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Planning and Heritage Statement incorporating Design and Access Matters

PROPOSED CONVERSION AND EXTENSION OF OUTBUILDING TO FORM TWO INDEPENDENT DWELLINGS AT THE OLD RECTORY, HOLT LANE, KINGSLEY, ST10 2BA

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This is a combined Planning and Listed Building Consent Application for the conversion and extension of a two-storey former coach-house, stable and servants' quarters to form two independent dwellings at The Old Rectory (referred to in the Listing as Peak House). The application building is part of a Grade II Listed Building. The principal Listed Building is a two-storey late19th Century former Rectory constructed with a local red brick and has a plain tiled roof. It is a large detached house standing in generous, landscaped grounds.

1.2 The site is located on the edge of Kingsley village and would have originally provided accommodation for the Rector of St Werburghs C of E Church on Church Street.

1.3 The Listed Building is an attractive late 19thC dwelling. It has been constructed with a local red brick with blue brick bands between floors and above windows. Windows and doors are framed within carved stone. The tiled roof is patterned with alternate bands of blue and red clay tiles.

1.4 The grounds of the building are generous and landscaped. The entrance is off Holt Lane through tall brick pillars and a wrought iron gate. The frontage is marked by a low stone wall with planting behind, and a tall brick wall with stone coving.

1.5 The application building is a two-storey collection of outbuildings, apparently used in the past as coach houses, stables, storage and small servants' quarters. It has an 'L' floor plan and extends from the northern gable of the principal house. The outbuildings are generally of sound construction, with demolition proposed only for a much later metal pole and timber framed lean-to with a corrugated sheet roof.

2.0 PLANNING POLICY

2.1 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.

2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in February 2019 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.

2.3 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 2). The NPPF confirms that at the heart of the guidance is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (para 10) 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).

2.4 The most relevant policies of the adopted Core Strategy are considered to be SO1 (Spatial Objectives), SS1 (Development Principles); SS1a (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development); SS6 (Rural Areas Hierarchy), SS6a (Larger Villages Strategy), ,R1(Rural Diversification); DC1 (Design Considerations); DC2 (Historic Environment) 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.

2.5 The yet to be adopted emerging Local Plan introduces material revisions relevant to this application. The new policy approach moves from the definition of settlements with hard boundaries in favour of a criteria based system for decisions relating to housing supply. Policy SS8 the equivalent or emerging replacement policy SS6a enables limited new housing development in these larger villages based on criteria Additionally emerging replacement for policy DC2 has been revised to accord with the NPPF and for policy DC3 a revision that provides for impacts that are of less than significant harm.

3.0 KEY PLANNING ISSUES

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

- the principle of the development
- impact on the heritage asset of the building and the principal building
- impact on the character and appearance of the area
- impact on highway safety
- impact on biodiversity

3.2 The planning application site is located on the edge of the built-up area of Kingsley and within the Local Plan Village Boundary. The application site is located within the settlement boundary, as a consequence close to village facilities. Kingsley has a church, village hall and a primary school. Whist the local shop has closed, there are two pubs, and there are bus services to Cheadle. On this basis it is considered that the proposal complies with the requirements of Core Strategy policy SS6a. The proposed use is therefore acceptable in principle.

3.3 The Council is not able to demonstrate that it has a five year supply of housing land and therefore the presumption in favour of sustainable development in paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework applies. Policy SS1a of the Core Strategy replicates the presumption in favour of development from the Framework. Through the achievement of sustainable development one of the overarching objectives of the planning system is to contribute to protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environments for the enjoyment of future generations. This is reiterated at paragraphs 120 and 196 of the NPPF that are dedicated to the achievement of well designed places and the protection of historic environment. In respect of this Core Strategy Policies DC1 and Emerging Local Plan Policy DC2 relate well and accord with the NPPF.

3.4 The National Planning Policy Framework states that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. Local Planning Authorities are therefore encouraged to take into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring; and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. The impacts that the proposal will have on the character and appearance of the area and the historic assets of the Listed Building are covered in the Heritage Assessment that forms part of this Statement (Section 4).

3.6 In terms of the impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area, the proposed use is residential and it is located in a predominantly residential environment. The proposal does not involve new buildings, albeit proposing an extension. The proposal delivers an economic use to the application building through an appropriate conversion to C3 dwellinghouse use and in doing so assists its future as an historic asset.

3.7 Paragraph 108 of the NPPF, and CS policies T1 and T2 requires that decisions should take account of opportunities that exist for sustainable transport modes. 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.

3.8 The application site has historically generated traffic at a level above its current use. The site has a wide entrance onto Holt Lane which is capable of accommodating the level of traffic generated by two small residential units. Parking would be accommodated within the existing hard surfaces within the curtilage.

3.9 In terms of biodiversity, the application is supported by a Bat and Bird Report. This concluded that there was evidence of bats using the building, and indeed the number of openings in the building make the building ideal for bat penetration. Whilst there was no evidence of birds in the building, the number of broken windows means that it is capable of accommodating bird nests. The further emergence surveys recommended within the initial Preliminary Ecological Appraisal have now been undertaken and confirm the presence of roosting bats within the application building. Given that the whole of the building is proposed to be converted to residential use a protected species licence will be required which will pertain to the loss of four summer day roosts for common pipistrelle bats. Subject to the provision of the licence and the mitigation measures outlined it is not considered that the proposal would be detrimental to any established protected species.

4.0 HERITAGE STATEMENT

4.1 The application property is part of a Grade II Listed Building. It is a two-storey brick building formerly used as a coach-house, stables and servants' quarters associated with the principal building which was built as a Rectory. The principal Listed Building is referred to in the List as Peak House and described as "Former rectory. 1870s. Red brick with modelled band at first-floor level; hipped and gabled steeply-pitched tiled roof on moulded eaves band; modelled ridge stacks. 2-storey, 3-window asymmetrical front; 2-, 2-, one-light stone-dressed trefoil-headed windows, gabletted over outer ones on first floor, hipped bay to ground floor left, and with 2-storey gabled (with stone-dressed verge parapets) porch projection to right of centre; trefoil to apex and deeply-moulded pilastered Tudor- arch entrance, flanked by diagonal buttresses; part-glazed inset door". It is a very attractive late C19th dwelling with elements of "Gothic" detailing.

4.2 The application building is effectively an annexe to the principal dwelling. It is built of similar materials but in a simpler style. There are timber “garage doors” to the former coach-house and numerous windows in the remainder of the building, which is not unusual given that a good part of the building has historically been used for residential purposes.

5.0 COMMENTS ON THE HERITAGE ASSET

5.1 The proposal seeks to retain all existing openings with only one new window (to the kitchen rear elevation). All other openings are adapted to the new use.

5.2 The application proposes a small single storey extension on the rear elevation of the building in place of the proposed demolished lean-to. Both units would take part of the structure to use as day rooms.

5.3 The historic purpose of the application building is to provide support to the principal dwelling. Its size and design and the quality of materials and detailing reflects this secondary role. The internal and external changes to the building are minor and do not diminish the character of the building. The proposed extension is small and does not compete with the subordinate purpose of the building. Its relationship with The Old Rectory is therefore retained.

5.4 The conclusion of this assessment is that the proposal does not harm the conservation asset of the application building not of the principal Listed Building. The proposed use and the proposed alterations that facilitate the new use are at a level that will not cause harm to the asset nor the character of the area.

6.0 DESIGN AND ACCESS ISSUES

6.1 Use

The application proposes the conversion of the application building to two independent dwellings.

Amount

The application proposes the conversion of the building into two independent dwellings- both single bedrooms.

6.2 Layout

This is largely determined by the existing building that will be retained and converted to another use. The building is attached to The Old Rectory.

6.3 Scale

The scale of the historic building will be retained. The proposed single storey extension on the rear will be in proportion to the host building.

6.4 Landscaping

The application buildings sits in a landscaped garden There will be no formal landscaping proposed in this application.

Appearance

Clearly, the listed status of the application building leads the proposal towards one that seeks to retain the existing appearance and character of the building. The proposal does exactly this throughout. The elevations will be renovated and existing features retained. The proposed rear extension will be secondary and will not compete with the listed status of the building.

Access

The site already has an established access onto Holt Lane. This access will also serve the proposed residential use.

7.0 CONCLUSION

7.1 The Government requires 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.

7.2 The proposed development is considered to constitute a sustainable form of development as it complies with the three elements of sustainability (social, economic and environmental) as advocated by the NPPF. Furthermore, the proposal is in accordance with the provisions of the policies listed above in the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy.

7.3 The application is a Listed Building. The proposal that gives the building a new use that secures its future whilst retaining its historic legacy.

7.4 The Local Planning Authority is requested to support this planning application and allow the conversion and extension of the building into two self contained dwellings and grant planning permission accordingly.