

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT IN RELATION TO

*PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF
TWO DETACHED DWELLINGS
STABLE HILLS
CHADWICK HALL ROAD
ROCHDALE
OL11 4DJ*

September 2017.

Stable Hills Embankment Housing

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1 INTRODUCTION

(1.0) Introduction:

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared to support the planning application for two new houses on the embankment of the Stable Hills Site. The design has evolved through a rigorous assessment of the surrounding context and through the involvement and collaboration of various professionals including architects, traffic consultants, heritage and aboriginal specialists. The following sections will explain how the design concept for the two dwellings has developed, and how the buildings engage with the surrounding landscape through high quality design.

(1.1) Project Description:

This planning application is for two new five-bedroom residential properties along the hillside of the Stable Hills site as stated above. Each property has a total area of 3100ft² and is arranged over three stories, taking advantage of the changing levels of the hillside. The properties are accessed at ground level, via the new access road along the western boundary of the site. The properties offer parking facilities and include external terraces and bin stores.

2 CONTEXT ANALYSIS

(2.0) Site Description

The design has developed through a rigorous assessment of the site context; not just its physical and visual characteristics, but also its social and historic landscape. Please also refer also to the heritage statement supporting this application.

The site is located on the edge of greenbelt land and is accessed from Chadwick Hall Road off Bury Road in Rochdale. Within the Stable Hills site lies the existing property, known as Stable Hills; a two-storey stone building with a pitched tiled roof and orientated with a north / south aspect. The south aspect in particular, affords spectacular views across the Roche Valley. The existing building is currently the residence of the Grieves family and sits at the highest level of the site allowing level access from the site boundary to the North. There is currently planning permission in place for the demolition of this dwelling and the construction of a replacement dwelling (Application reference 08/D51571).

To the North of the Stable Hills site lie the Stables, which is a single storey structure with a single aspect that faces west. Planning permission has also been granted for the demolition of this and its replacement with a larger dwelling (Application reference 17/00148).

One of the feature characteristics of the site is the mature trees, hedgerows and stone walls that line the boundaries. These are integral to the character of the site and the setting of these buildings. They also provide screening and privacy between adjacent properties.

The Hill House Estate – Historical Context:

The application site, now known as Stable Hills, was formerly within the curtilage of the Hill House Estate, the boundaries of which now occupy 4 separate ownerships. A local businessman and entrepreneur, James Duckworth, owned the Estate and sold off a parcel of the land including 2 of the outbuildings, in 1959 to husband and wife architects Moir and Bateman. They then converted the former coach-house into a 5 Bedroom residence for themselves and their children.

Following this, two further plots of land belonging to the Hill House Estate were sold off and new properties constructed for residential use. The application site is the largest of the 4 plots that make up the former estate.

Hill House:

The neighbouring property to Stable Hills is Hill House. This is Grade II listed and was built circa. 1608.

This building has had an Arts and Crafts ‘make-over’ but still retains some features that are characteristic of the original property. In particular stone copings to the gable elevations, stone surrounds and reveals to the windows and oversized chimneystacks. The external walls are finished in white render and the roof in red clay tiles. Although this building is listed it does not reflect a typology characteristic of the local area. (fig 1)



Fig. 1 – Rear elevation, Hill house



Fig. 2 – Rear elevation, Links View

Links View:

There are some newer dwellings constructed to the east boundary of the proposed development site (fig. 2). These are smaller in size and more ‘modern’, using brown brick and brindle pan-tiles for the roof.

The Existing Stable Hills Building:

The existing dwelling at Stable Hills sits in line with the adjacent Hill House, although in terms of its scale and massing it is not subservient, with the Stable Hills dwelling standing over 2m taller than the adjacent Listed Building. (fig. 3) It is understood that Stable Hills was constructed more recently than the original Hill House and it has been suggested that the intention may have been to rebuild the Hill House dwelling to a larger scale however this never materialised.

Furthermore, Stable Hills is identified as one large volume, whereas Hill House is formed by a cluster of smaller pitched roof elements which further emphasises the difference in scale.



Fig. 3 – Rear elevation, Stable Hills

Approved Replacement dwelling in place of Stable Hills:

As mentioned earlier there is planning permission in place to demolish the existing Stable Hills and re-build a replacement detached dwelling. The approved scheme is a departure away from the large single mass of the existing building, by creating two "wings" which are joined by a lower pitched element.

The replacement dwelling is also located along the same building line as Hill House and in a position that does not compromise the several TPO trees that can be found on the site.

Approved Replacement dwelling in place of the Stables:

As also mentioned earlier, planning permission has also been granted to demolish the Stables and build a replacement dwelling in its position. The new dwelling is two storeys high; the first floor will be accommodated within the roof space. The building size is still significantly smaller than that of both Stable Hills and Hill House therefore maintaining the historical hierarchy of the group of buildings.

The hillside:

South of the Stable Hills house, lies a formal lawn open to the south, which terminates with soft landscaping and planting and is approximately level. An existing dirt track (fig 4.) lies along the eastern boundary of the site, which slopes down and around the formal lawn. Immediately beyond this track, the site slopes quite dramatically towards the southern boundary (fig 5); the bottom of the hill being approximately 13m lower than the track level. The hillside is the particular part of the site in question for the location of the two new properties. The previously approved application for the replacement dwelling in place of Stable Hills also included a poolhouse on this hillside, as well as a new access road that follows the current direction of the existing dirt track. Although this planning permission has lapsed, it has demonstrated that Rochdale Council have previously accepted the principle of development on this land including the construction of an access road from the north.



Fig. 4 – existing track to Eastern boundary leading to hillside



Fig. 5 – Track and hillside beyond formal lawn

(2.2) Planning Policy Context

In terms of Planning Policy we understand that the Stable Hills building and application site are not included in the Listing for Hill House, and consequently no Listed Building Consent is required.

We acknowledge, however, that Hill House contributes significantly to the immediate character of the local area and any new building adjacent to it should consider the importance of this setting.

Information regarding the Heritage Planning Policy Context included within the heritage statement.

(2.3) Site Analysis:

Diagram 1 indicates the main constraints and opportunities that the Stable Hills site has to offer. The main constraint would be that it does not offer many opportunities for access to the hillside, which is only accessible by the existing path along the western part of the site. Furthermore, consideration needs to be made not to obstruct any of the views that the existing properties currently have across the hillside, particularly regarding the views from Hill House. The site also includes a number of important trees, in particular the chestnut tree to the eastern boundary of the site, which is of environmental and visual value to the surrounding properties. This tree also has a large root protection area which needs to be clear of major building works. The steep hillside could also be considered a constraint, mainly in terms of ground level access, however the changing levels could be an opportunity for interest in the design and character of the properties, assisting with privacy, taking advantage of the excellent views (fig.6) and plenty of southern sunlight the site has to offer.

Diagram 1: SITE ANALYSIS

Constraints:

1. Limited opportunities for access
2. Blocking neighbouring property views
3. Location of trees and root protection areas
4. Steep hillside

Opportunities:

4. Steep hillside
5. Southern sunlight
6. Views to the valley

(2.4) Site Response:

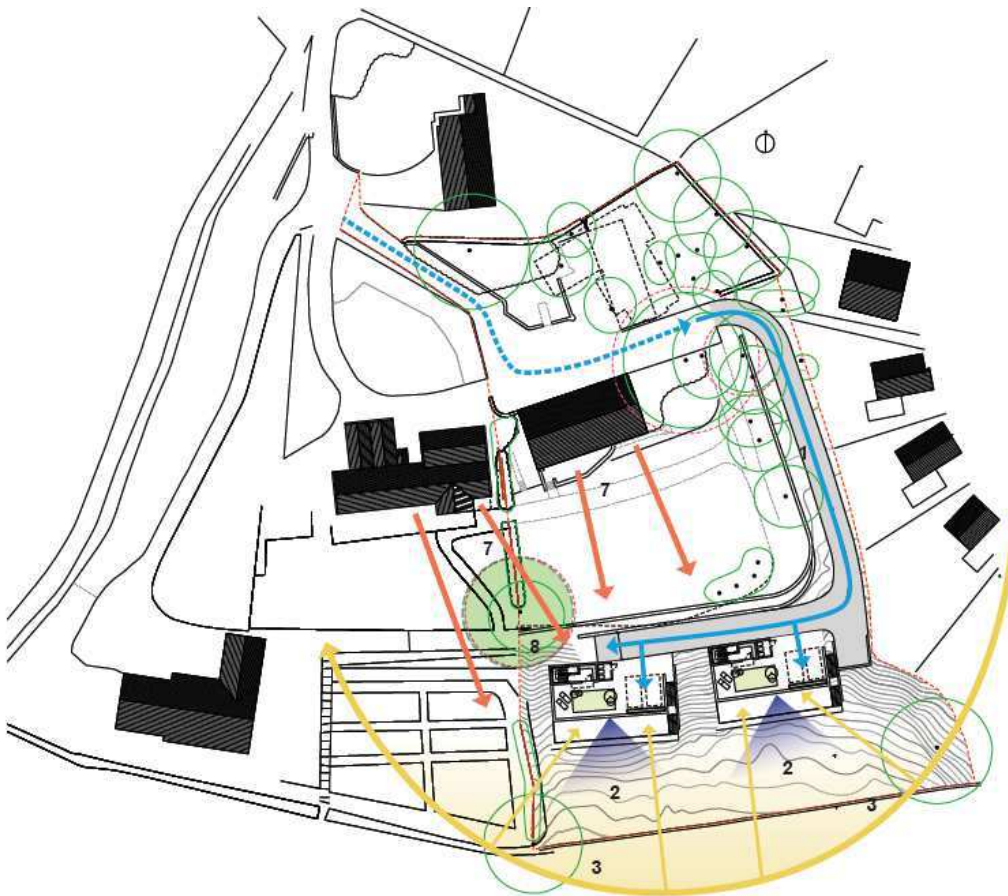


Diagram 2a

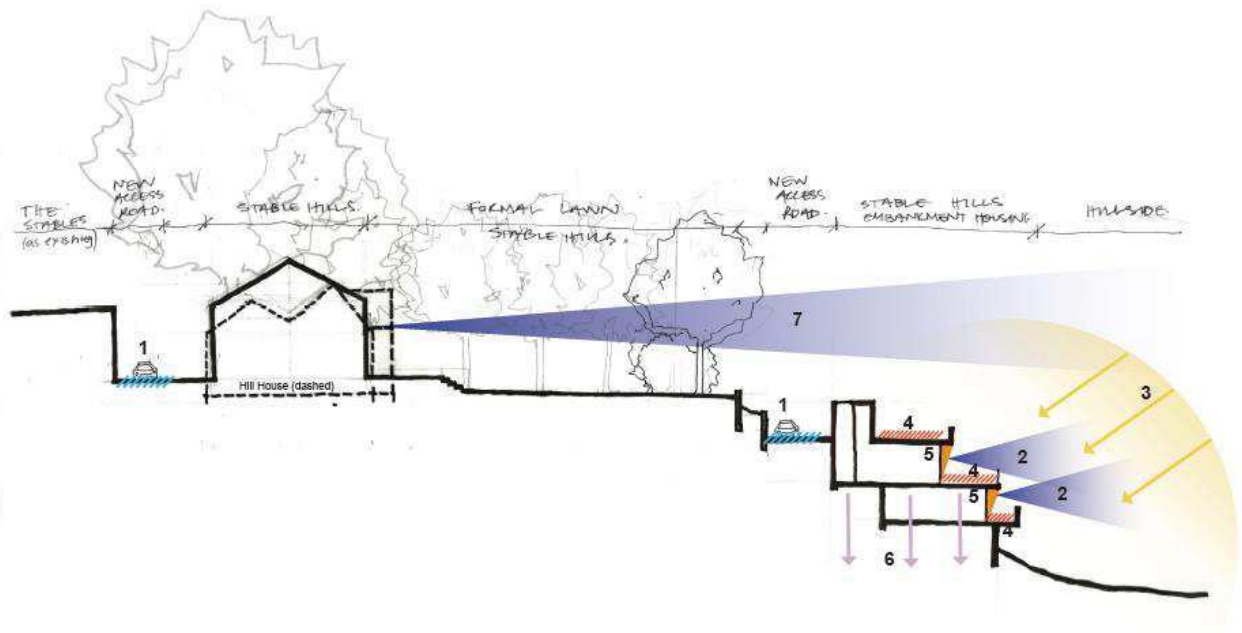


Diagram 2b

Diagram 2a + 2b: SITE RESPONSE

Diagrams 2a and 2b indicate the way the design has responded to the constraints and opportunities highlighted in the previous section. The dwellings have been positioned on site following a careful consideration of the constraints and opportunities the site has to offer. A new access road through the Stable Hills site will provide a route down to the hillside (1), where the two dwellings have been located. The two properties have been orientated to face south, in order to benefit from great views (2) and plenty of south light (3). Taking advantage of the sloping site, each floor staggers to provide a terrace for the floor above (4). This staggering also creates an overhang for each floor again, which provides shading for the rooms underneath (5). Respectful to the surrounding neighbours, the dwellings have been sunken into the site (6), in order to ensure the views to the surrounding landscape remain unobstructed (7). This way, the dwellings remain unnoticed to neighbours and passers-by. The properties and surrounding landscape works have also been carefully located away from the root protection area of the chestnut tree (TPO 278) (8).

3 DESIGN

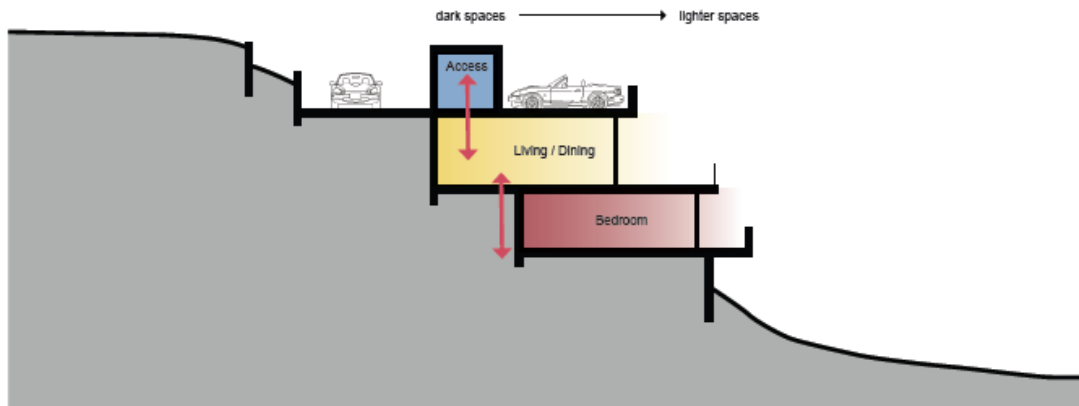


Diagram 3: DIAGRAMATIC SECTION

(3.0) Massing and scale

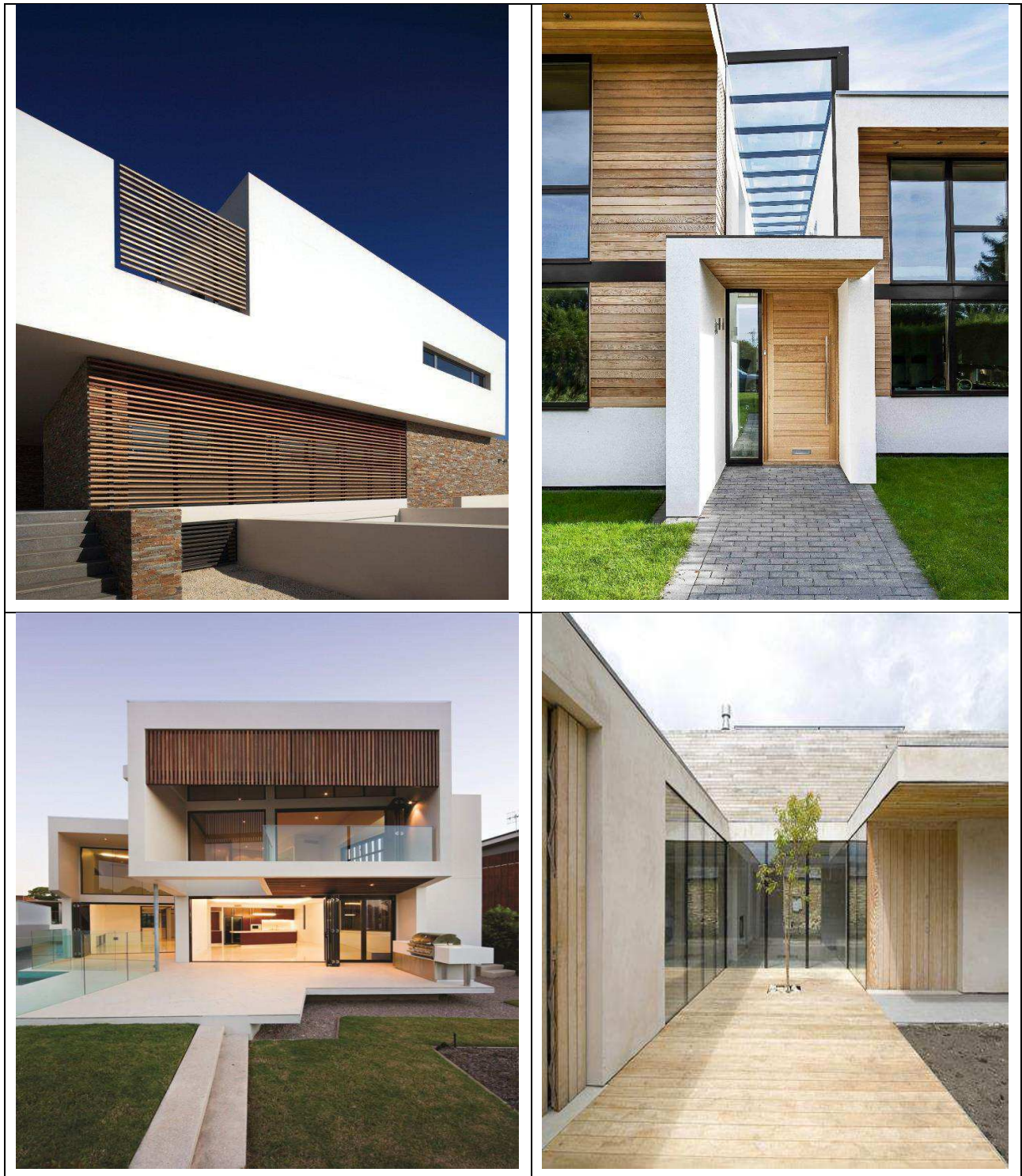
The massing and scale of the two properties has been carefully considered to be in line with the surrounding context and unobtrusive to the surrounding properties. The dwellings have been lowered below the level of the formal lawn of stable hills, and all floors have been staggered in resonance to the hillside. The houses are three storeys high; however the top storey consists of only a small pavilion for the main staircase. The rest of the accommodation is spread over two floors. The depth of the property allows enough natural light to enter all habitable rooms, and the length maximises views and usable space.

(3.1) Arrangement

The dwellings have been organised across three levels, as described by the diagrammatic section below. The top level is for access, the level below is for living and dining, whereas the floor below is dedicated to all bedrooms. Each floor experiences different levels of privacy; the main living and dining space has been designed to be open plan, so as one arrives at the bottom of the stairs they are greeted by an unobstructed panoramic view of the surrounding site. The level hosting the bedrooms however is more private, as each bedroom has its own dedicated view across the hillside. This is also expressed in the elevations, as this floor shows less glazing. Looking at each level further, storage and utility spaces have been located to the north of the floor plan, to allow living spaces to benefit from natural light to the south. All levels have direct access to the outside, including all bedrooms in the basement level.

(3.2) Materials / Appearance:

The dwellings have a contemporary appearance that is modest and sensitive to the surrounding context. The language of the design is simple in geometry and the elevations articulate the staggered floors, expressing a language of linear planes. The floors create the main linear elements and will be articulated in white render, resonating the main material used on Hill House, whereas the other facade elements that are set back will be expressed in glass or a choice between timber or brown / bronze metal cladding, contrasting the white render and giving the dwellings a warm character. The side walls will be in stone, giving them an earthy appearance and rooting them within the landscape.



4 ACCESS

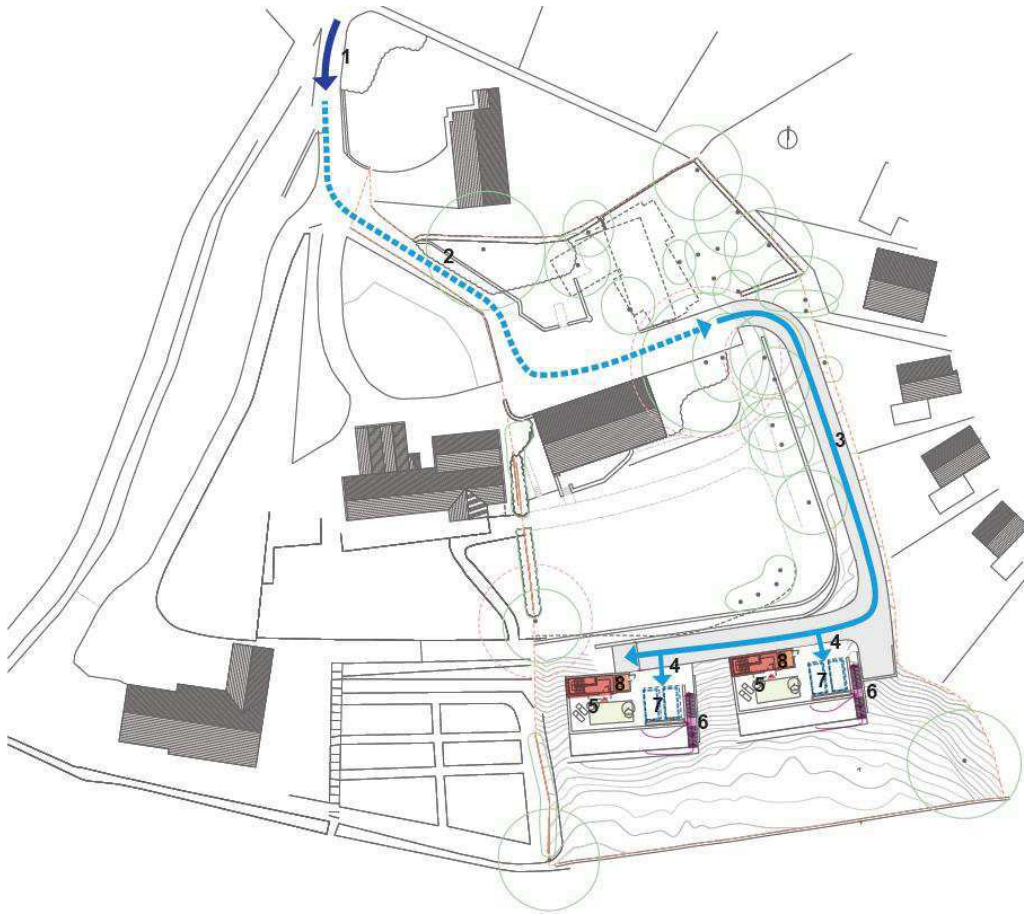


Diagram 4: ACCESS

Access into the general site is via Chadwick Hall Road (1), which leads to a shared driveway between the surrounding properties (2). The new access road to the east of the site (3) will provide both vehicular and pedestrian access directly to the two new dwellings from this shared driveway. This road will slope down and curve around to the south of the site, to provide access to the ground floor of the dwellings (4). At this floor, an enclosed staircase will provide access to the lower ground floor (5). A second staircase leads to the basement floor, where all the bedrooms are located. Each floor has direct access to an external terrace, which is linked to an external staircase. The external staircase facilitates a better connectivity and flow between the three storeys and external terraces (6). As the relationship between internal and external spaces is key, all bedrooms have doors that allow direct access outside.

Each dwelling will have to allocated parking spaces within their footprint (7), along with a dedicated, enclosed bin store (8).

5 CONCLUSION

The design of the proposed dwellings their setting & context have been fully considered and arranged to minimise the impact on the landscape and adjacent dwellings. In particular, access is arranged along the Eastern boundary along the line of the existing track and along the top of the embankment behind the formal lawn of Stable Hills. The dwellings are set into the hillside and at a lower level mainly below the level of the access driveway giving very little visual presence when viewed from Hill House or Stable Hills.

The new dwellings will be visible from some of the houses on Link View, but this will be minimise by additional tree screening between the new houses and the eastern boundaries. The level of the new houses will continue to allow the properties on Link View to enjoy the long views over the Roche valley beyond. The dwellings will be set against the back drop of a significant tree screen along the western boundary which will reduce the visual impact of the new dwellings from both Link View and from Yasmeen House to the West

The new dwellings are sited in the approximate location and adopt the same basic design concept as the previously approved Pool House, which similarly had the access road along the Eastern Boundary.

We believe that the proposals will have minimum long term visual impact and will bring an otherwise unusable part of Stable Hills garden in to use to create 2 very contemporary dwellings which have dedicated stepped terraces allowing the much of the remining site area to remain as 'natural' as possible.

We would therefore ask the Council to support this innovative proposal to provide high quality large family dwellings.