Rob Duncan
Planning
Consultancy

PLANNING STATEMENT

9 CONWAY GROVE, CHEADLE

OCTOBER 2016

Site Address:
9 Conway Grove, Cheadle, Staffordshire, ST0 1QG

Applicant:
Mr. D. Heath

Proposal:
Erection of Detached Dwelling

Planning Statement:
Date Issued: 27th October 2016
Job Reference: RDP/2016/123

Report Prepared By:
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1 Introduction

1.1 Rob Duncan Planning Consultancy Ltd. has been instructed by Mr. D. Heath to seek planning permission for the erection of a detached dwelling on land to the rear of 9 Conway Grove, Cheadle. The application is made in outline and seeks approval of matters of layout and means of access at this stage. Matters of appearance, scale and landscaping are reserved for subsequent approval.

1.2 It is envisaged that the proposed dwelling will adopt the form of a bungalow, and the plans submitted show the provision of an open-plan living, dining room and kitchen, two bedrooms and bathroom. A detached garage is to be located to the rear of the dwelling, with tandem parking provided alongside the property with sufficient space for up to 3 vehicles. Access is to be taken via the existing un-made track to the rear of the site. The submitted layout plan shows a dwelling with a footprint of approximately 58m^2.

2 Site & Surroundings

2.1 The application site lies within the defined settlement boundary of Cheadle and comprises a detached two storey dwelling set within a linear pattern of development that extends along Conway Grove which is a modest cul-de-sac of twenty properties that feeds off Manifold Drive. The gardens of nos. 1-19 (odd) Conway Grove extend in a southerly direction and are bordered by an un-made track that connects with Eaves Lane to the west. To the east/southeast of the site planning consent has been granted on appeal (ref. SMD/2013/0323) for the erection of a detached bungalow and this is in the process of being constructed. Dwellings on the southern side of Conway Grove are all two storey in nature with the exception of the recently approved bungalow, as are the two dwellings beyond the site to the south.

The location of the site in its surrounding context is shown in Figure 1 below, with the approved bungalow site nearby shown shaded orange.

Figure 1 – Aerial Photograph of Site



3 Planning Policy

3.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires proposals to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan taking into consideration any material considerations relevant to the determination of the application. The Development Plan for this area comprises the Stafford Moorlands Core Strategy DPD (2014) of which the following policies are of relevance:

3.2 Policy SS1a of the Core Strategy states that when considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will always work pro-actively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area. Planning applications that accord with the policies in the Core Strategy will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:

- *Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole;*

  or

- *specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.*

3.3 Policy SS2 of the Core Strategy states that provision will be made for 6000 additional dwellings (net of demolitions) to be completed in Staffordshire Moorlands (excluding the Peak District National Park) during the period 2006 to 2026.

3.4 Policy SS3 of the Core Strategy states that development will be located in accordance with the Spatial Strategy and will be distributed between the towns and rural areas. It identifies that some 22% of the total residential

provision outlined in policy SS2 will be allocated within Cheadle (equivalent to 1,320 dwellings).

3.5 Policy SS5c of the Core Strategy states that the Council will expand the role of Cheadle as a significant service centre and market town. The housing market will be expanded by increasing the range of available and affordable house types and higher market housing, especially for first time buyers and families. Sites within the urban area shall be in locations across the town which have good accessibility to services and facilities with encouragement given to previously developed sites.

3.6 Policy DC1 of the Core Strategy states that new development should be of a high quality and add value to the local area, incorporating creativity, detailing and materials appropriate to the character of the area. Proposals should be designed to respect the site and its surroundings and promote a positive sense of place and identity through its scale, density, layout, siting, landscaping, character and appearance. Development should also protect the amenity of the area, including residential amenity in terms of satisfactory daylight, sunlight, outlook, privacy and soft landscaping.

3.7 Policy T1 of the Core Strategy states that the Council will promote and support development which reduces reliance on the private car for travel journeys, reduces the need to travel generally and helps deliver the priorities of the Staffordshire Local Transport Plans, where this is consistent with other policies. This will be achieved by, amongst others, ensuring that all new development is located where the highway network can satisfactorily accommodate traffic generated by the development or can be improved as part of the development.

4 Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework

4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework places a strong emphasis on promoting sustainable development and seeks to significantly boost the supply of housing nationally. It furthermore states that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The content of the National Planning Policy Framework is explored in more detail, where relevant, in the Planning Assessment below.

Staffordshire Moorlands Housing Land Supply Statement (March 2016)

4.2 This document sets out the Local Authority's performance in respect of housing land supply and housing delivery. It confirms that the Local Authority has a deliverable supply of housing land equivalent to 1.87 years supply.

Appeal Decision APP/B3438/A/13/2203608

4.3 This appeal decision relates to the erection of a bungalow in the rear garden of no.3 Conway Grove to the south east of the application site. The content of this appeal and its relevance to the current proposal is discussed in more detail within the Planning Assessment below. A copy of the appeal decision is enclosed as Appendix A.

Appeal Decision APP/P3420/A/14/2222484

4.4 This appeal decision relates to the erection of a dwelling on a site at Rookery, Newcastle-under-Lyme. The content of this appeal and its relevance to the current proposal is discussed in more detail within the Planning Assessment below. A copy of the appeal decision is enclosed as Appendix B.

5 Planning Assessment

Principle of Development

5.1 Policies SS2 and SS3 of the adopted Core Strategy set out the Council's preferences for the delivery of new housing and confirm that some 1,320 new dwellings will need to be built within Cheadle between 2006-2026. These provisions are expanded upon within policy SS5c of the Core Strategy, which confirms the intention to expand the role of Cheadle as a significant service centre and market town, achieved in part by expanding the housing market to increase the range of available and affordable house types. Policy SS5c goes on to state that sites within the urban area shall be in locations across the town which have good accessibility to services and facilities.

5.2 The application site lies within the defined settlement boundary of Cheadle, where development is to be targeted over the plan period, and furthermore lies within easy walking and cycling distance of local services and facilities. Regular public transport connections with the wider area are also available a short distance away on the Tean Road (approx. 300m). As a consequence the proposal fully accords with the provisions of policies SS2, SS3, and SS5c of the adopted Core Strategy and is therefore acceptable in principle.

Impact on Character and Appearance of the Area

5.3 The application site lies within an area that is characterised by residential development. In determining the appeal on the nearby site at 3 Conway Grove, the Inspector noted the boundary treatments on the nearby properties and the presence of grass verges in front, which led him to conclude that:

> *"These features give this part of the lane an unmistakable suburban character, contrasting with the rural ambiance which*

comes into being as the lane continues beyond the site to cross open fields to the east".

5.4 There has been no material change to the characteristics of the immediate locality since that appeal was granted and as such I see no reason to disagree with the Inspector's conclusions. The conclusions of the Planning Inspector, s a representative of the Secretary of State are a material consideration of significant weight in the determination of this appeal, most notably because in discussing the character of the area he describes the character along the whole of the lane as being suburban, and found the proposed bungalow not to be harmful to that character.

5.5 The layout plan submitted to accompany the application takes its cues from the scheme permitted at no.3 Conway Grove, and is set in from each site boundary in a manner which reflects the host dwelling. It furthermore accommodates an area of private amenity space in the order of 70sq.m. which is excess of that required by the Local Authority's informal Space about Dwellings standards. The host property will furthermore maintain a garden area in excess of this recommended standard. The resultant plot size will reflect that established by the recently approved scheme at no.3 Conway Grove, which in any event was found by the Planning Inspector to not be markedly difference to those in the wider area (paragraph 8 of the appeal decision refers). As a consequence the proposal will not result in a cramped form of development. Supplementary landscaping is also proposed to the side and front of the dwelling in order to soften its overall impact.

5.6 The detailed design and appearance of the dwelling is not known at this stage, but will take the form of a bungalow based on the footprint proposed for approval at this outline stage. The proposed bungalow is modest in form, and accords with the informal amenity standards set out within the Local

Authority's Space about Dwellings standards, and as a consequence future occupants of the proposed dwelling will not be adversely impacted by overlooking or loss of light. The single storey nature of the proposed development furthermore means that the dwelling will not derive overlooking or loss of privacy to the neighbouring gardens on either side, or the host dwelling behind. The proposed development therefore accords with the provisions of policy DC1 of the Core Strategy.

Highway Safety

5.7 The application proposes the creation of a new vehicular access onto Plantation Lane, which is an unmade track which connects with Eaves Lane to the west of the site. This track benefits from good forward visibility and for 15m rear of the Eaves Lane carriageway is of sufficient width to enable two vehicles to pass one another. It also benefits from good visibility in both directions on egress onto Eaves Lane. The proposed development also incorporates the provision of up to 3 parking spaces to meet the needs of future occupants which is more than sufficient for a property of this nature. The proposal will therefore not give rise to harm to highway safety in the locality and accords with the requirements of policy T1 of the Core Strategy.

Drainage

5.8 A culvert runs under the application site, and in order to accommodate the proposed development this will need to be diverted. The submitted plans show how this is to be achieved, and this is considered to be an appropriate solution having regard to the solution that was found to be acceptable for the scheme at no.3 Conway Grove. A suitably worded planning condition can be imposed to ensure the delivery of these works.

Other Material Considerations

5.9 In addition to the matters discussed above, there are also other material considerations which weigh in favour of the proposed development, most notably the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Paragraph 49 of the NPPF states that:

> *"Housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development".*

5.10 Paragraph 49 of the NPPF goes on to state that:

> *"Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites"*

5.11 The latest housing land supply figures for Staffordshire Moorlands, as set out in the Local Authority's Housing Land Supply Statement (March 2016), confirm that the Local Planning Authority is only able to demonstrate a 1.87 year supply of deliverable housing. This falls significantly short of the 5-year supply required by paragraph 49 of the NPPF, and as a consequence the Council's policies for the supply of housing have to be considered out of date. Paragraph 14 of the NPPF stipulates that in such circumstances planning permission should be granted unless:

- *any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or*

- *specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted".* (my emphasis)

5.12 There are no specific policies in the Framework which indicate that development should be restricted in this location, and for the reasons discussed above there are no adverse impacts that would arise to significant and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the scheme, which will now be discussed.

5.13 Paragraph 7 of the NPPF identifies three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These roles are mutually dependant and should be jointly sought to achieve sustainable development.

5.14 In terms of the economic and social dimension of sustainable development it is considered that the proposal will derive benefits to the local economy, both to local tradesmen during the construction phase, and though the expenditure associated with one additional household. Such benefits lend weight in favour of the application being granted.

5.15 The proposal will also secure the delivery of a new dwelling that would contribute to the supply of housing within the District and in turn help the Local Authority to meet its shortfall in housing delivery. Such benefits are considered to be worthy of significant weight and numerous appeal decisions support this assertion, including Appeal Reference 2222484 (enclosed as Appendix B) where the Planning Inspector found that:

> *"11. The development would provide a new house, which would be capable of providing accommodation for a family. This is a significant benefit of the scheme. The Framework seeks to significantly boost the supply of housing"* (my emphasis)

5.16 The single storey nature of the proposed dwelling is also considered to be beneficial in terms of the social component of sustainable development. The

Local Authority's Strategic Housing Market Assessment acknowledges a significant growth in the number of persons aged 65+ and forecasts a requirement for a 19% increase in the number of 1 and 2 bedroomed bungalows. These conclusions are further reinforced by paragraph 21 of the Planning Practice Guidance (updated 1st April 2016) which confirms that the need to provide housing for older people is critical given the projected increase in the number of households aged 65 and over accounts for over half of the new households (Department for Communities and Local Government Household Projections 2013). It goes on to state that plan makers will need to consider the size, location and quality of dwellings needed in the future for older people in order to allow them to live independently and safely in their own home for as long as possible, or to move to more suitable accommodation if they so wish.

5.17 Paragraph 21 of the Planning Practice Guidance further adds that supporting independent living can help to reduce the costs to health and social services, and providing more options for older people to move could also free up houses that are under occupied, adding that many older people may not want or need specialist accommodation or care and may wish to stay or move to general housing that is already suitable, such as bungalows, or homes which can be adapted to meet a change in their needs. The proposed bungalow will help to fulfil these objectives, and will secure the delivery of new accommodation, in a sustainable location, to meet the needs of the identified changing demographic. Accordingly I submit that this amounts to a further social benefit of the development which should be afforded significant weight in the determination of this application.

5.18 In terms of the environmental dimension of sustainable development, the proposal will deliver a high quality design that responds positively to the constraints of the site and the character and appearance of the surrounding

area, and will furthermore secure the erection of a dwelling in a sustainable location where future occupiers would have a choice of means of transport to access local services and facilities.

5.19 I submit that the aforementioned benefits, taken as a whole, lend significant weight in favour of the proposed development and I consider that there are no adverse impacts identified that would serve to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the development – that being the test to be applied having regard to the provisions of paragraphs 49 and 14 of the NPPF.

6 Conclusion

6.1 Paragraph 186 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should approach decision taking in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development. It goes on to state in paragraph 187 that local planning authorities should look for solutions rather than problems, and decision-takers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

6.2 This proposal is considered to constitute a sustainable form of development that is acceptable in planning terms having regard to the following conclusions:

- *The application site lies within the settlement boundary of Cheadle;*
- *Cheadle is a target for significant housing growth up to 2026;*
- *The provisions of the NPPF mean that the proposal should be determined in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development;*

- *The site lies within easy walking and cycling distance of local services and facilities and benefits from regular public transport connections nearby;*

- *The proposed development will not result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area, nor will it result in a cramped form of development;*

- *The proposed development is of a modest form that will not detract from the amenity of neighbouring residential occupiers;*

- *Consent has been granted on appeal nearby with the Inspector concluding that the area is suburban in character and that the erection of a dwelling very similar to that proposed would not be harmful to the characteristics of the area;*

- *The proposal will not derive any adverse highway safety impacts;*

- *The proposal will not give rise to any adverse drainage issues.*

6.3 For these reasons the proposed development accords with the provisions of policies SS2, SS3, SS5c, DC1 and T1 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy and guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

6.4 It is furthermore submitted that there are no adverse impacts that would significant and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the proposed development, and as a consequence outline planning permission should be granted in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in policy SS1a of the Core Strategy.