

The application site

Conservation area shown hatched

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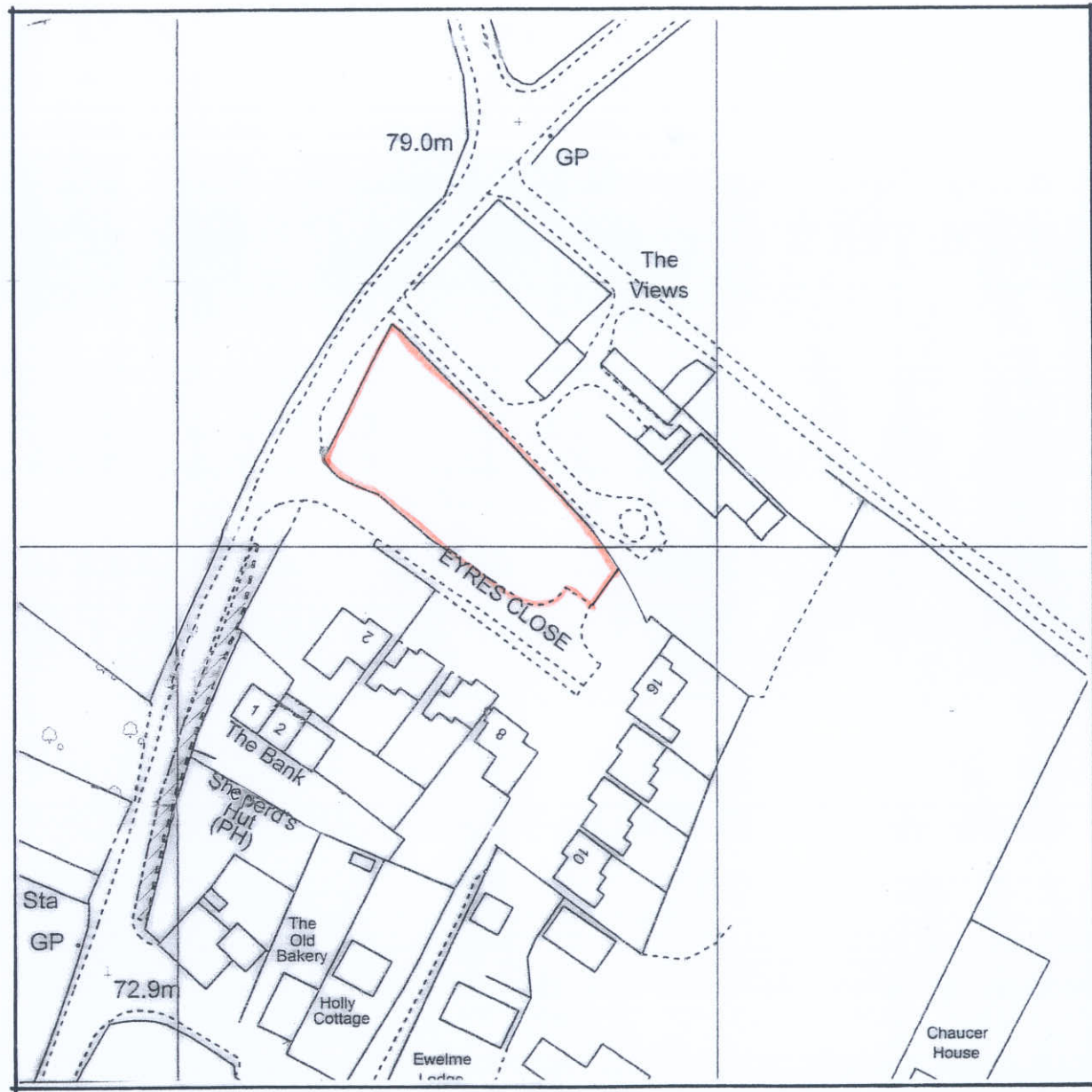
Application No. P15/S3649/O

1:2,500 scale



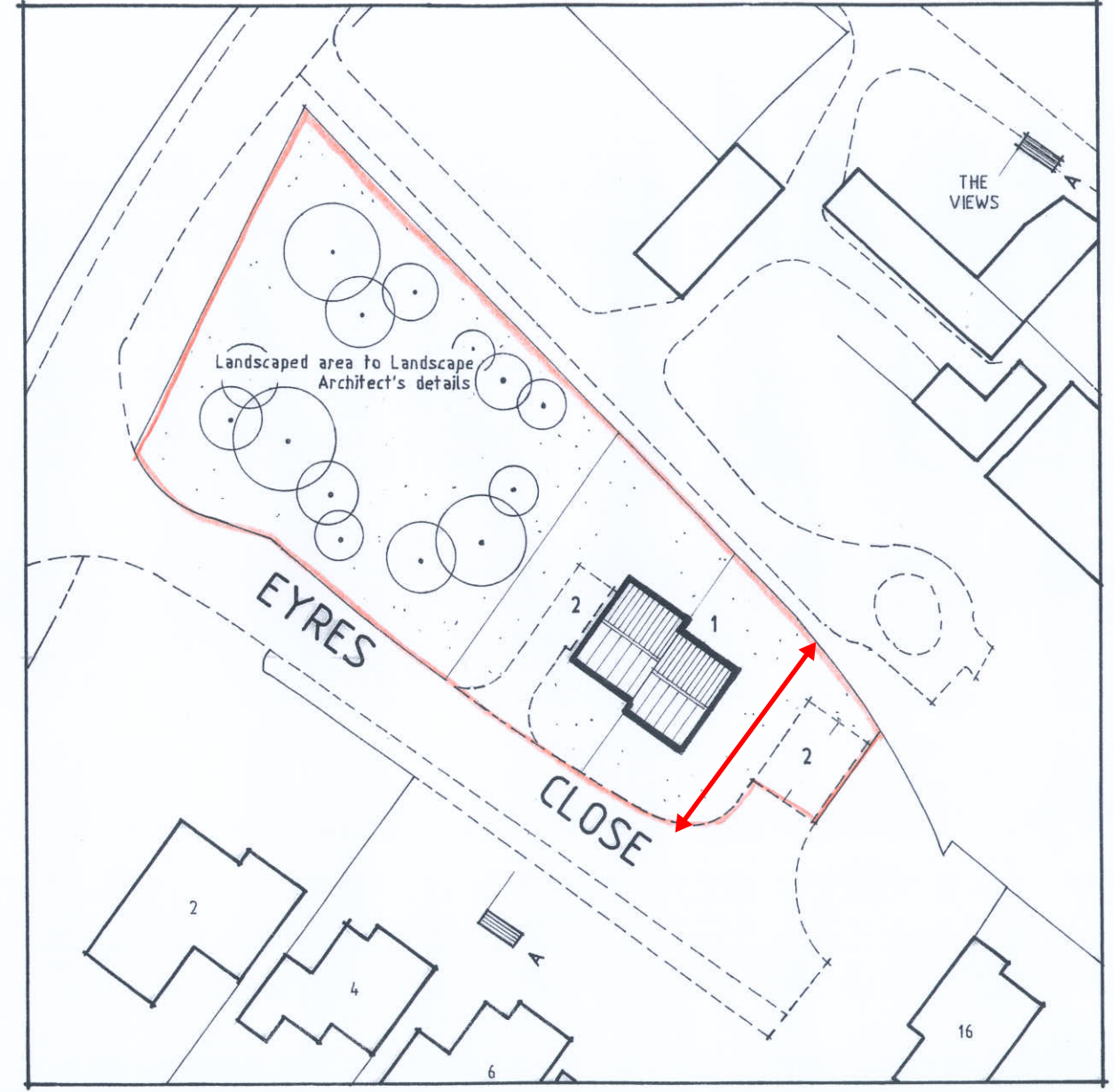
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LOCATION PLAN

1:1250



BLOCK PLAN

1:500

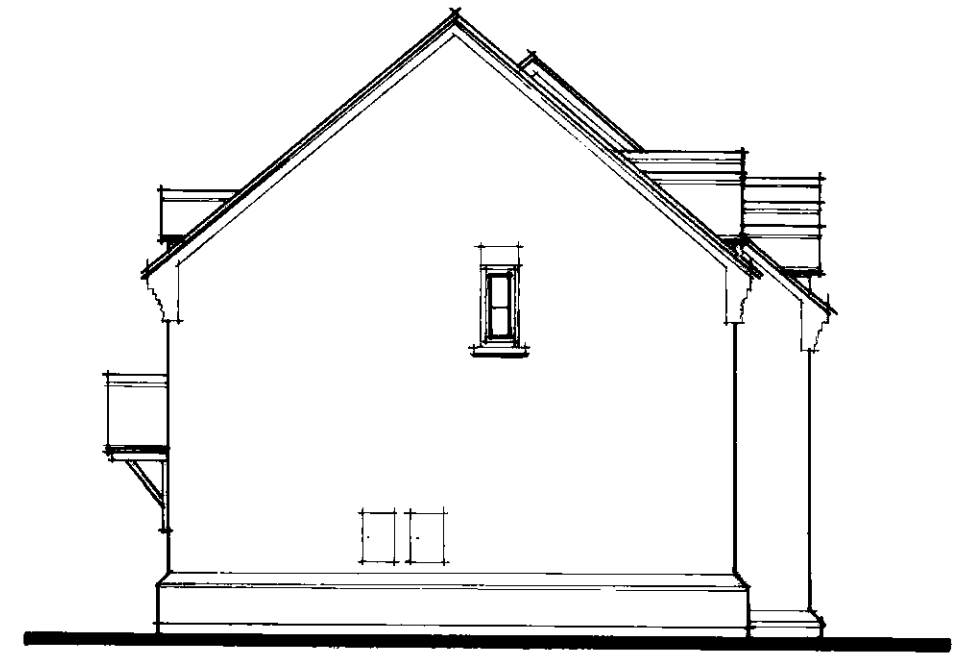
1 - Proposed 2 no. starter homes

2 - Parking spaces for 2 no. cars per house

# Appendix 2



SOUTHWEST ELEVATION

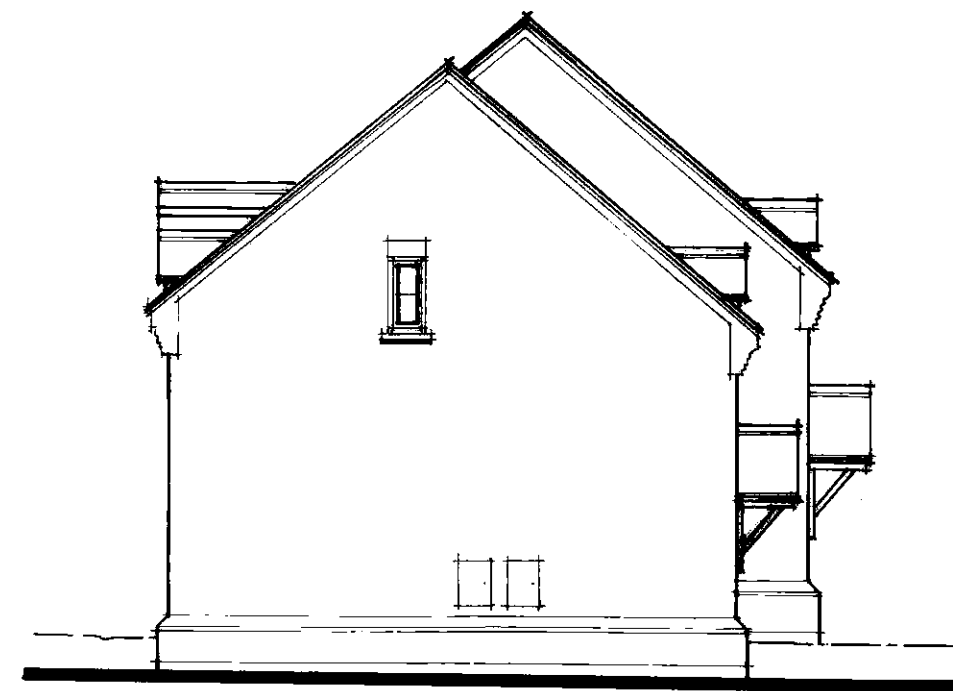


SOUTHEAST ELEVATION

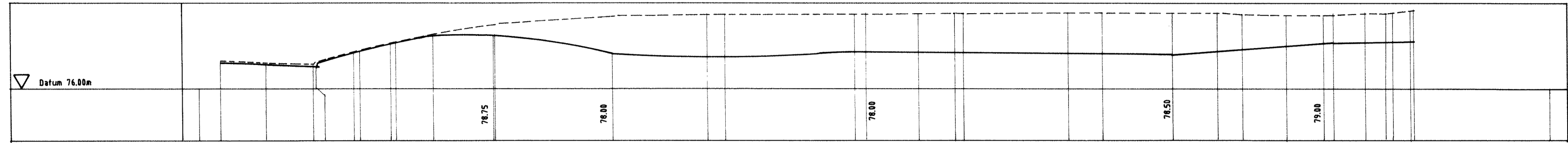
SCALE 1:100



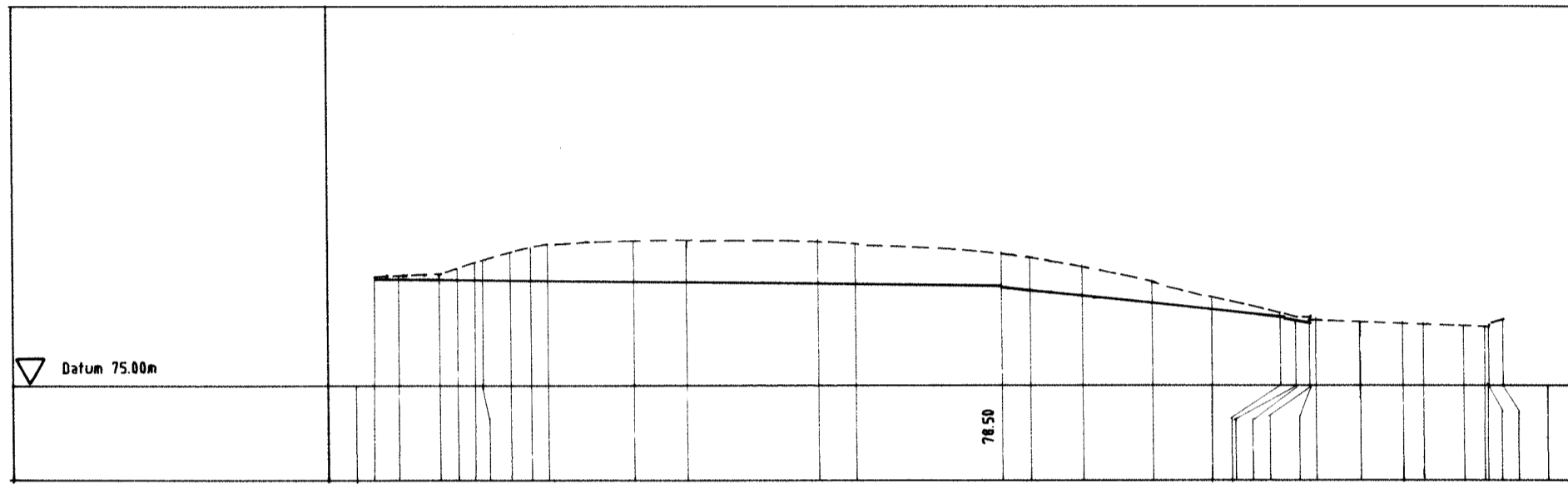
NORTHEAST ELEVATION



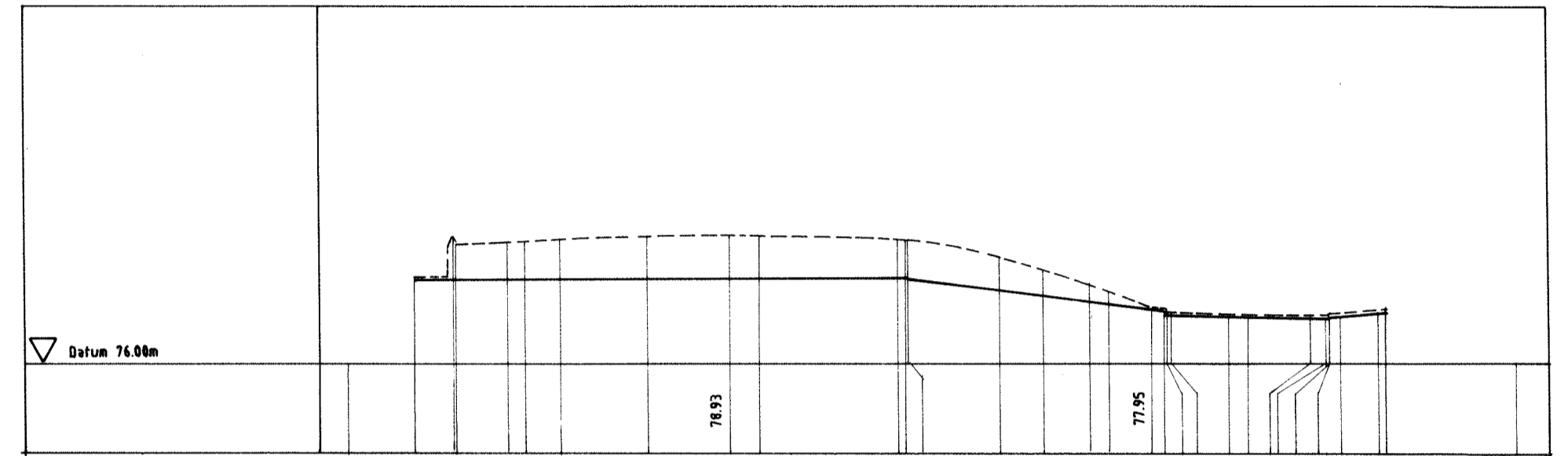
NORTHWEST ELEVATION



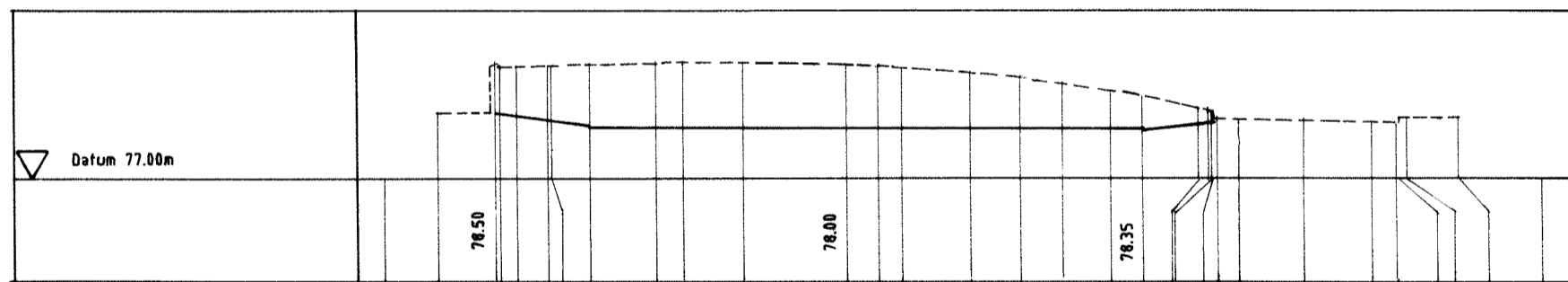
Section a-a



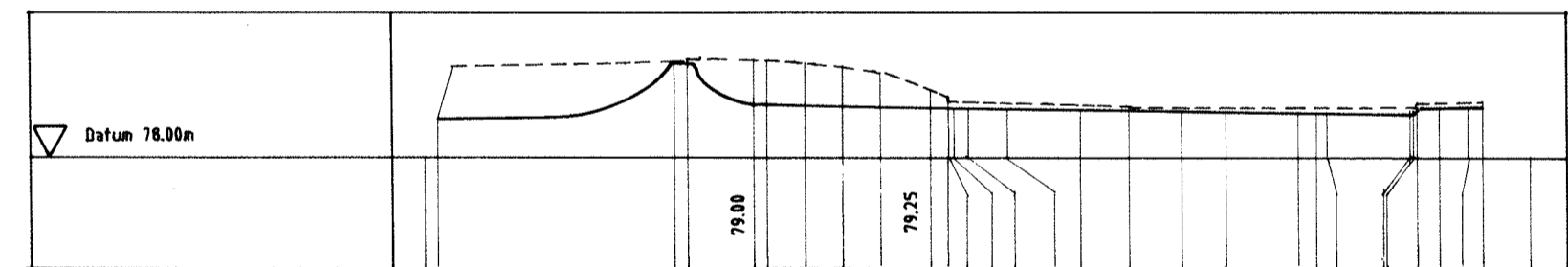
Section b-b



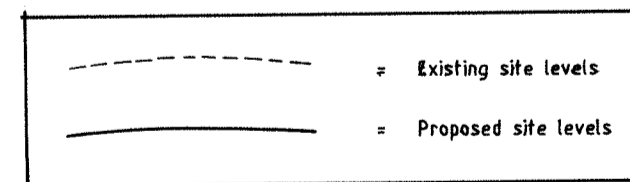
Section c-c



Section d-d



Section e-e



PROPOSED STARTER HOMES AT EYRES CLOSE - EWELME OX10 6LA EXISTING AND PROPOSED SITE CROSS SECTIONS  
 JULY 2015

PLAN 221415  
 SCALE 1:200



# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 June 2001

by **Roger Clews** BA MSc CertEd DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Transport,  
Local Government and the Regions

SODC  
APPEALS/ENF

23 JUL 2001

RECEIVED

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inspectorate.gsi.gov.uk

Date 19 JUL 2001

**Appeal Ref: APP/Q3115/A/01/1062069**

**Land off Eyres Close, Ewelme, Oxon**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Mr & Mrs M J Olliffe against the decision of South Oxfordshire District Council.
- The application (Ref. P01/W0006), dated 7 January 2001, was refused by notice dated 5 March 2001.
- The development proposed is to construct a new cottage with integral garage.

**Summary of Decision: The appeal is dismissed:**

## Procedural Matters

1. The appellants ticked a box on the original planning application form indicating that the application was in outline. However it is evident from the written representations that the Council, the appellants and other interested parties have all considered the application as being for full planning permission. I have therefore dealt with the appeal on this basis.

## Main Issues

2. I consider that the main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, which lies within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

## Planning Policy

3. The development plan for the area comprises the Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2011, adopted in August 1998, and the South Oxfordshire Local Plan, adopted in April 1997. Relevant policies seek to protect the character and quality of rural areas, to conserve and enhance Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and to ensure that development does not have an unacceptable impact on its surroundings.
4. There is a South Oxfordshire Design Guide, the second draft of which was published in December 2000. However I can give little weight to this in view of its draft status, and as no evidence has been submitted on the consultation undertaken by the Council and their response to representations made, as recommended in paragraph A3 of PPG1: General Policy and Principles.

## Reasons

5. Local Plan policy H6 states that planning permission will not be granted for new houses on the edge of settlements which would extend the built-up area into the countryside. The appellants suggest that the bridleway to the north-east of the adjacent property, The Views, marks the boundary of the built-up area of the village and that the curtilages of properties

along the main village street to the south run up to meet it. However it was apparent when I walked along the bridleway that it is in fact separated from these properties by grass paddocks and that, beyond The Views, the bridleway passes through open countryside on both sides.

6. The north-east frontage of The Views itself is open to the bridleway and the field beyond, while access is by an unmetalled track leading out into Eyre's Lane. The tall beech trees along its south-west boundary and the wooded area adjoining it to the south-east conceal views of the village beyond. As a result, although the south-eastern edge of its curtilage adjoins 16 Eyres Close, in my opinion The Views has the character of an individual dwelling in the countryside, rather than of an extension to the built-up area of the village.
7. The fencing and hedging on both sides of Eyre's Lane between the bridleway and Eyres Close, together with the absence of development on the north-west side, in my opinion give this part of the road a distinctly rural character. In my view this character changes on the south-west side of Eyres Close, where the cultivated conifer hedge to No 2 marks the beginning of the built-up area of the village proper. However, because of the curve of the road, this change in character is not apparent until quite near the entrance to the Close.
8. From within Eyres Close, although the appeal site faces residential development on two sides, its uncultivated appearance, together with the dense hedges along its north-east and north-west boundaries, mean, in my view, that it shares the rural character of the area to the north and west of the Close. While the raised profile of the site may be the result of human activity, it does not, in my opinion, appear noticeably unnatural in the context of the rising ground to the north of the village. Although there are no views from ground level across the site into the countryside beyond, I saw that from the upper floors of some of the houses in the Close the site forms part of a rural vista stretching to the outskirts of Oxford.
9. Whatever may previously have existed on the site, or in the area of Ewelme to the west of Eyre's Lane, on the basis of the foregoing points I consider that the site currently appears as part of the countryside beyond the built-up area of the village. The proposed residential development would therefore, in my view, have the effect of extending the built-up area of the village into the countryside.
10. After a few years of growth, the proposed tree plantation at the north-western end of the site would, in my view, largely preserve the rural appearance of the site when viewed from Eyre's Lane and more distant points. I therefore consider that the development would have no significantly detrimental effect on the wider landscape of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
11. However, viewed from within Eyres Close the new dwelling with its high front boundary wall would present a strongly enclosed and urbanised appearance, and in my opinion would destroy the attractive open rural character of the site. The hard, enclosed nature of the development would also contrast sharply with the soft front boundaries of the existing dwellings in the Close, which currently provide what I regard as an appropriate transition between the built-up edge of the village and the countryside beyond. Although the dwelling would be designed in accordance with a joint local authority design guide for the Chilterns AONB, I consider that this would not outweigh the harm which would result to the rural area at the edge of the village.

12. As any evidence of previous structures that may have existed on the site has, in my view, now blended into the landscape, I consider that the site does not fall within the definition of previously-developed land contained in Annex C to PPG3. I note the availability of public transport and accept that PPG3 encourages the more efficient use of land for housing. However in my opinion these considerations do not support the development of land outside an existing rural settlement.
13. I therefore conclude on the main issue that the proposed development would significantly detract from the character and appearance of the surrounding area, and would conflict with Local Plan policies G1, G5 and H6.

#### **Other Matters**

14. In view of the distance and the proposed boundary treatment between the properties, I consider that no harmful overlooking to The Views or to 16 Eyres Close would occur from the proposed new dwelling. As the site would be lowered to a level at or below that of the road, in my view the new dwelling would not dominate or unacceptably overlook the properties on the opposite side of Eyres Close.
15. Given the small amount of traffic that it would generate and the proposed on-site parking provision, in my opinion the proposed development would not significantly affect highway conditions or safety.
16. Many local residents refer to the importance of the site as an open recreational space, which was apparently used and maintained by them for this purpose in the past. However on the basis of the evidence before me, including condition No 15 attached to the January 1978 planning permission for the development of Eyres Close, I consider that whatever the outcome of this appeal, there is no certainty that this recreational use would continue in the future. I can therefore give little weight to this consideration in my decision.
17. Local Plan policy H4 allows for the development of up to 20 dwellings within the built-up areas of larger villages which have an adequate range of services and facilities, including good public transport. However, whether or not Ewelme falls within this definition, I consider that as the proposed development would be outside the built-up area of the village, it would not be permitted by the policy. Any contribution the development might make to meeting a local need for housing does not, in my view, outweigh my conclusion on the main issue.
18. Notwithstanding the appeal decision on a site at South Stoke referred to by the appellants, my decision is based on the specific merits of the present appeal.

#### **Conclusions**

19. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

#### **Formal Decision**

20. In exercise of the powers transferred to me, I dismiss the appeal.

**Information**

21. A separate note is attached setting out the circumstances in which the validity of this decision may be challenged by making an application to the High Court within 6 weeks from the date of this decision.



Inspector