

**Application No:** 10/1769M  
**Location:** 54, TRAFFORD ROAD, ALDERLEY EDGE, SK9 7DN  
**Proposal:** CONSTRUCTION OF A REPLACEMENT DWELLING ON THE SITE OF BRAMPTON HOUSE INCORPORATING THE EXISTING FACADE

**For** MR MJ H

**Registered** 08-Jul-2010  
**Policy Item** No  
**Grid Reference** 384589 378167

#### **SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION**

Refuse

#### **MAIN ISSUES**

Impact of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the street scene, the Alderley Edge Conservation Area, the existing trees, protected species, highway safety and implications for the residential amenity of neighbouring properties.

#### **Date Report Prepared:**

16<sup>th</sup> September 2010

#### **REASON FOR REPORT**

The application was called-in to committee by the Ward Councillor, Carolyn Andrew as representations had been made to her with regard to the proposal stating that it contravenes policies BE12, BE1, BE2, BE3 and BE4

#### **DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT**

The application site comprises a large detached Victorian villa constructed prior to 1910 that is located on the eastern side of Trafford Road. The application site is located within 'The Edge' Conservation Area

#### **DETAILS OF PROPOSAL**

Full planning permission is sought for a replacement dwellinghouse incorporating the existing façade. An accompanying full planning application for Conservation Area Consent to demolish the existing dwellinghouse (10/1768M) has also been submitted and appears elsewhere on the agenda.

#### **RELEVANT HISTORY**

08/2753P Alterations and extensions, including detached garage with room above  
Approved subject to conditions 24<sup>th</sup> February 2009

09/2417M

Alterations and extensions amended design for application 08/2753P  
Approved with conditions 11<sup>th</sup> November 2009

## **POLICIES**

### **Local Plan Policy**

NE11	Nature Conservation
BE1	Design Guidance
BE3	Conservation Areas
BE12	The Edge, Alderley Edge
H12	Low Density Housing Area
DC1	New Build
DC3	Amenity
DC6	Circulation & Access
DC8	Landscaping
DC9	Tree Protection
DC38	Space, Light and Privacy

### **Other Material Considerations**

Alderley Edge Conservation Area Appraisal – July 2004  
PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment

## **CONSIDERATIONS (External to Planning)**

**Highways:** Comments currently awaited

## **VIEWS OF THE PARISH / TOWN COUNCIL**

**Alderley Edge Parish Council:** The loss of this fine Victorian mansion, which is recorded in the publication "The Villa's of Alderley Edge" would be regrettable. The proposal to retain the front facade is no more than a fig-leaf to demolition and replacement. The relocation of the chimneys and the filling in of the roof will completely alter the aspect negating any suggested benefits from retaining the facade. The alterations to the rear and the demolition of the old stable block add to the argument that this proposal will neither enhance nor improve the Conservation Area.

## **OTHER REPRESENTATIONS**

Four letters of representation were received; three from neighbouring properties (one of which had a planning consultant write on their behalf) and one from The Edge Association.

Two letters received from neighbouring properties did not raise an objection to the proposed development but raised concerns regarding the parking of contractor's vehicles and the effect that existing vehicles are having on the road network, particularly Woodbrook Road and Trafford Road and ask that conditions are attached to require vehicles to be parked off the road, restrict the hours of construction and that wheel wash facilities are provided.

A third letter from a neighbouring property raised concerns regarding the associated noise from the swimming pool's pump room; the proximity of the swimming pool to their property; that the proposed balcony would overlook their conservatory terrace especially since the removal of some trees/shrubs, the associated noise and dust during construction, the parking of contractor's vehicles, disturbance from any pile driving, and considers that no

further trees should be felled. Comments regarding drainage are not a material planning consideration.

The fourth letter of representation was received from The Edge Association that stated the application site comprises one of the remaining Victorian Villas within the Conservation Area; the incorporation of the front façade, even if achieved successfully, offers no real compensation for the loss of the Villa; and to get permission for extensions and then decide it is easier to demolish and re-build the property is unacceptable.

## **APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

A Design & Access Statement, a Bat Survey, Landscape Proposals Plan, a Heritage Statement and a Structural Method Statement for the retention of the façade and side wall during demolition were submitted with the application.

## **OFFICER APPRAISAL**

### **Principal of Development**

The application is for a replacement dwellinghouse within a predominantly residential area and therefore the principle of such development is considered to comply with both National and Local policy.

### **Design**

Two previous applications for substantial contemporary extensions to the existing dwellinghouse were recently approved and are currently extant. Both these permissions involved an element of demolition to the rear of the property however the majority of the existing dwellinghouse and detached coach house was to be retained. Drawings were submitted with both applications that indicated precisely which walls were to be demolished and which were to be retained. Within the front garden a detached triple garage with living accommodation above was approved with the first application, whilst a partially sunken curved garage with parking for four vehicles and planting above was approved with the second application.

The overall design and scale of the replacement dwellinghouse is largely identical to the extensions that have been previously approved together with the existing dwellinghouse. Some changes have been made, however these are not considered to affect the overall design of the previously approved schemes. The previously approved curved garage also forms part of this application but has been handed and therefore would be sited adjacent to the boundary shared with No. 52 Trafford Road to the north rather than 'Netherfield' (No. 56 Trafford Road) to the south. The scale and contemporary design of the extensions was previously considered acceptable by the Conservation Officer and their scale in relation to the plot was considered to comply with the requirements of the low density housing area. The previously approved applications were therefore considered to comply with policies BE1, DC1 and H12 of the Local Plan and circumstances remain unchanged.

The main differences between the previously approved applications for extensions to the existing dwellinghouse and this application are that the majority of the existing dwellinghouse would be demolished whilst retaining the existing façade and part of the northern side wall and the size of the basement has been marginally increased. The existing coach house would also be demolished and replaced with a new building of a similar scale and footprint and sited in the same location. The visual appearance of the proposed dwellinghouse when viewed from Trafford Road would largely be the same, except for the repositioning of the existing chimneys from the centre of the building to either side. The main consideration therefore is whether it is acceptable to almost

completely demolish what is considered to be a good example of a Victorian Villa within 'The Edge' Conservation Area.

Policies BE3 and BE12 of the Local Plan relate to development within Conservation Areas and state that development should only be permitted which preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the Conservation Area; and seeks to preserve and enhance the Sylvan low density housing and the interesting and individual design of the large houses set in spacious grounds with mature trees.

The dwellinghouse is set back from Trafford Road by more than 40 metres and due to the trees and vegetation to the front and side boundaries, only glimpse views of the frontage of the dwellinghouse can be seen from public vantage points. The dwellinghouse is not listed and does not appear on the Cheshire East List of Locally Important Buildings. The Conservation Officer notes that the property has a strong period character however this becomes diluted towards the rear of the property. The façade and part of the northern side wall is proposed to be retained and a method statement has been submitted to outline how these walls would be retained during the demolition/construction process. The Borough Council's Structural Engineer has concluded that the method statement is acceptable and that it outlines a feasible way of retaining the two walls if the works are undertaken with care and supervision.

Whilst the Conservation Officer does concede that the finished visual appearance of the property from within the Conservation Area would not be significantly different due to the retention of the existing façade, he has raised concern that, if approved, this application could set a precedent for the demolition of other non-listed properties on the 'The Edge' that make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. Whilst two previous applications have been approved for extensions to the property both applications largely retained the existing structure and historic integrity of the dwellinghouse. It is therefore considered that the demolition of a building that makes a positive contribution to the Conservation Area would neither preserve nor enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area or the interesting and individual design of the large houses. The replacement dwellinghouse is therefore considered to be contrary to policies BE3 and BE12 of the Local Plan.

### **Amenity**

The dwellinghouse at the application site is sited centrally within a large plot with existing vegetation/mature trees surrounding the boundaries of the site. The height and density of the existing vegetation significantly screens the existing dwellinghouse from Trafford Road and its neighbouring properties. It was not considered that the previous applications for extensions to the property would have a detrimental effect on neighbouring amenity.

The windows in the replacement dwellinghouse would occupy similar positions to those within the previously approved extensions and the existing dwellinghouse. Due to the space between the dwellinghouses and their orientation it is considered that the proposed replacement dwellinghouse would comply with policy DC38 in terms of separation distances.

Concern has been raised from the occupier of 'Netherfield' that the proposed balcony/terrace would overlook their conservatory terrace especially since some trees/shrubs have been removed. The terraced areas formed part of the previously approved applications and their siting relative to the neighbouring properties were not considered to have a detrimental impact on neighbouring amenity due to their position, the height of the existing boundary wall shared with 'Netherfield' and the siting of the existing

coach house and trees/vegetation positioned along the boundaries. These areas have not altered since the previously approved extension and additional mature planting is also proposed along this shared boundary. For these reasons it is considered that they would not have a detrimental effect on neighbouring amenity and would comply with policy DC3 of the Local Plan.

Concern has also been raised from the occupier of 'Netherfield' that the replacement dwellinghouse would impact on their amenity due to the associated noise from the swimming pool's pump room; the proximity of the swimming pool to their property; the associated noise and dust during construction, and disturbance from any pile driving. It should be noted that a swimming pool was proposed under the previously approved application and was in a similar location and was of a similar size to that proposed by this scheme. Whilst conditions were previously not imposed regarding these issues, given the scale of the development has increased by this application (both demolition and construction) it is considered acceptable that should Members consider these additional conditions necessary that they could be attached.

The proposed garage is of a similar design to that which was previously approved however it has been relocated to the opposite side of the front garden closest to No. 52 Trafford Road. Due to the existing ground levels the previously approved garage was partially sunken into the ground and as the ground level at 'Netherfield' is higher than the application site, the majority of the structure would not have been visible from this property. The ground levels on the opposite side of the front garden differ and therefore the garage would not be partially sunken. No. 52 Trafford Road has a similar ground level as the application site and is sited so that the rear elevation of this property faces the application site at a 45-degree angle. A number of on-site and off-site trees are located along this boundary that are to be retained and additional trees are proposed to be planted along this boundary. Planting is also proposed on top of the garage's roof. It is therefore considered that the siting of the proposed garage would be highly screened from the neighbouring property and the existing and proposed planting would prevent the roof of the garage from being utilised as garden and as a result would not have a detrimental affect on the amenity of this property.

For these reasons outlined above it is considered that the proposed dwellinghouse would comply with policies DC1, DC3 and DC38 of the Local Plan.

### **Highways**

The proposed development would utilise the existing access onto Trafford Road. As part of the replacement dwellinghouse a garage would be provided within the front garden that would house four vehicles. A turning and parking area would also be provided within the front garden that would allow for vehicles to leave the site in a forward gear. Sufficient off-street parking would be provided at the application site for a property of this size however the comments of the Strategic Highways Engineer are currently awaited.

Concern has been raised by residents regarding the parking of contractor's vehicles on the surrounding roads and the impact this would have on highway safety. A resident has also asked that a condition be attached requiring wheel washing facilities to be provided. These conditions were not attached to the previous applications for extensions to the property, however given the scale of the development has increased by this application (both demolition and construction) it is considered acceptable that these additional conditions be attached.

### **Ecology**

A Bat Survey was submitted with the planning application. The ecologist that undertook the survey is known to the Nature Conservation Officer and is suitably qualified and experienced to undertake work of this type. The survey forms a suitable basis on which to assess the ecological impacts of the proposed development. A bat roost was previously recorded at the main house however based on the most recent survey it appears likely that this roost is now abandoned.

Evidence of limited bat activity in the form of 'feeding perches' of a common bat species was recorded within the coach house at this site. The usage of the coach house by bats is likely limited to possibly only small numbers or a single animal using the building for short periods of time during the night rather than being used as a roost during the day. The loss of the buildings on this site in the absence of mitigation is likely to have only a minor impact upon a very small number of individual bats and a negligible impact upon the conservation status of the species as a whole. Roosts of this kind are difficult to assess in legal terms, however the lack of recent evidence at the house means that this should not be considered an active roost and the feeding perch within the coach house falls below the level of activity that would trigger the need for a Natural England license to allow the work to proceed. For these reasons the Nature Conservation Officer advises that no consideration needs to be given to the Habitat Regulation tests when determining this application.

A method statement has been submitted recommending the creation of suitable replacement roosting opportunities for bats in both the replacement house and a proposed 'gazebo' as a means of compensating for the loss of the feeding perch and roosting potential and also recommends the timing and supervision of the works to reduce the risk posed to any bats that may be present. The proposed mitigation/compensation is acceptable and is likely to reduce the potential adverse impacts of the development to a negligible/zero level. To ensure that the proposed mitigation is enforceable it should be secured by means of a condition. Additional conditions in respect of breeding birds are also considered necessary.

For these reasons it is considered that the proposed development would comply with policy NE11 of the Local Plan.

### **Landscape**

The structural landscape proposals shown on Barnes Walker plan are generally acceptable. If the application is approved further hard and soft landscape details will be required, particularly for the boundary planting to the rear of the proposed garage to ensure that there is adequate screening and for the proposed walls, piers and gates at the main entrance. Subject to conditions it is considered that the proposed development would comply with policy DC8 of the Local Plan.

### **Trees**

A number of trees are located at the application site. Whilst these are not TPO protected they are protected by virtue of being located within a Conservation Area. The amendments to the previously approved scheme have been the subject of lengthy discussions on site between Cheshire Woodlands, Barnes Walker Landscapes and the Forestry Officer.

The loss of the identified trees has been accepted along with a number of minor incursions within Root Protection Areas, some of which are already occupied by existing hard standing. This was subject to the agreement of details for the construction of the flanking walls associated with the realigned driveway and can be addressed through conditions.

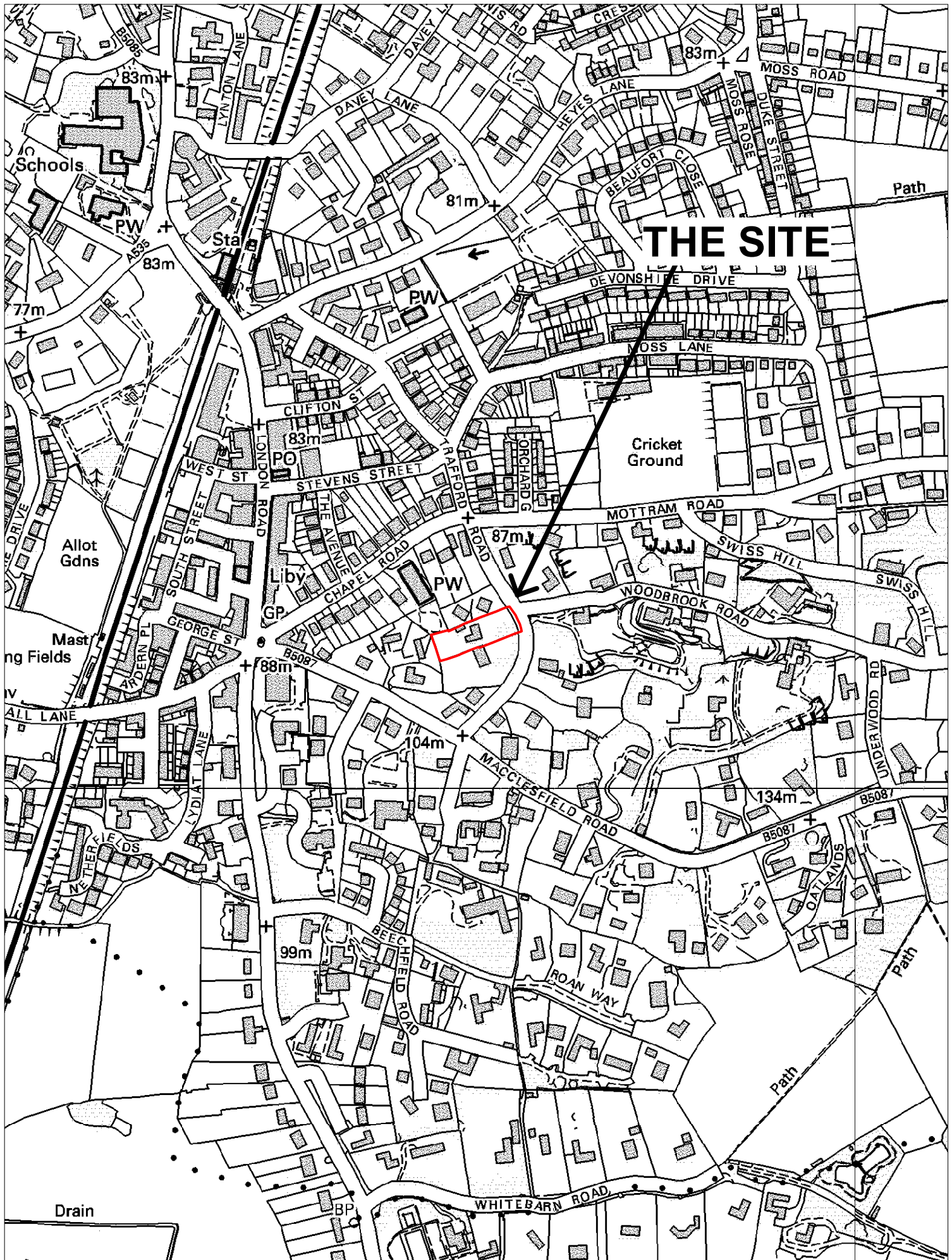
With the exception to the minor incursion noted above the retained trees can be protected in accordance with best practice BS5837:2005. A specimen landscape scheme has been submitted within which replacement planting is to be provided for the agreed losses and will enable the road frontage planting to be re-enforced, providing continuity for the Trafford Road street scene. Subject to a number of conditions the Forestry Officer does not raise an objection to the application from an arboricultural perspective. For these reasons it is considered that the proposed development would comply with policy DC9 of the Local Plan.

### **CONCLUSIONS AND REASON(S) FOR THE DECISION**

It is considered that the proposed development would not have a detrimental effect on neighbouring amenity, protected species, or the existing trees. However it is considered that the existing building makes a positive contribution to the character of the Alderley Edge Conservation Area. The proposed demolition could set a precedent for the demolition of other high quality and historic, unlisted dwellinghouses within 'The Edge' that would cumulatively have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. As such it is considered that the proposed development would not preserve or enhance the Conservation Area and would be contrary to the principles of policies BE3 and BE12 of the Local Plan.

### **SUBJECT TO**

Comments being received from Strategic Highways Manager





Application for **Full Planning**

**RECOMMENDATION : Refuse for the following reasons**

1. R02CA - Demolition of building in Conservation Area
2. Development fails to preserve the character of the Conservation Area