

Application No: 16/2121M

Location: GUY SALMON KNUTSFORD, MANCHESTER ROAD, KNUTSFORD, WA16 0ST

Proposal: To update the appearance of the existing Land Rover and Rolls Royce Dealership to the current Land Rover corporate identity. - New 'Sunshine Grey' rain-screen cladding is to be applied to the front and side elevations. - The existing cladding to back of house areas is to be painted Silver RAL 9006. - Customer entrance door to be moved to front of building facing Manchester Road. - Existing Curtain walling to be replaced with structural glazing. - External surfacing to be amended.

Applicant: Mr John Buchan, Sytner Group

Expiry Date: 16-Sep-2016

Summary

The application site is Guy Salmon, Land Rover and Rolls Royce car showroom located off Manchester Road A50 in Knutsford.

The application proposes the modernisation of the existing garage and proposes no extensions to the building.

The proposed development is considered to be acceptable, the National Planning Policy Framework and emerging policy PG3 of the CELPS allow for alterations to buildings providing they maintain the openness of the Green Belt, it is considered therefore that this proposal is not inappropriate development and does not conflict with the purposes for including land within the Green Belt. It is considered that whilst proposed design modern it is not detrimental to the character of the area and is in accordance with policies BE1 of the MBLP and SE1 of the CELPS.

It is considered the proposed development is acceptable and accords with the Development Plan policies outlined in policies section of the report and the National Planning Policy Framework.

The application has been called in to committee by Councillor Hayley Wells-Bradshaw for the following reasons:

- Strong local resident concern regarding:
 - o Increase in traffic congestion on Mereheath Lane, as no additional on site parking proposed and more frequent use of the facility
 - o Impact of proposed new lighting on neighbour's and the environment
 - o Design suitability on a gateway road into the town centre of our 'Historic Market

- Town.'
- o Insufficient landscaping.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

The application site is Guy Salmon, Land Rover and Rolls Royce car showroom located off Manchester Road A50 in Knutsford. The site is located to the north of Knutsford outside of the town. The showroom and forecourt is existing and the whole site covers an area of 1.4ha. The site is rectangular in shape with the existing buildings located in the centre of the site. The site has two vehicular accesses, and there are large areas of hardstanding for car parking and large established areas of landscaping along the boundaries of the site. The site consists of one main showroom building with a smaller valet building and bin store to the rear of the site.

DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

The application proposes to re-clad the front and sides of the existing building to update and modernise its appearance. The building size will remain as existing, with existing roof plan, however in order to give the building a more contemporary appearance and bring it inline with the Jaguar Land Rover corporate brand, a modern palate of sunshine grey and silver metal rainscreen cladding will be used giving horizontal lines across the building. The building currently has gable features with a hipped roof. The proposals will give the front elevation the appearance of a flat roof, with the existing roofline behind. The glazing surrounds will be finished in Champagne Silver with clear glazing. The rear elevation will remain as existing. The cladding has a height of 7.2m, which sits below the full height of the building which reaches 8.1m.

The proposals, include partially reconfiguring the car parking and introduces a demonstration vehicle semi-circle area to the south of the site which is currently a turning area. The customer car parking will be to the north of the site. The compound will remain as existing - located to the southwest corner of the site. The landscaping will remain as existing.

The signage for the site will be dealt with as a separate advertisement consent application.

Relevant Planning History

10/2712M, extension to the land rover dealership on Manchester Road, Knutsford to accommodate Rolls Royce. The proposal includes; a new showroom extension of 143sqm to create an overall 400sqm showroom facility, associated offices & sales area, creation of external display & 2no customer parking bays & improvement to landscaping, Approved, 13/09/2010

10/3656M, 1 No Wall Mounted Dealer Sign, 1 No Rolls Royce Corporate Pylon & 1 No Fascia Sign, Approved, 22/11/2010

11/1768M, New signage, Approved, 20/07/2011

POLICIES

Para 215 of The Framework indicates that relevant policies in existing plans will be given weight according to their degree of consistency with The Framework.

Local Plan Policy

Macclesfield Borough Local Plan Saved Policies

GC1 New Buildings
BE1 Design Guidance
DC3 Amenity

Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy

PG3 Green Belt
EG1 Economic Prosperity
SE1 Design
SE2 Efficient use of land
SE3 Biodiversity and geodiversity
SE4 The landscape
SE5 Trees, Hedgerows, Woodland
SE6 Green Infrastructure

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraphs 80, 89, 109
186, 187 Decision taking
196, 197 Determining applications

Supporting Information

N/A

CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)

Environmental Health – No objections subject to informative (comments received 04/08/2016)

Knutsford Town Council – The Council STRONGLY OBJECTS on the grounds that the proposed changes are inappropriate for the Green Belt location on a prime entrance route into the Historic Market Town in the countryside by virtue of inappropriate design. The Council recommends a new scheme is developed to be more in keeping with the rural character of the area.

The Council notes that the application includes advertising and expects an Advertisement Consent application will also be required (comments received 22/08/2016)

Map Officer - It appears unlikely that the proposal would affect the public right of way, although the PROW Unit would expect the Development Management department to add an advice note to any planning consent to ensure that developers are aware of their obligations through an informative (received 11/08/2016)

Forestry – This application has no significant implications for existing protected trees within the site (received 23/08/2016)

REPRESENTATIONS

South East Knutsford Residents Group - On behalf of the South East Knutsford residents Association we object to the planning application on the grounds that the design of the building is not appropriate. The oblong grey clad characterless building looks like a warehouse that could be situated in the middle of an industrial area anywhere in the country. The proposed building is situated on the road leading in to the historic town of Knutsford and should be designed appropriately to fit in with the rural setting, neighbouring buildings, Green Belt and to be an asset to the area and to Knutsford itself. The present buildings on this site have some character that relates to neighbouring buildings and does not detract from the area.

South Knutsford Residents Group - South Knutsford Residents Group objects to this application because of the inappropriateness of the design for this northern gateway into the historic market town of Knutsford. The proposed design is too bleak and industrial for the building's setting in the Green Belt. The current buildings were approved because they complement Bluebell Farm and the sympathetically converted out-buildings, now the Brookdale Centre, on the opposite side of Manchester Rd A50. These adaptations too were specifically approved to respond to their setting in the Green Belt. The present showrooms and workshops use red brickwork and gabled facades to echo the building materials and pitched roofs of the domestic and vernacular architecture on this side of the town. The proposed grey glass and dreary other surface treatments create an industrial estate ambiance that is completely at odds with the semi-rural approach to this side of Knutsford. The proposal takes no account of Cheshire East Borough Design Guide 2016 which stresses throughout that buildings, domestic and for employment purposes, must respect a sense of place: "developments on the fringes of settlements are not appropriate justification for building more of the same 'anywhere vernacular'".

The documents on the website do not include a Design and Access Statement so no indication exists to show how the proposers have considered any of the above factors. It is not clear how the proposals were weighed in relation to MBC Saved Policies DC 1 and DC 2 where "development must normally be sympathetic to the character of the local environment, street scene, adjoining buildings and the site itself" and "respect the existing architectural features of the building". The open countryside views to and from Tatton Park are not mentioned. The proposers do not appear to have consulted anyone other than the Planning Department of Cheshire East. The Application Form is inaccurate in that it fails to acknowledge protected species in the pond in adjoining land to the south of the site.

SKRG urges the proposers to reconsider this application. The town attracts visitors and therefore potential customers because of its countryside setting. Visitors respond positively to the present buildings because they offer a modern interpretation that responds positively in mass and scale to the built environment elsewhere in the town. The present buildings stand out precisely because they are not the traditional oblong glass and steel boxes of car showrooms elsewhere. In these ways, they show the quality of the brand through the respect the brand shows for the sense of place they occupy (received 30/08/2016)

Nether Ward Community Group - Knutsford is a Historic Market Town set in the Green Belt and has a unique character. The gateways to the town contribute greatly to that character. Nether Ward Community Group (NWCG) note that the garage is on the immediate approach to the town and in the Green Belt.

The present design, including its brick construction, was specially negotiated to be appropriate to its location and Green Belt setting. The proposed solid grey cladding is not appropriate to the approaches to a Historic Town of special character, nor to the Green Belt setting. The material proposed is incompatible with both the Knutsford Design Guide and with the Cheshire East Borough Design Guide.

The current building is a single storey with a pitched roof, overall height 8m, again appropriate to its setting. The proposed vertical monotone wall extending from the ground to 7.2m, hiding the pitched roof to the front and (most of the) side elevations and giving the building a box-like appearance is not appropriate to a Historic Town of special character, nor to the Green Belt setting. Again, the shape of the proposed building is incompatible with the Design Guides.

Finally, this development should be subject to National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sections 7 and 9; particularly paragraphs 60, 61 and 80. No special circumstances have been demonstrated for allowing this development.(comments received 30/08/2016)

Neighbour Comments –

- Out of keeping with historical nature of the town
- Out of character with Green Belt setting
- The redesign and grey block cladding to this building would set a poor precedent and be a much poorer alternative to the current design, visual appearance and materials.

OFFICER APPRAISAL

- Principle of Development
- Design
- Highways Issues
- Conclusions

Principle of Development

The application proposes to re-clad and modernise the existing Guy Salmon showroom to the north of Knutsford along the A50 Manchester Road.

The site is located within the Green Belt where there is a presumption against inappropriate development. Policies GC1 of the Macclesfield Borough Local Plan, PG3 of the Cheshire East Local Plan and paragraph 89 of the NPPF set out the circumstances where development can be acceptable.

The MBLP policy GC1 is silent on the matters of extensions to buildings which are not dwellings, therefore we must defer to emerging policy PG3 of the CELPS and paragraph 89 of

the NPPF which state that extensions and alterations to buildings are an acceptable form of development providing they do not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building, thereby having a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the original building. The proposal put forward does slightly alter the external appearance of the building, however does not propose any extensions to the building. Therefore it is considered that the proposal does not conflict with the 5 purposes for including land within the Green Belt and does preserve openness, which is the main characteristic of Green Belts.

Therefore due to the nature of the proposal it is considered that this accords with Green Belt policy and is acceptable in principle.

Design

Objections have been raised in relation to the design of the proposed redesign. However, it is considered that the proposed design is appropriate in this location, the colour of the cladding and the horizontal lines proposed are clean, high quality and simplistic. The design is less cluttered than the existing with the continuous roofline and uses more contemporary materials. The landscaping will remain as existing and only slight changes to the configuration of the car parking will take place.

The site is a semi rural location on the outskirts of Knutsford, however this is an existing car showroom with existing car parking areas and main building, it is not considered that the recladding will detract from the rural setting, the building will continue to be set back and will remain a well landscaped site as none of the landscaping is proposed to be lost.

Whilst the concerns of the residents groups and the Town Council are noted, it is not considered that a refusal of the application on design grounds could be supported in this case. The site is not within a heritage designation such as a Conservation Area, and it is considered that the design does not detract from the rural character of the area, therefore the design accords with policy BE1 of the MBLP and SE1 of the CELPS.

Amenity

There are no greater impacts on residential amenity than the existing use, the recladding of the building and reconfiguration will not impact on neighbouring properties, and Environmental Health have raised no objections to the proposals. Should additional lighting be required details of this will be required by condition to be agreed in writing by the Council. It is therefore considered that the proposals accord with policies DC3 and DC38 of the MBLP.

Highways

The application retains existing access points and a large customer car parking area, therefore the proposal is acceptable in terms of highways implications.

Other Issues

Due to the proximity to trees around the boundaries of the site, the Council's arboricultural officer has commented on the application however raises no objections. The site is near to a

public footpath, however the map officer considers that the proposal will not affect the footpath.

CONCLUSIONS AND REASON(S) FOR THE DECISION

The proposed development is considered to be acceptable, the National Planning Policy Framework and emerging policy PG3 of the CELPS allow for alterations to buildings providing they maintain the openness of the Green Belt, it is considered therefore that this proposal is not inappropriate development and does not conflict with the purposes for including land within the Green Belt. It is considered that whilst proposed design modern it is not detrimental to the character of the area and is in accordance with policies BE1 of the MBLP and SE1 of the CELPS, and does not affect the character of Knutsford as an historic town.

It is considered the proposed development is acceptable and accords with the Development Plan policies outlined in policies section of the report and the National Planning Policy Framework.

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE subject to conditions

In order to give proper effect to the Committee's intentions and without changing the substances of the decision, authority is delegated to the Head of Planning (Regulation) in consultation with the Chairman (or in their absence Vice Chairman) of the Northern Planning Committee to correct any technical slip or omission in the wording of the resolution, including wording of conditions and reasons, between approval of the minutes and issue of the decision notice.

Application for Full Planning

RECOMMENDATION: Approve subject to following conditions

1. Commencement of development (3 years)
2. Development in accord with approved plans
3. Materials as application
4. Lighting details to be approved
5. Important informative
6. Important informative

