

From: [Steve Massey](#)
To: [Johnston, Christopher](#)
Cc: [Planning Comments \(SMDC\)](#)
Subject: SMD/2021/0089 - Capri, Gallows Green, Alton
Date: 28 October 2021 17:09:38

Chris

This application seeks outline planning permission for residential development of an unspecified number of new dwellings with all matters reserved; however, the indicative layout plan shows a possible form of layout illustrating 13 new dwellings together with retention of the existing detached house.

An updated tree survey report has been submitted, reflecting the fact that a number of Ash trees to the southern and western boundary of the site have been removed since the previous application was submitted (SMD/2014/0824), these being identified at that time as being in poor condition and recommended for removal irrespective of any development proposals.

The latest tree report shows remaining trees, which in terms of those of any real significance are located to the site boundaries. The report has limited function as an arboricultural impact assessment at this stage because the layout is merely indicative. Nevertheless, the indicative layout is shown in the context of the tree-related constraints (essentially formed by the Root Protection Areas (RPAs) denoted in the tree report) and as the more significant trees and their RPAs are at the boundaries, it is evident that some residential development of the site in principle could be accommodated without detrimental impact on these trees. However, this is something which would need to be looked at in detail at reserved matters stage if outline planning permission is now granted. It seems likely that an anticipated future layout would involve removal of a group of topped conifers in the existing garden to Capri, together with a small ornamental Cherry, to which I would have no objection.

Although issues for detailed layout design, I have the following comments which might usefully be raised now in order that they may be taken into account by a layout designer from an early stage:

- It appears likely that dwelling footprints of a development generally of a form and scale indicated could avoid encroachment into tree RPAs; however, associated structures and features including areas of hard paving, and underground services, should also be kept outside RPAs unless there is some acceptable overriding justification for encroachment.
- In addition, consideration would need to be given to the relationship between dwellings/gardens and retained tree canopies, in order to avoid significant problems arising from shading, overbearing effect of trees, unduly restricted outlook, insufficient useable amenity space and poor quality living environment for occupants. This may well indicate that in places greater clearance than the basic minimum to avoid encroachment within RPAs may be required.
- The western and southern boundaries of the paddock would form the transition between built-up/developed village and open countryside beyond. The indicative layout appears to allow little or no realistic spatial opportunity to accommodate significant screening/buffer

planting to, in particular, the southern boundary and this could result in an unacceptably abrupt and visually harsh village edge, the more so if standard screening garden fences are introduced.

- The indicative scheme appears formal, regimented and rather “suburban housing estate” in its layout, and hence may not be the most sensitive form of development to be in keeping with the semi-rural location. Possibly something more informal/organic/rustic (in terms of layout and appearance/materials/landscaping) could be considered at detailed design stage.

However, in principle I have no objection to this outline application with all matters reserved. Appropriate conditions to impose at this stage, in the event of approval, would include:

1. No trees, shrubs or hedgerows shall be removed other than those whose removal is directly required to accommodate the development as may be subsequently approved in detail under a related reserved matters application, unless otherwise approved by the LPA. There shall be no removal of any trees, shrubs or hedgerows during the bird nesting season (March to August inclusive), unless otherwise agreed by the LPA and in this case only following careful inspection by a competent person immediately prior to removal in order to establish that such trees, shrubs or hedgerow are not in active use by nesting birds.
2. The first action on commencement of development, prior to any further action (including any demolition, site clearance, site stripping, site establishment or formation/improvement of temporary/permanent access) shall be the erection of temporary tree protection barriers and advisory notices for the protection of the existing trees to be retained, in accordance with guidance in British Standard 5837:2012 *Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction – Recommendations*, and as set out in the Tree Heritage Arboricultural Report reference THL-R21-41 dated 13th April 2021 submitted in support of the application hereby approved, and these shall be retained in position for the duration of the period that development takes place, unless otherwise agreed by the LPA. Within the fenced areas there shall be no excavation, changes in ground levels, installation of underground services, provision of hard surfacing, passage of vehicles, storage of materials, equipment or site huts, tipping of chemicals, waste or cement, or lighting of fires unless otherwise agreed by the LPA.

Landscaping would be a reserved matter, and therefore specific conditions relating to landscaping need not be imposed at this stage. However, subsequent reserved matters application for approval of landscaping should include a fully specified, comprehensive landscaping scheme. This should be anticipated to require provision of substantial structural planting to site boundaries, especially those forming the village/countryside interface, with a reliance on suitable native species to reflect the semi-rural location. Provision for orchard tree planting within plots and/or to boundaries would also be appropriate; this is a declining priority habitat type and there has been significant loss of traditional orchards in the Alton area, and useful opportunity would arise through this development proposal to provide some suitable replacement.

Steve Massey

Arboricultural Officer / Development Services
Staffordshire Moorlands District Council and High Peak Borough Council

Moorlands House, Stockwell Street, Leek, Staffordshire Moorlands ST13 6HQ
Tel: 01538 395788 Mobile: 07545 423071

E-mail: steve.massey@staffs Moorlands.gov.uk

www.staffs Moorlands.gov.uk www.highpeak.gov.uk

Do you really need to print out this Email? Be green - keep it on the screen.

This email is intended for the addressee(s) only and may contain sensitive, privileged or confidential information that could be protectively marked. If you are not the addressee please do not use the information in any way. If you have received this email in error please notify the sender immediately and delete it from your system. Thank you.

The Council may be required to disclose this email or any responses to it under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The way in which we handle personal information is set out in our privacy notice and is available at <https://www.highpeak.gov.uk/YourData>
