

Planning Statement – Outline application for 3 dwellings

Land off Park Lane, Cheadle

Project	Land at Park Lane, Cheadle
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Reference	2116
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1 Introduction

- 1.1 JMI Planning is a Midlands based town planning consultancy. Its directors are chartered town planners with over 30 years' combined experience in both the public and private sector.
- 1.2 The author of this Statement Jim Malkin has worked as a principal planning officer in local government, and more recently as a Planning Consultant in the private sector. He has extensive knowledge of the planning system and experience of the appeals process. He is a member of the Royal Town Planning Institute.
- 1.3 This statement accompanies an outline planning application for the erection of 3 dwellings on land at Park Lane, Cheadle.

2 Site and Planning History

- 2.1 The application site comprises a small area of field / paddock off Park Lane on the outskirts of Cheadle. The land appears as a typical infill site between properties on Nursery Close and those further up Park Lane.
- 2.2 The site is located on the periphery of the main town of Cheadle and is within easy walking distance of the High Street. The town is provided with a wide range of services including shops, public houses, restaurants, schools and employment opportunities. The site is served by a regular bus service linking the town to larger conurbations including Stoke on Trent.
- 2.3 The site is adjoined by residential properties to the north and south, with the town cemetery to the opposite side of Park Lane.

- 2.4 The site is located outside, but adjacent to the settlement boundary for Cheadle, it is also located within the greenbelt.
- 2.5 The site and its surroundings are shown on the following aerial photograph.



3 The Proposed Development

- 3.1 The application is submitted in outline with all matters reserved with the exception of access and proposes the erection of 3 properties, indicatively suggested to be a single accessible bungalow, with two dormer bungalows. Each property will be provided with associated parking provision and reasonably sized domestic curtilages. An area of orchard and wildflower planting will be provided on the northern portion of the site.
- 3.2 This submission is supported by an indicative layout. This layout shows how the 3 properties will potentially be laid out on the site to mirror adjoining built form. It is

proposed to utilise a single access point with a private drive serving the 3 properties.

- 3.3 It is anticipated that each property will be detached and will be provided with on-plot car parking and attractive landscaping. Whilst design and scale are reserved for later approval, as set out above it is anticipated that one property will be an accessible bungalow, with two further dormer bungalows. It is anticipated that any future development would exhibit a traditional design response and use of materials.
- 3.4 The scheme has been put forward by Mr Bullock, who currently lives in Lower Tean but has both lived and worked in Cheadle and the immediate area all of his life. However, owing to failing health Mr Bullock requires an accessible bungalow and wants to move back to Cheadle owing to the wide range of available facilities. In addition to this the further units are proposed for his son and daughter and their families to ensure that care can be provided to Mr Bullock moving forwards.

4 Planning Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.1 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF advises that plans and decision should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development, for decision making this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan.
- 4.2 The Staffordshire Moorlands Plan is up-to-date, however it is important to note that the Council are unable to provide a five year supply of deliverable housing sites.
- 4.3 Paragraph 60 of the NPPF supports the delivery of a sufficient supply of homes in order to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes.

- 4.4 Paragraph 63 of the NPPF states that within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people etc.
- 4.5 Paragraph 123 of the NPPF relates to making effective use of land and states that planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.
- 4.6 Paragraph 124 of the NPPF further adds to this and encourages planning decisions to promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings where available sites could be used more effectively.
- 4.7 Chapter 12 of the Framework houses a number of relevant paragraphs relating to the importance of appropriate design. Paragraph 131 encourages the creation of high quality buildings which raise the quality of the built environment and create better places in which to live and work. Paragraph 135 advises that decision makers should aim to ensure that development responds to local character and history, reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, and are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.
- 4.8 Chapter 13 of the Framework sets out guidance relating to development in the Green Belt. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belt are their openness and their permanence.
- 4.9 Paragraph 143 of the Framework lists the 5 purposes served by the Green Belt:
- a) To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
 - b) To prevent neighbouring town merging into one another;
 - c) To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;

- d) To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- e) To assist urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

4.10 Paragraph 154 gives examples of development that would be appropriate in Green Belt, these are as follows:

- a) buildings for agriculture and forestry;
- b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;
- c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
- d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- e) limited infilling in villages;
- f) limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); and
- g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would:
 - not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development; or
 - not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority.

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan 2020

- 4.11 The Core Strategy was adopted September 2020 and contains a number of policies relevant to the determination of this application, these are listed as follows.

SS 2 – Settlement Hierarchy

Towns – these are the largest settlements comprising of Leek, Biddulph and Cheadle which accommodate half of the district’s population and the majority of the district’s services and facilities. The spatial strategy seeks to focus future growth in these settlements and to strengthen their role as service centres. These settlements will be defined by a Development Boundary.

SS 10 – Other Rural Areas Strategy

This policy advises that other rural areas comprise the countryside and the green belt outside of the development boundaries of the towns and larger villages and the open countryside surrounding the smaller villages. The policy restricts development to that which has an essential need to be located in the Countryside. It also provides guidance in relation to development in the green belt.

H1 – New Housing Development

The policy permits residential development and redevelopment on windfall sites within the development boundaries of the towns and larger village. All new dwellings must be of sufficient size to provide satisfactory levels of amenity for future residents and existing occupiers.

DC1 – Design Considerations

All new development should be of high quality and incorporate detailing and materials which positively contribute to the character of the area in line with the Council’s Design SPD. Proposals should be designed to respect the site and its

surroundings in terms of scale, density, layout, siting, landscaping, character and appearance.

5 Five Year Land Supply

- 5.1 Staffordshire Moorlands District Council is currently unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing as required by the NPPF. The last published figure (1st April 2022) advised that the Borough can show a 3.71-year land supply. Therefore, in line with paragraph 11 (and associated footnotes) of the NPPF policies that restrict the supply of housing are out of date.

6 Planning Considerations

Principle of Development – Land Supply

- 6.1 The proposals involve the completion of small-scale residential development on the edge of the town of Cheadle, it is however located outside of the designated settlement boundary, therefore development is strictly controlled by policy SS 10. This policy does not make provision for new housing development unless it meets an essential local need, such as accommodation for agriculture or forestry. However, at this point Staffordshire Moorlands District Council cannot exhibit a 5-year supply of deliverable housing land.
- 6.2 Therefore in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework, relevant policies for the supply of housing are out of date and cannot be given any weight in the determination of this application. Paragraph 11 prescribes that in these circumstances, planning applications fall to be considered against policies in the NPPF in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraphs 7 and 8 of the NPPF identify three components to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Achieving sustainable

development requires economic, social and environmental gains to be sought simultaneously.

Economic

- 6.3 One of the core principles of the NPPF is that planning should proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes that the country needs. Paragraph 19 of the NPPF prescribes significant weight to the economic benefits of proposals in the overall planning balance.
- 6.4 The proposals would deliver both short term and longer-term economic benefits. In the short term the proposal would bring about the economic benefits associated with new development including supporting the construction industry both directly through construction jobs on site and indirectly through the supply chain.
- 6.5 In the medium to long term, future occupants of properties on the site will support local services and facilities, helping to safeguard their retention and potentially encourage new services in the village. The proposals would also boost the local labour supply, broadening the choice of suitable candidates for local employers.

Social

- 6.6 The proposals will make a modest but important contribution towards the Council's housing requirement, providing quality homes to meet the significant need within the Borough.
- 6.7 The site is well related to the existing settlement, which encourages community cohesion and will ensure that new residents do not feel isolated. The proposals would therefore contribute positively towards the vitality of the local community, increasing its population with new residents that can support and enhance local services and partake in social and community activities.

- 6.8 Critically to support this application is the fact that these properties are being constructed to enable Mr Bullock to live independently in an accessible bungalow, with the support of his children who will occupy the other proposed properties. This is a particular social benefit of the scheme.

Environmental

- 6.9 Cheadle itself contains all necessary services and facilities for everyday living as well as access to public transport, all of which are located within 500m of the application site.
- 6.10 Manual for Streets highlights the importance of encouraging a wide range of sustainable transport uses and avoid reliance on the private car. Development which is located up to 2km from day-to-day services and facilities are defined as walkable neighbourhoods and can be considered to be within a sustainable location. The application site is therefore clearly in a sustainable location and will support and enhance the vitality of the settlement.
- 6.11 This application is in outline and therefore no final details of the properties are submitted. However, the site is not covered by any specific landscape or heritage designations and therefore final designs of properties should not be too contentious. The existing field is used for haylage and is heavily managed for this purpose, therefore whilst it is green in nature the field is of no particular wider landscape importance. The scheme proposes significant ecological enhancement on the remaining portion of the field, with both orchard and wildflower planting proposed.
- 6.12 In terms of wider impacts of the proposal the field is not of any particular merit in the landscape. It is viewed against the backdrop of rising land to the south, whilst from longer views from available receptors it will be read alongside the existing built form that neighbours the site.

- 6.13 It is anticipated that the site will be developed by way of a high-quality, low-density scheme with properties provided with rear gardens and frontage car parking which will be served off a private drive behind the roadside hedge. As set out previously, one property is to be an accessible bungalow, built to lifetime homes standards for the applicant, and then two further dormer bungalows for the applicants children.
- 6.14 In determining applications the NPPF requires local planning authorities to aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by applying various principles. The site is heavily managed grassland, which is mown regularly, this ensures that there will be no impact on the habitats of any protected species, as set out in earlier paragraphs significant planting is proposed to the remaining portion of the field including orchard and wildflower planting that will provide for significant ecological enhancement from the development.
- 6.15 In addition, the development of the site will however provide opportunities for further biodiversity enhancement in terms of the provision of bat access tiles and bird boxes on / within the buildings.

Sustainability Conclusions

- 6.16 Due to the council being unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply, policies for the supply of housing are therefore out-of-date in the context of the NPPF and no weight should be attached to these policies in the planning balance.
- 6.17 The site is considered to comprise 'infill' development in a sustainable location which is a short walking distance of centre of Cheadle. The site is not subject to any specific landscape or heritage designations that preclude the development of this site.

6.18 The proposed development will provide a small but nevertheless important contribution to the councils under supply of housing, will provide accessible accommodation for the application, as well as having indirect benefits for the local construction trade and service economy.

6.19 The benefits of the proposal therefore significantly and demonstrably outweigh any harm that could be associated with the development.

Principle of Development - Greenbelt Implications

6.20 As set out above, the site is located within the green belt as defined by the Local Plan. It is therefore necessary for the development to meet one of the criteria for development appropriate in the green belt, as set out in paragraph 154 of the NPPF.

6.21 Criterion (e) of paragraph 154 allows for limited infilling. This proposal clearly constitutes the development of an infill plot on the edge of Cheadle and meets this criterion.

6.22 The site subject to this application is flanked by residential properties and built form within the immediate context comprises of residential properties which are considered to constitute a strong ribbon development.

6.23 The proposed dwellings, follow the prevailing character of the area, in particular Nursery Close and do not extend built form further into the field than the curtilage of the immediately adjacent property. The scheme would accord with pattern of development established by existing development off Park Lane.

6.24 In general terms adjacent plot sizes are generally larger than average, therefore the proposed development would sit acceptably within this context and would be in keeping with surrounding development in terms of its arrangement, design, height and scale.

- 6.25 Although the Framework does not define the term ‘limited infilling’, within the above case law it is determined that the term should therefore be interpreted subject to surrounding built form and the site should not be assessed in isolation. It is clear that in the locality there is a strong ribbon development, this development sits in between existing properties, it is clearly infilling and is not unacceptable in the context of the openness of the Green Belt and would strengthen existing ribbon development.
- 6.26 In concluding the subject site forms part of the built context of the settlement and therefore constitutes ‘limited infilling’ it is not then necessary to assess the effect of development on the openness of the Green Belt, as previous case law has determined that where development is found to be ‘not inappropriate’ it should not be regarded as harmful to the openness or purposes of the Green Belt.
- 6.27 Given the above, the proposal constitutes appropriate infill development, complementary to the surrounding pattern of development and settlement character, thus falling within the exception category for limited infilling as identified by Paragraph 154 of the NPPF.
- 6.28 It is also noted that development that exhibits very special circumstances is acceptable in the greenbelt. In this instance the development is proposed to provide for an accessible bungalow, built to lifetime homes standard, for the applicant to live in owing to his deteriorating health, with his immediate family living in the other properties to ensure that on-site assistance and care is available, thereby ensuring that health and social care can be provided by family rather than putting more pressure on over-stretched public services.

Other Material Considerations

Impact upon the Character and Appearance of the Area

- 6.29 The built context of the application site is one characterised by variety. Cheadle comprises of a mix of dwelling types and materials. In the immediate proximity of the site there are a mixture of two and single storey dwellings, all exhibiting traditional character and appearance.
- 6.30 The application is submitted in outline with all matters reserved. It is however anticipated that new properties, as set out above, will comprise of a single bungalow with two larger dormer bungalows to follow the prevailing scale and character of adjacent built form.
- 6.31 The development will be viewed, from wider landscape receptors, against rising land to the south and from other areas against the backdrop of the town and other peripheral development. Owing to the sites location adjoining existing residential development it is considered that this site can accommodate 3 detached dwellings without resulting in harm.

Amenity of Neighbours

- 6.32 Whilst detailed designs and layouts of individual dwellings have yet to be prepared, the illustrative layout demonstrates that 3 dwellings can be accommodated on the site whilst retaining sufficient separation to neighbouring dwellings so as to avoid unacceptable impacts upon daylight and privacy.
- 6.33 Whilst there may be a degree of increased noise and disturbance associated with increased comings and goings, this is unlikely to be significant given the level of development proposed.

Highway Safety

- 6.34 Paragraph 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that development should only be refused on highway grounds where its impact upon the network would be severe.
- 6.35 The proposed site access emerges onto Park Lane, which at this point is very lightly trafficked. The width and alignment of the carriageway however is such that vehicle speeds adjoining the site are very low. This access point is to be located on the outside of a gentle bend and is provided with good visibility in both directions and will not result in an increase in vehicle conflict in the locality.
- 6.36 The level of development is such that the proposal will not result in a significant increase in vehicular movements and will certainly not prejudice the safe or efficient use of the adjoining highway network.

Flood Risk

- 6.37 The Environment Agency shows the site lying entirely within Flood Zone 1, where the annual probability of flooding from rivers or the sea is less than 1 in 1000. The dwellings would not therefore be at unacceptable risk from flooding and neither would they exacerbate flood risk elsewhere.

7 Conclusions

- 7.1 The application is an outline application for the erection of 3 dwellings, indicatively this will provide for a single accessible bungalow and two dormer bungalows.
- 7.2 Staffordshire Moorlands cannot exhibit a five-year supply of deliverable housing and therefore the proposals fall to be considered under the presumption in favour of sustainable development as defined by the National Planning Policy Framework. The

Council are required to grant planning permission unless '*any adverse impacts of development.....significantly and demonstrably outweigh the* benefits of the scheme'. As set out above the scheme has significant benefits and is located in a sustainable location on the edge of Cheadle and within walking distance of all local facilities.

- 7.3 The scheme constitutes limited infilling and is therefore appropriate development in the green belt and is supported by the relevant criteria of paragraph 154 of the NPPF.
- 7.4 The development would not detrimentally affect the amenities enjoyed by the occupiers of nearby dwellings or the safe and efficient use of the highway network. The proposals would not harm protected species or their habitats.
- 7.5 The proposals therefore constitute sustainable development as defined by the National Planning Policy Framework.