

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2021/0849
Valid 13/01/2022

**80 AND 82 PRINCE
GEORGE STREET
CHEADLE**

**DEMOLITION OF 80 AND 82
PRINCE GEORGE STREET
AND THE INSTALLATION OF
PILED RETAINING WALL AND
ASSOCIATED MAKING SAFE.**

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

- Impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The site comprises a pair of semidetached cottages of red brick and tile construction. Number 80 and 82 Prince George Street are within the Conservation area but are modern properties that were built in the early 1990s on the site of two previous cottages. The cottages are constructed immediately alongside the highway in Prince George Street and sit at an elevated level above the rear of the shops fronting on to High Street. To the rear of the cottages the garden / amenity area sits on level ground supported by a retaining wall to the rear of the shops.

PROPOSAL

As part of the development of the properties in the 1990s, the existing retaining wall across the rear was extended in height by around 3m using plain concrete blocks. In September 2019 following heavy rainfall, a large section of the concrete block retaining wall failed with significant movement to other areas. Since that time the properties have been uninhabitable, due to the risk of collapse of the properties. The proposed works will remove the remainder of the concrete block retaining wall to prevent the risk of its collapse. To provide safe access for these works, the two properties (number 80 and 82), need to be demolished. With the retaining wall removed and the area made safe, the existing shops on the High Street can be brought back into use.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

SMDC Adopted Local Plan – September 2020

SS1 Development Principles
DC1 Design Considerations
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport
SS7 Cheadle Strategy
DC2 Historic Environment

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph(s) 199 -202

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

None relevant

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: Expired

Neighbour consultation period ends: Expired

Press Advert: Expired

Public Comments

None received

Town / Parish Comments

No objection

Staffordshire County Council Highways

No Objection

Severn Trent

No objection

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

The application site is within the settlement boundary for Cheadle where there is a general presumption in favour of new development.

Heritage

The site is within the Conservation Area. Advice within the NPPF states that where development affects a designated heritage asset, consideration must be given to the significance of the asset and the impact on that significance of the proposal. In this instance, a Heritage Statement has been submitted which explains that the building in question was constructed in the early 1990's to replace a pair of cottages on the same site. As such the demolition will not result in the loss of an historic building within the conservation area.

Nevertheless the building in question is traditional in appearance and in keeping with this part of the conservation area and does not detract from it's character. Furthermore, it could be argued that, as evidenced by old OS maps, there has been historically a building in this position enclosing this part of Prince George Street and the proposals will result in some change to the character of this part of the conservation area making it a more open aspect on this site of the road.

This change need not necessarily be regarded as harmful, but even if it were the extent of the harm, in the context of the Conservation Area as a whole would be less than substantial and would certainly be outweighed by the public benefits of stabilising the retaining walls and bank side in this area and thus ensuring the safety of the shops in High Street, and the other properties and public highway in Prince George Street. It will also enable the shops on High Street, which have been evacuated for the last 18 months to be safely re-occupied to the benefit of the vitality and viability of the town centre.

Accordingly the proposal complies with both the NPPF and Policy DC2 of the local plan with regard to impact on designated heritage assets

Design

The proposals show that the retaining wall would be reduced in height and a second "terrace" with retaining structure comprising piles and concrete beams would be constructed. The areas on the terraces would be levelled and a new kerb and closed boarded fence erected along Prince George Street. Public views of the retaining structures would only be from the higher ground in Prince George Street above and therefore no design concerns are raised.

Amenity

The removal of the cottages will improve the amenity of neighbouring properties from a light and overlooking perspective. The stabilisation of the slope will also improve the amenity and safety of surrounding occupants.

Highway Safety

The properties are in close proximity to Prince George Street and road closure will be required whilst the work is undertaken. A license has been agreed by SCC and liaison has been taking place with highway officers given the on-going issues of land stability affecting the safety of the public highway. The proposed works should provide a permanent solution to these issues enabling the permanent re-opening of Prince George Street to vehicle traffic, which has been subject to closures during the period since the landslip. Once the site has been cleared and restored no other highway issues are anticipated.

Land Stability

The applicant has also been liaising with the Council's Building Control service since the collapse of the wall and officers are satisfied with regard to the safety and

effectiveness of the proposed ground stabilisation works. Building Regulations Approval for the demolition works has been obtained.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The proposal is considered to be acceptable in principle, including in respect of the impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The building in question is modern dating from the 1990s and so no loss of historic fabric would occur. Any harm to the Conservation Area resulting from loss of the sense of enclosure to this part of Prince George Street would be less than substantial and would be outweighed by the benefits to public safety of addressing the land stability issues and the benefits to the vitality and viability of the town centre arising from re-opening the shops on High Street.

There are no other concerns with regard to amenity, highway safety, land stability, design or drainage and accordingly the proposal complies with all of the relevant local plan policies set out above. In the absence of any other material considerations and having due regard to all other matters raised, the application is recommended for approval

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : **Approve with conditions.**

Case Officer: Ben Haywood

Recommendation Date: 22nd February 2022

X 

Signed by: Jane Curley

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council