

30th August 2022

HERITAGE AND CONSERVATION CONSULTATION

SMD/2021/0610

Land off Froghall Road, Cheadle

Revised plans

My comments relate to the amended scheme and revised Masterplan Revision L.

Please note that the new Heritage Statement has been provided relates to the revised Masterplan – Revision L. It also includes photos which are not taken in accordance with the Landscape Institute Technical Guidance (Note 06/19).

Grade II listed farmhouse – Broad Haye Farmhouse

The creation of open space and preservation of the main views and sense of space around the grade II listed farmhouse is a welcome change to the plans. I consider that pulling back the development along the new alignment does reduce the level of harm to the lower end of the spectrum on the ‘less than substantial’ scale. I do not consider that the harm has been removed entirely, as its isolation is affected in the views of the farmhouse from the Froghall Road, where it will be effectively removed from view, and the agricultural land holding associated historically (and currently) with the farmhouse will have a moderate diminution, with a degree of urban encroachment, as illustrated in the wire frames supplied by the applicant. The application will still need to be assessed under paragraph 202 of the NPPF and s66(1) of the 1990 ‘Listed Buildings Act’ and public benefits will need to be weighed in the balance.

Paragraph 6.35 of the Heritage Statement agrees with the ‘less than substantial’ harm category.

The new Heritage Statement slightly misquotes what I said in my previous comments. The HS states “The consultee noted that harm to the listed building could be mitigated by better preserving views of the asset from Hammersley Hayes Road, maintaining the eastern part of the site as open space, and pulling back planting to the edge of the new development.”

In fact, I said “The sightlines I have overlaid define a reasonable-sized paddock to the west of the listed building to preserve the sense of isolation. This will not fully mitigate the impact and harm, but it will reduce it.”

Mitigation does not remove the harm and it is accepted that this is the case as GPA3 states “40..... As screening can only mitigate negative impacts, rather than removing impacts or providing enhancement, it ought never to be regarded as a substitute for well-designed developments within the setting of heritage assets. Screening may have as intrusive an effect on the setting as the development it seeks to mitigate, so where it is necessary, it too merits careful design.”

St. Giles, Cheadle – Grade I listed RC Church

I have a few comments to make in response to the new Heritage Statement, specifically with a view to Pugin’s RC church of St. Giles, Cheadle.

My previous comments asked for clarification with regard to any blocking of public views of the spire of St. Giles, which is visible as a prominent landmark because of its silhouette, when seen from the north. ‘Blocking’ key views is a legitimate reason for development affecting setting. My request in my previous comments was for clarity and I was expecting a certain level of ZTV to assess impact and to help the planning authority establish parameters.

The revised Heritage Statement is more of a rebuttal. It is accepted, and acknowledged, that the application site has no association with St. Giles. That was never suggested.

Para. 6.50 of the Pegasus Heritage Statement states “Long-range views of the church spire from the surrounding rural landscape do contribute to the significance of the asset where these best illustrate its designed architectural prominence and its place within a rural market town. However, the areas of the wider landscape from which the spire is visible are so numerous that not all of these areas contribute to the heritage significance of the asset through setting.”

St Giles is not as visible in the wider landscape as this might imply.

I have picked out three key statements from the Pegasus Heritage Statement:

- “Views from villages to the north oversail the site” (para. 6.52)
- “Consideration has been given to long distance views from villages to the north of Cheadle (Kingsley, Kingsley Holt, Kingsley Moor, Ipstones and Whiston), but as initial review of the model used for the photomontages showed that the views would oversail the development from even a short distance up Froghall Lane, no blocking of views is anticipated and detailed modelling was not considered to be proportionate.” (para. 6.57)
- “However, the land immediately to the north of the site rises from c. 185m to c. 200m AOD, therefore such views will continue to oversail the site even after it has been residentially developed (assuming new built form will be of an appropriate height and scale).” (para. 6.63)

In the absence of any visualisations or ZTV I have, therefore, had to visit Holt Lane myself, at 200-205 metres, FP Kingsley 16 at 201 metres, the Staffordshire Way north of Holt Lane at 210 metres, and Whistonbrook at 206 metres. Having visited these locations, I am satisfied that the development will not block any views of the church from these public rights-of-way.

We have not seen the model referred to in the HS, so in the absence of this the planning authority could legitimately wish to set a height limit on development, with a maximum height of two storeys, and a maximum overall ridge height.

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