that when viewed from a public place, it would have the appearance of a relatively modest sized dwelling. It would break through the existing building line on the north and south elevation, and would significantly reduce the gaps to the side boundaries when compared with the original dwelling. It should be noted that following revision of the proposal, a distance of 2 metres on either side of the building to the side boundary would be retained.

The original design showed a building projected some 4.5 metres forward of the existing southern building line retained by 2 and 3 Gowanbrae Road and 3 Baillieswells Road. The building has been re-sited approximately 2.5 metres further to the north and whilst some 2 metres forward of the adjacent houses, it would broadly conform to the existing building line in the context of the whole length of the street. It is noted that, even though at present there is a clear building line stretching from 3 Baillieswells Road to 3 Gowanbrae Road, this becomes less distinct further along the street with the introduction of bay windows and minor alterations to properties.

The northern building line is less clear than the southern building line. Again, there is a reasonably clear pattern as to the original dwellings, but more properties have been extended to the rear – often with single storey extensions – and many have garages located on the plot boundary facing onto Prospecthill Road. The proposed house would not conform to the general appearance of low buildings with outbuildings on the boundary. It opens the plot more as the design incorporates an integral double garage rather than a separate building on the boundary. As such, the massing of the building on the north elevation is significantly larger than that of any neighbouring properties. However, to reduce the impact of this massing, the ridge height of the garage has been lowered by 1 metre, and a dormer facing 2 Gowanbrae Road has been replaced by a small rooflight. This represents a significant improvement to the scheme as it reduces the impact of the east elevation on general views from Baillieswells Road and the top of Prospecthill Road.

As such, it is considered that, on balance and taking account of these alterations to the initial design of the dwelling, enough has been done to contain the footprint of the building within the existing overall building lines of both the north and south side of this street.

The design results in a building with a large footprint, which is partly due to the complicated roof design. This roof plan with two distinct main sections to the dwelling and a link between is designed to reduce the overall height of the dwelling and its impact on the surrounding area. Even though the dwelling is still higher than most surrounding properties, it is kept relatively low through the use of dormers in the roofspace rather than a full height two storey building. Furthermore, as stated above, during consideration of the application by officers, the height and design of the garage have been significantly reduced to further decrease the impact on the street scene.

A further material consideration in this respect is the extant planning permission at 2 Gowanbrae Road. This permission allows for the raising of the roof to a half hipped design, significantly increasing the floorspace and height of this property. Even though the permission has not been implemented, it is still valid and should therefore be taken into consideration. The height of the proposed dwelling – although higher than the existing dwelling and most neighbouring properties – is lower than that approved at 2 Gowanbrae Road. It is acknowledged that the massing of the dwelling is increased through the use of full gabled ends rather



than a fully or half hipped roof construction. However, on this occasion this is considered acceptable.

It is considered that, on balance, and taking account of the alterations to the scheme to reduce its overall impact, size and massing, the proposal in its current form has an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, and complies with criteria as set out in policies D1 (Architecture and Placemaking) and D2 (Design and Amenity) of the Adopted Local Development Plan.

Impact on the residential amenities of neighbouring properties:

The proposed dwelling is set at a distance of 2 metres from each side boundary. This leaves a general gap of 5 metres to the side elevation of 2 Gowanbrae Road and a distance ranging between just over 2 metres to just over 4 metres to the side elevation of 3 Baillieswells Road. Objections have been received stating that the proposal would result in loss of light and cause overlooking of both properties.

2 Gowanbrae Road contains two side facing windows in the existing ground floor layout. Both these windows serve a bedroom. It is acknowledged that the proposal would bring the side elevation of the property closer to 2 Gowanbrae Road and that the height of the walls facing this dwelling would be increased. However, it is considered that, on balance, its overall impact is reduced due to the two relatively small gables and the middle link section that slopes away from the side boundary. Furthermore, the boundary between the two properties is currently made up of a dense hedge of more than 2 metres in height, which would already significantly reduce light levels into the two rooms.

The proposal includes two side facing windows – one serving the landing and a secondary window serving the family room. A condition can be added to any approval setting out that a boundary treatment of at least 1.8m should be retained on the side boundary to ensure privacy levels between the two properties are maintained.

3 Baillieswells Road is set at a lower level than the application site, approximately 1 metre lower. The property has been altered and has a large mansard-style roof to the rear and a small porch to the side. Above the porch is a small dormer style window. Next to the porch are two further windows – one of which is very small. Contrary to the general trend in Gowanbrae Road, 3 Baillieswells Road is located much closer to the side boundary. As a result, there is a gap of just over 4 metres between the side elevation containing the window and the side elevation and garage projection of the replacement dwelling. There is a mature high hedge on the boundary between the two properties which appears to be in control of 3 Baillieswells Road. Again, on balance, taking account of the distance between the two properties, the existing boundary treatment and the sloping of the roof away from the boundary, the impact on light levels is considered acceptable.

With regards to a potential loss of privacy due to overlooking, the east elevation contains a side door leading into the utility room, a small window serving the study and a secondary window serving the kitchen. Again, a boundary treatment

of a minimum height of 1.8 metres should be sufficient to counter any adverse impact due to overlooking.

The dormer windows would not have a significant impact on overlooking and a loss of privacy for either 2 Gowanbrae Road or 3 Baillieswells Road as they are not facing directly towards either property. They would also not result in a loss of privacy to the owners of 46 North Deeside Road as the distance between the dormer windows and this property more than exceeds the 18m window-to-window criteria as set out in the Subdivision and Redevelopment of Residential Curtilages SG.

It is claimed that the development would have a detrimental impact on views from 1 Prospecthill Road. The loss of views is not a relevant planning matter, and is not further considered.

Overall, on balance, the proposal is not considered to have a significant adverse impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties. It therefore complies with this part of policy H1 (Residential Areas) of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan.

Impact on energy efficiency:

One of the main arguments in the Design Statement for the need to replace the existing dwelling on the site with a new property was to increase energy efficiency. Policy R7 (Low and Zero Carbon Buildings) sets out that all new development should achieve a reduction in predicted carbon dioxide emissions of at least 15% below 2007 building standards. Compliance with this requirement would be demonstrated through the submission of a low carbon development statement. It has not yet been demonstrated how this building would achieve this target. However, the submission of such a statement can be the subject of a condition to the planning permission. Subject to this condition, it is considered that the proposal complies with policy R7 (Low and Zero Carbon Buildings).

Impact on public highways, especially in relation to access and parking:

The proposal would provide a total of four parking spaces: two in the double garage, and two on the drive adjacent to the garage. The Transport and Accessibility SG sets out that a five bedrooomed property in the Outer City should have at least three parking spaces. This has been achieved in this case.

The proposal results in an access and a dropped kerb with an overall length of 12 metres. In normal circumstances, the Roads Projects Team would object to such a long dropped kerb. However, in this instance it is clear that the footpath is on the other side of Prospecthill Road. As such, it would not result in a deterioration of road safety. This is considered acceptable.

Impact on mature trees:

The property has a large mature south facing garden. Within this garden are a large number of mature trees. The Council is satisfied that, subject to suitable conditions in relation to a tree protection plan and tree management plan, the development can be carried out without endangering the health of these mature

trees. Subject to this condition, the proposal complies with policy NE5 (Trees and Woodlands) of the Adopted Local Development Plan.

Impact on protected species:

As part of the application, a bat survey was submitted as, due to the mature gardens and the type of dwelling on the plot, it was considered that the site might provide a suitable habitat for bats. The bat survey shows that no bats entered or exited the house, and that no evidence of bat roosts were present in the property. As such, it is considered highly unlikely that the proposal would have a harmful impact on protected species. The proposal complies with policy NE8 (Natural Heritage) of the Adopted Local Development Plan.

Drainage and surface water flooding:

A drainage impact assessment has been submitted with the application, incorporating a SuDS soakaway system. The Flooding Team of the City Council have assessed this scheme, and raised no objections. The proposal complies with policy NE6 (Flooding and Drainage) of the Adopted Local Development Plan.

Proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan

The Proposed ALDP was approved at the meeting of the Communities, Housing and Infrastructure Committee of 28 October 2014. It constitutes the Council's settled view as to what should be the content of the final adopted ALDP and is now a material consideration in the determination of planning applications, along with the adopted ALDP. The exact weight to be given to matters contained in the Proposed ALDP (including individual policies) in relation to specific applications will depend on whether:

- these matters have been subject to public consultation through the Main Issues Report; and
- the level of objection raised in relation these matters as part of the Main Issues Report; and
- the relevance of these matters to the application under consideration

The foregoing can only be assessed on a case by case basis. In relation to this particular application no new issues were raised.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Approve Conditionally

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

On balance it is considered that, even though the proposed replacement dwelling is significantly larger than existing, it respects the general grain of development within Gowanbrae Road and has an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area. It does not have an adverse impact on residential amenity of neighbouring properties, local highway conditions or protected species. Subject to conditions, it would not have an adverse impact on

mature trees and would achieve a more energy efficient building. As such, it is considered to comply with policies

D1 (Architecture and Placemaking), D2 (Design and Amenity), D4 (Aberdeen's Granite Heritage), H1 (Residential Areas), NE5 (Trees and Woodlands), NE6 (Flooding and Drainage), NE8 (Natural Heritage), R7 (Low and Zero Carbon Buildings) of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan and policies D1 (Quality Placemaking by Design), D5 (Our Granite Heritage), H1 (Residential Areas), NE5 (Trees and Woodlands), NE6 (Flooding, Drainage and Water Quality) NE8 (Natural Heritage), and R7 (Low and Zero Carbon Buildings, and Water Efficiency) of the Proposed Local Development Plan, and the Transport and Accessibility Supplementary Guidance and the Subdivision and Redevelopment of Residential Curtilages Supplementary Guidance

### **CONDITION(S)**

1. that no development shall take place unless a scheme detailing all external finishing materials to the roof and walls of the development hereby approved has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the planning authority and thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the details so agreed - in the interests of visual amenity.
2. that no development shall take place unless a plan showing those trees to be removed and those to be retained and a scheme for the protection of all trees to be retained on the site during construction works has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority and any such scheme as may have been approved has been implemented - in order to ensure adequate protection for the trees on site during the construction of the development
3. that no part of the development hereby approved shall be occupied unless a plan and report illustrating appropriate management proposals for the care and maintenance of all trees to be retained and any new areas of planting (to include timing of works and inspections) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. The proposals shall be carried out in complete accordance with such plan and report as may be so approved, unless the planning authority has given prior written approval for a variation - in order to preserve the character and visual amenity of the area.
4. that no materials, supplies, plant, machinery, spoil, changes in ground levels or construction activities shall be permitted within the protected areas specified in the aforementioned scheme of tree protection without the written consent of the Planning Authority and no fire shall be lit in a position where the flames could extend to within 5 metres of foliage, branches or trunks - in order to ensure adequate protection for the trees on site during the construction of the development.

5. that no development shall take place unless there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority a scheme of boundaries enclosures for the site, the said scheme comprising 1.8 metre high enclosures along both side boundaries adjacent to the location of the house hereby granted planning permission. Thereafter the house shall not be occupied unless the said scheme has been implemented in full – in order to minimise overlooking and thus preserving the amenity of the adjacent residents.
  
6. that the building hereby approved shall not be occupied unless a scheme detailing compliance with the Council's 'Low and Zero Carbon Buildings' supplementary guidance has been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority, and any recommended measures specified within that scheme for the reduction of carbon emissions have been implemented in full - to ensure that this development complies with requirements for reductions in carbon emissions specified in the City Council's relevant published Supplementary Guidance document, 'Low and Zero Carbon Buildings'.

**Dr Margaret Bochel**  
Head of Planning and Sustainable Development.