

AE Planning Consultants

The Old Barns, Chapel Street, Cheadle, Stoke-on-Trent, ST10 1DU.

Applicant: Mr Neil Meyrick.

Planning, Design, Access, and Heritage Statement.

Proposed demolition of two workshop buildings and the construction of three,
one-bedroom dwellings.

August 2022

A.E. Planning Consultants Ltd
57 Bollington Road
Bollington
Macclesfield
Cheshire
SK10 5EJ
07765 308 547

1 INTRODUCTION.

- 1.1 This statement is submitted to support an application seeking full planning permission for the demolition of a two detached brick workshop buildings and the construction of a new building that would contain three, one-bedroom dwellings at Chapel Street, Cheadle. The statement assesses the application proposals against the relevant policy tests set out in the Development Plan and National Policy guidance.

2. SITE LOCATION.

- 2.1 The application site is situated to the north side of Chapel Street and lies between the rear car park of Wetherspoons and the end terrace at No. 6 Chapel Street. There are commercial properties to the rear and St Giles RC Church on the opposite side of Chapel Street. The site lies within the town of Cheadle and is located within the Cheadle Development and Churnet Valley Masterplan Boundary as well as the Cheadle Conservation Area.

3 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.2 A search of the Council's web site shows that the site has no relevant planning history.

4 THE APPLICATION.

- 4.1 This section explains the design principles of the proposal under the following headings: Drawing List; Use; Amount; Scale; Layout; Access; Landscaping and Appearance

Drawing / Document List

- 4.2 The drawings / documents which accompany this application include: -

- ✓ Drawing CS-NM01 – Existing and proposed plans with site and location plan.
- ✓ Bat Survey prepared by Jonathan Ayres – May 2022.

Use

- 4.3 The two buildings on site are brick built with a pitched tiled roof, both buildings are partially collapsed and in a poor state of repair internally and externally. It is understood that the most recent use included vehicle and furniture repair with storage. The buildings are currently vacant and in a very poor and somewhat derelict condition. The proposal would result in the change of use of the site from commercial to residential.

Amount & Scale

- 4.4 The existing buildings have a combined floorspace (GIA) of 71m² and the proposed building would have a floorspace (GIA) of 174m² over two floors. The existing smaller building has an eaves height of 3.525m and a ridge of 4.850m. The exiting larger building has an eaves

height of 4.250m and a ridge of 6.185m. The proposed building would be part single and part two storey with a maximum eaves and ridge height of 4.250m and 5.825m respectively.

Layout

- 4.5 The proposed building would occupy the rear part of the site and form an L shape along the north and east boundary. Amenity space would be provided in the small courtyard at the front of the building. Unit 1 would be located in the single storey section and comprise a 1-bed dwelling with kitchen-diner, bedroom, and shower unit. Units 2 and 3 would be located in the two-storey section and comprise of a kitchen-diner on the ground floor with bedroom and shower room above.

Access

- 4.6 The site has an existing restricted vehicular access onto Chapel Street and parking for one vehicle. This existing access would be retained and the proposed site plan shows that it is possible to park one car within the site but vehicles would still have to reverse out onto Chapel Street. In light of this it would be preferable not to provide any permanent parking facility within the site but simply use this area for servicing and deliveries. The proposed site plan shows both bin store and cycle shelter to the south side of Unit 1.

Landscaping

- 4.7 All the existing boundary walls and fences would be retained and repaired to reflect their current position and height. Hard and soft landscaping within the site can be dealt with by means of a planning condition.

Appearance and Context of the Development

- 4.8 The proposed building would be similar in scale and appearance to the buildings that would be demolished. The design is simple with a traditional pitched roof to reflect the character of the residential properties within the immediate vicinity of the site. Facing materials would be re-claimed brick with a Staffordshire blue roof tile. Windows and doors would be grey, powder coated aluminium.

5. PLANNING POLICY.

- 5.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This section focuses on the relevant national planning policy guidance, which is a material consideration in the determination of this application, as well as reviewing the development plan for Cheshire East, and the National Planning Policy Framework.

National Planning Policy Framework.

- 5.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) sets out the Government's planning policies for England. It views delivery of sustainable development as a key consideration for the planning system. Indeed, within the Framework there is 'a presumption in favour of sustainable development.' Paragraphs 7 and 8 of the Framework reinforces the key principle of sustainable development, i.e. meeting the needs of the present whilst not compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The following three overarching objectives are set out, and each are seen to be interdependent and pursued in mutually supported ways to secure net gain across each of the objectives:
- (a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure.
 - (b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
 - (c) an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 5.3 The Framework seeks to achieve sustainable development and explains that this involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural, and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life. This includes promoting good design, the continued protection of the Green Belt and the protection of heritage assets.
- 5.4 Section 12 of the Framework relates to achieving well-designed places. Paragraph 126 states: *"The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities".*
- 5.5 Paragraph 130 states that: *"Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:*
- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping.

c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming, and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and in summary it states that local planning authorities should aim to ensure developments.

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

5.6 Paragraph 134 states that: *“Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:*

a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or

b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings”

5.7 Section 16 of the Framework references the need to conserve and enhance the historic environment. It notes that Local Planning Authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. In doing so, they should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance. In developing this strategy, Local Planning Authorities should consider the following (paragraph 197):

(a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

(b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and

(c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

- 5.8 Paragraph 60 of the Framework states that local planning authorities should seek to significantly boost the supply of new housing. Paragraph 69 confirms that small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirements in an area and are often built out relatively quickly. To promote development local planning authorities should support the development of windfall sites for new homes within existing settlements.

The Development Plan.

- 5.9 With reference to relevant planning policy, the application site is situated within Cheadle Town Centre. The Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan was adopted on 9th September 2020 and sets out the council's vision and strategy for the District until 2033. It also refers to the proposed locations for development and policies which will be used in determining planning applications. The Local Plan covers the Staffordshire Moorlands area except for the part that lies within the Peak District National Park Authority. Relevant policies include: -

- ✓ SS1 – Development Principles.
- ✓ SS2 – Settlement Hierarchy.
- ✓ SS7 – Cheadle Area Strategy.
- ✓ H1 – New Housing Development.
- ✓ TCR - Development in the Town Centres.
- ✓ DC1 – Design Considerations.
- ✓ DC2 – The Historic Environment
- ✓ T1 - Development and Sustainable Transport

Policy SS1 seeks to ensure that the development and use of land makes a positive contribution to the social, economic, and environmental improvement of the Staffordshire Moorlands. Particular reference is made to a well-designed and well-maintained environment with development being undertaken in a way that protects and enhances the natural and historic environment of the District and its surrounding areas.

Policy SS2 sets out the settlement hierarchy for the district and requires that all development will need to be of a scale and nature appropriate to the character and role of each area within its hierarchy. The hierarchy refers to Towns; Rural Area Larger Villages; Rural Area Smaller Villages and the Other Rural Areas.

Policy SS7 confirms the role that Cheadle will play as a significant serviced centre and a market town where encouragement will be given to expanding the housing market and community provision by, amongst other things, increasing the range of available and affordable house types and higher market housing, including for first time buyers and families.

Policy H1 refers to new housing development and sets out a range of factors to be considered when assessing new housing proposals. All development should seek to provide high quality, sustainable housing which it meets identified housing needs, having regard to the location of the development, the characteristics of the site and the economics of provision. All housing development should be at the most appropriate density compatible with the site and its location and with the character of the surrounding area. Higher densities will generally be appropriate in locations which are more accessible by public transport and which have good access to services. All new dwellings must be of sufficient size to provide satisfactory levels of amenity for future occupiers of the dwellings whilst respecting the privacy and amenity of occupiers of existing dwellings.

Policy TCR1 seeks to protect and enhance the town centres of Leek, Biddulph and Cheadle by positive management.

Policy DC1 seeks to achieve good design and ensure that all development uses materials that are appropriate to the character of the area. Particular attention should be made to matters of scale, height, density, layout, siting, landscaping, character, and appearance.

Policy DC2 refers to the Historic Environment where the Council will seek to conserve and where possible enhance heritage assets, including their setting in a manner appropriate to their significance. This will take into account the desirability of maintaining and enhancing their significance and will ensure that development proposals contribute positively to the character of the built and historic environment. Protection will be given to designated heritage assets and their settings and non-designated heritage assets as set out in the Framework.

Policy T1 seeks to promote and support development which reduces reliance on the private car for travel journeys and reduces the need to travel generally. The need to provide parking will be considered on a case-by-case basis with recourse to the parking guidance set out in Appendix 2.

5.10 As well as the above the Council has produced further guidance in respect of design and space standards that are contained within the following: -

- ✓ Design Principles for Development (Supplementary Planning Guidance)
- ✓ Space About Dwellings (Supplementary Planning Guidance)
- ✓ Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide (Supplementary Planning Document).

6. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS.

The principle of the proposed development.

- 6.1 The application site is located within the Cheadle Town Development Boundary where the surrounding area consists of residential, commercial, and service development. LP Policy SS7 (Cheadle Area Strategy) confirms that encouragement will be given to expanding the housing market particularly where this would increase the range of available and affordable house types. When windfall sites of this nature become available any re-development proposals must, therefore, be determined on their merits. Any development within the settlement zone on land that is not otherwise allocated for a particular use must simply be appropriate to the character of its locality in terms of use, intensity, scale, and appearance.
- 6.2 The proposed residential development would be fully compliant with the provisions of LP Policy SS7, which is supportive of development within Cheadle Town Centre in order to support and maintain vitality and viability. Paragraph 60 of the Framework also states that local planning authorities should seek to significantly boost the supply of new housing. Paragraph 69 confirms that small and medium sizes sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirements in an area and are often built out relatively quickly. To promote development local planning authorities should support the development of windfall sites for new homes within existing settlements.

Design, character, and appearance.

- 6.3 Both the Framework and the Local Plan expect new development proposals to achieve high standards of design and not to have any adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area. Paragraph 126 of the Framework states that: *“The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.”* Paragraph 134 states that development that is not well designed should be refused
- 6.4 The existing buildings would have probably been former barns or stables and have a simple rectangular plan form with a pitched roof. The proposed building seeks to respond to this existing character and would be constructed with reclaimed red brick walls and a Staffordshire blue roof tile. The eaves and ridge height of the proposal would be very similar to the existing and reflects the domestic scale of the adjoining houses on Chapel Street. The design is sympathetic to the character of the area and would provide affordable, high-quality housing, in a sustainable town centre location. The proposal would satisfy the requirements of LP Policies SS1, H1 and DC1.

Heritage Matters and the Impact on the Cheadle Conservation Area.

- 6.5 Paragraph 194 and 195 of the Framework require planning applicants and local planning authorities to assess the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be appropriate to the asset's importance and no more than sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. Local planning authorities should take this assessment into account when the potential impact of proposed development to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage assets conservation and any aspect of the proposal. Paragraph 197 states: -

'In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- ✓ the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- ✓ the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- ✓ the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

- 6.6 Paragraph 199 states: When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance. Paragraph 200 states that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.

- 6.7 Paragraph 201 states that: Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

- 6.8 Paragraph 202 states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
- 6.9 The Cheadle Conservation Area was designated in 1970 with minor amendments made to the boundary in 1992. The Conservation Area Appraisal prepared by the Council summarises confirms that the Conservation Area seeks to preserve and enhance this unique small historic market town that has been fortunate in retaining its historic street pattern along with many of its historic buildings and whose hillside setting adds to the interest of the built environment. The Conservation Area defines the historic heart of the town, centring on High Street, which roughly divides the Conservation Area in half east to west. The imposing St. Giles (Roman Catholic) Church by A.W.N. Pugin lies to the south of the site and dominates the town centre and the skyline beyond.
- 6.10 The application site is located on the north side of Chapel Street and is situated towards the south east edge of the conservation area. There are several “key” unlisted buildings stretching between No’s 15-37 Chapel Street and these are primarily two and three storey terraced houses. St Giles RC Church, a Grade 1 listed Gothic Revival church, lies on the opposite side of Chapel Street. There are also a several Grade II listed buildings on either side of Cross Street to the west which are primarily shops on the ground floor with residential above. The terraced row on the east side of Cross Street backs onto the car park at Wetherspoons (The Wheatsheaf P.H.). The car park with its garage outbuildings forms part of the side boundary with the application site.
- 6.11 The character and appearance of the conservation area is set out clearly in the character appraisal which sets out the context of this historic market town. Brick is now dominant with either Welsh Slate or Staffordshire Blue Clay Tiles.
- 6.12 An examination of the historic maps within the Conservation Area Appraisal shows that the buildings on site date back to at least 1880 and were probably associated with the open grazing land to the rear before the re-development of this area with offices, retail, and car parking. The result is that the application site is now enclosed on all sides by commercial and residential uses. The buildings are now virtually derelict and have no aesthetic or communal significance. The photographs submitted in the Ecology Survey show the current condition and appearance of the buildings.
- 6.13 The position of the new building, on the site of the existing, would be in accordance with the historical siting pattern and there are no key views within the critical area of the conservation area that would be affected by the proposals. The derelict condition of the existing buildings detracts from the conservation area’s appearance. The re-development of the site would make a positive contribution to the overall character and significance of the area. The proposed access is the same as existing, and therefore the character of the road would remain largely unchanged. There is also the public benefit of the proposal which makes an effective use of previously developed land and would contribute to an increase in housing supply that would contribute to economic, social, and sustainable development

within the town centre. Whilst the proposal, would introduce a level of change, this would fit in with the settlement, and overall would have a positive impact on the character of the conservation area. The scale and height of the proposal is appropriate for its setting and respects the character and built form of the building types in this part of the conservation area and satisfies the requirements of LP Policies SS1, H1 and DC1

Amenity

- 6.14 The site is situated immediately to the rear of the terraced house at No's 7 and 9 Chapel Street. The demolition of the derelict buildings and the removal of a commercial use from the site can only improve the living condition and amenity for the occupiers of these properties. The proposed building has been designed so that it is single storey where it adjoins the rear boundaries with both No.7 and 9. No windows are proposed in the east elevation to prevent overlooking of the adjoining gardens.
- 6.15 Each property would have access to shared amenity space at the front of the building and this would provide a small area that would enable residents to carry out normal domestic activities with sufficient room for clothes drying and for people to sit out. The size of the garden would be apparent to anyone choosing to live there and for many this would not be a disadvantage. Many people choosing to live in a town centre location neither need nor want a substantial garden. The town centre location also gives easy access to a range of public recreation facilities.
- 6.16 Unit 1, the single storey part, would have a floor area of 50m². Units 2 and 3, in the two-storey section, would be 64m² and 60m² respectively. These areas satisfy the space standards set out in the Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard published by the DCLG (NDSS). The proposed dwellings would, therefore, provide an acceptable standard of amenity in respect of the internal space that is provided in accordance with the relevant policy criteria.
- 6.17 LP Policy H1 requires that the size, layout, and facilities provided are sufficient to provide occupants with a positive living experience. The proposal would satisfy this requirement whilst also respecting the privacy and amenity of occupiers of existing dwellings.

Highways

- 6.18 The existing commercial use of the site benefits from 1 parking space at the front of the site and has a very narrow access out into Chapel Street. The existing access would be retained and the proposed site plan shows that it is possible to park one car within the site but vehicles would still have to reverse out onto Chapel Street. In light of this it would be preferable not to provide any permanent parking facility within the site but simply use this area for servicing and delivery purposes as well as for cycle and bin storage.
- 6.19 The Council's parking standards indicate that for a light industrial use the existing buildings at 71m² would normally require 2 parking spaces. The small nature of the proposed three residential units would require 3 parking spaces so there is little difference in terms of the overall parking generation. The Framework states that development should only be

prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. Policy T1 seeks to promote and support development which reduces reliance on the private car for travel journeys and reduces the need to travel generally. The need to provide parking will be considered on a case-by-case basis with recourse to the parking guidance set out in Appendix 2.

- 6.20 The site is in a highly sustainable location with good access to public transport and within easy walking and cycling distances of local services including outdoor amenity space, places of education and community facilities, where future occupiers may therefore choose not to own a car. As such, although there is limited parking provision and it is not strictly in accordance with the provisions of Policy T1 which requires 3 spaces, the location and its accessibility should on balance be acceptable. Consideration must also be given to the former commercial use of the site which would have generated both parking and delivery requirements.

Impact on Protected Species.

- 6.21 A Daytime Bat Survey has been carried out at the site by Ardea Ecology and the report confirm that no bats are present at the site. Since neither building is in use by roosting bats, a licence will not be required in order to carry out the proposed demolition works. However, as bats are a mobile species and will move roosts throughout the year it is recommended that the developer follows the list of reasonable avoidance measures provided within the report as guided by Natural England standing advice. No habitat occurs on site as the land is cleared or covered with hardstanding/buildings, therefore in order to provide a measurable net gain for biodiversity the inclusion of bat mitigation and soft landscaping measures post development for the site will make a significant uplift on the current level of biodiversity.

7 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The National Planning Policy Framework indicates that there are three dimensions to sustainable development; environmental, social, and economic. The proposal satisfies the relevant core planning principles within the Framework and the requirements of the Local Plan for the following reasons: -

- ✓ The proposal is located within the Market Town of Cheadle and makes an effective use of land in a highly sustainable location.
- ✓ The proposal provides for three affordable housing units that would achieve a high standard of design and respect the building traditions of Cheadle.
- ✓ The proposal provides satisfactory arrangements in respect of access, privacy, and amenity.

- ✓ The proposal would not harm the character or appearance of the Conservation Area and would improve the overall appearance of the area by the demolition of two derelict buildings.

7.2 The proposal would contribute to economic, social, and environmentally sustainable development and there would be no adverse impacts arising from the proposal that would outweigh the presumption in favour of granting planning permission. Accordingly, and in accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, it is requested that this planning application be approved.

Andrew Ellis BA (Hons) DipEp MRTPI
Chartered Planning Consultant
August 2022