

# PLANNING / HERIATGE AND DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT



**PROPOSAL** : ERECTION OF 4NO. BUNAGLOWS FOLLOWING THE  
DEMOLITION OF THE EXISTING GARAGE COURT

**ADDRESS** : GARAGE COURT, LAND OFF STOCKWELL STREET, LEEK,  
STAFFORDSHIRE

**APPLICANT** : STOCKWELL MEWS

**DATE** : DECEMBER 2016

**JOB No.** : 2016-2194

# **CONTENTS:**

- 1.0 INTRODUCTION**
- 2.0 USE**
- 3.0 AMOUNT**
- 4.0 LAYOUT**
- 5.0 SCALE**
- 6.0 LANDSCAPING**
- 7.0 APPEARANCE**
- 8.0 ACCESS**
- 9.0 PLANNING POLICY**
- 10.0 HERITAGE STATEMENT**
- 11.0 CONCLUSION**

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Sammons Architectural Ltd have been appointed by Stockwell Mews to prepare and submit a planning application to Staffordshire Moorlands District Council for the erection of 4no. new bungalows following the demolition of the existing garage court.

## **2.0 USE**

The site currently forms a disused garage court that has fallen into disrepair.

## **3.0 AMOUNT**

The site measures approximately 1320m<sup>2</sup> in area and it is proposed to erect 4no bungalows following the demolition of the garages.

## **4.0 LAYOUT**

The layout of the bungalows will be in a terraced form as per the submitted drawings

## **5.0 SCALE**

The proposal will be in the form of a single storey bungalows

## **6.0 LANDSCAPING**

The application site is reasonably well screened, but additional landscaping is proposed due to the proposal, but this will be minimal through paved and lawned areas. More detailed planting will be left up to future occupiers to decide what they want to plant in their own private gardens.

## **7.0 APPEARANCE**

The appearance of the proposal will be as a traditional single storey bungalows dwelling incorporating local vernacular.

## **8.0 ACCESS**

The proposal will use an existing access onto the site.

## **9.0 PLANNING POLICY**

As you will be aware Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that when determining a planning application, the decision maker must make their determination in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Given this obligation, this chapter therefore considers national guidance relevant to the application as well as the Core Strategy Development Plan Document (March 2014). The following is considered relevant:

### Core Strategy,

SS1 – Development Principles

SS1a – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

SS5 – Towns

SS5a – Leek Area Strategy

SD1 – Sustainable Use of Resources

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H1 – New Housing Development  
DC1 – Design Considerations  
DC2 – The Historic Environment  
DC3 – Landscape and Settlement Setting  
T1 – Development and Sustainable Transport

### National Planning Policy Framework

There is considerable planning policy and guidance relevant to the planning application proposal at both local and national levels. The NPPF is significant as it sets out the Government's commitment for a positive response to planning proposals that would deliver sustainable development in order to assist growth to the economy. It has been made clear that the planning system has a key role in facilitating growth and development should be supported with a presumption in favour of granting planning permission. This change of emphasis provides an important background to the application proposal.

National Planning Policy Framework places a strong emphasis on promoting economic growth and sets out policies for the control of development. The Development Plan represents the starting point for the determination of this application, which in this instance is the Core Strategy. The guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework is also relevant, in particular the following Chapters:

1. Building a strong, competitive economy
6. Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes
7. Requiring good design

Within the NPPF it is also worth noting the following relevant paragraphs:

- Planning decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise (para 2).
- Plans and decisions need to take local circumstances into account, so that they respond to the different opportunities for achieving sustainable development in different areas, (para 10)
- Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, (para 11).
- At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. LPA's should approve proposals which accord with the development plan without delay (para 14).
- The Government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth. Planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth. Therefore, significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system (para 19)
- Local Authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years' worth of housing against their housing requirements, with an additional buffer of 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land (para 47).
- The NPPF goes on to state that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. 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 (para 49).

## 10.0 HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

The application site comprises of a series of non-listed buildings in the Leek Conservation Area. The garage court consists of 3no. blocks of garages with a series of individual garages. The garage court has not been used for some time and are considered to have deteriorated in physical quality. The Leek Conservation Area was designated in 1970 and has been extended a further 4no. times, the latest being in December 2013. The Conservation Area itself is broken into 5no. Character Areas and the site forming this application is situated in the central section with the market town and St. Edward's Church. In the Leek Conservation Character Area at 4.2 it states:

*The core of the Conservation Area is the medieval market town with its church, market place and medieval street pattern formed by Church Street, St. Edward's Street, Derby Street and Stockwell Street.*

Furthermore at 4.3 it states:

*The road from Macclesfield to Buxton follows Church Street and Stockwell Street past the medieval church of St. Edward. With its massive tower and fine detailing, the church dominates the top of St. Edward Street, where its churchyard provides respite above a busy road junction.*

Whilst the proposed site is outside the boundary of the Foxlowe, which is a Grade II Listed Building, it is nevertheless adjacent and is therefore a consideration in this heritage assessment. The building was first listed on 13<sup>th</sup> April 1951 with the most recent amendment on 14<sup>th</sup> October 1996. In the listing it states:

*House, in use as trade union and labour club since 1919. Late C18. The interior remodelled c1900, probably by William Larnar Sugden. Brick with slate roof. EXTERIOR: 3 storeys, 5-window range forming 2 parallel ranges. Corinthian architrave with paterae and triglyphs to cornice; 6-panelled door with traceried fanlight enriched with swags in the spandrels. Flanking 12-pane sash windows on each floor (6-pane sashes to attic storey) with continuous cill band to ground and first floors. String course above ground floor. Central first-floor window emphasised with entablature. All windows have painted stone cills and flat-arched brick heads. Rear elevation has full-height bow window to principal rooms (formerly drawing room and morning room) to right, long service wing to left, extended against inner face with addition of billiard room c1902, and further extended in connection with the use of the building as a club in the C20. INTERIOR: substantially remodelled c1900, though central entrance and stair hall with stone cantilevered stair and cast-iron balusters, and conservatory accessed from the mezzanine may possibly date from earlier alterations. Plaster or frieze paper cornice of pomegranates and leaves, to hall, staircase and landings, and fine brass door furniture. Several rooms contain fireplaces and overmantels from this c1900 remodelling, but the former drawing room to ground floor rear retains a plaster cornice and gilded cornice to the bow window from an earlier C19 decorative scheme. HISTORICAL NOTE: the house was probably built for Thomas Mills, attorney, of Leek and Barlaston Hall at the end of C18, and was lived in for much of C19 by the locally eminent Cruso family. In 1918, the house was acquired by the Federation of Textile Unions as their headquarters and working men's club, and served as the office of William Bromfield, for a time General Secretary of the Union, and elected as Leek's first labour MP in 1918.*

### Evaluation

The significance of the Heritage Asset is its contribution to the towns character, which in this location comprises of a mix of older stone and brick buildings. The application site represents a disused garage court in Leek on the edge of the Conservation Area. The location of the proposal will not

create any adverse impacts to the Heritage Asset or the Conservation Area. The proposal will replace a disused and untidy garage court that is unsightly and therefore the Conservation Area will be enhanced significantly. The scale and mass of the proposal can be comfortably located within the site and the character of this area will be maintained. Therefore, the contribution to the historic assets have been preserved. On this basis the proposal is considered to have been favourably assessed against the criteria and is therefore acceptable from a planning and historic viewpoint.

## **11.0 SUMMARY**

It is recognised that a previous planning application was submitted and subsequently refused at appeal (08/00892/FUL). However, the proposal as submitted differs greatly from the previously refused scheme as the scheme proposed is for 4no. terraced single storey bungalows compared to 6no. two storey terraced houses. The previous reasons for refusal were as follows:

- The effect of granting permission for the previous scheme on the prospects for the satisfactory refurbishment and re-use of the Foxlowe
- The effect of the scheme on the character and appearance of the area, and
- The adequacy of the proposed access arrangements

In the appeal decision dated 12<sup>th</sup> June 2009 the Inspector considered that the issues that led him to dismiss the appeal were in relation to visual impact and highway safety. The proposed scheme is considered markedly different to dismissed appeal scheme. It was generally accepted by the Council and the Inspector that the principle of development in this location was acceptable and no harm to the setting of the Foxlowe, which is a Grade II Listed Building would occur. Given the previous concerns that the refused scheme raised by the Inspector, these concerns and comments have been taken into consideration and have helped to form the scheme as proposed. In addition, there have been many reports in the local press regarding the demand and overall shortage of bungalows in Leek and Staffordshire Moorlands in general.

The proposal does not involve or encroach outside of the land that the existing garage court is located, so the previous concerns about land belonging to the Foxlowe being used by the development are no longer apparent. With regards to access and highway safety, the proposed layout overcomes previous concerns raised by lack of sightlines at the access point as the reduction in the number of dwellings has allowed the row to be moved away from the north eastern site boundary, thus providing sufficient visibility in both directions at the junction with the access road. With regards to this aspect it should be noted the number of vehicles that could potentially be generated by the garage court if it was to resume operation.

With regards to character and appearance the principle of short row of terraced properties in the general location would be appropriate in the context of the site. However, the concern appeared to be in relation to how the appeal scheme intrudes into the public areas at the eastern end of the site. The close proximity of one of the proposed dwellings and the new boundary wall adjacent to the existing access was considered to form a 'inappropriate and brutal incursion into what should be respected as an increasingly green and soft transition into the park beyond. The new scheme does not comprise of as much built form and as such the development assimilates better with its surroundings.

## **12.0 CONCLUSION**

The Government has a strong commitment to growth and provides a strong presumption in favour of development and is committed to increasing levels of growth. 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. It also states in the NPPF that where proposals accord with the development plan they should be approved without delay, and where policies are out-of-date permission should only be refused where there is significant and demonstrable harm to outweigh the benefits of the development.

The latest figures for housing in Staffordshire Moorlands in the Annual Monitoring Report, confirm that the Core Strategy identifies a net requirement of 6000 dwellings to be built across the whole District between 2006 and 2026. The current figures show that there is currently a supply of 1081 units, which gives a shortfall in the 5-year housing supply of 2638 units. This equates to the Council only having a housing supply of 1.87 years. It is therefore clear that the Local Authority is unable to demonstrate a five-year deliverable supply of housing, and as a consequence paragraph 49 of the NPPF states that the relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date.

Whilst a planning application has been previously refused at appeal for residential development on this site, the proposal is very different and has overcome the concerns raised by the Inspector. The design of the new bungalows are appropriate in this location and will complement other dwellings in the locality. The siting will of the proposal will not create any harmful visual impacts on the street scene due to the layout and overall design.

There are no other residential properties in the immediate vicinity and therefore no issues with residential amenity will arise. Furthermore, the proposal will not give rise to any adverse impacts to the residential amenity afforded by future occupiers of the proposed dwellings due to the linear form of development and the distance from mature trees on the site boundary, where views will be possible through the trees due to the height of the crowns. The properties will have sufficient outside amenity space with a communal style area to the front and private areas to the rear. The private areas are not extensive, due to the age of people that would be attracted to the properties and the overall sustainable location of the site. Likewise, the proposal will not cause any highway safety issues as the proposed access is more than sufficient to meet the needs of the development, whilst maintaining adequate visibility for motorists and pedestrians alike. The application is considered to accord with policies in the Development Plan and guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework. The Local Authority is therefore politely encouraged to support this application for the erection of 4no bungalows and grant planning permission accordingly.