

Application No: 14/2222M

Location: RED WALLS, PARKFIELD ROAD, KNUTSFORD, WA16 8NP

Proposal: Demolition of bungalow, garage and summer house, erection of new dwelling, replacement of timber gates and hard and soft landscaping.

Applicant: IGG GROUP

Expiry Date: 24-Jun-2014

Date Report Prepared: 21 July 2014

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

Approve subject to conditions

MAIN ISSUES

Impact on:

- Design in relation to Conservation Area/ Low Density Housing Area/ Street Scene
- Neighbouring Amenity
- Highways
- Trees
- Landscaping
- Nature Conservation

REASON FOR REPORT

Due to the heritage and design issues relevant to this application, the Planning and Enforcement Manager considers that the application should be referred to the Northern Planning Committee.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

The application site relates to a single storey bungalow located within a plot which benefits from substantial screening to the north, south and east boundaries. The dwelling and plot is therefore well screened from existing public vantage points. It is noted that over time, Parkfield Road has seen a number of replacement dwellings and extended dwellings, which have now resulted in a variety of house types and ages.

DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

Revised plans have been submitted during the application process, amending the details slightly. The proposal is for Conservation Area Consent for the demolition of the existing bungalow, garage and summer house and planning permission for the erection of a two storey contemporary replacement dwelling with a basement level incorporated. Additional landscaping works are also proposed and replacement entrance gates.

The proposals follow a formal pre application advice meeting and letter.

RELEVANT HISTORY

None.

POLICIES

Local Plan Policy

BE1 – Design Guidance
BE2- Historic Fabric
BE3 – Conservation Areas
BE4- Demolition in Conservation Areas
BE13 – Legh Road Conservation Area
BE21- Archaeology
NE11- Nature Conservation
H5 – Windfall Housing
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
DC46- Demolition
DC63- Decontaminated Land

Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy – Submission Version

Paragraph 216 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise, decision-takers may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

- The stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced the preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- The degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the NPPF (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).

In view of the level of consultation already afforded to the plan-making process, together with the degree of consistency with national planning guidance, it is appropriate to attach enhanced weight to the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy - Submission Version in the decision-making process.

At its meeting on the 28 February 2014, the Council resolved to approve the *Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy – Submission Version* for publication and submission to the Secretary of State. It was also resolved that this document be given weight as a material consideration for Development Management purposes with immediate effect.

MP1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

SD1 – Sustainable Development in Cheshire East

SD2 – Sustainable Development Principles

SE1 – Design

Between them these policies aim to protect the living conditions of adjoining residential properties from harmful loss of amenity such as loss of privacy, overshadowing, loss of light or overbearing impact. They aim to ensure that the design of any extension or new building is sympathetic to the existing building on the site, surrounding properties, Conservation Area and the wider street scene by virtue of being appropriate in form and scale and utilising sympathetic building materials.

National Planning Policy Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework reinforces the system of statutory development plans. When considering the weight to be attached to development plan policies, paragraphs 214 and 215 enable ‘full weight’ to be given to Development Plan policies adopted under the 2004 Act. The Macclesfield Local Plan policies, although saved in accordance with the 2004 Act are not adopted under it. Consequently, following the guidance in paragraph 215, “*due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with this framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the framework, the greater the weight that may be given)*”.

The Local Plan policies outlined above are all consistent with the NPPF and should therefore be given full weight.

Other Material Planning Considerations

Legh Road Conservation Area Appraisal 2005

CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)

Highways: no objections.

VIEWS OF THE PARISH / TOWN COUNCIL

Knutsford Town Council: The Council objects on the grounds that the new dwelling would be out of keeping with the prevailing design in the Legh Road Conservation Area and would represent overdevelopment when considered in the context of its historical surroundings.

OTHER REPRESENTATION

Six representations have been received in relation to the application, the main points of which are summarised below:

- Overdevelopment of the plot
- Would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area
- Adverse impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties near to the western boundary in terms of overlooking, overbearing impact and overshadowing
- Possible drainage issues related to the swimming pool
- Unclear what materials are to be used

Full copies of the representations received are available to view on the Council's website.

APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Planning Design and Access Statement. Heritage Statement.

OFFICER APPRAISAL

KEY ISSUES

Design/Conservation Area

Local Plan Policies BE1 and DC1 seek to promote high standards of design, with the overall vernacular, scale, density, height, mass, spacing and materials of new development being sympathetic to the character of the locality, surrounding buildings and site itself.

The objections received have been carefully considered.

However, it is noted that Parkfield Road is characterised by dwellings of a variety of architectural styles, and many of the properties on this road are modern style replacement dwellings. Subject to the materials used being acceptable, which can be conditioned, the proposed dwelling is considered to have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the street scene and locality. The development would not constitute overdevelopment of the plot and would be of a size, scale and siting that would not over dominate neighbouring properties or the street scene.

Whilst it is noted that the proposed dwelling would be close to the western boundary, it is nevertheless not considered to adversely impact on the character and appearance of this low density housing area. Sufficient space would remain within the plot and between the surrounding properties and it is noted that whilst the dwelling would be increasing in height from 3.6m (existing) to 7m (proposed), this would be of a similar height to neighbouring properties. Overall the existing high standards of space, light and privacy within the Legh Road Conservation Area would be retained.

Substantial boundary screening would remain and additional heavy landscaping on the western boundary is proposed. Overall the development would accord with all design objectives.

Para 131 of the NPPF states that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation, and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Para 137 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance.

Local Plan policies BE3 and BE13 state that development should protect or enhance the character and appearance of the Legh Road Conservation Area.

A Conservation Area is defined in the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as: "an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance." The character of these areas is defined not only by a concentration of historic buildings, but also by the relationship these buildings have with each other, historic street patterns, plot boundaries, the spaces between buildings and so forth.

As set out in the Legh Road Conservation Area Appraisal 2005, the Legh Road Conservation Area is characterised by substantial houses set in large grounds. Within the Legh Road Conservation Area the Borough Council will seek to preserve and enhance the interesting and individual design of the large houses set in spacious grounds.

The Legh Road Conservation Area comprises a number of detached or semi-detached houses, with capacious, well-planted gardens. As well as the importance of the villas themselves the conservation area appraisal reinforces the importance of the established landscaping stating 'one of the most important features of the Legh Road Conservation Area is the abundance of mature trees, which mark the boundaries and sit within the gardens of the houses.'

The Conservation Officer raises no objections to the proposed development.

The Red Walls site as existing contains a nondescript bungalow dating from the 1960's which is considered to neither contribute nor detract from the character of the Conservation Area. The proposals retain the current site entry point, driveway and boundary treatment to Parkfield Road.

Whilst the objections from the Town Council and neighbours have been carefully considered, the proposed dwelling is deemed to be a contemporary high quality dwelling, that continues the development within the Legh Road Conservation Area of individual and unique detached houses set within large landscaped plots.

The proposal would be well screened via existing and proposed boundary treatment to the front and side boundaries and would not be readily visible from public vantage points within the Conservation Area.

Furthermore, the proposal is deemed to be in keeping with the mix of architectural styles in the area, which are considered to make up this area of special interest; the Harding Watt Houses on nearby Legh Road and Leycester Road are an eclectic mix and as such a 'different' house style such as proposed would not be out of keeping, subject to conditions including a materials condition.

The proposed replacement gates would also be in keeping with the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, subject to appropriate materials which can be conditioned.

Overall therefore the development would preserve the character and appearance of the Legh Road Conservation Area.

Amenity

The objections have been carefully considered. It is noted that the proposal is relatively close to the western boundary. However, the proposed dwelling would be circa 18m away from windows to habitable rooms on the nearest neighbouring property to the west of the development. This would be 4m more than stipulated in the guidance for distances set out under Local Plan policy DC38. Furthermore, due to the orientation of the proposal and neighbouring properties in relation to the sun's path, there is not considered to be any adverse impact in terms of loss of light to neighbouring property.

No first floor windows to habitable rooms are proposed on the side elevations and the ensuite windows can be conditioned to be obscurely glazed.

Whilst there would be a taller dwelling on the site than the existing dwelling, close to the boundary, any visual impact would be further mitigated through the extensive proposed landscaping on the western boundary. This will be conditioned to ensure that the specimens are of sufficient height when planted. The Landscape Officer raises no objections to the proposal subject to this.

The dwelling would be over 27m from the dwelling to the rear and whilst a balcony is proposed to the front, the respective distances would mean no adverse impact in terms of overlooking.

Overall a commensurate degree of space, light and privacy would remain to all neighbouring properties subject to conditions and the development accords with Local Plan policies DC3 and DC38.

Highways

The Strategic Highways Manager raises no objections.

The gate width at less than 3m is marginally acceptable. Width between brick piers must be maximised and not reduced by new gate construction.

Sufficient parking would remain on the site. No highway objections are raised and the scheme would comply with policy DC6.

Trees/ Landscaping

The Tree Officer raises no objections to the development, however states:

The proposed increase in the building footprint does bring the development close to if not touching the canopy of the Oak tree in the adjacent property. The canopy extends some 7m across the site.

The high and dense tree cover on the east boundary may give rise to some daylight problems in the adjacent habitable rooms, however, this may be offset by extra light through the proposed central atrium.

Trees at the access have low branches and these will need to be pruned to allow access for demolition and construction materials/ high sided vehicles etc.

Various conditions need to be attached to ensure that all of the trees in the Conservation Area are preserved.

The Landscape Officer raises no objections to the proposed development, however notes that the Hornbeam proposed on the western boundary would not be very high (30-40cm) and they would take quite a few years to grow to a suitable height. Therefore a revised landscaping scheme should be submitted, to show more mature Hornbeam trees or a suitably high level alternative to be planted on the western boundary, to ensure that the proposed dwelling is suitably screened from neighbouring property and Parkfield Road.

Subject to this the development would accord with policy DC8.

Nature Conservation

The Nature Conservation Officer raises no objection to the demolition of this relatively modern bungalow and associated outbuildings, and the development is not considered to have any adverse impact on protected species, in accordance with Local Plan policy NE11.

Environmental Health

The Environmental Health Officer raises no objection to the development. There are not considered to be any issues regarding contaminated land on the site.

Archaeology

The development affects an area within Knutsford's Area of Archaeological Potential, as defined in the Local Plan of the former Macclesfield Borough Council. It is advised, from the Archaeology Officer however, that this particular application has no archaeological implications and no further mitigation is advised.

United Utilities

United Utilities do not object to the development, subject to informatives being attached relating to drainage.

CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR DECISION

To conclude, whilst the objections have been carefully considered, the proposed development is deemed to be in accordance with all relevant policies in the development plan and there are not considered to be any other material considerations that would carry sufficient weight to refuse the application. Therefore a recommendation of approval is made, subject to conditions.

Application for Full Planning

RECOMMENDATION: Approve subject to following conditions

1. A01GR - Removal of permitted development rights
2. A01LS - Landscaping - submission of details
3. A01TR - Tree retention
4. A03TR - Construction specification/method statement
5. A04LS - Landscaping (implementation)
6. A04TR - Tree pruning / felling specification
7. A06TR - Levels survey
8. A07GR - No windows to be inserted
9. A07TR - Service / drainage layout
10. A23GR -
11. Pile Driving
12. Pile Driving
13. A25GR - Obscure glazing requirement
14. A02CA - Demolition as precursor of redevelopment
15. A02TR - Tree protection
16. A03FP - Commencement of development (3 years)
17. A02AP - Detail on plan overridden by condition
18. A05EX - Details of materials to be submitted
19. Hours of construction
20. Informative
21. Contaminated Land

22. Drainage

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