Design and Access Statement for Proposed Dormer Bungalow on land at Heather Hills, Birchall Lane, Leek, ST13 5AR – RLM821DAS.

Introduction

This application for Change of Use of part of a former garden area to a single residential building plot, with the construction of a relatively modest two-bedroom dormer bungalow. It is being submitted on behalf of my clients, the current owners of the site. It is a re-submission following the recent withdrawal of a previous application ref: SMD/2019/0385, which was for a modest two bedroom two storey house, set in a different location within the site.

There is additional planning history to this site, which is well documented and which the author will not go over again.

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 – previous applications were refused by the Planning Committee against Officer recommendations for approval.

It is fair to say that several appeals against the refusals have been dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate – in addition in a recent appeal the Inspector did state 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 (only 2 years of a 5 year target).

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”

The latest housing land supply figures for Staffordshire Moorlands, as set out in the Local Authority’s Housing Land Supply Statement (March 2015), confirm that the Local Planning Authority is only able to demonstrate a 1.84 year supply of deliverable housing. This falls significantly short of the 5-year supply required by paragraph 49 of the NPPF, and as a consequence, the provisions of paragraph 14 of the NPPF are relevant to this proposal.

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”.

The absence of a five-year deliverable supply of housing means that the adopted policies of the Core Strategy, insofar as they relate to the supply of housing, have to be afforded less weight. By comparison the provisions of the NPPF are a material consideration of the highest weight and in the absence of any specific policies to indicate that permission should be refused it is concluded that permission for this proposal should be granted unless any adverse impacts can be shown to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

A similar plot not 300 metres away has recently received full consent - just as that plot is a windfall site it is argued that this site to falls within that category.

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

The design of the proposed dwelling has been carefully considered and has the benefit of feedback from various consultations with the LPA, namely with Christopher Johnston and Jane Curley

The property, as before, has been set back from the edge of Birchall Lane in order to exceed the privacy distance requirements face to face with the existing properties opposite the site

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.

It is asserted that this latest proposal complies with Policy DC1 and Section 7 of the NPPF.

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 wheelchair 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 wheelchair 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:

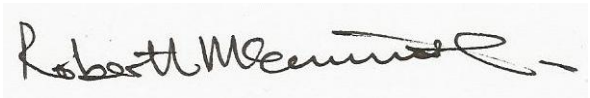
- The application site lies within the settlement boundary of Leek.
- Leek is a target for significant housing growth up to 2026.
- The provisions of the NPPF mean that the proposal should be determined in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- The site lies within easy 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 policies SS1, SS2, SS3, SS5a and DC1 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 paragraphs 49 and 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework and policy SS1a of 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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27th July 2017