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HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT



PROPOSAL : ALTERATIONS TO EXISTING DWELLING, REALIGNMENT OF BOUNDARY WALL AND ALTERATIONS TO VEHICLE ACCESS

ADDRESS : THE FORMER LORD NELSON PUBLIC HOUSE, SCHOOL DRIVE, OAKAMOOR, ST10 3DQ

APPLICANT : MR T THOMPKINSON

DATE : JULY 2023 **JOB No. : 2020-2532**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Sammons Architectural Ltd have been appointed by Mr T Thompkinson to prepare and submit a householder application for alterations to the former Lord Nelson Public House, School Drive, Oakamoor.

Oakamoor has recently been designated a Conservation Area (as part of the Churnet Valley Masterplan) following a comprehensive review conducted under section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and following guidelines from Historic England.

This Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of this application.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site comprises of the former Lord Nelson Public House which was converted to residential use following an appeal in 2016 (Ref: APP/B3438/W/16/3157636). The building which is traditional in terms of its form and appearance sits within the south eastern corner of a large irregular wedge shaped plot at the junction of School Drive and Carr Bank. The land gradually rises towards the north resulting in the application building being prominent in the streetscene and occupying an elevated position over School Drive and Carr Ban to the south and east respectively.

The immediate area surrounding the site is defined by residential properties of various styles and age. To the north of the site is the Memorial Free Church and directly to the west is "The Coppers". To the east is Carr Bank and to south is school drive, both with residential properties beyond.

3.0 PROPOSAL

Planning permission for alterations and extensions to the converted public house were permitted on 30th April 2019 as part of planning approval SMD/2018/0369. The approved application sought to demolish an existing single storey side extension and replace it with a slightly larger single storey side extension and make alterations to the existing front boundary wall and vehicular access.

A subsequent non material application which sought to retain the existing single storey side extension but make some minor alterations to the facing materials and windows was approved on 28th October 2020 under application reference NMA/2020/0034.

Unfortunately the original application has now lapsed and as the subsequent amendments was submitted as a non material amendment it did not result in the grant of a new planning permission. This application therefore seeks consent for the development approved under the previous approval SMD/2018/0369 as amended by the subsequent non material amendment application NMA/2020/0034.

4.0 POLICY

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004 requires proposals to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan taking into consideration any material considerations relevant to the determination of the application.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27th March 2012 and replaced a significant proportion of central government planning policy advice with immediate effect. Revised in 2021 it is the Government's clear intention that the document should be considered to be a material consideration and as such carries particular weight where development is not addressed by planning policies in the existing Development Plan.

Whilst the revised NPPF does not change the statutory status of the Development Plan as the starting point for decision making it does provide guidance to LPA's and is a material consideration in determining planning applications. The NPPF confirms that at the heart of the guidance is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that for decision making this means approving development proposals that accord with the Development Plan without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for the Staffordshire Moorlands comprises of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (September 2020). The most relevant policies contained within this documents are considered to be SS1 (Development Principles); SS1a (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development); SS6A (Larger Villages Area Strategy); DC1 (Design Considerations); DC2 (The Historic Environment), T1 Development and Sustainable Transport and T2 (Other Sustainable Transport Measures). For the sake of brevity these policies are not quoted in full but they are referred to where appropriate in the following section.

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 makes it a duty for the Local Planning Authority, in reaching its decision, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Policy DC2 of the Local Plan seeks to resist development which would be harmful to heritage buildings and features but to promote development which sustains, respects or enhances them. NPPF paragraph 197 says that, in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and (inter alia) putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation. NPPF paragraph 199 says that, "great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). Paragraph 202 states that where a development would lead to "less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset this harm should be weighed against the public benefit of the proposal including securing its optimal viable use".

Heritage 'significance' is defined in the NPPF as "The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting."

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) states that "It is the degree of harm to the asset's significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed. The harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting." It goes on, "Works that are moderate

or minor in scale are likely to cause less than substantial harm or no harm at all. However, even minor works have the potential to cause substantial harm."

Public benefits should flow from the proposed development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and should not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits

5.0 HERITAGE & SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENT

1) A description of the heritage asset, its history and its setting

Oakamoor is a small village situated to the north west of Alton and to the east of Cheadle, along the River Churnet. It lies at 100m above sea level within the Churnet Valley which follows a route running roughly north west / south east from Cheddleton to Denstone.

The industrialisation of the country benefited Oakamoor greatly and it became an essential part in the development of the local mineral industries from the 13th Century onwards. Being located at a particularly shallow point of the river Churnet made it an ideal crossing point for traders from the iron work sites around the valley.

It also benefitted from its location at a key junction between the parishes of Alton, Kingsley and Cheadle, driving traffic from all 3 parishes through Oakamoor creating a popular route. In 1710 the construction of a stone bridge over the river Churnet was a major development which both improved and increased traffic through the village.

In 1811 a canal was constructed to help with transportation of materials for the copper and brass industry that was thriving at the time although this was replaced with a railway in 1847 which was a more effective transportation method for industrial trade.

For most of its history Oakamoor has been dominated by industrialisation starting with the iron works which lasted until the 18th century. This then lead onto Copper and Brass works during the 18th Century when Thomas Patten opened the first copper works in Alton and Cheadle. During the 19th Century both the Cheadle and Alton mills had to close down due to rent increases in the area and all copper work was consolidated at the site in Oakamoor. The Pattens sold the Copper works in 1851 to the Bolton family who continued production in Oakamoor until it eventually had to be relocated to Froghall in the 1960's. This effectively brought an end to the industrial era of Oakamoor and no other sites were opened after this period.

Up until the end of the 16th century and early 17th century) Oakamoor was still classed as a hamlet with only a few houses within its boundaries, but as industrialisation developed around Oakamoor its size greatly increased with more buildings being constructed to accommodate workers at the Copper Works. In 1897 it was promoted to Parish status.

The architectural heritage of Oakamoor is largely from this industrial period between the 18th & 19th century when the village was at its peak with the Copper & Brass works investing and developing the area for its workers. The village hall, Valley school and churches were all built during this time, as well as the development of the terrace properties that sit at the heart of Oakamoor. Much of the architecture is from this period and has been well maintained thereby retaining the industrial heritage of the village.

In terms of materials, brickwork is widely used as a construction material with a combination of stonework which would have been made available from the local quarries. Some of the buildings have been finished with render, although this is not as common and generally seen on larger houses within the area. Bargeboards are not a traditional detail in the wider Staffordshire Moorlands but they are an important and distinctive feature of Oakamoor. The dominant roof material in Oakamoor is blue clay tiles made in the Staffordshire potteries.

The Conservation Area appraisal recommends The Lord Nelson, along with a number of other buildings, for inclusion within a non-exclusive Local Heritage List.

2) Significance

Inter visibilty is a major factor in the town due to the nature of being located in a valley. As a result, few parts of the Conservation Area are without impact on others and ill considered developments can have a major impact.

It is particularly important that existing contrasts are maintained. Each is the result of its historical development and represents a key characteristic of the Conservation Area. Each area as its own scale of development, in some cases associated with a particular type of building.

The small cluster of buildings at the bottom of Carr Bank is a particularly picturesque group, popularised in early photographs. It is inward looking and of consistent simple character, domestic in scale and detail. The Lord Nelson overlooks the former Mills School (now the village hall) and the rows of cottages forming The Square and Starwood Terrace.

The Lord Nelson is likely to have been purpose built as a public house to catch passing trade. it looks south down the valley and is a prominent local building catching travellers en-route to Cotton.

The use of traditional dark pink gristone may lead people to assume that the application building dates from the 18th century but there is little architecturally to suggest that it predates 1800. It is a good example of a public house of circa 1805 with attached Saloon dating from circa 1840, which has larger grander sash windows. The names was probably coined in the immediate aftermath of the Battle of Trafalgar and Nelson's death. Joseph Harvey was the tenant of the Lord Nelson in 1841/4 and the evidence of his smallholding survives in the many farm buildings associated with the pub.

3) Design Concept

The development proposals have been carefully assessed to review the potential to minimise harmful heritage impacts that such development may have on the heritage significance of the area, the setting of the nearby listed buildings and the conservation area.

The proposal seeks to make alterations to the external appearance of the existing extension side extension. The proposed development would retain the footprint of the existing extension and improve its external appearance through the use of traditional and natural materials which are in keeping with the existing building. The proposal would by virtue of its size, scale, form and design appear as a secondary and subservient addition which would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the host building.

The proposed development will not adversely harm the conservation area. Neither will it adversely harm the setting of any nearby listed buildings or other key heritage assets. The design of the

proposal has been guided by a clear understanding and respect for the conservation area, as the layout and style of residential development is wide spread throughout Oakamoor. The proposals have been previously judged by the Local Planning Authority under applications SMD/2018/0369 and NMA/2020/0034 and held to be acceptable. Although it is acknowledged that these applications have now lapsed a recently extant permission can and should be given material weight in the planning process. Given that there has been no significant or material alterations in adopted development plan policy and no site specific changes it is considered that there is no reason why a different conclusion should be reached on this occasion.

6.0 SUMMARY

The Government has a strong commitment to growth and provides a strong presumption in favour of development and is committed to increasing levels of growth. The NPPF states that local planning authorities should approach decision-taking in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development. It goes on to state that local planning authorities should look for solutions rather than problems, and decision-takers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

The application is considered to accord with policies in the Development Plan and guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework. At the heart of the Framework is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The Framework identifies three key elements of sustainability based on social, economic and environmental dimensions. This proposal responds positively towards all three elements and as such, the Local Authority is politely requested to support this planning application for a high quality residential development and grant planning permission accordingly.