PLANNING AND
BUILDING CONTROL
30 APR 2012

peacock and smith
chartered town planners & development consultants

GLEESON HOMES AND REGENERATION

AMENDMENT OF CONDITION 8: BOUNDARY TREATMENT

PLANNING STATEMENT

APRIL 2012

Peacock & Smith Limited
Suite 9C
Joseph's Well
Hanover Walk
Leeds
LS3 1AB
T: 0113 243 1919
F: 0113 242 2198
E: planning@peacockandsmith.co.uk
www.peacockandsmith.co.uk

1. INTRODUCTION

1.01 Planning consent for 175 dwellings was granted on 22nd September 2011 on land bounded By Bell Crescent, Brennock Close, Charlesworth Street, Shefford Close and Windcroft Close, Bradford, Manchester, M11 3BA, application reference number 095667/FO/2011/N2.

1.02 Conditions were attached to the planning consent. Condition 8 concerns boundary treatment:

> ***"8) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any order revoking or re-enacting that Order with or without modification) and notwithstanding the details shown on the approved plans, no development works above ground shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council, as local planning authority, a plan indicating the positions, design, materials and type of boundary treatment to be erected. The boundary treatment shall be completed before any of the approved housing units are occupied. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and shall thereafter be retained.***
>
> ***Reason - To ensure that the appearance of the development is acceptable to the City Council as local planning authority in the interests of the visual amenity of the area within which the site is located, pursuant to Policies H2.2, and E3.5, of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester.***

1.03 This application seeks to amend condition 8 to require boundary treatments to be provided in line with the details shown on plans PL222, PL16, and SD107 as submitted with this application.

1.05 This report considers:

- The site and the proposals for the boundaries at Section 2;
- the relevant planning polices at Section 3;
- an analysis of the proposals in relation to the statutory development plan and other material considerations at Section 4;
- and makes a conclusion at Section 5.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSALS

2.01 The site is located to the East of Manchester City centre to the North of a development previously built by the applicant which is immediately North of the A635 Ashton Old Road.

2.02 The previous appropriately urban development by the applicant has three and four storey dwellings fronting onto the busy Ashton Old Road with generally two storey dwellings behind.

2.03 The two storey dwellings to the rear of the frontage dwellings are hard landscaped and are also urban in nature with very little evidence of green areas.

2.04 The subject site comprises a cleared housing site and the applicants' proposals for boundary treatment are to respect what has been previously constructed on the existing urban site and to introduce a more relaxed and greener environment to the subject site. This is totally appropriate as development moves away from the busy Ashton Old Road into a more sub-urban environment.

2.05 Consultations have taken place by the applicant with local residents and in particular with the local Residents Group who have expressed a strong desire for a move away from hand surfaces and towards a greener street scene.

2.06 The proposed boundary treatment exactly reflects the existing wall and railing structures at important junctions and corners and subtly devolves into hedging between. By adopting this approach the applicant maintains the street hierarchy and prevents pedestrians from cutting across private property while introducing the much needed and desirable green and soft treatment where it enhances the street scene.

2.07 The applicant proposes that the entrances to the three home zone areas have walls and fences in accordance with the above and once within the home zones the front boundaries devolve into hedging.

3. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

3.01 The UDP indicates that development should be of an appropriate character for the area. Two policies are cited in the condition:

> H2.2 The Council will not allow development which will have an unacceptable impact on residential areas. The matters which the Council will consider in coming to such decisions will include the scale and appearance of the development and its impact in terms of noise, vibration, traffic generation, road safety and air pollution.
> Objective: To maintain and where necessary improve the quality of the housing stock and residential environments.

> E3.5 The Council will promote measures which will lead to a safer environment for all people living in and using the City. These measures will include:-
> a) ensuring that the layout of new development is designed with safety in mind and does not lead to the creation of isolated areas;
> b) designing landscaping schemes so as to minimise the risk of attack;
> c) that community facilities are located where they are easy and safe to get to;
> d) providing safe places for children to play;
> e) improving road safety.
> Objective: To enhance the City's environment.

3.02 The Guide to Development in Manchester - Supplementary Planning Document and Planning Guidance (SPD) was officially adopted on 11 April 2007. This includes a relevant paragraph on boundary treatments in new developments:

> **Site boundaries and treatment should contribute to the street scene**
>
> The impact of site boundaries can be significant and must be taken into account and incorporated into the design of new developments and conversions from an early stage. Original examples that contribute to the character of the area should be retained. Well designed new treatments such as walls, low walls and railings or hedges and boundary trees, can maintain the enclosure of the street, reinforce the building line and contribute to the quality of the environment.

3.03 The emerging Core Strategy is at examination stage. The application site lies within the Central Arc area which is characterised by 1960's social housing estates and significant redevelopment opportunities (such as the application site). Policy EN1 requires that development should follow the seven principles of urban design set out at paragraph 12.6. These include 'Character: a place with its own identify; continuity and enclosure: a place where public and private places are clearly distinguished;

Legibility: a place that has a clear image and is easy to understand; and Diversity: a place with variety and choice'.

3.04 The text associated with the character area map (Paragraph 12.8) indicates that detailed guidance might be prepared for the character areas where required.

3.05 The recently published National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) indicates that development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved without delay, and where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, permission should be granted unless

> "any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or
> Specific polices in this Framework indicate development should be restricted"

3.06 The NPPF sets out Core planning principles at paragraph 17, and these include the requirement that high quality design should be achieved and that a good standard of amenity achieved. In addition to promoting housing development at as a priority, the NPPF stresses the importance of good design and suggests that it should "*contribute positively to making places better for people*".

3.07 Paragraph 59 warns of the danger of unnecessary prescription in design codes. Similarly, Paragraph 60 indicates that policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes upon a development, although local distinctiveness can be reinforced.

3.08 Paragraph 66 states:

> "Applicants will be expected to work closely with those directly affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Proposals that can demonstrate this in developing the design of the new development should be looked on more favourably.

4. ANALYSIS

4.01 The proposed boundary treatment respects the existing boundaries by introducing a combination of walls and railings on corners with hedges between. This provides a very clear definition on all properties between the public space of the street and the private space within the curtilage of the dwelling.

4.02 The provision of a mesh fence in accordance with good horticultural practice on the outside edge of the hedge planting will help the hedges to establish and form a secure boundary. The presence of this good standard of amenity green planting rather than hard landscaping will enhance the street scene and give residents a sense of place. It will also help to create a sense of movement throughout the site, with the walled corners signalling the presence of junctions.

4.03 The proposals are in accordance with UDP policy H2.2 in that they will have a positive impact upon the character of the residential area in which they are situated. The proposals will also not conflict with Policy E3.5 in that they will not result in a risk of attack.

4.04 In terms of the The Guide to Development in Manchester SPD, it is considered that the proposed boundary treatment will create a positive contribution to the street scene. The movement from the deliberately harsh urban character of the previous site to a softer and greener character is desirable and welcomed by residents.

4.05 It is considered that the proposals contribute towards creating a development with its own character, where the public and private space is clearly delineated. The use of walls on the corners will help to create a legible area and the inclusion of hedges will create a variety across the development. This is in accordance with Policy EN1 of the emerging Core Strategy.

4.06 It is also considered that the proposals are in accordance with the design policies of the NPPF. In particular, the consultation with the nearby residents group and specific request for inclusion of green boundary treatments in the design has been taken on-board in the design of the proposals.

4.07 It is therefore concluded that the proposals offer an appropriate design of boundary treatment for this site and the application should be permitted.

5. CONCLUSIONS

5.01 The proposals offer an attractive and practical solution to the boundary treatment of the site. Inclusion of the hedging rather than a purely hard-landscaped boundary will bring a softer element into the street scene, improve biodiversity and help to meet the identified aims of the local residents group.

5.02 The recently published National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) indicates that development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved without delay, and where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, permission should be granted unless

> "any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or
> Specific polices in this Framework indicate development should be restricted"

5.03 There are no policies in the framework that suggest that development should be restricted. There are no adverse impacts of the proposed boundary treatment. Furthermore, it has been shown that the proposals accord with Development Plan policies.

5.04 It is therefore requested that the proposed amendment to the condition to allow boundary treatments in accordance with plan PL222 and associated specification plans SD107 and PL16 be permitted.