

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2024/0155
Valid 02/04/2024

GRAVEL BANK FARM
CAVERSWALL COMMON
LANE
CAVERSWALL

APPLICATION FOR
APPROVAL OF RESERVED
MATTERS IN
RELATION TO APPLICATION
SMD/2022/0344
APPROVAL OF MATTERS OF
SCALE, SITING,
APPEARANCE,
LANDSCAPING AND MEANS
OF ACCESS, AS PER THE
REQUIREMENTS OF
CONDITION 3 OF THE
OUTLINE CONSENT

(RESERVED MATTERS -
MINOR APPS)

MAIN ISSUES

- The impact on the openness of the Green Belt
- The impact on the character and appearance of the area
- Impact on residential amenity
- Impact on highway safety

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The site is located in the open countryside to the east of Weston Coyney and to the north of Caverswall and Cookshill and is also in the open Green Belt. It is accessed via county roads which connect to the nearest A road (A520) which is about half a mile to the north-west of the site. It lies on the north side of Caverswall Common Lane which provides access to the site. The site comprises a vacant garden centre/plant nursery with two large glasshouse structures and two derelict polytunnels. Outside of the site is a dwellinghouse (to the east of the glasshouses), agricultural metal-sheeted storage building (to the north-east of the glasshouses) and a field (to the north) which are also within the same ownership and are accessed via the same entrance as the garden centre site. The property is surrounded by open land/fields including the land to the other side of the road to the south. The application site is 0.45 hectares.

PROPOSAL

This is a Reserved Matters planning application for three detached bungalows for the redevelopment of the former plant nurseries site which would be cleared of all the glasshouses and buildings. Outline planning permission for up to four bungalows

was approved by Members in September 2022. The details of access, scale, siting, design/appearance and landscaping were not determined as part of the outline application and these matters are to be determined as part of this new Reserved Matters application.

The drawings show three brick-and-tile conventional-looking detached bungalows grouped together in the back part of the site near to the north-west corner with an end-of-cul-de-sac development arrangement screened by new hedgerows and with the remainder of the site to the south and east separated from the development and left as open grassland. The development would occupy the area of the site where the existing buildings are located. All existing buildings within the site would be removed.

In addition to the new hedgerow planting to enclose the development and separate it from the existing open parts of the site (i.e. hedgerows to the north, east and south perimeters of the along with the existing hedgerow to remain on the west boundary), there would be a row of new trees along part of the south perimeter to provide additional screening from the road with the rest of the south perimeter screened by an existing large mature tree. All existing trees (which are all within the open areas of the site) would remain. Each plot would be separated by either a hedge or a wide shrub planting border. There would also be biodiversity enhancements in form of bat, bee, bird and hedgehog boxes along with the native planting. Each plot would have a front and rear garden.

A new access off the road would be built adjacent to the existing access point which would be blocked by a new hedge. The access road would branch off to the right to serve the existing dwellings to the east of the site and to the west lead to the development as a standard cul-de-sac with turning head.

The bungalows would all have three bedrooms. There would be two bungalow types, both with pitched roofs with side gables. One is characterised by front and rear gable projections and two of the bungalows would be this type, placed side by side along the rear (north) boundary of the site at the end of the cul-de-sac and facing south (in the direction of the road). The remaining bungalow would be a slightly smaller bungalow characterised by a pitched roof porch. The designs have been amended to all bungalows to include more features such as the porch, eaves and verge detailing, curved soldier courses above windows and chimneys.

Each dwelling would have a driveway leading to a detached garage and there would be two parking spaces in front of each garage.

The application is accompanied by a Planning Statement.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (Adopted Sept 2020)

- SS10 Other Rural Areas Strategy
- SD1 Sustainable Use of Resources
- H1 New Housing Development

- DC3 Landscape and Settlement Setting
- NE1 Biodiversity and Geological Resources
- T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework (Dec 2023)

Section 5 (Housing), 12 (Design) and 13 (Green Belts).

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

00/01041: Agricultural/horticultural building. Approved.

SMD/2017/0579: Redevelopment of site to provide dwellings. Withdrawn.

SMD/2018/0003: Outline application with all matters reserved for the redevelopment of the site to provide dwellings. Refused in March 2018. Appeal dismissed in March 2019.

SMD/2020/0160: Certificate of lawfulness for existing use of the site as a retail garden centre in A1 use. Refused.

SMD/2021/0190: Outline application (with all matters reserved) for the redevelopment of the site to provide three bungalows. Approved.

SMD/2022/0344: Outline application (with all matters reserved) for the redevelopment of the site to provide four bungalows. Approved on 9th September 2022.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 22.5.24
Neighbour consultation period ends: 22.5.24
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

None.

Town / Parish Comments

None received.

Local Highways Authority

No objection subject to standard conditions for new housing development including the provision of visibility splays.

Environmental Health

No objection.

Severn Trent Water

Requested more details of drainage.

SMDC Waste Collection Service

No issues regarding waste collections.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Outline planning permission was granted for up to four bungalows. It was considered this was not inappropriate development in the Green Belt as this is a previously developed site with retail plant nursery buildings. It was not considered that the replacement of these with four bungalows in the area of the nursery site where the buildings were present would harm the openness of the Green Belt.

The outline permission approved only the principle of the development with all matters reserved for a future Reserved Matters planning application, those being the scale of development, siting, appearance/design, landscaping and access and this new Reserved Matters application seeks approval of these matters. Three bungalows have been put forward along with a detached garage for each. The total footprint of development would remain significantly less than the current buildings on site to be removed and although the heights of 5.3m would still exceed the height of all buildings on the site (roughly 2.5 to 3.0m), the eaves height would not be much more than the current buildings and it is considered overall, there would be no additional harm to the openness of the Green Belt, particularly as the bungalows and garages would be largely contained within the envelope of the current group of buildings on site.

The design of the bungalows is in keeping with nearby dwellings in the area. The current dwelling at the nursery property to the east has a modern appearance and there is a mix of dwelling styles further along the road to the east. The proposed bungalows would not be out of keeping with the area in terms of design and improvements have been made to reflect that this is a rural area, such as chimneys, curved soldier courses and the eaves and verge detailing rather than prominent barge or fascia boards. The gable sided design is a vernacular feature of the built environment in the District as is the red brick and tiled roof. A condition attached to the outline requires details of the exact building materials to be approved before works commence.

The landscaping is appropriate. All existing trees and hedges would be retained and new hedgerows would be used to form boundaries, even between the plots and also used to provide additional screening when viewed from the road. There is not considered to be a high biodiversity value at the site and no protected species present other than bats which may use the trees (which are to be retained) but

ecology measures have been put in place such as bat, bird, bee and hedgehog boxes along with the native hedge planting.

With regard to residential amenity, the bungalows would be a considerable distance from the nearest existing dwellings and would not lead to any loss of light provision or privacy enjoyed by existing nearby residents.

The bungalows would also be laid out to prevent to ensure adequate light and privacy for the future occupants. Front and rear elevations where the main windows are located would not be facing other front or rear elevations and side windows would be only 'secondary' and would not face any primary windows. The proposal would accord with the Council's Space About Dwellings standards including the 45 degree rule applied to primary windows and the 11.0m distance rule between front or rear elevations and the flank walls of bungalows to protect light entering the dwellings and prevent an overbearing form of development when viewed from primary windows.

All three bungalows would meet the floorspace thresholds set out in the government's Nationally Described Space Standards applicable to 3-bedroom, 6-person bungalows. The garden lengths of two of the plots would not be in accordance with the Council's Space About Dwellings SPG but this shortfall is easily compensated by the overall size of the rear gardens which is well in excess of the 65 sq.m overall area minimum size threshold for all three units. The occupants of the bungalows would therefore enjoy sufficient living conditions in the interests of residential amenity.

Overall, the proposal has been designed to ensure no harm to the residential amenities of the area.

Finally, with regard to highway safety, the local planning authority did not object to the outline application as the previous use as a commercial nursery with sales from the site would have led to no less vehicle movements than that arising from a scheme of up to four 3-bed dwellings. This new application proposed three which would further reduce the potential for increased vehicle movements on the country lanes. The new application puts forward the access design and the local planning authority considers there is sufficient visibility in both directions for drivers leaving the new access. A condition has been recommended for visibility splays from the access and these are achievable within the land at the property. The one to the west may result in the removal of a section of hedge. A condition can be added requiring its replacement behind the new visibility splay in the interests of the appearance of the lane and the site. Parking provision is in line with the Council's parking standards and the spaces and garage sizes also accord with the same standards. The design of the cul-de-sac is acceptable and would allow two cars to pass at the same time and allow space to turn to prevent vehicles from reversing onto the lane, in the interests of highway safety.

There is no conflict in the plans put forward with the outline planning permission including the conditions attached to it. No details have been provided as requested by the outline pre-commencement conditions which require the submission and approval of details before works commence (except the landscaping scheme

condition) but as these are requested before the commencement of works, there is no requirement for these to be submitted at the Reserved Matters stage. Such details, in this case relating to drainage, materials, ecology method statements, a CEMP, ground contamination and lighting can be submitted under separate Discharge of Conditions applications before works commence.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The details of the scale, design, siting, landscaping and access for the development approved at the outline stage are acceptable and would comply with the Council's Local Plan and the government planning guidance contained in the NPPF.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : APPROVE

Case Officer: Chris Johnston

Recommendation Date: 24.5.24

X 

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council