

Application No: 12/0309M

Location: WITHINLEE HOLLOW, WITHINLEE ROAD, PRESTBURY, SK10 4AT

Proposal: Demolition of Existing house. Construction of Replacement Dwelling House. Resubmission of 11/2386M

Applicant: MS VICTORIA CALDERBANK

Expiry Date: 27-Mar-2012

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

Approve subject to conditions

MAIN ISSUES

- The design and appearance of the proposal and its impact on the character and appearance of the area/the Low Density Housing Area
- The impact of the proposal on the amenity/privacy of adjoining residents
- Whether access and parking arrangements are suitable
- The impact of the proposal on existing trees, landscaping and nature conservation

Date Report Prepared: 5th March 2012

REASON FOR REPORT

The application was called-in to Committee by the Ward Councillor, Paul Findlow for the following reasons:

- Inappropriate size, mass, design incongruity, height and style, being situated on the edge of the Green Belt and adjacent to an ASCV.
- Contrary to policy BE1 - does not respect form, layout, scale and design of the surroundings and their setting.
- Contrary to policy H12 - is not sympathetic to the character of the low density housing area, taking into account vehicular access. See also 3.1 of the SPD.
- The deleterious visual impact both generally and from Chelford Road.
- The impact on existing trees/tree root systems.
- Significant road/driveway safety issues at/on the entrance to the access drive.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

The application site comprises a detached bungalow constructed of white rendered walls, some stone feature walls and a grey concrete tile roof with a link-attached double garage. It is accessed via a long driveway from Withinlee Road and is positioned, as its name suggests, within a hollow. The dwellinghouse is sited within the predominantly residential area of Prestbury and within a Low Density Housing Area. The application site bounds the Green Belt and an Area of Special County Value to the south and southwest.

DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

Full planning permission is sought for a replacement dwellinghouse.

RELEVANT HISTORY

11/2386M Replacement of existing dwelling
Withdrawn 9th September 2011

POLICIES

Regional Spatial Strategy

DP1 Spatial Principles
DP2 Promote Sustainable Communities
DP4 Make the Best Use of Existing Resources and Infrastructure
DP7 Promote Environmental Quality

Local Plan Policy

NE11 Nature Conservation
BE1 Design Guidance
H12 Low Density Housing Areas
H13 Protecting Residential Areas
DC1 New Build
DC3 Amenity
DC6 Circulation and Access
DC8 Landscaping
DC9 Tree Protection
DC38 Space, Light and Privacy
DC63 Contaminated Land Including Landfill Gas

Other Material Considerations

PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development
PPG2 Green Belts
PPS3 Housing
PPS9 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation
Prestbury Supplementary Planning Document
Prestbury Village Design Statement

CONSIDERATIONS (External to Planning)

Highways: No objections subject to conditions. As this is an application for a replacement dwelling there can be no objection to the development on highway safety grounds. However, he notes that the construction of the new house will be difficult due to the poor access which is long and narrow. To deal with this issue the applicant should submit for approval a construction method statement giving details of parking and delivery arrangements.

United Utilities: No objection

VIEWS OF THE PARISH / TOWN COUNCIL

Prestbury Parish Council – Comments are awaited and will be updated to Members accordingly.

OTHER REPRESENTATIONS

Representations have been received from two separate neighbouring properties that raised the following concerns/comments:

- Highway safety issues regarding the narrowness of the existing drive and the access onto Withinlee Road, particularly during construction when large vehicles will be accessing the site; there does not seem to be enough room for larger delivery vehicles to turn within the site, especially if vehicles are parked on the hardstanding.
- The proposed dwellinghouse would be a lot bigger than the existing house in both height and ground space; it would be higher than most houses; it would not be in keeping with the surrounding area; it would have a very modern design that is not like the surrounding properties; it comprises a 3-4 storey house from some angles; excessive mass; it would be higher than the previous proposal whose height was considered unacceptable; slate is not used in the immediate surroundings; the use of materials would make it incongruous next to the neo-Georgian houses; the use of brick and terracotta like Withinlee and the neo-Georgian houses would be much less intrusive than the proposed render, glass and slate and would reflect the surrounding dwellinghouses; the re-siting of the building to the north will not make much difference to the view from Chelford Road which is to the south.
- It would be intrusive to the local landscape and to neighbours; it would be clearly seen from Chelford Road and more prominent than the existing bungalow; it is inappropriate given its setting on the edge of the Green Belt and Area of Special County Value; they consider that developments bordering onto an area designated as ASCV should be of a higher design standard; the proposed design would be particularly conspicuous from long distance views from within the Green Belt and ASCV.
- The existing trees and their roots should be protected during the construction period.
- The building will be visible from neighbouring properties due to the number of trees that have been lost and some which are currently decaying and will have to be removed in the future.
- Comments made in respect of the submitted Design & Access Statement.

Prestbury Amenity Society has also commented on the application and considered that the variety of materials should be reduced.

APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION

A Design & Access Statement, 3-D images, photographs of the site and surroundings have been submitted with the planning application.

OFFICER APPRAISAL

Principal of Development

The application is for a replacement dwellinghouse within the predominantly residential area of Prestbury therefore the principle of the development is acceptable.

Design & Landscape

The existing dwellinghouse comprises a detached H-shaped bungalow with a link-attached double garage. The bungalow is rendered white with some feature stone walls and has a grey concrete tiled roof. The bungalow is of no architectural merit and does not reflect the large detached 2/2.5 storey dwellinghouses in the surrounding area. The land slopes steeply from the rear of the dwellinghouse to the fields beyond which results in the property having a private garden to the southwest of the existing dwellinghouse.

It is proposed to demolish the existing bungalow and double garage and construct a detached dwellinghouse with an integral double garage. The replacement dwellinghouse would be T-shaped and would comprise two-storeys with additional living accommodation in the roofspace and a basement that would be partially visible from the south. The property would have a contemporary design that would use a mix of render, wooden cladding and brick to the walls and a slate pitched roof. The dwellinghouse would occupy a similar footprint as the existing bungalow but would be sited marginally further away from the south/southwestern boundaries.

Policies BE1 and DC1 of the Local Plan (which are expanded by paragraph 3.1 of the Prestbury Supplementary Planning Document) state that new development should be sympathetic to the character of the local environment, street scene, adjoining buildings and the site itself. The explanatory text to policy DC1 suggests that designs should normally be in keeping '*and where necessary improve*' positive aspects of local character. PPS1 also makes it clear that designs should improve the character and qualities of an area not necessarily just replicate it. It seeks to promote local distinctiveness and sustainable, durable and adaptable developments which are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping. This area of Prestbury has a character that stems from a large plot size and generous vegetation, rather than from a consistent architectural style. Whilst the design of the proposed dwellinghouse is contemporary and may not reflect the immediate neighbouring properties, the wider surrounding area comprises a mix of designs and ages with some comprising contemporary designs, in particular 'Highfield' which comprises a very modern, highly glazed contemporary design.

The dwellinghouse would be sited approximately 170 metres from Withinlee Road, at a lower land level and would be screened by the dwellinghouses that are located between the application site and Withinlee Road and the existing tree cover. The proposed dwellinghouse would therefore not be highly visible from Withinlee Road; would not be read as part of the street scene; and would not be read alongside the adjacent properties due to the spacing between the properties and the existing tree cover.

Concern has been raised by neighbour's regarding the use of render and slate rather than brick and terracotta tiles however the existing bungalow is rendered and does not have a terracotta tiled roof and the surrounding area comprises a mix of both slate and terracotta tiles. The use of slate is therefore not considered to be out-of-character with the surrounding area. Concern has also been raised regarding the plethora of materials to be used on the proposed dwellinghouse however the existing bungalow is constructed of a mix of materials and the proposed materials are central to the contemporary design of the replacement dwellinghouse. The mix of materials is therefore considered acceptable.

The Design Officer has considered the application and notes that unlike many others in the surrounding area the development has not taken the pastiche route but has instead taken a step towards contemporary, albeit at a reduced burst of modernism than the previously withdrawn scheme. Nonetheless she states that it is a welcome design, but considers that it is rather unfortunate that it will not be visible from many public vantage points. The Design Officer considers that the replacement dwelling is seen to have regard to policy BE1 in that it reflects local character and respects the form, layout, siting, scale and design of surrounding buildings and their setting.

The site is outside the Green Belt, however, paragraph 3.15 of PPG2 advises that the visual amenities of the Green Belt should not be injured by development conspicuous from the Green Belt.

Concern has been raised in representations regarding the prominence of the proposed building from the Green Belt/Area of Special County Value and Chelford Road to the south/southwest of the application site. The fields surrounding the application site are in private ownership and therefore no public view of the site would be gained from this aspect. A public footpath links Chelford Road with Withinlee Road however it is located nearly 500 metres from the application site and given the topography of the land and existing tree cover, the site cannot be viewed from the public footpath. Chelford Road is located to the south of the application site. Concern has been raised and photographs submitted to demonstrate that the proposed dwellinghouse would be prominent when viewed from Chelford Road.

It should be noted that Chelford Road is sited nearly 500 metres from the application site; has no footpath; has no lay-bys; and has a hedge along either side. The existing dwellinghouse is not noticeable when travelling along Chelford Road and is only visible through gaps in the hedge when actually trying to 'spot' the site. Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposed dwellinghouse would be higher than the existing dwellinghouse, it is not considered that it would be noticeably prominent when travelling along Chelford Road for the same reasons. The proposed dwellinghouse would also be viewed against a backdrop of residential properties that are of a similar scale to the proposed dwellinghouse and have a similar relationship to the Green Belt/Area of Special County Value boundary. In addition other dwellinghouses are located closer to Chelford Road and are therefore would be arguably more prominent than the proposed dwellinghouse. The Landscape Officer has considered the application and looked at the site from Chelford Road. In her opinion the proposed development would not have an adverse visual impact and would not be harmful to the character of the Green Belt and ASCV. It is therefore considered that the landscape impact of the dwellinghouse is acceptable and would not be conspicuous from the Green Belt.

The application site falls within a Low Density Housing Area whereby policy H12 of the Local Plan is applicable. This policy seeks to ensure that new developments are sympathetic to the character of the established residential area, particularly in respect of the physical scale and form of new houses; the plot width and space between the sides of housing should be commensurate with the surrounding area; the existing low density should not be exceeded; existing high standards of space, light and privacy should be maintained; and existing tree and ground cover of public amenity value should be retained. Concern has been raised in objections that the proposed dwellinghouse would not comply with policy H12 of the Local Plan.

The proposed development would comprise a replacement dwellinghouse. The dwellinghouse would have a similar footprint as the existing bungalow and would have a similar spacing to the sides; the density of the plot would therefore be retained. As outlined above it is not considered that the proposed dwellinghouse would be out-of-character with the surrounding area and would have a similar scale and form to the surrounding dwellinghouses. The existing trees would be retained and existing high standards of space, light and privacy would be maintained. The proposed is considered to comply with the criteria in policy H12.

For these reasons it is considered that the proposed dwellinghouse would not have a detrimental effect on the character or appearance of the surrounding area and it would comply with policies BE1, DC1 and H12 of the Local Plan as well as the Prestbury Supplementary Planning Document.

Amenity

Residential properties surround the application site to the north, northwest and east, whilst fields owned by the applicant immediately bound the application site to the south/southwest.

The proposed dwellinghouse would be sited approximately 2.8 metres closer to the boundary shared with Withinlee Court to the northwest of the application site. However the dwellinghouse would still be sited approximately 16 metres from the shared boundary and approximately 65 metres from the neighbour's dwellinghouse. The proposed dwellinghouse would therefore significantly exceed the separation distances outlined in policy DC38 of the Local Plan. The proposed dwellinghouse is therefore not considered to have a detrimental effect on the amenity of this property. It should also be noted that this neighbour has raised concern regarding a dormer window overlooking their property. However the dormer window would be positioned in the elevation facing in a southwesterly direction across the adjacent fields rather than towards the neighbour's property.

The properties to the north and northeast of the dwellinghouse (e.g. Clover Heights, Withinlee, Withinlee Cottages) are separated from the proposed dwellinghouse by a paddock that is owned by the applicant. These properties are located a significant distance from the application site. The separation distances in policy DC38 would be significantly exceeded and therefore it is not considered that the proposed dwellinghouse would have a detrimental effect on the amenity of these properties.

The property to the east of the application site (Hanover House) forms part of the recently constructed gated development known as St James' Hill. The property is a substantial detached dwellinghouse and is located on a lower ground level than the application site. Concern was raised regarding the bulk of the building closest to this property in respect of the previously withdrawn scheme. Since the withdrawn scheme the design of the dwellinghouse has been revised so that the dwellinghouse now comprises two-storeys with a pitched roof that slopes away from Hanover House rather than three storeys with a flat roof; the dwellinghouse has been sited 1.5 metres away from this property when compared to the existing bungalow; and the first floor has been stepped a further 1.5 metres away.

Due to the orientation of the two properties, Hanover House would have an oblique view of the built area of the proposed dwellinghouse closest to their property and a direct view where the proposed dwellinghouse would be sited approximately 40 metres from the application site. It is considered that the amendments to the proposed dwellinghouse have overcome the previous concerns in respect of its impact on the amenity of Hanover House, especially as the proposed dwellinghouse would comply with the separation distances outlined in policy DC38, even when taking into account the changes in land levels.

In order to protect neighbouring amenity during the demolition of the existing dwellinghouse and the construction of the proposed dwellinghouse it is recommended that a condition be attached restricting works to specific days/times.

For the reasons outlined above and subject to the recommended condition, it is considered that the proposed development would comply with policies DC3 and DC38 of the Local Plan.

Highways

The proposed development is for a replacement dwellinghouse. An existing double garage would be replaced with a garage of a similar size and an area for the parking and turning of vehicles would be maintained within the existing area of hardstanding. The existing access onto Withinlee Road and the existing driveway would be utilised with no alterations proposed. Concern has been raised from neighbouring properties regarding the existing access being substandard and the use of the access and driveway by large vehicles during the construction process. The Strategic Highways Engineer has assessed the application and states that as this is an application for a replacement dwelling there can be no objection to the development on highway safety grounds. However, he notes that the construction of the new house will be difficult due to the poor access which is long and narrow. To deal with this issue the applicant should submit for approval a construction method statement giving details of parking and delivery arrangements etc. Subject to this condition, it is considered that the proposed development would comply with policy DC6 of the Local Plan.

Ecology

The proposed development has been assessed by the Nature Conservation Officer and he does not anticipate there being any significant ecological issues associated with the proposed development.

Trees

TPO protected trees are located at the entrance onto Withinlee Road and along the boundary shared with Hanover House to the southeast of the application site. Other non-protected trees are located within the application site. A Tree Survey has been requested from the applicant and this is currently awaited. It should be noted however that, in respect of the previously withdrawn application, the Tree Officer considered that the proposed development could be adequately mitigated against so as not to cause harm to the existing trees, subject to conditions.

CONCLUSIONS AND REASON(S) FOR THE DECISION

The objections raised have been considered however conditions can be applied that adequately address these concerns in respect of trees and construction. The development complies with Local Plan policies in respect of design, character, Low Density Housing Area, highway safety and nature conservation. The landscape impact is acceptable and the development would not be conspicuous from the Green Belt.

The application is therefore recommended for approval.

SUBJECT TO

The comments of the Officer for Arboriculture

1. A03FP - Commencement of development (3 years)
2. A02EX - Submission of samples of building materials
3. A01LS - Landscaping - submission of details
4. A04LS - Landscaping (implementation)

5. A22GR - Protection from noise during construction (hours of construction)
6. A30HA - Protection of highway from mud and debris
7. A23MC - Details of ground levels to be submitted
8. A32HA - Submission of construction method statement
9. A01AP - Development in accord with approved plan

