APPELLANT'S RESPONSE TO

H&BBC CASE FOR THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY

PLANNING INSPECTORATE REFERENCE - APP/K2420/A/12/2172312

PLANNING APPEAL IN RESPECT OF;

LAND TO THE REAR OF 31 & 33 CANNING STREET, HINCKLEY

and

REFUSAL OF PERMISSION FOR;

ERECTION OF 7 DWELLINGS WITH ASSOCIATED ACCESS
(APP - 11/0627/FUL)

Introduction

We are in receipt of the document provided by Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council including the case for the Local Planning Authority and the Comments on the Appellants Grounds of Appeal and having considered the content are able to provide the following clarification on the points raised within the above document.

Clearly the key points argued by the Council revolve around the three reasons for refusal and the following expands upon those three points;

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Reason for Refusal 1 : Impact upon The Character of the Surrounding Area

In summary, and contrary to the Planning Committee Report, the Council now consider that;

'the development… will result in the loss of this green oasis and will therefore not add to the overall quality of the area and thus would be a form of inappropriate development that causes harm to the character of the local area'

and

'By virtue of the number, and layout of units proposed on this relatively small site, which is not replicable of the less dense development further west, the development is considered to be harmful to the character and appearance of the locality…'

There are several aspects that we shall need to consider in this summary;

1 'green oasis'
2 quality of the existing area & harm to the character of the local area
3 number of units proposed & density of existing development to the west

1 : Green Oasis

The suggestion that the site is a 'green oasis' could perhaps be considered misleading. Contrary to the LPA's current standing they clearly acknowledged at the application stage that this site is NOT a 'green oasis'. Indeed, the definition of 'oasis' conjures up an image of a solitary parcel of land, surrounded by built development, whereas in reality the Hollycroft Park is a matter of 25m distant from the application site.

Within the Committee Report it is acknowledged, under 'The Principle of Development' that the site;

'comprises a derelict plot of land'

and,

'Historically there were workshops and associated car parking spaces on the land'

In addition the Appellant would refer the Inspector to a copy of communication received from H&BBC Planning Department (contained at Appendix (i) of this document) dated 3rd June 2011 and is the most recent communication received by the owner on the same matter. It is without doubt that the owner of the site (the mother of the Applicant) still has the shadow of action being taken under Section 215-219 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) in order that this unsightly site can be remedied. The redevelopment of the site clearly offers the opportunity to deal with this outstanding issue and it is possible that the Case Officer for the planning application was not aware of this matter.

Contrary to the LPA's current standing they clearly acknowledged at the application stage that this site is NOT a 'green oasis'. Indeed, the definition of 'oasis' conjures up an image of a solitary parcel of land, surrounded by built development, whereas in reality the Hollycroft Park is a matter of 25m distant from the application site.

2 : Quality of the Existing Area & Harm to the Character of the Local Area

Again, the LPA now consider that the proposal is one that is at odds with the quality of the existing area. Therefore we shall need to consider and define what the existing environment contains, in support of this photographs of the surrounding area can be found at Appendix (ii) that show;

- lack of green frontage to semi-detached dwellings fronting Shakespeare Drive
- abundant conversion of front gardens to hard standing and loss of green spaces
- high level fencing, along Canning Street, to the dwelling fronting Shakespeare Drive
- lack of green frontage to semi-detached dwellings fronting St Georges Avenue

In now considering the existing environment we shall also consider the comments contained within the Committee Report that covers the same topic;

It states, under 'The Principles of Development';

'the semi-detached dwellings… have been designed to be in keeping with the character of the Conservation Area and surrounding properties… the buildings are reflective of the semi-detached properties further west and south west, and their scale, design and proportions is also in keeping'

'the development is considered to preserve the character of the Conservation Area and is considered in accordance with the intentions of Policy BE7 of the Local Plan'

Under the 'Design' heading it states;

'In summary, the design incorporates sufficient detailing, resulting in interesting elevations which conserve and enhance the appearance of the adjacent Conservation Area. Thus the scheme is in accordance with policies BE1 and BE6 of the Local Plan.'

Therefore we are now confused as to what has changed since the Committee Report that warrants a complete change of opinion of the LPA, and the fact that no new evidence has been provided by them.

The proposed development, by the LPA's own admission;

- is in keeping with the character of the Conservation Area and surrounding properties
- is reflective of the properties in the surrounding area
- is in proportion to the surrounding area
- conserve and enhance the appearance of the locality

Therefore no justifiable reasons have been put forward to suggest otherwise or to substantiate the comments now made in the 'Case for the Local Planning Authority' that the site if harmful or of a standard lower that the existing area.

For the reasons above we would suggest that the LPA's argument is flawed.

3 : Number of Units Proposed & Density of Existing Development to the West

The LPA now argue that the proposal is not replicable of the less dense development than the properties found 'further west'. However, in contrast it can also be stated that the development is at a lower density than development found 'further east'.

Therefore the Appeal site has to be viewed upon its own merits and how it fits within the environment surrounding it. As explained within the initial Appeal Document;

- property to the east is terraced and at a 'high' density
- property to the west and south is semi-detached and at a 'mid' density
- property to the north is detached and semi-detached and at a 'low' density

The Appeal site sits within the above areas and, as an arrangement of semi-detached, provides for a density and arrangement that 'links' all of the above densities together.

If we are to consider the current argument put forward by the LPA and that semi-detached dwellings are not acceptable then the question has to be asked as to what is considered acceptable.

Clearly terraced housing within a collection of existing semi-detached dwellings cannot be acceptable on appearance and density. Similarly, the use of detached dwellings would, for the same reasons, not be acceptable. The only solution, to the area of site in question, is the use of semi-detached dwellings.

It is accepted that the development density is higher than that found 'further west' however this area contains dwellings that were constructed around 60-70 years ago, and as such were provided with larger rear gardens that are rarely, if ever, found in new developments.

However, whilst the rear garden sizes of units 1-4 may be lower than the guidance stated within the 'New Residential Development' SPG their location within the site was specifically discussed at pre-application stage in order to provide a larger green area to the front of the dwellings.

Again referring to the Planning Committee report, the Council are already satisfied that the

'The development proposed in this application is for 7 dwellings and for the reasons discussed further in this report is not considered to be in conflict with adopted development plan policy.'

The Appellant is understandably confused as to the disparity that is found between the Planning Committee Report and the current 'Case for the Local Planning Authority', no new reasons have been given for this 'sea change' of opinion and therefore the question has to be asked as to why the LPA now consider that the Appeal should not be successful.

Given the above facts the Appellant is concerned that the reasons given by the LPA are without real foundation and that they have put forward no genuine reasons to substantiate their argument.

Reason for refusal 2 : Impact Upon Residential Amenity

Again, the Appellant now finds inconsistency between the Committee Report and the current 'Case for the LPA' and is confused as to how and why this has arisen.

Firstly looking at the Committee Report the matter of 'Impact upon Residential Amenity' is considered and summarised;

'*Each property has an enclosed garden to the rear. The rear amenity space proposed is less than that defined within the SPG on New Residential Development, which suggests an area of 80 square meters for 3 bed properties. However, in this case, the Victorian terrace of properties to the east are of a very high density, having small amenity spaces. Accordingly, the development proposed is not out of keeping with the plots in this area.'*

'Further, as the site is situated within a town centre location, within close proximity of the Hollycroft Recreation Ground, the inadequate amenity spaces proposed would not warrant refusal of the scheme'

In respect of 29 Canning Street;

'Although the separation distance falls slightly short of that advised within the SPG, given the dense pattern of surrounding development, the proposed development is characteristic of the area the short fall is not considered to result in a significant material impact in the privacy of this property. Further the distance of 22m would be sufficient to mitigate against any significant loss of light, overshadowing and overbearing impacts'

In respect of 35 Chessher Street;

'The distance is well below that advised within the SPG, however as there will be an access road between the proposed dwellings and 35 Chessher Street, and due to fenestration and configuration, this relationship is considered acceptable and will not give rise to any material impacts in terms of privacy, over dominance or loss of light'

'Further, the character of development to the south east of the site is of highly dense Victorian terraced properties, which have similar separation distance to those proposed by the development'

'Accordingly the development proposed is considered characteristic of the area'

In summary;

'…the proposal is considered to have minimal impacts upon the amenity of neighbouring residents'

'Accordingly the scheme is considered to be in accordance with the Policy BE1 of the Local Plan'

It is without doubt that the LPA carefully considered the effect upon neighbouring dwellings and decided, for several genuine reasons, that the scheme is acceptable.

Therefore to suggest that the scheme is no longer acceptable is clearly unreasonable.

This matter, as defined by the Council, clearly revolves around the potential impact upon the dwellings found at 29 Canning Street and 35 Chessher Street and this has been adequately dealt with within the initial Appeal Document.

However, to expand upon this, at no point in the pre-application discussions, the application process, the Appeal questionnaire or the 'Case for the Local Planning Authority' have any issues over the amenity of properties has been raised other than for those found at 29 Canning Street and 35 Chessher Street.

Therefore, given the information provided by the LPA, we can only conclude that only these specific two are affected by the proposals. Furthermore the effect of the proposal, for example, to other dwellings found along Chessher Street, is not at such a level as to warrant any reason for refusal. The LPA, in its Committee Report, acknowledges that in this instance the reduction of such distances is acceptable, would have minimal impact and is reflective of the immediate environment. The view that these same compromises are *not* acceptable, as is now being argued, is inconsistent with the previously expressed professional judgements.

Their argument, concerning 35 Chessher Street, now revolves around the matter of small high level secondary windows that cannot be viewed through by the occupier. Again the fact remains that the primary windows to 35 Chessher Street do not face the application site and that the separation distances to these windows are fully compliant with those contained within the SPG.

Similarly, in respect of 29 Canning Street, it is apparent that the recently constructed pairs of semi-detached dwellings directly opposite are placed at greatly reduced distances than that found on the current proposal (see cross section at Appendix iii). Therefore reductions in distances are not an alien concept to the LPA and that, in this particular instance, they have clearly considered the effect that such a reduction places on adjacent dwellings and accept that it is satisfactory.

The Appellant is not seeking anything other than the same level of consideration. Bearing in mind that a reduction of around 50% has been previously acceptable it is not unreasonable to perhaps accept that a 10% reduction would be acceptable. The proposal has been designed to mimic the surrounding environment and as such a reduction of distances has to be expected. The LPA had already considered these reductions and decided that they are acceptable.

Given the nature of the immediate Victorian terraced environment, as accepted by the LPA in the Committee Report, then it would be reasonable to expect that any development upon this site could not be designed without a slight reduction of separation distances.

To propose a form of development that would comply with the SPG standards of separation would simply not be in keeping with the immediate environment.

The proposal has been designed to account for as little effect upon the existing properties as possible, whilst ensuring that development of this 'derelict site' can take place.

The proposal has been designed to mimic the surrounding environment and as such a reduction of distances has to be expected. The Council has already considered these reductions and decided that they are acceptable.

It is a matter of what level of compromise is acceptable and the Appellant clearly argues, to which the Committee Report fully agrees that the proposal has made suitable allowances that do not unduly affect the amenity of adjacent dwellings.

Reason for Refusal 3 : Lack of off road Parking Provision

In summary the Council now consider that;

'…provision for plots 1-4 is considered insufficient, with the situation for plots 1 and 2 being worsened due to the inadequate size of the garages'

They support this assumption with;

'This under provision is considered detrimental to the safety of Canning Street, through the developments likely contribution to the already high levels of on street parking within the locality'

Firstly we shall review the comments made in the Committee Report that state;

'Tandem parking spaces are provided to the side of plots 3 and 4, and a parking space and integral garage is provided to the sides of plots 1 and 2. Enclosed rear gardens are provided to the dwellings.'

'… the required number and size of off road parking spaces have been provided for each dwelling along with adequate visibility.'

'Further, the scheme will not exacerbate existing parking problems in the Chessher Street area, as a designated self contained parking court has been provided within the site for plots 5 – 7. The parking arrangement for plots 1 – 4 have been positioned adjacent to the properties which is a common arrangement within the locality.'

It would seem that the LPA are now basing their reason for refusal upon the, incorrect, assumption that the garage dimensions are not in accordance with the guidance contained within the 6C's Design Guide.

It is unfortunate that they have chosen to base their assumption without seeking further clarification from the applicant at the time. In correspondence between the Agent and the LPA during the application process it was a specific request that the dimensions to the parking spaces allocated to plots 5, 6 & 7 were defined and as a consequence they were added to the application drawings.

Had the same concern been evident at the time the LPA would have sought to seek clarification of the dimensions of the garages. Clearly it could not have been an issue at the time of the application as they did not seek clarification. Indeed, the Leicester City Highways, whilst being mindful that the 6C's Design Guide was simply 'guidance' and not a 'requirement' confirmed that this was not a reason to warrant refusal.

However, the drawings submitted with the application are 'planning drawings' and do not go into constructional details, as a consequence it is an extremely straightforward constructional detailing exercise to give conclusive proof that the garages can be constructed to dimensions in excess of the guidance within the 6C's Design Guide. See Appendix (iv) and drawing APPEAL001.

IF this was such an issue then the LPA simply had to ask for clarification, as they did with the car parking spaces. The LCC Highways even suggested that this could be controlled by the use of a condition attached to any permission. The LPA had the opportunity to have complete control over the matter of useable garage spaces and failed to make use of it.

It is therefore unreasonable of them to place the burden on the Applicant due to their own failures.

Given that the garages could be constructed in excess of the 3m x 6m dimensions then it is without doubt that the garages proposed at the time of the application are adequate for use as parking spaces and therefore any weight that the LPA add to this as a reason for their Case should be wholly discounted.

Contrary to the LPA's belief, plots 1 and 2 have the benefit of **two** car parking spaces per dwelling

It is unfortunate that by adding such weight to the garage dimensions that it has raised issues over recent approvals to dwellings situated on Canning Street. In the photograph below it is evident that the LPA has approved dwellings, situated opposite the application site that has;

- substandard garage dimensions (they are 2.4m x 5m)

- garaging that do not provide sufficient 'set back' from the highway

- three storey dwellings approx 13m opposite existing dwellings



Whilst it is appreciated that each site should be viewed upon its own merits, it seems unreasonable for the LPA put forward such arguments in relation to the proposed development when they are fundamentally undermined by recent approvals. This seems to be inconsistent.

Now that it has been proven that plots 1 & 2 do have two car parking spaces we shall consider the LPA's comments concerning the use of additional design guides and in particular the Communities and Local Government document 'Residential Car Parking Research'

However, prior to doing so the Appellant is of the strong belief that as the site is clearly split then it is perhaps a more reasoned approach to consider that each site is less than 5 units and as such should follow the 6C's Design Guide approach to parking standards.

If we are to take this approach then the proposal is fully compliant.

Turning to the 'Residential Car Parking Research' document we are faced with a laborious calculation process to give a level of parking standards. This process has been carried out and the calculations are included at Appendix (v).

Here it is proved that the proposed development provides for car parking standards that are in excess of the requirement.

Therefore in summary of the car parking standards;

- plots 1 & 2 have two car parking spaces

- the scheme complies with the 'guidance' contained within the 6C's Design Guide

- the scheme complies with the 'Communities and Local Government' publication, 'Residential Car Parking Standards'

The argument tabled by the LPA is frustratingly without foundation and appears to be an attempt to justify the opinion expressed by some members of the Planning Committee.

The Case does make reference to the '*high levels of on street parking within the area'*, however it is noted that;

- there are no parking restrictions, residents permits or other controls over parking, save for yellow lines at the junction that serve for safety reasons

- the Hollycroft Conservation Area Appraisal, approved by the same Planning Committee that refused the application, does state that;

'The Hollycroft is a main principal route into Hinckley Town Centre. Its busy nature contrasts significantly with that of Shakespeare Drive and St George's Avenue which are generally only used by residents and park visitors. The area is therefore subject to very low levels of traffic, which emphasises the secluded character of the area.'

There is a contradiction expressed in these two differing views of the area that is confusing to the Appellant and is suggestive of further inconsistencies in the LPA response. We note that no objections to the proposed development were received from Highways/traffic and would wish to draw this to your attention.

In any event, ultimately the fact remains that each of the proposed dwellings are provided with sufficient numbers of car parking spaces that accord with Local SPG, County Highways 'guidance' and National Planning Policy. Therefore there can be no justified reason for this to warrant refusal of the application on grounds of car parking.

SUMMARY

Throughout the course of the application process, including pre-application advice, the committee report and post decision meetings it has been acknowledged by the Planning Authority that there are many areas of common ground that are clearly not in dispute.

It is particularly worth noting that on several occasions, including during the introduction at the planning committee meeting on the 13th September, Simon Wood, Head Planning Department of H&BBC, confirmed that;

' it is both a well thought out development' and ***'it is in keeping with its surroundings'***

The committee report presented to the Planning Committee reflected this positive nature of the development and clearly recommended approval;

'The Layout and Design proposed has been carefully considered to ensure it is in keeping with the surrounding development and architectural details and materials common of the locality have been incorporated to aid the developments assimilation within the area and to conserve and preserve the character of the Hollycroft Conservation Area'

'The scheme does not give rise to any significant material harm to residential amenity, visual amenity or impacts upon the existing trees. In conclusion, no material impacts have been identified, that would indicate that the scheme is not in compliance with the development plan policies. Accordingly, the application is recommended for approval, subject to the imposition of planning conditions'

Clearly there are many areas in which the applicant and the LPA agree wholeheartedly that the proposal is acceptable and the following are clearly areas of common ground;

- The site is suitable for development
- Residential development has been accepted in principle
- The proposal is in keeping with its surroundings
- The design and appearance of the dwellings is acceptable. There is nothing in the reasons for refusal to suggest that, in general, pairs of semis or a row of terraces are unacceptable
- There are no issues concerning highway access and egress
- There are no ecological issues
- The amenities of 29 Canning St and 35 Chessher St will not be impacted on by units 1-4

Given the positive support that the application has received it is surprising to the Applicant to find themselves in the position where the decision by the Committee was to refuse the application.

Of greater confusion to the Applicant, at a meeting of the 19th November with the Head of Planning Simon Wood, at H&BBC offices, stated quite clearly that;

'there is little, if anything, in planning terms that could be altered to provide a better proposal for this particular site'.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX (i)

Correspondence received from H&BBC Planning Department

Steve Atkinson MAIOxonl • MBA • FIoD • FRSA
Chief Executive

Please Ask for – Nick Cox
Direct Dial/Ext: 01455 255659
Direct Fax:01455 619897
Email: nick.cox@hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk
Your Ref:
Our Ref: 09/00421/S215
Date: 03/6/2011

Received Wed 8th June.

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

A Borough to be proud of

Mrs Pamela Wheatley
31 Canning Street
Hinckley
Leicestershire
LE10 0QA

IMPORTANT THIS COMMUNICATION AFFECTS YOUR PROPERTY

Dear Mrs Wheatley

Re: Property adversely affecting the amenity of the neighbourhood
At Chessher Street, Hinckley.

Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council is committed to ensuring that properties within the Borough are maintained in a tidy condition. Improving the appearance of land and buildings has been identified by local people as a key priority for the Council.

It has been brought to my attention that the condition of your property at the above address is unsatisfactory and in these circumstances I must ask you to undertake the following works to abate the nuisance and so bring the property back to an acceptable standard within 21 days from the date of this letter.

1) Remove all over-grown vegetation from your property at the rear of 31 and 33 Canning Street, Hinckley.

I must warn you that failure to comply with my request will leave me with no option but to consider action pursuant to Section 215 – 219 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

This could involve formal action by way of service of a Notice to legally require you to undertake the work described above. Obviously this is a course of action I would rather avoid and I seek your co-operation in the carrying out of the above works, which will contribute towards achieving an improved Borough of Hinckley and Bosworth.

Should you wish to discuss any of the above in detail, you can contact the Officer named above on the number given, who will be pleased to assist you. It is my hope that this matter can be resolved in a spirit of mutual co-operation.

Yours sincerely

N Cox

For Simon Wood
Head of Planning

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APPENDIX (ii)

Photographs showing 'local environment' within Hollycroft Conservation Area



No's 7 & 8 Shakespeare Drive

These semi-detached properties sit within the Hollycroft Conservation Area and face directly to the Hollycroft Park.

They have no green frontage and have been hard surfaced.



No 9 Shakespeare Drive

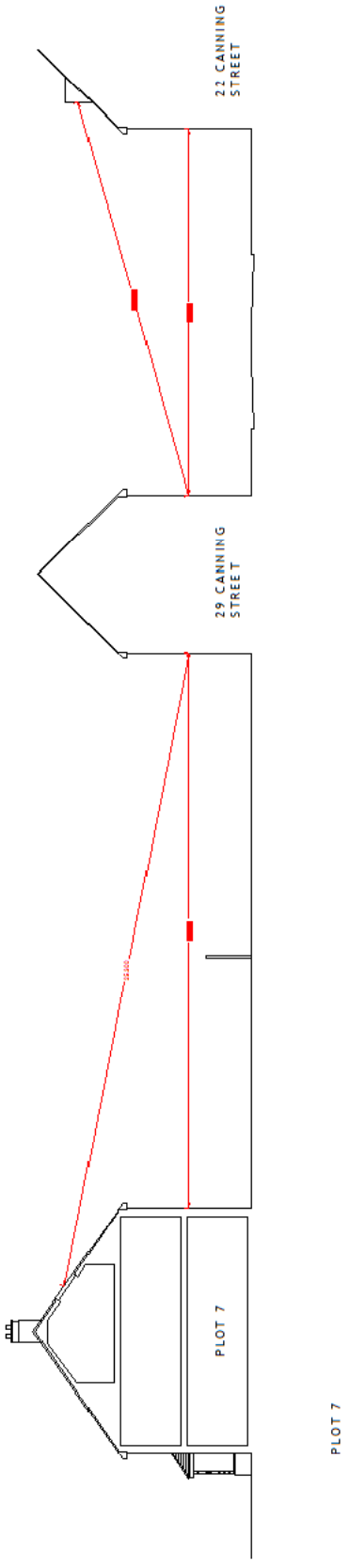
This detached dwelling within the Hollycroft Conservation Area has erected 2m high fencing to the boundary thus removing any green amenity spaces.



St Georges Avenue

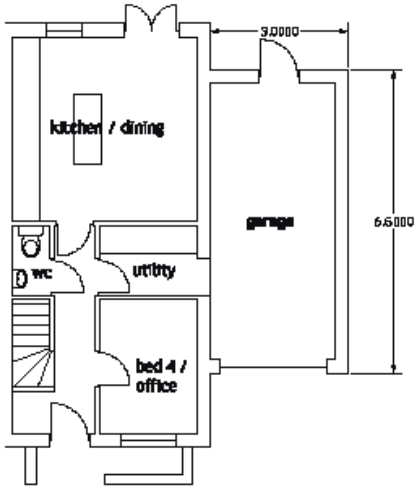
Again within the Conservation Area and the removal of green spaces.

APPENDIX (iii)



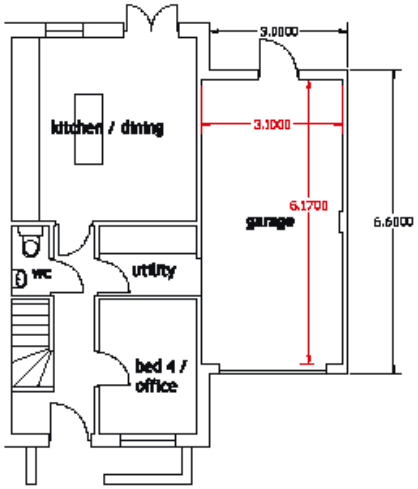
APPENDIX (iv)

Detail drawing showing garage dimensions.



GROUND FLOOR PLAN

PLANNING DRAWINGS



GROUND FLOOR PLAN

DETAIL DRAWINGS

THIS DRAWING PROVIDES CONCLUSIVE PROOF THAT, WITH THE BENEFIT OF TECHNICAL DRAWINGS, THERE IS NO REASON THAT THE GARAGES PROPOSED AT THE PLANNING APPLICATION STAGE CANNOT BE CONSTRUCTED TO COMPLY WITH THE GUIDANCE OF GARAGING STANDARDS OF 3m X 6m.

THE PROPOSED PLANNING CONDITION REQUESTED BY LEICESTER COUNTY COUNCIL PROVIDED SUITABLE CONTROL OVER THIS AND THEREFORE THE PLANNING AUTHORITY HAVE BEEN UNREASONABLE IN THEIR REASON FOR REFUSAL ON THIS ASPECT.

This drawing must not be copied or reproduced without written permission or consent from planapp.

Only figured dimensions to be taken from this drawing, do not scale.

The Author of this drawing does not accept any liability for details or information provided by outside organisations.

Boundaries are shown for indicative purposes only, all boundaries are to be confirmed by the legal owner.

Rev.	Revision notes	Date

Issue

tender ☐ preliminary ■

contract/site ☐ HBS file ☐

Client
Mr R Wheatley

Project
Canning Street Hinckley

Drawing
garaging dimensions

planapp
19 Maple Grove
Stratford upon Avon
Warwickshire
CV37 0DB

www.planapp.co.uk
07764 840444

Scale	Date	Drawn
1:100@A3	25 06 12	AA
Job No	Drawing No	Revision
132	APPEAL 001	

APPENDIX (v)

Communities & Local Government parking calculations;

Table 1 - Typical Additional Demand for Unallocated Parking

Av Car ownership/dwelling	with 1 allocated space	with 2 allocated spaces
0.1	0	0
0.2	0	0
0.3	0	0
0.4	0	0
0.5	0.1	0
0.6	0.1	0
0.7	0.1	0
0.8	0.2	0
0.9	0.2	0
1	0.2	0
1.1	0.3	0
1.2	0.4	0.1
1.3	0.4	0.1
1.4	0.5	0.1
1.5	0.6	0.1
1.6	0.7	0.1
1.7	0.8	0.2
1.8	0.8	0.2
1.9	0.9	0.2
2	1	0.3
2.1	1.1	0.3
2.2	1.2	0.4
2.3	1.3	0.4
2.4	1.4	0.5
2.5	1.5	0.6
2.6	1.6	0.6
2.7	1.7	0.7

Table 3 - 20206 Average Car Ownership Values (extracted information)

No of rooms	Urban Houses			
	From	To	Av range	Rounded
1	x			
2	x			
3	0.8	1.1	0.95	1.0
4	0.9	1.2	1.05	1.1
5	1.1	1.4	1.25	1.3
6	1.2	1.5	1.35	1.4
7	1.4	1.8	1.6	1.6
8	1.7	2.1	1.9	1.9

Table C2

Roooms	Additional Demand for Unallocated Parking 1 Allocated Space	 2 Allocated Spaces
3	0	0
4	0	0
5	0	0
6	0	0
7	0	0
8	0	0

Combine Tables 1 & 2 to produce total demand for residents parking

Rooms	0 Allocated Parking Spaces per dwelling	1 Allocated Parking Spaces per dwelling	2 Allocated Parking Spaces per dwelling
3	1.0	0	0.00
4	1.1	0	0.00
5	1.3	0	0.00
6	1.4	0	0.00
7	1.6	0	0.00
8	1.9	0	0.00

	Number of rooms
Housetype A	6
Housetype B	6
Housetype C	5

Summary

The proposed development makes provision for 2 allocated car parking spaces per dwelling.

Housetype A and B have a total of 6 rooms (as defined in the 2001 Census) and therefore the requirement for this type of dwelling is **2 spaces per dwelling**
Housetype C has a total of 5 rooms (as defined in the 2001 Census) and therefore the requirement for this type of dwelling is **1.8spaces per dwelling**

The proposal provides car parking standards in excess of the requirements of the 'Residential Car Parking Research' document issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government.