From: planningcomments@staffsmoorlands.gov.uk
To: Planning Comments (SMDC)
Subject: Comment Received from Public Access
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Application Reference No. : SMD/2020/0645 Site Address: Greywoods Cheddleton Road Leek Staffordshire ST13 5QZ Leek Comments by: Jim WillshawFriend / Neighbour
From:
Ridgeway
Birchall Lane
Birchall
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Phone:
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Submission: Objection
Comments: I wish to object to the proposed development of the garden of Greywoods in the strongest possible terms.

The reasons for my objection are set out below:

1) The proposed access drive for the proposed southwest-most dwelling is dangerously close to the junction of Birchall Lane and the main A520 Cheddleton Road.

2) In proposing two houses on this site, the building line cannot be maintained for both A520, and Birchall Lane simultaneously, and maintain a property(ies) in-keeping with the local vernacular and street scene.

3) The orientation of the southwestern-most proposed dwelling is the wrong way around. If the proposed orientation remains, then the visual impairment of the street scene when viewed from Birchall Lane is unacceptable, as the dwelling will be ¿side-on¿; and/or

If orientation is rotated, then the dwelling will sit awkwardly on the plot, with ¿side¿ gardens (not front and back gardens) and unacceptably overlook the original Greywoods house, this option would also likely breach the Cheddleton Road / A520 building line; and/or

If rotated and moved eastwards (away from the main A520), the proposed dwelling would sit very awkwardly to the Eastern side of the proposed plot and be overlooking the other newly proposed dwelling; and/or

If moved westwards, the proposed dwelling would breach the building line of the A520.

There is insufficient space on this plot to not breach any of these planning matters and remain in-keeping with the local character.

4) The northeastern-most proposed dwelling will also impact significantly on the privacy in the rear garden of Croxteth and the front aspects of Aldbury and Fairhaven, which are further being encroached upon and ¿boxed-in¿. Light in the garden of Croxteth will also be greatly diminished.

5) The proposed dwellings do not appear to have detached garages, therefor may be simplistic in design, and therefore not in-keeping with the local vernacular. This cannot be established until detailed design is known. The omission of garages may lead to further over-development ¿ ¿by stealth¿ - once the initial construction of the houses is completed, and planning for garages is subsequently sought.

6) In the application, trees and hedges are marked as being ¿not important¿. I dispute this, as all houses on Birchall Lane have covenants in their original deeds stating that hedges should be kept and maintained. This was the original intention of those who developed Birchall Lane. Cutting a new driveway, so close to the main A520 road will undoubtedly change the street scene of Birchall Lane by removing a significant section of hedge at a most prominent and visible point.

7) The planning committee has set precedent for refusing applications of this nature submitted as ¿outline¿ as it is impossible to know the visual impact of the proposed developments, the impact on the character, vernacular, light, privacy and other relevant matters.

8) The plot sizes of the proposed dwellings and the resultant plot size of Greywoods will be smaller than average in the wider neighbourhood, even though the average plot sizes have been decimated by previous developments. Greywoods is one of the last remaining grand and architecturally unique houses of Birchall, and its status would be greatly diminished by this proposed over development of its grounds.

9) While Leek may need housing, there are numerous brownfield sites in the town at the moment, that could be developed and would better serve this objective. An additional two dwellings on Birchall Lane does not have any material impact on any affordable housing shortage, and any associated ¿presumption in favour¿ should therefore be discounted.

Further, as the planning committee knows, the state of the surface of the road of Birchall Lane is deteriorating, and its deterioration has accelerated following the unprecedented frequencies of heavy vehicles used on the construction of other dwellings in the last year or two.

Unless the planning team reject the proposal, the race to the bottom will continue, with ever decreasing plot sizes and designs not in-keeping with the unique character of this area, and this unique area of Leek will be lost forever.

And, so for these reasons, I object to the development on multiple grounds relating to DC1 (numerous factors) and DC3 (numerous factors) of the local planning policy, and urge the application be refused.

Regards

Jim & Debbie Willshaw

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