SAMMONS Architectural LIMITED

Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists
Registered Practice

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

PLANNING STATEMENT INCLUDING DESIGN & ACCESS CONSIDERATIONS

DATE ISSUED:
February 2018

SITE ADDRESS:
Land adjacent to Cheddleton Park Avenue, Cheddleton

APPLICANT:
Moorlands Homes (Cheadle) Ltd

PROPOSAL:
Outline application with means of access for residential development of up to 8 dwellings

JOB NUMBER:

2018-2296

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This statement is submitted in support of an outline planning application for residential development of up to 8 dwellings on land adjacent to Cheddleton Park Avenue, Cheddleton. The application is made in outline and seeks approval of means of access only with all other matters reserved for subsequent approval. The application has been submitted by Sammons Architectural Ltd on behalf of Moorlands Homes (Cheadle) Ltd and is accompanied by a site location plan, block plan and ecological survey which should be read in conjunction with this statement.

1.2 This statement analyses the site, the proposal and the policy context within which it is made. Thereafter it provides justification for approval of the proposed development primarily on the basis that Cheddleton village is a target for significant housing growth up to 2026. The proposed development lies within a recognised development boundary where there is a general presumption in favour of development. It will relate well to the existing area and no significant demonstrable harm would arise in respect of the proposal in relation to the character and appearance of the area, highway safety or residential amenity. In addition, the economic and social benefits which the development would bring in terms of its contribution to housing land supply, new homes bonus, jobs in construction and the construction industry supply chain and spending in local shops also attract considerable weight in favour of the proposal.

2 APPLICATION SITE AND ITS SETTING

2.1 The application site comprises of a roughly rectangular undulating parcel of land which extends to some 0.77 hectares. It forms part of a much larger open agricultural field which lies to the west of the existing turning head for Cheddleton Park Avenue. It lies on the side of a steeply sloping valley with land falling away in a northerly direction to Caldon Canal which lies approximately 80m in the bottom of the valley . Residential development lies to the north eastern, and south eastern site boundaries with open countryside the north, south and west. The Batemans factory lies on the opposite side of the Canal.

2.2 The site occupies a sustainable location within the built up development boundary of Cheddleton and is within easy walking and cycling distance of the numerous facilities and employment opportunities which this large village provides. Regular public transport connections are also available. For the purposes of the Development Plan the application site lies within a recognised development boundary where there is a general presumption in favour of development.

3. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 This is an outline application which seeks consent for the principle of residential development on the site for up to 8 detached dwellings. Means of access is sought for consideration at this stage with all other matters reserved for subsequent consideration. The proposed dwellings would be laid out in the same manner as the existing housing development with the existing turning head extended.

4. PLANNING POLICY

4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004 requires proposals to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan taking into consideration any material considerations relevant to the determination of the application.

4.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27th March 2012 and replaced a significant proportion of central government planning policy advice with immediate effect. It is the Government's clear intention that the document should be considered to be a material consideration and as such carries particular weight where development is not addressed by planning policies in the existing Development Plan.

4.3 Whilst the recently published NPPF does not change the statutory status of the Development Plan as the starting point for decision making it does provide guidance to LPA's and is a material consideration in determining planning applications (para 12). The NPPF confirms that at the heart of the guidance is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (para 14) and that for decision making this means approving development proposals that accord with the Development Plan without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for the Staffordshire Moorlands comprises of the adopted Core Strategy Development Plan Document (March 2014) saved policies of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (1998), saved policies of the Minerals Local Plan (1999) and the Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent Joint Waste Core Strategy (March 2013).

4.4 The most relevant policies of the adopted Core Strategy are considered to be SS1 (Development Principles); SS1a (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development); SS2 (Future provision of Development); SS3 (Distribution of Development); SS4 (Managing the Release of Housing Land); SS6 (Development in Rural Areas); SS6c (Rural Areas Strategy); SD1 (Sustainable Use of Resources); H1 (New Housing); H2 (Affordable and Local Needs Housing) R2 (Rural Housing); DC1 (Design Considerations); DC3 (Landscape and Settlement Setting); C1 (Creating Sustainable Communities) NE1 Biodiversity and Geological Resources; T1 Development and Sustainable Transport and T2 (Other Sustainable Transport Measures). For the sake of brevity these policies are not quoted in full but they are referred to where appropriate in the following section.

4.5 In terms of Supplementary Planning Guidance the Space About Dwellings (September 1998 - Appendix 3 of the Local Plan[1998]) are also important in the consideration of this application.

4.6 Also of particular relevance to this application is the Staffordshire Moorlands Housing Land Supply Statement (March 2017) which sets out the Local Authority's performance in respect of housing land supply and housing delivery.

5. KEY PLANNING ISSUES

5.1 The key issues for consideration in the determination of this application are considered to be:-

- the principle of development
- impact on the character and appearance of the area
- impact on residential amenity and neighbouring land uses
- impact on highway safety
- impact on biodiversity

Principle of development

5.2 Policy SS6a (Larger Villages) of the Core Strategy states that in addition to the three market towns of Leek, Cheadle and Biddulph the bulk of local housing needs for the rural areas will be met within the larger villages of which Cheddleton is identified as one. The application site lies within the village development boundary where there is a general presumption in favour of development. The application site comprises a sustainable location for new housing that is within easy walking and cycling distance of the numerous local services, facilities and employment opportunities on offer within the village. The site also lies within short walking stance of public transport connections which offer regular links with neighbouring towns of Leek and Cheadle. The application is submitted at a time when the Local Plan would support the development of this site for housing and the proposal will assist in delivering the Council's commitment for housing. The proposed development is therefore considered to be acceptable in principle.

The need for housing

5.3 The development plan identifies a net housing requirement in the District of 6,000 additional dwellings during the period 2006 to 2026. Currently, there is a significant shortage of deliverable housing land in the District. The latest housing land supply figures for Staffordshire Moorlands, as set out in the Local Authority's Housing Land Supply Statement, demonstrates that the Local Planning Authority is only able to demonstrate 1.99 years of deliverable housing supply (with a 20% buffer). This falls significantly short of the 5 year supply required by paragraph 49 of the NPPF, and represents a continued decline in the Council's housing supply position over the last few years. As a consequence the provisions of paragraph 14 of the NPPF becomes relevant.

5.4 In order to significantly boost the supply of housing para 47 of the NPPF asks LPA's to have a 5 year continuous supply (including an additional 5% buffer) of deliverable land at all times. It also goes on to state that housing applications should be considered in the context of presumption in favour of sustainable development (para 49). It further advises that where a LPA cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites, the relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up to date.

5.5 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."

Sustainability

5.6 In terms of compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 7 identifies three dimensions to sustainable development; social, economic and environmental which should be considered collectively. The proposal will also derive a number of social benefits notably helping the Local Planning Authority to meet its housing delivery targets. In terms of the economic dimension of sustainable development the proposed development will meet this aim by generating additional household expenditure which will contribute to the local economy and help to support local services and facilities. Additional economic benefits will be achieved through the employment generated during the construction phase. Such benefits are considered to be worthy of significant weight, given the number of dwellings proposed. With regards to the environmental dimension of sustainable development the site is considered to be well related to the surrounding residential development and its sustainable location will help generate sustainable travel patterns and reduce the need for reliance on the private car. Having regard to the above considerations it is concluded that the principle of development is wholly acceptable on this site and that the proposal constitutes a sustainable form of development.

Design & Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area

5.7 Housing Development" states that "all development will be assessed according to the extent to which it provides for high quality, sustainable housing ...and the strategy for the area having regard to the location of the development, the characteristics of the site...All housing should be the most appropriate density compatible with the site and its location, with the character of the surrounding area." The specific design policies of the CS also seek to promote local distinctiveness and positively contribute to the area as is similarly reflected in the NPPF which confirms that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. It furthermore states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development; is indivisible from good planning; and should contribute positively to making places better for people. Developments should function well and establish a strong sense of place creating attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit. Proposals should also optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development and respond to local character and history including local materials and the use of good architecture and appropriate landscaping. Developments should also create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder and the fear of crime do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion. Policy DC1 states that new development should protect residential amenity in terms of satisfactory daylight, sunlight, outlook, privacy and soft landscaping.

5.8 Whilst the overall layout, appearance and landscaping of the site is reserved for subsequent approval it is considered that an appropriate design could be achieved which would respect the character and appearance of the surrounding development and help it assimilate with the rural area beyond. The plot sizes would be comparable to those adjacent to the site and it would appear to be more than capable of accommodating the number of dwellings proposed whilst maintaining an acceptable relationship with the neighbouring dwellings. A detailed scheme which meets the Council's adopted Space About Dwellings Standards could be designed so that there would be no adverse impact on neighbouring properties or indeed future occupiers of the units. Each dwelling would also benefit from a suitably sized area of private amenity space thus ensuring that future occupiers will benefit from an appropriate level of residential amenity. The proposed development would be read as a logical extension of the existing residential housing development and when viewed in longer distance views from the side it would be seen against the back drop of the existing built development and the rising ground to the south. The detailed design of the dwellings is not for consideration at this stage, but is likely to make reference to and take its cue from the adjacent residential development which would also assist in reinforcing the character of the locality. Appropriate soft landscaping will form an integral part of the proposed development to ensure that the site is well integrated with its surroundings and will have a positive visual impact on the local environment.

5.9 On balance it is considered that the submitted details adequately demonstrate that the application site can accommodate the density of development sought and that it can be assimilated into the area without any visual harm to the site or the wider surrounding area. In this respect the proposal accords with CS policies H1 and DC1 and the guidance contained in the NPPF more generally.

Highways

5.10 Paragraph 32 of the NPPF states: Plans and decisions should take account of whether: the opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up depending on the nature and location of the site, to reduce the need for major transport infrastructure; safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people and improvements can be undertaken within the transport network that cost effectively limit the significant impacts of the development. Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe is reflected in CS Policy T1 Development and Sustainable Transport.

5.11 The application proposes to extend the existing Cheddleton Park Avenue to serve the development. The proposed development would replicate the existing arrangement with dwellings located on either side of the highway with a turning head provided at the end. Adequate off road parking provision for each dwelling can be achieved within the site and there would therefore be no significant conflict with CS Policy T1 or guidance contained in the NPPF.

Amenity

5.12 Whist the layout of the proposed development is indicative at this stage is to considered that a residential scheme could be designed which would not adversely impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers. Both of the properties have secondary windows in the side facing gables however these are only secondary in nature and accordingly the Local Authority's Space About Dwellings would not therefore be applied. In any event existing boundary treatments, which comprises of close boarded timber fencing would be maintained thus reducing any potential impact for overlooking/loss of amenity. It is not considered that the proposed development would give rise to any significant adverse impacts to neighbouring residential amenity and will derive acceptable levels of residential amenity for future occupiers of the proposed dwellings. The proposal therefore meets the requirements of policy DC1 of the Core Strategy in this regard.

Biodiversity

5.13 The conservation and enhancement of the natural environment is a core principle of the NPPF where planning policies should promote the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats and ecological networks. In determining planning applications, permission should be refused if significant harm resulting from development cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated or, as a last resort, compensated for. CS Policy DC1 promotes the maintenance, enhancement, restoration and re-creation of biodiversity and geological heritage, where appropriate, in accordance with Policy NE1 'Biodiversity and Geological Resources'. Amongst other matters, Policy NE1 requires that development, where it is appropriate, produces a net gain in biodiversity and ensures that any unavoidable impacts are appropriately mitigated for whilst promoting the appropriate maintenance, enhancement, restoration and/or re-creation of biodiversity through its proposed nature, scale, location and design.

5.14 The application has been accompanied by a preliminary ecological appraisal which has been undertaken by Absolute Ecology. This identifies the site as being unmanaged, semi improved grassland which is considered as being of low conservation value in terms of protected flora/vegetation communities and / or indicator species. It concludes by stating that subject to phasing/timing of works, detailed control of any lighting scheme and the carrying out of a detailed reptile survey prior to works commencing the proposed development would not adversely impact upon any of the established ecological interests in the area.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 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. For the reasons given above it is considered that residential development on the application site would provide clear social, economic and environmental benefits in relation to the provision of new housing within an accessible and sustainable

location. The proposal would also make a modest contribution to housing land supply in accordance with policy SS2 and SS3 of the Core Strategy and paragraphs 49 and 50 of the Framework. Cheddleton village is a target for significant housing growth up to 2026. Moreover the proposal would support a local service centre in accordance with Policy SS6a of the Core Strategy and Paragraph 55 of the National Planning Policy Framework which states that housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. The proposed development will relate well to the existing area and no significant demonstrable harm would arise in respect of the proposal in relation to the character and appearance of the area, highway safety or residential amenity. In addition the economic and social benefits which the development would bring in terms of its contribution to housing land supply, new homes bonus, jobs in construction and the construction industry supply chain and spending in local shops would also attract considerable weight in favour of the proposal The proposed development therefore accords with the provisions of policies SS1, SS1a, SS2, SS3, SS6a, DC1, DC3, H1 and H2 and NE1 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy and guidance contained within the NPPF. The LPA is therefore respectfully requested to approve outline planning permission for the residential development of land adjacent to Cheddleton Park Avenue, Cheddleton subject to any planning conditions it may feel are necessary in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in Policy SS1a of the Core Strategy and paragraph 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Use

The application proposes the development of the site for residential purposes for up to 8 dwellings. The application is in outline within means of access considered. All other matters are reserved for subsequent consideration. This form of development is considered to reflect the nature and character of existing development which surrounds the site. Identified in the SHLAA this site has been shown as a viable possibility for much needed housing in a location within one of the Staffordshire Moorlands larger villages.

Amount

The application proposes the redevelopment of the site for up to 8 detached dwellings. This amount of development is considered to comply with housing policy and is in keeping with the nature and character of existing development which surrounds the site.

Scale

It is proposed that the dwellings will all be mix of two storey and single storey dwellings which is in keeping with the surrounding built development.

Landscaping

Whilst landscaping is a matter which is reserved for later consideration it is considered that the proposed development can be achieved without harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding locality.

Appearance

Appearance is a reserved matter that would be appropriately dealt with in a detailed application.

Access

The proposed development would be served by the existing vehicular access point off Cheddleton Park Avenue. It is anticipated that adequate off road parking can be provided to each plot with either a garage and/or external parking. The site is within easy walking and cycling distance of the centre of the village which has a wide range of services and facilities. Public transport links are easily accessible to Leek and other parts of the Staffordshire Moorlands as well as the neighbouring city of Stoke on Trent. It is anticipated that a concessionary footpath which will provide access from Cheddleton Park Avenue through the site to the open land beyond will be offered as part of a detailed reserved matters application.