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 AND ACCESS STATEMENT



PROPOSAL : **OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION WITH ALL MATTERS RESERVED (EXCEPT ACCESS) FOR THE ERECTION OF DWELLINGS.**

ADDRESS : **HIGHFIELD, LEEK, STAFFORDSHIRE, ST13 8SG**

APPLICANT : **MR D ALLEN**

DATE : **SEPTEMBER 2017** **JOB NO. : 2016-2149**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Sammons Architectural Ltd have been appointed by Mr D Allen to prepare and submit an outline planning application to Staffordshire Moorlands District Council for the erection of dwellings at Highfield, Leek, Staffordshire, ST13 8SG.

2.0 USE

The site currently forms the residential unit, its garden and orchard of Highfield, Leek. The site itself is located outside the defined settlement boundary of Leek and is therefore considered to be located in the open countryside.

3.0 AMOUNT

The number of dwellings is not a consideration at this stage as the application only seeks to establish the principle of residential development on site and the access. The number of dwellings shown on the layout plan is for indicative purposes only and will be addressed in a future reserved matters application.

4.0 LAYOUT

At this stage layout is not a consideration as the submitted plan is for indicative purposes only. This matter will be addressed in a future reserved matters application.

5.0 SCALE

At this stage scale is not a consideration. This matter will be addressed in a future reserved matters application.

6.0 LANDSCAPING

At this stage landscaping is not a consideration. This matter will be addressed in a future reserved matters application.

7.0 APPEARANCE

At this stage appearance is not a consideration. This matter will be addressed in a future reserved matters application.

8.0 ACCESS

The proposal will utilise the existing access to the Cricket Club and provide a new access or egress that onto Macclesfield Road (A523). The site itself will then be accessed off a small access to be created off the existing road that will then go through a clearing to the trees to the north of the road to Highfield.

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 Local Plan for Staffordshire Moorlands is being developed and is out for consultation, but due to its status only limited weight can be attached to this document. The following is considered relevant:

Core Strategy,

SS1 – Development Principles
SS1a – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
SS5a – Leek Area Strategy
SS6c – Other Areas Rural Strategy
SD1 – Sustainable Use of Resources
H1 – New Housing Development
DC1 – Design Considerations
DC3 – Landscape and Settlement Setting

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 SUMMARY

The application site is located just outside the Leek Development Boundary, which terminates at the southern end of Leek Cricket Club. The site is approximately 200m further north of the Development Boundary. Whist a new Town Boundary is being proposed through the Local Plan the amendments in the area of the site only serve to include an area of land as a preferred housing site to the south of the former reservoir. The site represents a detached dwelling, its garden and its orchard. The site measures 0.64ha. and currently has a vehicular access on to the A523 from an access further north of the access to the Cricket Club, which is used by several properties.

Paragraph 47 of the NPPF requires the Council to identify a five-year supply of deliverable housing land sites, including a 5% buffer to allow for choice and competition in the market for land increased to a 20% buffer where there is a persistent under-delivery in past years. The Council calculates its 5-year land supply on a district basis. As at March 2016, it was 1.87 years (with a 20% buffer). The local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites. Paragraph 49 states 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.

Paragraph 14 of the NPPF states that where the development plan is absent, silent or out-of-date 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 the Framework taken as a whole; or specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted.

The proposed development would make a valuable contribution towards meeting the housing land supply shortfall in the District within an accessible and sustainable location. The development would also attract significant economic and social benefits that will aid the local economy and local businesses. The development of the orchard, which is a greenfield site will impact on the character and appearance of the countryside, but this is not considered sufficient as to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits that are associated with the development.

The site is located in a sustainable location, especially as it is only located approximately 50m away from a residential scheme that has recently been approved under outline planning application SMD/2016/0376 for the erection of two dwellings that was approved on 16th August 2017. Leek can be easily reached by walking, as it is generally accepted that a distance of 2km is considered a reasonable and achievable walking distance and the first shops and services can be reached from the site in approximately 500m. Thus, development in this location would not lead to reliance on private transport in accordance with the aims of the Framework.

The site is located within a cluster of existing buildings, so whilst the site is not located within the existing Development Boundary or proposed Town Boundary, it will not represent an isolated form of development. In addition, the site is well screened due to the mature trees and vegetation that surround neighbouring sites, such as at the Cricket Club and on the agricultural fields to the north. This means that the site will have a minimal impact on the wider visual amenities in the area as it will not be clearly visible from anywhere in the public realm.

The proposal will require some works to trees, especially with regards to providing the new highway accesses off Macclesfield Road (A523) and off the internal road to the proposed housing site itself. Whilst the site forms part of a blanket / temporary Tree Preservation order that was confirmed on 14th July 2017, the submitted tree report clearly demonstrates that the proposed works will not harm any significant trees. Such as the new access off the internal road has been located where there is already a clearing within the trees.

Whilst the proposal will result in the creation of additional residential dwellings in the locality and associated vehicle movements, it will use an access that is generally considered to be acceptable in highways terms. However, in this instance the proposal will improve the current situation through the provision of a separate entrance / exit that will further improve highway safety in this stretch of the A523.

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. 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 application is considered to accord with policies in the Development Plan and guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework. At the heart of the Framework is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 7 of the Framework identifies three key elements of sustainability based on social, economic and environmental dimensions. This proposal responds positively towards all three elements and as such, the Local Authority is politely requested to support this outline application for a residential development and grant planning permission accordingly.