FOREFRONT
DEVELOPMENT CONSULTING
9 Britannia Park, North Road, Stoke on Trent, ST6 2PZ
Office 01782 216912 WWW.FOREFRONTDC.UK

Design and Access Statement

Detailed Planning Application for a single Dwelling on land at Micklea Lane, Longsdon, Staffordshire, ST9 9QA

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Planning Application seeks detailed planning permission for the residential development of land on the north eastern side of Micklea Lane, Longsdon, Staffordshire.

1.2 This document deals with the scope and nature of the proposal, the planning history of the site, planning policies and the land use rationale.

1.3 The site lies between existing residential properties and its boundary is a road frontage to Micklea Lane.

1.4 This application proposes a single dwelling.

2.0 Site Description

2.1 The site is bounded to the northwest by a two storey dwelling, and to the Southeast by another residential property, which has eaves dormers.

2.2 The site slopes slightly and this factor has informed the design of the proposed dwelling .

2.3 There are trees and hedges on the site, mainly confined to the road frontage. These are not protected.

3.0 Planning History and Constraints

3.1 The site has not been subject to previous applications to secure additional residential development.

3.2 The site lies within the designated Green Belt. It does not lie within a Conservation Area or within the curtilage of a Listed Building. None of the trees on the site are protected

3.3 The site lies within a designated Special Landscape Area.

4.0 Proposed Use

4.1 The proposed use of the site is for a residential development. This is a detailed planning application with plans showing the appearance and siting of a new dwelling.

4.2 The new dwelling would be served by a new vehicular access, in the position shown on the submitted plans. This will provide adequate highway visibility.

4.3 The existing road side hedge and trees can be largely retained, to maintain the appearance of the street scene and screen the proposed new building.

5.0 Design and Scale

5.1 The application site lies between two existing dwellings. The proposed dwelling will continue the built form of linear development.
The application site is comparable in size to the adjacent houses and is capable of providing small scale infill development.

5.2 The scheme has been devised to allow for a single new home. This has been positioned to provide an aesthetically pleasing living environment that will incorporate areas of landscaped space as well as incorporating existing trees and hedgerows. The layout corresponds to and enhances the surrounding area.

5.3 Cars associated with the new dwelling will have off road parking in the form of a double garage thereby limiting their impact upon the site.

5.4 The sloping nature of the site has informed the design and position of the proposed dwelling. It allows the provision of a part three storey dwelling which appears as a traditional 2 storey dwelling in its front elevation.

5.5 The proposed dwelling includes traditional design features as well as details including parapets and stone cills and lintels. The new dwelling will integrate successfully with the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

6.0 Layout

6.1 In accordance with policy DC1 all new development shall be designed to protect the amenity of the area, including residential amenity, in terms of satisfactory daylight, sunlight, outlook, privacy and soft landscaping.

6.3 The shape and size and of the site means that the new house and garage have been able to be accommodate a good-sized area of private amenity space to its rear. The proposal will therefore not result in a significant and demonstrable adverse impact to residential amenity, and accords with the provisions of policy DC1 in this regard.

7.0 Environmental Performance

7.1 The development will make provision to achieve building standards and energy requirements that are forward thinking and aim to reduce CO 2 omissions.

7.3 From an overall development standpoint and to reduce emission rates, the following measures will be integrated in the scheme:

- External, secure drying spaces including a drying line.
- External lighting will carry energy efficient fittings.
- Energy efficient boilers.
- secure cycle storage/
- A room in the property with the potential for home working. This would include extra power outlets, telephone points and an appropriate level of light and ventilation.
- Up to 75% of internal lighting dedicated to low energy fittings.
- Water efficient wc's, taps etc.
- Provision of water butts and rainwater harvesting systems.
- Efficient use of orientation of the principal rooms of the dwellings.

7.4 Drainage. The site is not shown to be susceptible from flooding on the Environmental Agency maps. The storage and controlled release of surface water during extreme storm events can be accommodated through collection systems such as permeable surfacing, soakaways, rainwater harvesting etc to slow down the peak-rate run-off.

7.5 The details of the drainage system for the site will be subject to a condition for a suitable drainage system to be agreed with the council and the utility company.

8.0 Access and Transport

8.1 In accordance with policies DC1 and T1 all new development should provide for safe and satisfactory access and make a contribution to meeting the parking requirements arising from the development.

8.2 The application site will be able to facilitate level access to the doors of all new properties which will also have to comply with the relevant Building Regulations whilst being built. The emergency services will have no difficulty reaching all parts of the proposed development, should that ever be necessary.

8.3 The site is of sufficient size to enable provision of a turning space to enable vehicles to exit the site in a forward gear. There is also space for parking at least two vehicles to accord with the local authority's informal parking standards.

8.4. The proposed development will therefore not result in a significant and demonstrable adverse impact to highway safety, and accords with the provisions of policy T1 of the Core Strategy.

9.0 Planning Policy Considerations

9.1 The site is located within the designated North Staffordshire Green Belt. National Planning Policy Framework, March 2012 contains Paragraph 80 which states that;

"Green Belt serves five purposes:

● to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
● to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
● to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
● to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
● to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land."

9.2 Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) confirms the statutory position that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For this area and this type of development the relevant document is the Core Strategy adopted by the District Council on 26th March 2014.

9.3 Accordingly, the main issues are:

- Whether the proposal is inappropriate development within the Green Belt for the purposes of the National Planning Policy Framework and development plan policy;
- The effect of the development on the openness of the Green Belt and the character of the area;
- Whether the development would comply with development plan policies that seek to control development in rural areas; and
- If the development is inappropriate, whether the harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations, so as to amount to the very special circumstances necessary to justify the development.

9.4 The original object of establishing the Green Belt was to discourage uncontrolled urban sprawl into the open countryside around our larger towns

and cities and to prevent the coalescence of two or more large neighbouring towns. No-one would disagree with that broad objective; but it has resulted in unnecessary and inappropriate rigidity in the treatment of development proposals, which seeks to resist all development in the Green Belt unless either it is deemed to be 'appropriate' development or exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated. This rigidity has been further compounded by the unfortunate wording of the relevant policy guidance in the NPPF, compared with the wording of the former PPG2. [See Europa Oil and Gas Limited v. SSCLG [2013] EWHC 2643 (Admin) and Fordent Holdings Ltd v SSCLG [2013] EWHC 2844 (Admin).

9.5 Rather than this increasingly inflexible approach, the approach should be that within Green Belts, development should not be permitted which would prejudice the objectives of the Green Belt and/or which would compromise its openness, but that in determining applications for development in the Green Belt local planning authorities should examine the contribution that the application site in question makes to the Green Belt (in other words, its 'Green Belt value'). It would thus be the impact of the development on the Green Belt as a whole that would be the determining factor, rather than the 'appropriateness' of the development in the Green Belt (in land use terms) or any question of exceptional circumstances being required to justify the development. The essential point is that Green Belts are not and never have been intended to create wholly development-free zones in the countryside.

9.6 The National Planning Policy Framework made it clear that local planning authorities are to significantly boost the supply of housing and where, as in this case, a District does not have a five year supply of deliverable housing sites existing policies restricting housing such as development envelopes are to be considered out of date.

9.7 In the absence of a five year supply of deliverable housing sites, the test to be applied to planning applications is that in paragraph 14 of the NPPF. Planning permission is to be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole or specific policies in that document indicate development should be restricted.

9.8 Staffordshire Moorlands Housing Land Supply Statement (March 2016) is a document which sets out the Local Authority's performance in respect of housing land supply and housing delivery. It confirms that the Local Authority has a deliverable supply of housing land equivalent to 1.87 years supply.

9.9 The Local Plan process which it is part way through has to allocate at least five years supply of deliverable housing sites. To be 'deliverable' sites should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, be

achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years and be viable. This site meets all those criteria.

9.10 When viewing the site in the context of the exsing built form it is clear that the land can be considered as infill development; dwellings are located to the southeast and northwest of the site within a linear roadside fronting pattern. The development of this site will not appear as an isolated dwelling in the countryside but will visually appear as infill development. It should therefore be considered as appropriate development within the Green Belt.

10.0 Precedent

10.1 Planning permission was granted under SMD/2014/0748 for the erection of a dwelling within the garden area of a detached property known as 'Wyn Dene' Leek Road, Longsdon. This is also a Green Belt site.

10.2 The Planning Officer's report on that planning application included the following remark;

"When viewing the site in the context of the existing built form it is clear that that the land can be considered as infill development; dwellings are located to the east and west of the site within a linear roadside fronting pattern. The application site is not a back land site, rather it has a generous length of roadside frontage, exhibiting all of the characteristics of an infill site. For the above reasons it is considered that the residential development of this site is not inappropriate development within the Green Belt."

10.3 These points apply equally well to this site, which is within 1 mile.

11.0 Conclusions

11.1 Planning permission should be granted as the local plan and the policies within are considered to be out of date.

11.2 There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in the NPPF and in addition where an LPA cannot demonstrate a five year supply of housing land, as in this case, then there is a double presumption in favour of development. The Council does not have a five year supply of housing land and that consequently its development plan housing policies should be regarded as being out of date. In these circumstances, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) confirms that the key test is whether adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the scheme.

11.3 The proposed dwelling has been designed and arranged to complement and enhance the surrounding area and safeguard the amenities of the surrounding residents.

11.4 The access layout from Micklea Lane has been thoroughly assessed and is adequate, for the scale of the development proposed.

11.5 The application site is not a back land site, rather it has a generous length of roadside frontage, exhibiting all of the characteristics of an infill site. For the above reasons it is considered that the residential development of this site is not inappropriate development within the Green Belt.