Design & Access Statement

for

Proposed Dwelling

On

Land at

Heather Hills

Birchall Lane

Leek

Staffs

ST13 5RA

Design and Access Statement for Proposed Dormer Bungalow on land at Heather Hills, Birchall Lane, Leek, ST13 5AR – RLM821DAS.

Introduction

This application for Change of Use of part of an existing garden to a single residential building plot, with dormer bungalow is being submitted on behalf of my clients, the current owners of Heather Hills. It is a re-submission following the recent withdrawal of a previous application ref: SMD/2016/0548 and the subsequent refusal of application SMD/2017/0147.

It seeks to re-affirm and establish that this part of the garden can have full planning consent for a single dwelling – the last application was refused by the Planning Committee against an Officer recommendation for approval.

Discussions with the Local Authority have confirmed that the Heather Hill site was formerly part of a larger housing development, granted outline permission on 13th January 1971 - the existing Heather Hills plot was formerly known as plots 17 and 18.

Heather Hills itself was granted planning consent to extend to the rear on 7th May 1996 under reference SMD/1996/0784 – it is unclear exactly when Heather Hills itself was constructed.

Subsequently a reserved matters application was approved on 1st December 1971 with regards to this. A letter issued on 12th May 2016 by Ben Haywood of SMDC confirms that an extant consent for residential development exists.

The subject matter of this application covers the dominant part of what was known as plot 17 (see attached correspondence and plan) – plot 18 is clearly what now Heather Hills is.

The site lies within the defined town boundary of Leek and there is therefore a presumption in favour of development as covered by Local and NPPF

policies, which the Council are well aware of. In addition at this present time the Local Authority falls far short of its projected target of housing supply (only 2 years of a 5 year target).

Paragraph 49 of the NPPF states that:
"Housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development". 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"

The latest housing land supply figures for Staffordshire Moorlands, as set out in the Local Authority's Housing Land Supply Statement (March 2015), confirm that the Local Planning Authority is only able to demonstrate a 1.84 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 provisions of paragraph 14 of the NPPF are relevant to this proposal.

Paragraph 14 of the NPPF confirms that at the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking. It goes on to state that for decision taking this means: "where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission 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".

The absence of a five-year deliverable supply of housing means that the adopted policies of the Core Strategy, insofar as they relate to the supply of housing, have to be afforded less weight. By comparison the provisions of the NPPF are a material consideration of the highest weight and in the absence of any specific policies to indicate that permission should be refused it is concluded that permission for this proposal should be granted unless any adverse impacts can be shown to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

A similar plot not 300 metres away has recently received full consent - just as that plot is a windfall site it is argued that this site to falls within that category.

Full details including landscaping and materials have been included as the applicant wishes to seek full consent for all details to avoid the need for a subsequent discharge of conditions application.

Design

The previous design for a traditional two storey, four bedroom property with attached garage was criticised by Planning Committee members as well as local neighbours for its size and form. In addition it was stated that the design was not in keeping with the local architecture – it should be stated that there is a great variety of designs in the Birchall area.

The latest submitted details show a three bedroom bungalow is proposed on the plot, complete with a separate single garage. This three bedroom dormer bungalow has been designed to be of a smaller overall form and footprint, with detailing to mimic details on nearby dwellings. The property will be built to a high standard with materials of high quality and finish.

In addition its position within the plot has been revised and the proposed floor level has been lifted 500mm in order to reduce the amount of excavation required, thus reducing the amount of material to be taken off site and the building of retaining walls (also criticised at Committee). The bungalow is now separated from Heather Hills by a greater distance, therefore giving better privacy and amenity to both properties.

Despite this slight elevation the ridge line of the proposed bungalow is some 1200mm lower than the previously proposed two storey house – in addition the gables are less dominant, as the first floor bedrooms are within the outline of the roof. Only a single flat roofed dormer to the front protrudes from the roof slope.
The property, as before, has been set back from the edge of Birchall Lane in order to exceed the privacy distance requirements face to face with the existing properties opposite the site. The garage is set back 12 metres from

the road edge and the bungalow has been rotated slightly to face across the existing contours.

Landscaping proposals are very similar to the previous application, with the addition of the rebuilding and slight extension of the original dry stone wall to the front – this will help with the grading of levels.

It is asserted that this latest proposal complies with Policy DC1 and Section 7 of the NPPF – reasons sited by SMDC as reasons for refusal, despite the protracted discussions and agreement/recommendation of the Planning Officer.

Access

The works will incorporate current building regulation measures as laid out in Approved Document M and associated legislation. The existing access arrangements will allow for assisted wheel chair access to all ground floor doors as both the internal and external doors are wide enough. The hallway is of a good size and allows for adequate circulation space for wheel chair users.

Conclusion

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 Leek.
- Leek 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 is of an appropriate design that is in-keeping with the widely varying character of the surrounding area.
- The proposed development will not detract from the amenity of neighbouring residential occupiers.

For these reasons the proposed development is considered to accord with the provisions of policies SS1, SS2, SS3, SS5a and DC1 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy and guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

It is furthermore submitted that having regard to the provisions of paragraphs 49 and 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework and policy SS1a of the Core Strategy, that this proposal should be determined in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development. In this regard it is considered that the proposal amounts to a sustainable form of development and no adverse impacts are considered to exist to **significantly and demonstrably** outweigh the benefits of the development.

The Local Planning Authority is therefore respectfully requested to grant full planning permission for the proposed development.

Robert L McGuinness MRICS
Chartered Surveyor – RLM Associates

29th July 2017

STAFFORDSHIRE
moorlands
DISTRICT COUNCIL

ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE

Simon W. Baker B.Ed MSA MISPAL
Chief Executive

Dealt with by: Mr B. Haywood

Our Ref:

Direct Dial: 01538 395400 ext. 4924

Your Ref:

Date: 12th May 2016

Mr. Dave James

By Email

Dear Mr. James.

RE: Land off Birchall Lane & Rivendell Lane, Leek, Staffordshire

Thank you for providing me with a copy of the reserved matters approval for the above site dated 1st December 1971

On the basis of this additional information it would appear that there is an extant consent for residential development on this site.

You will appreciate that the above is the informal opinion of a Planning Officer based on the information that you have provided and does not constitute a formal determination under the Planning Acts.

If you have any queries regarding the above please do not hesitate to contact us again.

Yours sincerely,

B.J. Haywood

Mr. B. Haywood
Operations Manager – Development Services