

Application No: 12/0242M

Location: Land At, PARK GREEN, PARK STREET, MACCLESFIELD, CHESHIRE, SK11 7GY

Proposal: Conservation Area Consent for Removal of Existing 5 Storey Office Block Which Has Been Vacant for Over 10 Years. Building is Unlisted. Existing Boundary Wall to Park Street To Be Retained.

Applicant: Mr Alastair Watson

Expiry Date: 13-Apr-2012

Date Report Prepared: 25 October 2012

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

Approve subject to conditions

MAIN ISSUES

- Impact upon the character and appearance of the Conservation Area

REASON FOR REPORT

The proposal is linked to application 12/0127M, which is a major application and appears elsewhere on the agenda.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

The application site comprises a prominent office block, which has been vacant for some time and parking area with soft landscaping fronting onto Park Green. The site is located within a Mixed Use Regeneration Area and the Park Green Conservation Area as identified in the Macclesfield Borough Local Plan. The High Street Conservation Area is located on the opposite side of Park Street,

DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

This application seeks conservation area consent to demolish the existing building on the site.

RELEVANT HISTORY

There is no planning history specifically relevant to the current proposal.

POLICIES

Local Plan Policy

BE4 Demolition within Conservation Areas

Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework)

CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)

None

OTHER REPRESENTATIONS

One letter of representation has been received from the Macclesfield Civic Society making the following comments on the application:

- Removal of the existing building is welcomed
- Concern over the removal of trees
- Flat roof to Park Green frontage could be improved
- Do contrasting colours add to the street scene?

APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The applicant has submitted a Design & Access statement, a Heritage Statement, and a Planning Statement. The Planning Statement concludes that:

- The proposal will result in an attractive residential development and will enhance the character of the area in this key location.
- The proposals are at the minimum density to make the scheme viable.
- The café and active frontage to Park Green are deemed to be a mutually supportive use to the assisted living development.
- The proposal will regenerate a disused brownfield site and will place no further demand on the existing transport infrastructure.
- The proposal is supported by policies which encourage the redevelopment of previously developed land and the efficient and sustainable use of the site.
- Respects the heritage of Macclesfield.

OFFICER APPRAISAL

When considering impact on the character and appearance of Park Green and High Street Conservation Areas, the starting point is to understand the characteristics of those areas and in particular the elements which contribute positively to the special character of the area. Neither conservation area has an adopted appraisal document.

The Park Green Conservation Area centres around a triangular area of open land used part as a car park and part as a memorial garden subdivided by the junction of Park Street, Sunderland Street and Park Green. This open area is surrounded by buildings of considerable variety in terms of scale, size and design, some of which make positive contributions to the character of the area, some which have a neutral impact and others which

have a negative influence. Amongst those buildings which positively contribute are an array of listed buildings of varying ages and styles, including several Victorian ornately decorated Gothic style stone buildings (including the former Library on the corner of Park Lane and Park Green and the adjacent similarly styled and aged arts college building), the stone United Reform Church to the north western edge of the conservation area, several simpler brick and slate late Georgian and Victorian former mills including Paradise Mill on Park Lane and Chapel Mill (Gradus) to the east of the memorial garden, 82 Park Green a Georgian grade II* brick and stone property with dutch gable, the Grade II* early Victorian ashlar former bank with classical portico as well as a number of Georgian town houses fronting onto the north side of the memorial gardens. The unlisted terraced properties on the north side of the green largely have a neutral impact. There are several properties considered to have a particularly negative impact and these are, the public convenience sited centrally within the green, the Natwest bank building sited just outside the western boundary adjacent to the United Reform Church, the building currently on the application site and the Royal Bank of Scotland building on the corner of Park Street and Park Green. There are a number of trees within the Park Green Conservation Area which also contribute positively to the general character and ambiance including those trees along the boundaries of the application site.

The High Street Conservation Area which lies to the south of the application site has a completely different character with a relatively cohesive style of 19th century buildings and a clear common palette of materials (predominantly brick and slate) and a relatively common scale (2-3 storeys). No 1 Park Street, which sits directly opposite the site within the High Street Conservation Area is Grade II Listed.

The existing building is not of any architectural merit and is considered to have a negative impact upon the overall character of the Park Green Conservation Area and views of and from the adjacent High Street Conservation Area. No objections are therefore raised over the proposed demolition, and planning application 12/0127M is considered to represent a scheme for the redevelopment of the site. Although it should be noted in this instance that a replacement scheme is not considered to be necessary.

CONCLUSION

The removal of the existing building from the site would improve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Accordingly, a recommendation of approval is made.

Application for Conservation Area Consent

RECOMMENDATION: Approve subject to following conditions

1. A03CA - Standard Time Limit
2. A scheme of site restoration works, or contract details and timescales for redevelopment shall be submitted to and approved in writing prior to demolition

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