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PLANNING, HERITAGE IMPACT & DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

PROPOSAL : DEMOLITION OF EXISTING OUTRIGGER AND ERECTION OF SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION AND ALTERATIONS

ADDRESS : SPORTS INJURY CLINIC, 20 HAYWOOD STREET, LEEK, STAFFORDSHIRE, ST13 5JX

APPLICANT : MR J BEWS

DATE : JULY 2020 JOB No.: 2014-1924

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INTRODUCTION

This statement is submitted in support of a full planning application for the demolition of the existing single storey outrigger and its replacement with a single storey rear extension and alterations to an existing commercial building at 20 Haywood Street, Leek. The application has been submitted by Sammons Architectural Ltd on behalf of Mr J Bews and is accompanied by drawing numbers 2014-1924-01A, 2014-1924-02B and 2014-1924-03 which should be read in conjunction with this statement.

Town and Country Planning legislation requires the submission of a statement demonstrating how the special historic or architectural interest of a building or area has been considered within a planning application proposal. In addition to the above this statement design principles and concepts have been applied to the design of the proposal and how it has taken account of national and local historic environment planning policies, and in particular how the design preserves or enhances the historic and architectural importance of the application building; how the proposal has been designed to harmonise with the existing architectural style of the building and area; the application building's setting; and particular physical features of the building and area that contribute to its special interest or character. The statement also shows how the design approach to access balances the recommendations of the Equality act 2010 with the historic asset.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site comprises of a three storey semi-detached building which sits on the southern side of Haywood Street between the junctions of Leonard Street and Shoobridge Street. Immediately to the north of the site lies a large car park which serves the town's Aldi superstore whilst the adjoining semi provides a Chinese takeaway with residential flat above. To the east and south east are apartments. For the purposes of the development plan the application site lies in the town's development boundary where there is a general presumption in favour of development.

PROPOSAL

This is a full application which seeks consent for the demolition of an existing single storey outrigger and its replacement with a single storey flat roof extension and alterations. The application building is currently used as a sports injury clinic at ground floor with a residential flat above. The proposed extension would provide a second treatment and provide improved access to the upper floor flat.

PLANNING POLICY

Conservation Areas are designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and are defined as areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

Section 72 of the same Act is also relevant and states "in the exercise with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area. of any functions under or by virtue of any of the previous mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area."

The purpose of the Character Appraisal is to define and record the special architectural and historic interest of the Leek Conservation Area to guide decisions on planning proposals.

The development plan for the area is the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy (2014) and contains the planning and conservation policies that are relevant to this proposal.

Policy SS1 Development principles requires new development to contribute positively to the social, economic and environmental improvement of the area and maintains is local distinctiveness.

Policy 1A encourages Sustainable Development in the area.

Policy SO8 in the Design and Conservation section promotes local distinctiveness by means of good design and the conservation, protection and enhancement of historic assets.

Policy DC2 The Historic Environment requires heritage assets and their setting to be enhanced and gives protection to designated and non-designated heritage assets.

The National Planning Policy Framework (2019) sets out clear guidance on the Historic Environment. If the planning authority / the decision maker judge the application building to be a "non-designated heritage asset" then the application will need to be judged against paragraph 197 of the NPPF, which states:
"197 The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset

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) which was published on 27th March 2012 and revised in February 2019 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.

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. The NPPF also sets out requirements in respect of housing delivery and securing high quality design. The following are considered to be the most relevant chapters:-

- Chapter 2 - Achieving Sustainable Development
- Chapter 6 - Building a Strong and Competitive Economy
- Chapter 7 - Ensuring the Vitality of Town Centres
- Chapter 9 - Promoting Sustainable Transport
- Chapter 12 - Achieving Well Designed Places

The Development Plan for the Staffordshire Moorlands comprises of the adopted Core Strategy Development Plan Document (March 2014) and the Saved Local plan Proposals Map / Settlement Boundaries (1998). The most relevant policies of the adopted Core Strategy are considered to be SS1 (Development Principles); SS1a (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development); SS5 (Towns) SS5a (Leek Sub Area Strategy), TCR1 (Development in the Town Centres), DC1 (Design Considerations); C1 (Creating Sustainable Communities), 1 (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.

Emerging Plan

The Local Plan Submission Version which will shape how the District shapes over the next 14 years was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination on 29th June 2018 following examination in public. It was due to be adopted towards the end of 2019. . An Inspector was appointed and he held a series of hearings at Moorlands House, Leek between Tuesday 9 and Tuesday 23 October 2018 and 4 and 5 February 2020. The Council has now issued a response to the Inspector's post hearing advice letter before considering the Plan as modified for adoption. The inspector's reply is still awaited. Once adopted the Plan will supersede the adopted Core Strategy and become part of the statutory development plan for the District. However, it is unclear how much the Covid-19 pandemic will delay the adoption of the Plan.

A number of its policies can therefore be afforded meaningful weight having been found to be acceptable by the Planning Inspector conducting the examination.

ASSESSMENT

Paragraph 189 of the Framework states that "in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's significance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. "

Leek is located on the A523 former trunk road between Macclesfield (to the North) and Buxton (to the East). It is historically a hill settlement dating back to the 13th Century. The conservation area is focused on the historic medieval streets at the core of the town centre and expands outwards to include the large mills associated with the silk industry that operated in the town in the 19th Century, the streets of terraced workers' housing and attractive Victorian and Edwardian housing, much influenced by the Arts and Crafts Movement.

The Leek Conservation Area was designated in 1970 and has been extended a further four times, the latest being in December 2013. The Conservation Area itself is broken into five Character Areas with the application site located in the South Eastern Section.

The historic context of the application building

The application proposes the demolition of an existing outrigger and the erection of a small single storey extension on the rear of the existing commercial premises. The application building is a non listed building which lies in the Leek Conservation area. It is a three storey former dwelling dating from the later part of the C19th. In the Leek Conservation Character Area at 4.42 it states that the south eastern area is "one of sharp contrasts. Immediately south of Russell Street the streetscape changes from one of small three storey shops with housing above, to one of industrial and public buildings, including the pre-Union workhouse and the former Police Station." The application site lies in close proximity to Shoobridge Street Mill (12 Haywood Street) and the Police Station and Superintendent's house which lie on the western side of Leonard Street, all of which are Grade II Listed Buildings. No specific mention is made of the application building in the conservation appraisal.

Statement of significance

The application buildings significance is its contribution to the town's character, which in this location comprises of a mix of heritage brick properties in the form of terraced housing and mills.

The design of the proposal will complement the existing building and has been created to enable the business to grow by providing a second treatment room.

The proposal constitutes a modest extension on the property, which can be comfortably accommodated on this part of the building. Its modest size and scale and sensitive design combined with its positioning at the rear means that the character and appearance of the host building would be maintained. Furthermore it would not affect the special or historic interests of any of the neighbouring listed buildings or their settings. As such the impact on the Conservation Area will be minimal and the contribution to the historic asset will therefore be preserved. On this basis it is considered that the proposal is compliant with policies SS1a,SS5a, DC1 and DC2 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan.

Impact on residential amenity

National planning policy dictates that at the heart of its core principles, planning should always seek to secure a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. This is further re-iterated in CS Policy DC1, which seeks to protect residential amenity, in terms of satisfactory daylight, sunlight, outlook, privacy and soft landscaping as informed by the Council's 'Space about Dwellings' SPG.

It is not considered that the external staircase and the use of the single storey flat roof extension to form first floor access into the existing residential unit would give raise to any adverse amenity or overlooking issues having regard to the use of the adjacent semi, which is used as a Chinese takeaway at ground floor and neighbouring land uses. The use of the application site for a Sports Injury Clinic has previously been found to be acceptable and the provision of a second treatment room would not raise any additional having regard to how these types of D1 uses operate. On this basis it is considered that the proposal accords with such requirements in relation to CS Policy DC1 and the NPPF.

Highway Safety

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' as is reflected within CS Policy T1 'Development and Sustainable Transport'.

Whilst no off street parking is provided the application site lies within a sustainable town centre location which is easily accessible by a means of alternative transport options. It is a short walk from the bus station which lies to the south east and a public car park is located at the corner of Haywood Street with Leonard Street. On street parking is also provided within the vicinity. It is therefore considered that there would be no adverse impact on highway safety and accordingly there is no conflict with CS policy T1 or with the guidance of the NPPF.

CONCLUSION

The Framework sets out that there should be a presumption in favour of sustainable development and indicates that to achieve that, economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system.

The application site lies within a sustainable town centre location. The proposed extension and alterations are modest and will ensure that the existing business can grow through the provision of an additional treatment. The proposed development would not by virtue of its modest size, scale, form, design, positioning and materials have any adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the host building, application site or wider surrounding area including the Conservation Area within which it is located. Furthermore, it is not considered that it would be prejudicial to the reasonable enjoyment of the existing residential properties nor would it affect neighbouring land uses. It lies within a very sustainable location close to public transport links and easily accessible on foot and bicycle. In this respect the proposal is considered to be an acceptable form of development and compliant with policies SS1, SS1a, DC1, and DC2 of the adopted Core Strategy as well as guidance contained within the NPPF.

The Local Authority is therefore respectfully requested to grant full planning permission for the proposed development in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

7.0 DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

USE

The application proposes a modest single storey rear extension and alterations to the existing Sports Injury Clinic (D1 use). This form of development is considered to reflect the nature and character of existing development which surrounds the site.

AMOUNT

The area of the site measures approximately 54 sq metres in area. The existing ground floor area is 48.6 sq metres. The existing outrigger which is to be demolished as part of the proposal equates to 8.6 sq metres and the replacement extension would provide an additional 16.8 sq metres thereby resulting in an extended ground floor area of 56.8 sq metres.

LAYOUT

The layout is shown on the submitted drawing accompanying the application. The proposed extension and alterations would be located on the rear elevation of the existing building.

SCALE

The proposal will be single storey in form and appearance.

LANDSCAPING

No landscaping is proposed as part of this proposal.

APPEARANCE

The modest single storey extensions seeks to minimise the impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host building and conservation area. The extension will visually complement the existing building and its surroundings and the use of matching materials will ensure that it is quickly assimilated into the locality.

ACCESS

The site is located within a sustainable town centre location well located to existing local facilities and public transport links are easily accessible to the site and other parts of the Staffordshire Moorlands as well as the neighbouring city of Stoke on Trent.