SAMMONS Architectural LIMITED

Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists

10 Cawdry Buildings
Fountain Street
Leek, Staffordshire, ST13 6JP
Tel / fax 01538 386002
e-mail info@sammonsltd.co.uk

# PLANNING / DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT



**PROPOSAL** : **ERECTION OF 6NO. DWELLINGS (RESUBMISSION OF SMD/2016/0534)**

**ADDRESS** : **LAND OFF PICKWOOD AVENUE, LEEK, STAFFS, ST13 5BZ**

**APPLICANT** : **RD (LEEK) LTD**

**DATE** : **DECEMBER 2016** **JOB No. : 2016-2172**

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Sammons Architectural Ltd have been appointed by RD (Leek) Ltd to prepare and resubmit a planning application to Staffordshire Moorlands District Council for the erection of 6no. dwellings on land off Pickwood Avenue Leek. This application constitutes a resubmission of SMD/2016/0534 that was for 7no. dwellings. Discussions took place with Council Officers after the withdrawal of SMD/2016/0534 regarding layout, design, ecology and highways. It is considered that this proposal incorporates all suggestions and recommendations.

## 2.0 USE

The application proposes a residential use through the erection of seven detached properties.

## 3.0 AMOUNT

The proposal is now for the erection of six dwellings (2no. detached and 4no. semi-detached) on a site that measures approximately 1.4 Hectares. The Government's planning guidance has removed minimum densities and allowed these to be determined at a local level to reflect local character. It is considered that the density of development would be inkeeping with the pattern of surrounding development.

## 4.0 LAYOUT

The layout reflects the pattern of development in the area with the front of the dwellings facing the road and allows parking for three cars per property with one space provided in the garage. The size of the dwellings delivers family-sized rear and side gardens that exceed the recommended areas of the 'saved' Local Plan Appendix 3.

## 5.0 SCALE

The application proposes 6no. three storey buildings. However, when viewed from the front on Pickwood Avenue, the dwellings will only have the appearance of a two storey building due to a change in land levels. The proposal will complement and be in keeping surrounding properties in particular those opposite on Pickwood Avenue.

## 6.0 LANDSCAPING

The properties will be landscaped to form domestic gardens, the areas to the front of the dwellings will adopt a similar approach to other properties on the estate in order for the proposal to assimilate within the properties already built and to ensure that they complement the street scene. The landscaping will where possible include improvements to biodiversity.

## 7.0 APPEARANCE

The proposed dwellings will be three storeys height due to the change in land levels when viewed from the north west. However, the properties will only be two storeys in appearance from the front. The dwellings will be constructed out of brick with tile roofs. Design features present in the adjacent development has been incorporated into the form and appearance of the dwellings proposed to enable the proposed units to complement the street scene.

## 8.0 ACCESS

The site is located within reasonable walking distance of Leek town centre where a range of public transport routes are available. Leek Bus Station is within easy reach by foot, bike or bus providing access to other Moorland towns and villages and The Potteries. The properties will have their own direct access points onto Pickwood Avenue.

## 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
SS5a – Leek Area Strategy
SD1 – Sustainable Use of Resources
H1- New Housing Development
DC1 – Design Considerations
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:

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 securing economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity, building on the country's inherent strengths, and to meeting the twin challenges of global competition and of a low carbon future (para 18)
- 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)
- 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).
- The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people (para 56)
- Planning policies and decisions should encourage the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value. Local planning authorities may continue to consider the case for setting a locally appropriate target for the use of brownfield land (para 111)

## 10.0 SUMMARY

The introduction of the NPPF and the requirement for all Local Planning Authorities to demonstrate a 5-year housing supply. The latest figures for housing in Staffordshire Moorlands in the Annual Monitoring Report 2014 -2015, 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 5-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. The site has been the subject of applications for its development for housing in the past. The application site is situated within an area covered by an extant planning permission (reference SMD/1987/0593) for residential development. Therefore, the LPA must be mindful and consider this fact to be a material consideration.

The Council's planning policies clearly support the principle of residential development on the site. The site is in the town settlement boundary and can be adequately serviced. In terms of the NPPF, the proposal makes a positive contribution to all three of the sustainability roles- it has a clear economic role by proposing new building close to town centre services, employment opportunities, schools, doctors' surgeries and recreational facilities; it has a social and health role in that the closeness of the site to the facilities and services listed above will encourage walking and cycling as an alternative to the car and it has an environmental role in that it puts to use an unused area of land on a main arterial route into Leek.

## 11.0 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.

The application is considered to accord with the Development Plan Policies and guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework. The proposal is now for six dwellings and the revised application is now considered to overcome concerns relating to visual / residential amenity; design; ecology and highways. The proposed scheme will positively contribute to the visual amenities in the locality and the street scene of which they would form part. The proposal will also positively contribute to the Council's 5-year housing supply that currently stands at a very low 1.87 years. On this basis and on the fact that the site already benefits from an extant planning permission, the Local Planning Authority is politely requested to support this application and grant planning permission accordingly.