



Planning, Design and Access Statement

Erection of dormer
bungalow, alterations and
extensions to The Orchard
and reconfiguration of site
access to enable both
dwellings to be accessed
from Deebank Heights

At

The Orchard, Springfield
Drive, Leek

March 2023

Document Control Sheet

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Client	Mr J Hurst
Project Reference	3671
Project Lead	Richard Pigott (RP)
Team Members	Megan Askham (MA)

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Produced by:

Planning & Design Practice Ltd
 3 Woburn House
 Vernon Gate
 Derby
 DE1 1UL

www.planningdesign.co.uk

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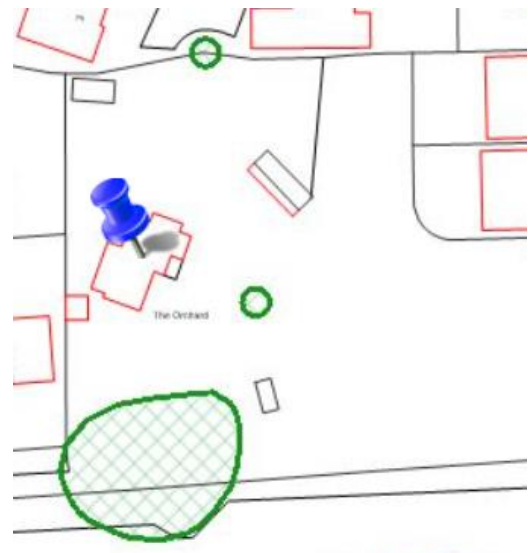
1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** Planning & Design Practice is a town planning and architectural design consultancy consisting of chartered town planners and an architectural design team. The practice operates across England and Wales and, with over 60 years combined experience in the team, the company has an excellent record of success.
- 1.2** Full planning permission is sought for the erection of a dormer bungalow, alterations and extensions to The Orchard and reconfiguration of site access to enable both dwellings to be accessed from Deebank Heights at The Orchard, Springfield Drive, Leek.
- 1.3** This report has been structured to provide an introduction to the site and review its planning history; provide details of the proposed development and the rationale for it; an overview of the relevant planning policies and design guidance; and an examination of the key planning issues to be considered.
- 1.4** Also submitted to accompany the report are the following:
- Location Plan;
 - Existing and Proposed Site Plans;
 - Proposed floor plans and elevations; and
 - Arboricultural Survey.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION AND PLANNING HISTORY

Site Description

- 2.1** The application site comprises the detached dwelling known as The Orchard and its residential curtilage, located at the eastern end of Springfield Drive. The Orchard sits in the centre of a large plot with significant areas of curtilage to the north, east and south of it. There are residential properties to the north (on Woodfield Court) and west (on Springfield Drive) of the dwelling. To the south is Leek High School. To the east of the curtilage is a former paddock of rough grassland which has the benefit of planning permission for 7 dwellings granted under application ref. SMD/2016/0134. This development is nearing completion.
- 2.2** According to the Adopted Local Plan, the site is located within the town development boundary of Leek. There are no other relevant constraints in planning policy terms.
- 2.3** The site is covered by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) relating to a single lime tree located to the east of the dwelling (T1) and a group of three trees (G1) consisting of 2 Lime and 1 Ash near the southern boundary of the site.



Relevant Planning History

- 2.4** An application for outline planning permission was submitted in 2015 (ref. SMD/2015/0208) for the erection of one new dwelling and the creation of new vehicular access but was ultimately

refused due to concerns over the impact on the residential amenity of 12 Springfield Drive, the neighbouring dwelling and the existing dwelling, The Orchard. This was due to the position of the proposed dwelling towards the western part of the site to avoid the protected trees. A revised design was subsequently submitted later in the same year (ref SMD/2015/0390). This application demonstrated that a new dwelling could be located further away from the existing dwellings without impacting the tree protection areas, and harmful overlooking or loss of light could be avoided. Outline consent was approved which has established the principle for residential development on the site and the 'Deebank Heights' drive to continue to the grounds of The Orchard. Reserved matters were never applied for, and the outline permission has since lapsed.

- 2.5** Planning permission on land to the east of The Orchard was obtained in 2016 (SMD/2016/0134) for the erection of 7 dwellings, part of the 'Deebank Heights' development, a mix of standard and chalet bungalows, with new private access secured from Deebank Avenue. Six dwellings have been completed, with one still under construction.

3 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1** Full planning permission is sought for the erection of a dormer bungalow, alterations and extensions to The Orchard and reconfiguration of site access to enable both dwellings to be accessed from Deebank Heights at The Orchard, Springfield Drive, Leek.

Rationale for Development

- 3.2** There are four key objectives underpinning this proposal:
1. A new dwelling on this site will be an appropriate use of underutilised and vacant land to the south of the existing dwelling, The Orchard. It will redirect access to The Orchard via 'Deebank Heights', which more appropriately entertains the front elevation of the property and makes effective use of the access from Springfield Drive which will serve the proposed dwelling.
 2. Restoration of the existing Orchard house is a more sustainable alternative to demolition and will improve the appearance and functionality of the property, bringing it up to modern standards of build and thermal efficiency (the current Orchard dwelling contains no thermal insulation at all and has several structural weaknesses).
 3. The proposal will improve the landscaping of the whole site by the removal of dead or poorly conditioned trees and shrubs and the implementation of a suitable plantation scheme.
 4. The proposed new dwelling and refurbishment to The Orchard will develop this site in a way that complements the Deebank Heights development currently underway and makes best available use of the total space available.

Details of the Proposed Development

The New Dwelling ('Plot 9')

- 3.3** Planning permission is sought for alterations and extensions to The Orchard and the erection of a dormer bungalow within its residential curtilage. The dwellings would be accessed via the new development known as 'Deebank Heights' rather than Springfield Drive which is currently used to access The Orchard.

- 3.4** The new dwelling will be a 3-bedroom dormer bungalow with living space over two floors. The ground floor consists of the kitchen space with a utility room attached and a lounge area with a set of French doors leading to a well-sized rear garden to the east. There would also be a double bedroom and downstairs bathroom. Upstairs, the first floor will consist of two further double bedrooms, both of which will have an ensuite. The roof will be finished with interlocking concrete grey tiles, cream foil effect windows, fascia and soffit boards on the eaves. The walls will be finished in facing brick consisting of Ibstock Hanchurch Red Mixture Blend, similar to that of the Deebank dwellings.
- 3.5** A detached single storey garage is proposed along the site's southern boundary, opposite the dwelling's front elevation in the new driveway. The garage will be finished in matching materials to the main dwelling.

The Orchard

- 3.6** The proposed restoration and extension of The Orchard will bring it up to modern standards of comfort and energy efficiency, creating a 5-bedroom property that is better able to meet the spatial requirements of the applicant's family. The existing single storey extensions to the south and southwest of the property (garage/study) will be removed and a replacement garage is proposed in place of the old structure on the southern gable of the property. This will bring the footprint of the dwelling further away from 12 Springfield Drive and extend to the northeast, further into the property's private gardens. The proposal will also replace the existing roof with a steeper pitched structure to allow rooms in the roof to be formed. It is proposed that solar panels will be installed on the south/western aspects of the roof to create sustainable energy generation for the dwelling.
- 3.7** Once the above changes have been made, the property will be rendered in 'Chalk Weber Rend System' as per the 'Deebank Heights' development to the east, and the new dwelling (plot 9). Additionally, the walls will be finished with facing brick consisting of 'Ibstock Alnwick Blend', similar to the Deebank Heights development but with more colour variation. The windows, fascia and soffit boards will be an Irish Oak effect.

4 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

4.2 The development plan consists of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan, which covers the plan period of 2014 to 2033, and was adopted in 2020. Other material considerations include the National Planning Policy Framework ('the NPPF') and the Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide SPD adopted in 2018, which identifies the overarching principles in securing good design. Other relevant guidance includes the Council's Space About Dwellings SPG adopted in 1998, which contains guidance intended to protect the amenities of existing and future residents when residential development is proposed.

4.3 The purpose of this section is to set out the relevant planning policy background which is pertinent to the site and proposed development, as well as identifying any key studies or reports which will assist in the determination of this application. For ease of reference, these are considered under the following headings:

- Staffordshire Moorlands Adopted Local Plan (2014-2033);
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan Adopted in 2020

4.4 Policy SS1 – Development Principles

"The Council will expect the development and use of land to contribute positively to the social, economic and environmental improvement of the Staffordshire Moorlands in terms of delivering, in partnership with other agencies and services [criteria not relevant to this application omitted]:

- *a mix of types and tenures of quality, affordable homes, to meet the needs and aspirations of the existing and future communities...*
- *a healthy, safe, attractive, active, well-designed, and well-maintained environment; ...*
- *development which maintains the locally distinctive character of the Staffordshire Moorlands, its individual towns and villages and their settings".*

4.5 Policy SS2 – Settlement Hierarchy

“Towns – these are the largest settlements comprising of Leek, Biddulph and Cheadle which accommodate half of the District's population and the majority of the District's services and facilities. The spatial strategy seeks to focus future growth in these settlements and to strengthen their role as service centres. These settlements will be defined by a Development Boundary.”

4.6 Policy SS 4 – Strategic Housing and Employment Land Supply

“In order to meet the housing requirements identified in Policy SS 3, sufficient land will be identified to accommodate at least 3763 additional dwellings ... This will be met from sites allocated in Policy H 2 and a windfall allowance for small sites that accord with the Spatial Strategy and Policy H 1.”

The text which accompanies Policy SS4 states: *“In order to deliver the housing requirements for Leek ... there will need to be a minimum of 945 additional dwellings to be provided in the town. This requirement will be met through the allocated sites, windfalls or the small sites.”*

Area	% of District Total	Net housing requirement
Leek	30%	945
Biddulph	20%	962
Cheadle	25%	1158
Rural	25%	698
Total	100%	3763

Table 6.6

4.7 Policy DC1 – Design Considerations

“All development shall be well designed and reinforce local distinctiveness by positively contributing to and complementing the special character and heritage of the area in line with the Council's Design Guide SPD. In particular, new development should:

- 1. be of a high quality and add value to the local area, incorporating creativity, detailing and materials appropriate to the character of the area;*
- 2. be designed to respect the site and its surroundings and promote a positive sense of place and identity through its scale, height, density, layout, siting, landscaping, character and appearance”.*

4.8 Policy SS 5 – Leek Area Strategy

“The Council and its partners will seek to consolidate the role of Leek as the principal service centre and a market town and support its regeneration. This will be achieved through the following actions:

- 1. Continue to meet the housing and community needs of Leek and its rural hinterland by:*
 - Increasing the range of available and affordable house types, including for first time buyers and older people.*

- *Allocating a range of suitable, deliverable housing sites sufficient to meet the requirements of the area.*
- *Supporting the development of new housing on sustainable sites within the Development Boundary.”*

4.9 Policy H1 – New Housing

1. *“New housing development should provide for a mix of housing sizes, types and tenure including a proportion of affordable housing as set out in Policy H 3, and where appropriate housing for special groups, to meet the needs and aspirations of the current and future population having regard to the Area Strategies.*

c) All housing development should be at the most appropriate density compatible with the site and its location, and with the character of the surrounding area. Higher densities will generally be appropriate in locations which are more accessible by public transport and which have good access to services.

d) All new dwellings should aim to provide flexible accommodation which is capable of future adaptation by seeking to achieve adequate internal space for the intended number of occupants in accordance with the Nationally Described Space standard and delivered to meet accessibility standards set out in the Optional Requirement M4(2) of Part M of the Building Regulations. This will be determined on a site-by-site basis subject to considerations such as viability and design.

e) All new dwellings must be of sufficient size to provide satisfactory levels of amenity for future occupiers of the dwellings whilst respecting the privacy and amenity of occupiers of existing dwellings.

2. *All development will be assessed according to the extent to which it provides for high quality, sustainable housing and to which it meets identified housing needs, having regard to the location of the development, the characteristics of the site and the economics of provision...*

3. *Housing development on sites not allocated for such purposes in Policy H 2 will be supported as follows:*

a) Within the development boundaries of the towns and larger villages, residential development and development on unidentified (windfall) sites will be permitted, subject to compliance with the Spatial Strategy and wider Local Plan policies...”

4.10 Policy SD 3 – Sustainability Measures in Development

“The Council will support further carbon-saving or water-saving measures in both new and existing development in the following ways:

The Council will support measures designed to improve the sustainability of existing buildings (such as improved thermal insulation, water conservation, or the installation of micro-renewables).”

4.11 Policy NE2 – Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

“The Council will protect existing trees, woodland and hedgerows, in particular, ancient woodland, veteran trees and ancient or species-rich hedgerows from loss or deterioration.

This will be achieved by:

Requiring that existing woodlands, healthy trees and hedgerows are retained and integrated within a proposed development unless the need for, and benefits of, the development clearly outweigh their loss...”

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 4.12** Paragraph 7 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.
- 4.13** Paragraph 8 sets out how the goal of *“achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has 3 overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):*
- *an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure*
 - *a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and*
 - *an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.”*
- 4.14** Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework advises that at the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking this means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay. Amongst its main objectives there is a stated aim of significantly boosting the supply of new housing in sustainable locations.
- 4.15** Paragraph 60 states that; *“To support the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed...”*.
- 4.16** Paragraph 69 goes on to say; *“Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area and are often built-out relatively quickly. To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should... d) work with developers to encourage the sub-division of large sites where this could help to speed up the delivery of homes”*.

4.17 Paragraphs 126 and 130 set out the importance of achieving well-designed places;

“The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process”.

“Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

(a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

(b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

(c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

(d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit...”.

4.18 Paragraph 131 is also relevant to this site, given the TPO; *“Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments, and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that...appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible...”*

5 KEY PLANNING ISSUES

The principle of the development

- 5.1** The site is within the settlement boundary of Leek, a market town that Policy SS2 identifies as a location where future growth should be focussed. It is within comfortable walking distance of the services and amenities that Leek has to offer including schools, shops, health services, leisure facilities, bus services and open spaces. The proposal for a new dwelling is therefore consistent with Local Plan Policy SS5 and NPPF guidance which support development in sustainable locations.
- 5.2** The principle of development for a new dwelling on the site and extension of Deebank Avenue to The Orchard has already been established, as a result of the outline planning permission that was approved in 2015. The ‘Deebank Heights’ development has been very popular and four of the six dwellings currently built were sold off plan. The pandemic, if anything, merely served to increase demand and there has been, and still remains, substantial interest in the development.
- 5.3** The new dwelling will be a single dormer bungalow within a garden at a density that is appropriate to the surrounding area and will provide a good quality home in an existing residential area. It is consistent with Policies H1, SS1 and SS5 which collectively support the development of an appropriate range and type of housing that is flexible and accessible, able to meet the differing needs of households, including housing suitable for an ageing population, as well as families and first-time buyers. Demand for this type of dwelling is strong – 6 of the approved dwellings at ‘Deebank Heights’ have already sold and there has been substantial interest from potential buyers in the remaining dwelling which is in the process of being built.
- 5.4** The proposed dwelling will make more efficient use of an underused and generously sized site. The NPPF recognises that small and medium-sized sites such as this can make an important contribution to meeting an area’s housing need (para 69), at the time of the Local Plan’s publication in September 2020 Leek required an additional 945 dwellings (minimum) by the end of the Plan period in 2033.
- 5.5** The proposed extension and restoration of The Orchard will modernise and revitalise the appearance of the dwelling, address existing structural weaknesses, and improve the sustainability of the building. The improved sustainability will be achieved through enhanced thermal insulation, providing an efficient heating source, and solar panels, providing solar energy

generation, in line with Local Plan Policy SD3 and the NPPF's support for development that minimises waste and contributes positively to environmental sustainability (para 8).

- 5.6** In this context, it is considered that the principle of development, namely the creation of an additional dwelling in a residential area and the extension and restoration of The Orchard, is acceptable. The proposal, therefore, complies with the principles of housing development as set out in Local Plan policies H1, SS1 and SS5 and should be considered in the context of site-specific factors which will be discussed below.

Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area

- 5.7** The Orchard is set in very spacious grounds compared with the rest of the surrounding area where properties are set in more modest plots. The subdivision of this plot would therefore not be out of keeping with the pattern of development in the area or detrimental to its character and appearance. The Orchard would still retain a generous plot size even after the subdivision and the proposed extension.
- 5.8** The proposed dwelling will be a modest dormer bungalow, which is consistent with the form of neighbouring dwellings, namely the new bungalows being built to the east at Deebank Heights and the existing Bungalows on Springfield Drive. The site is visually well-screened by the trees along the southern and northern boundaries. This screening, and the size of the property, will ensure that the new dwelling is not visually prominent in the context of the surrounding area, and is compliant with design Policy DC1 which requires that development respects the site and its surroundings, and is appropriate in form, size, scale, and density.
- 5.9** The proposal also complies with Policy DC1 in the respect that it will promote a positive sense of place and identity by improving the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area. The design of the new dormer bungalow and the refurbished dwelling will do this by incorporating matching details and materials, such as the partially rendered finish, which will ensure that the appearance of the two properties is sympathetic to one another, as well as the bungalows within the 'Deebank Heights' development. The proposed materials already gained the Council's approval in 2015 when outline permission was granted. Additionally, the proposed extension to The Orchard will respect the character and dominance of the original building and be subordinate in terms of its size and massing. The proposed alterations to the roof pitch and external finishes

to the building will be consistent with the guidance regarding residential extensions in the 2018 Design SPD, as the aim is to revitalise the building without altering its fundamental character.

Impact on Protected Trees

- 5.10** The application is accompanied by an Arboricultural Report prepared by Tree Heritage. There is a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) relating to a single lime tree located to the east of The Orchard and a group of three trees consisting of 2 Lime and 1 Ash near the southern boundary of the site (adjacent to the boundary with the school). The centre tree of the group is located virtually on the boundary. Whilst the two trees on either side of it are located approximately 3-4 metres from the boundary, the new dwelling and associated garage would be located comfortably outside their root protection areas (RPAs).
- 5.11** The Arboricultural Report states that the current hard surface of the existing driveway will have restricted root growth in this area and the proposed development of plot 9 will not adversely affect these trees. The report recommends that root protection barriers are located along the edge of the driveway during the initial phase of development. Since the installation of the attenuation system, the trees have shown improvements in their condition due to careful digging in the area.
- 5.12** To allow the development of 'plot 9', two category U trees (trees of low quality) will require removal. Additionally, a cluster of category C coniferous trees that are showing signs of decline will also be removed. As recommended in the Arboricultural Report, replacement tree planting, as outlined in paragraph 5.13, is proposed to mitigate the impact of the removal of existing trees.
- 5.13** The applicant met with the Trees & Woodland Officer (TWO) on site on 10th November 2022 to review the scheme plan, the Arboricultural Report and discuss viability of a new detached garage in the exact location where the existing pavilion rests. Steve Massey raised minor concerns over loss of two trees, T12 Silver Birch and T13 Oak, that would be removed to make way for the foundations of the new garage. The applicant heeded the preferences of the TWO and amended the proposed scheme plan and Orchard Restoration Design to resituate the garage accommodation at the southern gable of The Orchard. To allow construction of the proposed new driveway to Plot 9, T9 (Lime tree) will be removed. With regards Plot 8, it is proposed that one Tilla Cordata be planted to the northwest of the retained pavilion, three Prunus Kanzan be planted to the side of the southeastern gable and two Pyrus Calleryana trees be planted in the respective

rear gardens of Plot 8 and Plot 9 to increase the density of trees on site. Special protective measures will be required where the proposed new driveway encroaches into RPA's. This section of the driveway will require a 'no-dig' construction method and the use of a 3D cellular confinement and load spreading system. It is also recommended that all retained trees are protected during the construction period to ensure they are not damaged.

- 5.14** All retained trees will require protection during construction work to ensure there is no further damage. This can be achieved with a Construction Exclusion Zone (CEZ), using barriers to exclude vehicles, personnel and materials from that area.
- 5.15** The measures that have been set out above to protect the trees within the site are consistent with policy NE2 from the Local Plan and Paragraph 131 of the NPPF and will help mitigate impacts on the trees that have been identified in the Arboricultural Report.

Impact on Highway Safety

- 5.16** The Orchard and the new dwelling will be accessed via the existing vehicular access to the 'Deebank Heights' development at Deebank Avenue. There will be a slight increase in traffic along the private drive but this will not result in a significant increase in vehicular movements and will not impact highway safety.

Impact on the Amenities of Neighbouring Residents

12 Springfield Drive

- 5.17** The proposed dwelling will be sited 7.6 metres from the boundary with 12 Springfield Drive, thus complying with the 'Space About Dwellings' SPG which requires a 6-metre separation distance between principal windows and site boundaries. There would also be nearly 15 metres between the front elevation of the plot 9 dwelling and the western flank of Plot 4. This complies with the requirement for there to be no less than 10.7 metres of distance between a principal window on the front elevation of a dwelling and the flank wall of a bungalow with no principal windows.
- 5.18** The distance between the rear elevation of the new dwelling and the eastern gable of 12 Springfield Drive would be 11 metres at the nearest point. The SPG requires 11 metres between a principal window and the flank wall of a bungalow. The ground floor of the proposed dwelling would be designed to ensure that the proposed tree screens the view from the lounge and study

that face towards the gable. The first floor contains no windows facing west towards the gable of no.12. As there would be negligible differences between the finished floor levels of the new dwelling and 12 Springfield Drive (400mm), and a new 1.8m high fence along the boundary, this further limits any impact on the outlook of the west facing elevation of the proposed dwelling.

The Orchard

- 5.19** Regarding the proposed extension of The Orchard, there will be no adverse impact on the amenity and privacy of 12 Springfield Drive. The proposal will bring the footprint of the dwelling 1 metre further away from 12 Springfield Drive by removing the existing dilapidated extensions and creating the new features of the dwelling at its northern end. The proposed dormer inset into the roof of the west-facing roof would be at the stairwell, at a point where the occupants will have descended approximately 1m down the stairs, making views out of the dormer into 12 Springfield Drive impossible. The dormer will provide additional head height and aid light dissipation in the new stairwell.
- 5.20** There would be an 8-metre separation distance between the living quarters of The Orchard and the proposed dwelling at the nearest point, which is 3-4 metres further than the scheme approved in 2015 for the site. There would be no breach of the 45-degree angle from any front facing windows of The Orchard. The north elevation of the new dwelling, facing towards The Orchard will have no windows, so there will be no risk of overlooking.
- 5.21** In summary, it will be possible to construct a dwelling on the application site which respects the amenities of adjacent occupiers and provides a suitable level of amenity to future occupiers. This is consistent with Local Plan policies SS1, H1 and DC1, as well as the relevant SPDs, which require new residential development to be well-designed, of a density compatible with the plot's size and considerate to the amenity of residents.

Leek High School

- 5.22** In 2016, planning permission was obtained for the erection of 7 dwellings as part of the 'Deebank Heights' development (ref: SMD/2016/0134). The approval contained Condition 8 which stated that 'The acoustic fence shall be provided in exact accordance with the details on drawing 2015/2095 08 Rev G before the development is first brought into use.' This high quality acoustic fencing was provided on Leek High School's boundary and the school are extremely happy with

the outcomes to date. Therefore, within this development, the applicant is happy to offer this concession again and to replace the existing fencing which is in poor condition along the southern boundary.

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1** Planning permission is sought for alterations and extensions to The Orchard and the erection of a dormer bungalow; and reconfiguration of site access to enable both dwellings to be accessed from Deebank Heights at The Orchard, Springfield Drive, Leek.
- 6.2** This is a sustainable location for a new dwelling as it lies close to the services and amenities that Leek has to offer. The development of a single house within a garden at a density that is appropriate to the surrounding area will provide a good quality family home in an existing residential area where services and infrastructure are already available. It will make efficient use of an underused site and be within walking distance of local basic services. This will take the pressure off Greenfield sites and is clearly in the interests of good town planning.
- 6.3** The proposed site plan shows how a dwelling can fit comfortably within the plot. The subdivision of The Orchard would not result in a plot size (either for the proposed dwelling or The Orchard) that is out of keeping with the pattern of development in the area or detrimental to the character and appearance of the area. It is notable that The Orchard would still retain a generous plot size, with enough space to conduct the proposed extension, whilst remaining larger than all of the adjoining plots. The proposed extension and alterations will improve the sustainability of the property and create a more attractive, functional home for the applicant's family.
- 6.4** Whilst the properties on Springfield Drive are constructed linearly the site lies at the end of a row, the dwelling would be modest, and it is visually well screened. This will ensure that the new dwelling is not visually prominent in the context of the surrounding area and will not be harmful to its character and appearance.
- 6.5** The most important trees will be retained and safeguarded, and the dwelling will be designed to ensure no significant conflict between future occupiers and the trees.

- 6.6** The proposal to build a new dwelling on the site will not have a significant impact on the amenities of The Orchard or 12 Springfield Drive, nor will future occupiers of the proposed dwelling be subject to poor living conditions.
- 6.7** Overall, it is considered that planning permission should be granted as there are no adverse impacts that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against relevant local and national planning policies.



Planning & Design Practice Ltd

www.planningdesign.co.uk

info@planningdesign.co.uk

Tel: 01332 347371

Derby

3 Woburn House
Vernon Gate
Derby
Derbyshire
DE1 1UL

Macclesfield

Waters Green House
Waters Green
Macclesfield
Cheshire
SK11 6LF

Matlock

Cromford Creative
Cromford Mills
Mill Lane, Cromford
Matlock
DE4 3RQ

Sheffield

32 Gilbert Street
Park Hill
Sheffield
S2 5PN