Design and Access Statement for Proposed Dwelling on land adjacent to Heather Hills, Birchall Lane, Leek, ST13 5AR – RLM821DAS Rev.

Introduction

This application for Change of Use of part of an existing garden to a single residential building plot, with the construction of a relatively modest 'two' storey property is being submitted on behalf of my clients, the current owners of the site. It is a new submission following the recent appeal dismissal in respect of application SMD/2017/0513.

There is additionally planning history to the site, which the author will not go over again, as it is well documented.

The application, like the others, seeks to re-affirm and establish that this part of the garden can have full planning consent for a single dwelling – the previous two applications were refused by the Planning Committee against Officer Recommendations for approval on both. The Appeal's Inspector stated in paragraph 13 of the appeal decision the following: 'Nonetheless it is evident that the principle of development on the site has been considered acceptable'.

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 (just below 2 years of a 5 year target, which falls significantly short of the 5-year supply required by paragraph 49 of the NPPF).

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”

Paragraph 11 of the NPPF also 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on to state that for decision taking this means: “where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless: - any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies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".

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

Discussions with the Local Authority have taken place since the appeal decision with a view to designing something that takes account of the Planning committee's concerns and more importantly those of the Planning Inspector.

Previous designs have been criticised by the Planning Committee members as well as local neighbours for their size and form. In addition it was stated that the design was not in keeping with the local architecture - it should be noted that the Planning Inspector accepted that there was no particular style or form to properties within the Birchall area.

The latest submitted details show a two/three bedroom relatively modest dwelling, whose eaves heights are considerably lower than a normal two storey dwelling, being only 5800mm to ridge height. This is 600mm lower that the previous bungalow proposal, in addition to which the ground

floor level is also 250mm lower, giving a net gain in height loss of 850mm.

In addition the roof has been designed to flow with the ground slope, with the ground floor section set slightly into the slope to reduce the visual impact of the proposal. There is a limited amount of cut and fill as the existing drive, where the property sits, has a retaining wall along its rear edge already.

Dormers have been avoided in preference for roof lights, to keep the roof line simple and less complicated visually. This also assists with keeping the proposed ridge height lower in order to maintain the views from the higher patio area of heather Hills.

The garaging has been omitted and the proposed dwelling has been relocated to the south western boundary and utilises the existing driveway/access, thus keeping the property well away from Heather Hills (just over 15 metres). At this point the blank gable is seen as single storey, as it is set within the existing ground slope.

The separation distance from Birchall Lane to the road side elevation is in excess of 13 meters and the ground floor level is some 600mm below the proposed ground floor level for the previous application, thus reducing the visual impact to the frontage.

The choice of external finishes to the roof and elevations are flexible and the client is happy to agree these and any additional fenestration with the Case Officer during the 8 week application consideration period.

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.

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 the current relevant adopted policies 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 the National Planning Policy Framework and 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.

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