

Planning Reference No:	09/3490C
Application Address:	20 Pikemere Road, Alsager
Proposal:	Proposed Subdivision Of Domestic Curtilage To Create Additional, Separate Dwelling
Applicant:	Mr. Michael Bounford
Application Type:	Outline Planning Permission
Ward:	Alsager
Registration Date:	22-October-2009
Earliest Determination Date:	26-January-2010
Expiry Date:	17-December-2009
Date report Prepared	5-February-2010
Constraints:	None

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE subject to conditions.

MAIN ISSUES:

- Principle of Residential Development
- Policy
- Design & Character of Development
- Trees
- Residential Amenity
- Highways
- Contamination

1. REASON FOR REFERRAL

Councillor S. Jones has called the application in for consideration by the Southern Committee on the grounds that the proposed development would be un-neighbourly, would represent an overdevelopment of the site and would lead to access problems.

PREVIOUS MEETING

At the Planning Committee meeting held on 27th January 2010, members resolved to defer this application in order to undertake a site visit. Members must note that additional representations have been received from neighbouring occupiers. These comments are summarised in section 7 of this report.

2. DESCRIPTION AND SITE CONTEXT

This application relates to the side garden associated with number 20 Pikemere Road, Alsager. The existing dwelling is a large detached white rendered property situated on the southwestern side of the road adjacent to a public footpath linking Pikemere Road with Grig Place, a residential cul-de-sac located to the west. The area is predominantly residential and is characterised by a mix of dwellings ranging from large detached dwellings situated

within spacious plots to smaller detached / semi-detached properties occupying narrower plots. The site lies within the Alsager Settlement Zone Line as designated in the adopted Congleton Borough Local Plan First Review (2005).

3. DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

Outline planning permission is sought to erect a dwelling within the side garden of no. 20 Pikemere Road. Full details of access have been provided with the application with all other matters reserved for future consideration (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale).

A new-detached garage sited in front of the existing dwelling no. 20 has been omitted from the application due to concerns regarding the impact that it would have on the street scene and the character and appearance of the area. Furthermore, layout has also been removed from consideration at this stage and the indicative layout has been amended to show a dwelling with a narrower footprint.

The maximum scale parameters indicate that the width and depth of the dwelling would be 8.7m and 13.5m respectively. In terms of height, the dwelling would measure a maximum of 9m to the ridge to accord with the height of the existing dwelling no. 20.

4. POLICIES

Regional Spatial Strategy

DP1 Spatial Principles

DP7 Promote Environmental Quality

DP4 Make the Best Use of Existing Resources and Infrastructure

L4 Regional Housing Provision

Local Plan Policy

PS4 Towns

GR1 New Development

GR2 Design

GR6 Amenity & Health

GR9 Accessibility, servicing and parking provision

GR18 Traffic Generation

H1 Provision of New Housing Development

H2 Provision of New Housing Development

H4 Residential Development in Towns

NR1 Trees & Woodland

SPG2 Provision of Private Open Space in Residential Developments

Other Material Considerations

PPS1 'Delivering Sustainable Development'

PPS3 'Housing'

PPS23 'Planning & Pollution Control'

Circular 01/2006 Guidance on Changes to the Development Control System

5. CONSIDERATIONS (External to Planning)

Environmental Health:

No objection subject to the imposition of conditions restricting hours of construction/piling, and conditions relating to land contamination investigations.

Highways:

No objection.

Senior Landscape Officer (SLO):

The tree information provided on amended plan 3510/01B is limited and the information does not conform to the recommendation in British Standard 5837:2005 Trees in relation to construction. It is understood that layout and the previously proposed garage have now been omitted from this application. The omission of the garage addresses my concerns that such building would have required tree removal with associated loss of screening.

The indicative position of the dwelling on the amended plan indicates that a dwelling could be accommodated outside the root protection area of the mature Sycamore tree adjacent to the public footpath although pruning of the crown would still be necessary. The crown of this tree extends some distance into the site and would have to be radically pruned in order to accommodate the dwelling. Such pruning would affect the balance and appearance of the tree and would reduce its amenity value when viewed from the public footpath.

6. VIEWS OF ALSAGER TOWN COUNCIL

Alsager Town Council has no objections to this application but expresses concern that this is another windfall development.

7. OTHER REPRESENTATIONS

Letters have been received from neighbouring properties objecting to this application on the following grounds;

- The development would be over-intensive.
- The retention of the existing detached garage at the front would lead to an undesirable precedent and would harm the openness of the street scene.
- The existing garage should be demolished and a new one incorporated into the new dwelling.
- If the application is approved, a further application for a new garage will follow.
- The amended indicative layout shows a dwelling 6m wide and 9m deep. These measurements do not tie up with the scale parameters and this is misleading.
- The Senior Landscape Officer has made her comments on limited information.
- The excavations will inevitably lead to the removal of trees.
- It is unclear how much of the tree line will be removed.
- Views immediately surrounding no. 20 should be given priority.
- Neighbour's privacy would be harmed
- The plans show that the house will be 'shoe-horned' in.
- There are no details of recycling arrangements.
- New build will create noise
- The dwelling is white painted brick not rendered.

- It does not appear as though a site visit has been carried out.
- The limited tree information does not comply with the Council's validation requirements.
- The loss of the ornamental shrubs and trees would affect the street scene and would reduce screening.
- The application should have regard to what is most acceptable not what is most profitable.

8. APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Design & Access Statement
Amended Plans (ref 3510/01B)

9. OFFICER APPRAISAL

Principle of Development

The application site is located within the settlement zone line for Alsager where according to Policy PS4 there is a general presumption in favour of development provided that it is in keeping with the town's scale and character and does not conflict with other policies. With regard to housing development, policies H1 and H2 relate to the supply and distribution of housing land. The most recent housing land position statement for the former borough of Congleton demonstrates that the Council does not have a five-year land supply and as such proposals for residential development are being considered favourably subject to conformity with paragraph 69 of PPS3 and compliance with other material planning considerations.

Policy H4 outlines a series of criteria to be met when assessing residential development in towns. This includes the sustainability of the site and compliance with other local plan policies. The site is an accessible location on the northwesterly edge of Alsager where it is within walking distance of the town centre and is well connected to public transport and community facilities and services. The proposal would involve development of a Brownfield site within an existing settlement and as such the principle of residential development on the site is considered to be acceptable.

Design & Character of Development

The area is characterised by a mix of dwellings ranging from large detached dwellings situated within spacious plots to smaller semi-detached properties occupying narrower plots. With regard to the proposed scale parameters, the maximum depth and width of the dwelling would reflect some of those properties found further along the street and the ratio between the plot size and the dwelling would be consistent with these other examples. In terms of height, an overall ridge height of 9 metres is proposed which would be no higher than the existing property no. 20. Having regard to this pattern of development, it is considered that the provision of a dwelling on the site would not harm the character of Pikemere Road and would reflect the existing grain of development.

Highways & Parking

The existing dwelling benefits from a dual access. The first access is positioned towards the left hand side directly in front of no.20 and the second is located 10 metres further towards north. The proposed dwelling would utilise the second access. The gap between

the boundary of the site and edge of the road would enable sufficient visibility for vehicles emerging from each access in both directions. The Strategic Highways Manager has not raised any objection to the proposals and given that both dwellings would benefit from more than 2 off-street parking spaces, it is not believed that any detriment would be caused to highway safety.

Trees

To facilitate the provision of a new dwelling on the site, some existing trees would have to be removed within the site. Those specimens that would require removal are ornamental shrubs and conifers, which are not protected and are not of any great amenity value and therefore their loss would not be detrimental. Elsewhere, there is a single Sycamore specimen located outside of the site close to the western boundary that partly overhangs the site. This specimen would need to be pruned to accommodate a dwelling on the site; however, the amended indicative layout showing a slightly narrower property would reduce the extent of pruning required. Whilst the Sycamore tree is visible from the public domain, the specimen is not protected and is not worthy of TPO and the side that would be affected faces into the site and is not prominent from the adjacent footpath or the street scene. As such, the side of the tree that does offer some amenity value would be unaffected and therefore the proposal is deemed to be acceptable with regard to Policy NR1.

Residential Amenity

Given that the application has reserved appearance, layout and scale for subsequent approval, full consideration cannot be given to the impact on neighbouring properties. Nonetheless, the provision of a dwelling on the site would allow sufficient separation distances to be achieved between the proposed dwelling and the existing dwellings surrounding the site in accordance with the requirements of policy GR6 and SPG2 'Provision of Private Open Space in Residential Developments'. In terms of private amenity space, the existing and proposed dwelling would benefit from more than 60 sq metres in accordance with the SPG2.

Contamination

Paragraph 2.42 of PPS23 'Planning & Pollution Control' states that sufficient information should be required to determine the existence or otherwise of contamination, its nature and the risks it may pose and whether these can be satisfactorily reduced to an acceptable level. This will require a risk assessment that identifies the sources, pathways and receptors (pollutant linkages) and as such a condition requiring a desktop survey is recommended.

Other Issues

Neighbouring occupiers have raised concerns that the retention of the existing garage would set an undesirable precedent for garages in front of dwellings. Each application is assessed on its own merits and on a site-by-site basis and in this case the garage is an existing structure and is well screened by the planting along the frontage. The proposed dwelling would allow this planting to be retained. The SLO has viewed the amended plan and her comments reflect this. In terms of the requirements from a tree survey the Council's relevant validation checklist only requires a full tree survey where the proposal is likely to

affect a tree protected by Tree Preservation Order or is in a Conservation Area. There are no protected trees and the site is not within a Conservation Area.

With regard to the amended indicative layout, the claims that this shows a dwelling only 6m wide and 9m deep are incorrect. The amended plan is to scale and shows a dwelling with a maximum width and depth of 8.7m and 13.5m respectively.

10. CONCLUSIONS AND REASONS FOR THE DECISION

In land use terms, there is a presumption in favour of development in this location and as such the principle of the development is deemed to be acceptable having regard to the use, intensity and the indicative scale parameters. The development could be accommodated on the site without causing detriment to the amenities afforded to nearby properties. Sufficient off street parking would be achieved and the proposed access arrangements would not give rise to traffic problems in the area. As such the outline proposals are deemed to be in compliance with relevant development plan policies and therefore the application is recommended for approval.

11. RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE subject to the following conditions:

- 1. Commencement of development within 3 years or within 2 years of approval of the last of the reserved matters.**
- 2. Approval of reserved matters to be obtained prior to commencement of development.**
- 3. Full details of access are approved by virtue of this consent.**
- 4. Accordance with maximum scale parameters and amended details received 11th January 2010.**
- 5. Submission of a phase 1-land contamination assessment prior to commencement of development.**
- 6. Protection from noise during construction (hours of construction).**
- 7. Details of method and timing of pile driving if required.**
- 8. Materials to be submitted and approved.**
- 9. Tree protection measures**

Location Plan: Cheshire East Council Licence No. 100049045

