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PLANNING / HERITAGE STATEMENT



PROPOSAL : **ERECTION OF FRONT EXTENSION, INCLUDING NEW DUAL PITCHED ROOF OVER DWELLING FOLLOWING PARTIAL DEMOLITION AND ALTERATIONS TO EXISTING ELEVATIONS (CLADDING & NEW WINDOWS).**

ADDRESS : **FERNBANK, REACLIFFE ROAD, RUDYARD, ST13 8RS**

APPLICANT : **MR & MRS R MCGHIE**

DATE : **APRIL 2017** **JOB No. : 2017-2210**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Sammons Architectural Ltd have been appointed by Mr & Mrs R McGhie to prepare and submit a planning application to Staffordshire Moorlands District Council for the erection of a front extension, including new dual pitched roof over dwelling following partial demolition and alterations to existing elevations (cladding & new windows). Whilst a statement is not required for this planning application, one has been submitted to clarify the position surrounding this proposal, especially since the issues that arose during the recently withdrawn planning application (SMD/2016/0724).

The property is located in the open countryside and is on land designated as Green Belt. The property itself still has an old Article 4 Direction in place that restricts what development could be undertaken through Permitted Development Rights. The site is not located within the Rudyard Conservation Area, but the boundary runs along the north-eastern boundary of the site. The site also has a public footpath (Horton 33) that runs down Reacliffe Road itself, where connection to other routes in the locality are located such as Horton 53 & 55 to the east.

2.0 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 therefore considered relevant:

<u>Core Strategy</u>,
SS1 – Development Principles
SS1a – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
SS6c - Other Rural Areas Area Strategy
DC1 – Design Considerations
DC2 – The Historic Environment
DC3 – Landscape and Settlement Setting
R2 – Rural Housing

<u>National Planning Policy Framework</u>

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
7. Requiring good design
9. Protecting Green Belt land

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 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 not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles. It is however, proper to seek to promote local distinctiveness (para 60)
- A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in Green Belt. An exception to this is: The extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
- Where development will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use (para 133)

3.0 HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

The site is adjacent to the recently designated Rudyard Conservation Area and is designated as:

<u>Character Area 1 - Cliffe Park Estate and Reacliffe Road</u>

In the Rudyard Conservation Area Appraisal it states:

- *To the south of Cliffe Park Hall the boundary includes Reacliffe Wood, which was deliberately ornamented with mixed planting and glaucous-leaved shrubs to enhance the setting of the house and wider views. The conservation area excludes the open glades close to Reacliffe Farm, which were developed with chalets as part of a low-key early 20th century expansion of the interest in holiday homes by the North Staffordshire Railway. Chalets have been considerably altered from the largely timber-framed structures of the early 20th century and*

the character of the area has changed from one of quirky, temporary and lightweight structures which had their own charm, to one with a more permanent character. Whist there are one or two exemplary chalet conversions / reconstructions, the majority of replacement structures are of brick, which is out-of-place in this context. For this reason, the character of these spaces has been irrevocably altered and there is no longer special architectural interest. P.29

- *This area is dominated by the parkland landscape of the Cliffe Park Estate and Reacliffe Woods, which runs in a linear form to the west of Rudyard Lake and which was embellished by John Haworth and subsequent owners of the estate. The Cliffe Park estate was sold in 1928 with 38 acres, a substantial reduction from the original 135 acres identified in the previous record and the 784 acres sold in 1885. However, the main parkland landscape has not been subdivided and has matured without significant losses. P. 34*

- *Some of these tree belts incorporate enhanced areas of native woodland, such as that at Reacliffe Wood which contains a 'blanket' Tree Preservation Order (LR002), whilst other areas were deliberately planted as belts close to the reservoir and as a backdrop to the buildings, to create shelter and visual interest. P.34*

- *To the north of the reservoir the carriage drive to the Cliffe Park Estate forms a dominant linear structure, with battered stone revetment walls, both retaining the drive and forming the edge of the reservoir. The carriage drive is now the route of the Staffordshire Way (footpath no. 31 Horton) and is wide open in places and enclosed in others; single-sided lines of mature deciduous trees provide shade along eastern sections of the route. Approaching the parkland from the Rushton direction, a long line of mature oak and a former old hedgerow line the eastern side of the drive and an ancient woodland indicator, dogs mercury, is prevalent. The margins of the lake have been encouraged to develop with willow and alder carr, as alluvial silt has created a rich flora and wetland environment – this part of the reservoir is now a dedicated nature reserve, with no public access but the carriage drive provides the best views of this area. The carriage drive contains deliberately planted groups of three beech trees and there are specimen purple beech on the periphery of the wooded carr, both indicating ornamented 19th century planting designed to add visual interest throughout the year. P.35.*

The proposal will create a high-quality development that is like other buildings in the locality. The building will be constructed out of high quality materials, where the resultant design has been influenced by its origin as a holiday chalet. Therefore, the proposed use will not be out of character with the surrounding area or properties. The assessment therefore concludes that the proposal will not result in a harmful impact on the building's significance as a heritage asset, the Conservation in which it is sited or the neighbouring Listed Buildings.

4.0 SUMMARY

This application is for the re-modelling of an existing property that has benefitted from planning permission in the past. Most recently a planning application was submitted for extensions and alterations in the form of the erection of a single storey side extension and external terrace. This application (SMD/2016/0724) was withdrawn when the issues surrounding the existence of a historic

Article 4 Direction became apparent, thus removing any argument for the potential of Permitted Development.

As any further extensions to the property is no longer an option due to Green Belt policy and the fact that the property has been extended on numerous occasions, the client has been forced to re-think their approach to creating a modern home that meets current housing standards, something which the current dwelling does not. On this basis, the approach has been to demolish the timber framed element of the property and retain the more substantial brick built element to the rear of the property. The replacement will have the same footprint as the element which it replaces. The materials proposed in the proposal will form a building that is primarily constructed out of natural stone, timber effect cladding and artificial slate.

The proposal will result in a slight increase in height by 0.84m, but this is necessary to facilitate a single roof over the dwelling and move away from the felt / flat roofs that are currently in situ. However, in this instance whilst the proposal involves a marginal increase in height, there will be an overall reduction in volume by 9 cubic metres that is considered sufficient enough to offset the increase in height. The figures below show the existing and proposed situation surrounding the development proposal:

- Height

  Existing – 3.3m
  Proposed – 4.14m

- Footprint

  Existing – 101m^2
  Proposed – 101m^2

- Volume

  Existing – 374m^3
  Proposed – 365m^3

On this basis, it is considered that the property will not create any additional harm to the openness or character of the Green Belt. Furthermore, the design of the proposal is of a high quality that does not have an urban appearance. Such features as the materials to be used in the construction of the property and fenestration details create a dwelling that is not urban in appearance and more akin to the holiday accommodation in the locality. Whilst, reservations were received from the Council regarding the introduction of dormer windows in the proposal, the approach undertaken has resulted in an integral feature in the overall design of the dwelling. The windows in the roof plane on the front elevation with the enclosed balcony also contribute to the reduced urban appearance of the dwelling.

It is envisaged by the applicant that the proposed dwelling will be energy efficient through the installation of triple glazing and renewable technologies such as a ground source heat pump, solar photovoltaic and solar panels to produce electricity and heat water. The applicant is also in the process of tidying the site in general through the re-building of historic field boundary walls and renewing existing post and rail fencing. The applicant is also liaising closely with Staffordshire

Wildlife Trust to clear Rhododendron from woodland areas and removal of fallen trees and woodland debris - also helping to put together a general woodland management plan to include wildlife conservation.

5.0 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 is considered that as an individual piece of design the proposal will be appropriate and represent a significant improvement on the current dwelling that is in situ. The proposal due to its scale and form will not result in a detrimental impact on the character of the rural area or Green Belt that it is situated within and nor will harm the adjacent Rudyard Conservation Area. The application is considered to accord with the Development Plan Policies and guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework. The Local Authority is therefore politely requested to support this application and grant planning permission accordingly.