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PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

PROPOSAL : EXTENSION AND ALTERATIONS TO EXISTING WORKSHOP

ADDRESS : LEEK TRANSMISSIONS CENTRE, LEEK ROAD, LEEKBROOK

APPLICANT : LEEK TRANSMISSIONS CENTRE

DATE : OCTOBER 2018 JOB No. : 2018-2354

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Sammons Architectural Ltd have been appointed by Leek Transmissions Centre to prepare and submit a full planning application for the extension and alteration of the existing workshop at Leek Transmissions Centre, Leek Road, Leekbrook. The application is accompanied by a location plan numbered 2018-2354-03, existing layout plan 2018-2354--01 and proposed plan numbered 2018-2354-02 which should be read in conjunction with this application.

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 on the basis that it would enable a local company to expand and retain its current operations on a single site within the town to meet their operational requirements without any adverse impact on the landscape, residential amenity or highway safety.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site comprises of an irregular shaped parcel of land which extends to some 1,496 metres. It contains a rectangular shaped brick building with a steel profiled roof which is currently used as a MOT testing station and vehicle workshop. Immediately to the east of the site lies a brick building owned by the neighbour Stanic Motors whilst to the west lies a similar sized portal framed building currently used by Docksey's. To the north of the site lies a small stream with Brook Bank House, a detached brick building currently used as a newsagents with flat above. To the south lies a hard surfaced parking area with open countryside beyond. For the purposes of the Development Plan the application site lies within the town development boundary where there is a general presumption in favour of development.

3.0 HISTORY

None.

4.0 POLICY

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.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27th March 2012 and has recently been revised (July 2018). 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, which in this area comprises of the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy document which was adopted in March 2014.

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. The NPPF confirms that at the heart of the guidance is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (para 11) and that for decision

making this means approving development proposals that accord with the Development Plan without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

At a national level, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the government's commitment for the planning system to support sustainable economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity (paragraph 80). Paragraph 81 makes clear that local planning authorities should support existing business sectors, taking account of whether they are expanding or contracting.

6.0 ASSESSMENT

Principle of development

The principle of development aligns with national and local policy objectives which aim to support economic growth. Policy E1 f the adopted Core Strategy document states that new proposal involving employment development is to be assessed according to the extent to which it supports and improves the local economy in terms of providing for the needs and skills of the existing and future local resident workforce and meeting identified business needs. Business developments will only be permitted for the expansion of existing businesses or for small scale developments provided that they would not have an unacceptable impact on the amenities, character or appearance of the area.

The application building is located within an established employment are and the proposal represents additional employment investment. The site has operated for several years without any issue. The proposal relates to a modest extension which will allow the existing and established building to continue to thrive an grow. The principle of an extension to the existing building is therefore considered acceptable subject to the detailed issues below regarding design, amenity and highway safety.

Design

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.

The proposed development would be modest in terms of its overall size and scale. Furthermore, its detailed design and appearance would be appropriate for a functional commercial building, in keeping with that of the existing building and the wider surrounding area. The majority of the extension would be located at the rear of the existing building and the extension to the side would be set well back off the front elevation. The proposed development would therefore have little if any impact on the landscape especially given its location within an established industrial area.
In this respect the proposal accords with CS1 and the guidance contained in the NPPF more generally.

Amenity

Due to its location it is not considered that the proposed development would raise any adverse amenity issues.

Highways

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.

The application site is located within a sustainable location on the edge of the development boundary. It is close to the A520 with good transport links and carries a range of frequent bus services between Leek and settlements to the south of the town. Whilst the proposed development would result in building over some of the existing parking space it would not result in the loss of any off road parking as this would simply be provided internally rather than externally. In addition the dynamics of the business is such that rather than have customers on a daily basis vehicles are generally left for a week at a time before being repaired and delivered back. On this basis it is considered that the proposed development would comply with policy T1 of the adopted Core Strategy and guidance contained within the NPPF.

7. CONCLUSION

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 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 the submitted scheme would deliver sustainable development which would allow an existing and established business to grow and expand. The principle of development is acceptable and the proposal would not raise any significant issues in terms of its visual impact nor would it be prejudicial to the reasonable enjoyment of any of the surrounding residential dwellings or any neighbouring land uses, detrimental to highway safety or raise any new environmental issues not previously considered.

8. DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

USE

The application proposes the extension and alteration of the existing vehicle workshop as shown on the submitted drawings in order to allow the existing transmissions business to grow.

AMOUNT

The existing warehouse building has a gross internal floor area of 220 sq. metres. The proposed extension would provide a further 125 sq metres of gross internal floor area.

LAYOUT

Layout is shown on the submitted drawing and access will be provided from the existing access to the site.

SCALE

The scale of the proposed extension would be smaller than that of the original building with the extension having a secondary ridge line.

LANDSCAPING

The application site sits within an existing established industrial area. No additional landscaping is proposed as part of this application.

APPEARANCE

The proposed extension would be constructed as shown on the submitted plans with all facing and roofing materials to match those on the existing building.

ACCESS

The proposal will continue to use the existing access for the site from the main A520.