DELEGATED REPORT

Application Number	**21/1049M**
Proposal	**Demolition of existing detached building (2 apartments) and erection of a new detached dwelling**
Location	**Coach House, 23, HAWTHORN GROVE, WILMSLOW, CHESHIRE, SK9 5DE**
LDFC	**05-Jun-2021**
Expiry Date	**03-Nov-2021**
Constraints	**Macclesfield Local Plan Boundary** **Conservation Area** **Predominantly Residential**

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

The application relates to 23 Hawthorn Grove (also known as 'Coach House'), a detached building containing two flats, located within a predominantly residential area of Wilmslow, and also within the boundary of the Hawthorn Lane (Wilmslow) Conservation Area. The site is accessed from the extreme end of Hawthorn Grove.

The site has extant planning permission for its conversion from two apartments into one single dwelling unit along with alterations and extensions to the existing building (LPA ref: 18/0057M).

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

The application proposes the demolition of the existing Coach House building followed by the construction of a new detached dwellinghouse. The proposed dwellinghouse would be two-storeys in height and would provide four bedrooms.

RELEVANT POLICIES

Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (CELPS)
PG 2 Settlement Hierarchy
MP 1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
SD 1 Sustainable Development in Cheshire East
SD 2 Sustainable Development Principles
SE 1 Design
SE 3 Biodiversity and Geodiversity
SE 5 Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland
SE 7 The Historic Environment
Appendix C Parking Standards

Saved Macclesfield Borough Local Plan Policies (MBLP)
DC3 Design – Amenity
DC6 Circulation and Access
DC38 Residential - Space, Light and Privacy

Wilmslow Neighbourhood Plan (WNP)
LSP1 Sustainable Construction
LSP2 Sustainable Spaces
LSP3 Sustainable Transport
NE5 Biodiversity Conservation

NE6 Development in Gardens
TH3 Heritage Assets
TA1 Residential Parking Standards
H2 Housing Design
H3 Housing Mix

Other Material Considerations
National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

19/0119M – positive certificate – February 2019
Lawful Development Certificate for a Proposed Use/Development – Amalgamation of 2 no. flats into 1 no. dwellinghouse

18/0057M – appeal allowed – April 2019
Conversion of existing coach house with 2 x 1-bed apartments into 3-bed dwelling with associated remodelling and extension

60248P – approved – October 1989
Change of use of coach house stable and tack room to two single bedroom apartments

CONSULTATION

Environmental Protection (CEC):
- No objection, subject to conditions and informatives
- Recommended electric vehicle charging and ultra-low emission boiler conditions in the interests of local air quality
- Recommended conditions relating to land contamination

Highways (CEC):
- No objection
- Use of existing access is acceptable
- Sufficient car parking space provided
- No material impact on the highway network

United Utilities:
- The site should be drained on a separate system with foul water draining to the public sewer and surface water draining in the most sustainable way
- Request conditions relating to drainage to reflect the above approach

COMMENTS FROM PARISH / TOWN COUNCIL / NEIGHBOURS

Wilmslow Town Council:
- "No objections"
- "Would request a Condition be included that construction vehicles must be contained within the site to reflect the cramped nature of the site access and the impact on nearby residents if construction vehicles are not contained within the site"

Comments were received from the occupiers of two nearby properties, making the following general observations:
- Prefer this proposal over approved application 19/4199M

- Request a hedge or fence along the boundary where the existing building sits
- Proposed building would be better suited in the centre of the site
- Request condition of no parking on Hawthorn Grove unless loading/unloading materials
- Vans, lorries, etc may cause access issues to residents on Hawthorn Grove
- No site notice put up
- Built Heritage no consulted
- Development would impede on the Conservation Area by removing the low density and feeling of spaciousness
- Views of the Conservation Area from Hawthorn Grove will be negatively affected
- Backland development undermines local character

SITE VISIT

A site visit was carried out by the case officer on during the consideration of previous applications at the same address.

OFFICER APPRAISAL

Principle of Development

The application site lies within a predominately residential area of Wilmslow. CELPS policy PG 2 identifies Wilmslow as a Key Service Centre. This policy supports development of a scale, location and nature that recognises and reinforces the distinctiveness of the individual towns.

The principle of residential development in this location is acceptable, subject to compliance with the relevant policies of the adopted development plan.

Character, Appearance and Heritage

Between them, policies SE 1, SD 2 and H2 seek to ensure that development proposals make a positive contribution to the character and identity of an area. Amongst other matters, design solutions should achieve a sense of place by protecting and enhancing the quality, distinctiveness and character of settlements. It also seeks to ensure sensitivity of design in proximity to designated and local heritage assets and their settings.

The site is also located within the Hawthorn Lane (Wilmslow) Conservation Area and therefore policies SE 7 and TH3 are of relevance for the assessment of the proposed development. These polices seeks to ensure that development does not adversely affect designated or non-designated heritage assets.

The application proposes the demolition of the existing building, and its loss is a material consideration. The existing building itself is not considered to be a non-designated heritage asset or locally listed. It does however lie within the setting of a building of local interest, 26 Hawthorn Lane. The Coach House has been the subject of a number of modifications and the allowed appeal scheme has granted consent for further significant changes to the property. Its own interest lies largely with its connection to 26 Hawthorn Lane, but as the Inspector identified in the allowed appeal, this connection has been altered. Overall, the loss of the existing building would not be detrimental to the setting of the Conservation Area.

In terms of the replacement building, it has been designed to respect the character and appearance of the larger villa through materials and form. The building is set down from Hawthorn Lane into its garden due to the steep site topography. Due to this lower level, it is therefore considered that the new dwelling would not cause harm to the setting of 26 Hawthorn Lane or the wider Conservation Area and that it's an acceptable replacement for the existing structure in heritage and design terms.

The building itself would be positioned to the centre of the site, as opposed to the existing Coach House which sits directly adjoining the eastern boundary. Sufficient space would remain around the dwellinghouse to avoid a cramped appearance which would otherwise be at odds with the spacious character of the site.

Considering the scale of the proposed dwellinghouse, it would not be too dissimilar to that of the extant approval for extensions and alterations to the existing Coach House. The proposal would sit at a lower height relative to this approval due to the way in which the dwelling would be 'sunken' into the ground, and is considered to reduce its visual prominence as a result.

The Heritage Conservation Officer has been involved in pre-application discussions prior to the submission of this application and has reviewed the submitted scheme. They are satisfied that the proposal would accord with relevant policies, and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area will be preserved and enhanced.

To ensure a high-quality design is delivered, conditions are recommended for the submission and approval of full details of openings, and a sample panel of brickwork to be provided for approval.

Amenity

Development proposals should ensure they do not cause significant injury to the amenities of nearby residential properties through loss of privacy, loss of light and overbearing impacts for the proposal to be in accordance with saved policy DC3.

The nearest neighbour to the application site is 21 Hawthorn Grove, found to the east of the proposal. The proposed dwellinghouse would be set further away from the shared boundary with this nearest neighbour that the existing Coach House, and would be of a lower maximum height. Accordingly, the amenity impact when considering availability of daylight, shadowing and overbearing effects is considered to be an improvement over and above the existing relationship.

Along the eastern elevation of the proposed dwellinghouse, three first floor windows are proposed which would provide a direct outlook down into the rear garden of 21 Hawthorn Grove. An condition requiring these windows to be obscure glazed is recommended, to protect the privacy currently enjoyed by the occupants of this nearest neighbour. The obscure glazing would not detrimentally impact the living conditions within the proposed dwelling as they are all 'secondary windows', either serving non-habitable rooms (landing), or rooms which are served by other principal windows.

Separation distances from the proposed dwellinghouse to the nearest properties to the front, rear and west side elevation are satisfactory and would not result in any undue overlooking or loss of privacy.

Highways and Parking

The application has been reviewed by Cheshire East Highways. A summary of their assessment is provided below.

The proposal is for a replacement dwelling; therefore, there are no grounds for refusal based on sustainability.

The existing site access has good visibility for drivers of vehicles emerging from and approaching the site access along Hawthorn Grove. its continued use to serve the replacement dwelling is acceptable.

There is sufficient space set aside within the site for off-street car parking provision to be in accordance with CEC parking standards.

The commuter peak hour and daily traffic generation associated with a replacement dwelling would not have a material impact on the safe operation of the adjacent or wider highway network.

Overall, the Head of Strategic Transport has no objection to the planning application.

Trees

The application is supported by an Arboricultural Method Statement which includes a Tree Survey and a Tree Protection Plan. The report identifies that the proposed development would not have any direct impact on existing trees on the site.

The Forestry Officer has reviewed the submitted details and confirms that the tree protection and construction methods are acceptable, therefore a condition is recommended to ensure development is carried out in accordance with these details. The Forestry Officer is also satisfied that the proposed drainage infrastructure associated with the development would not detrimentally impact the rooting environment of the retained trees.

Nature Conservation

A bat survey was carried out and the findings submitted during the course of the application. The submitted report identified no evidence of roosting bats. The Nature Conservation Officer has reviewed the submitted survey and advises that roosting bats are not reasonably likely to be present or affected by the proposal.

The Nature Conservation Officer has also advised that a scheme to provide features for nesting birds and roosting bats should be provided to enhance the biodiversity value of the development. The applicant has submitted proposals for the incorporation of features for nesting birds and roosting bats which is considered to be acceptable. A condition is recommended to ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the submitted scheme.

Air Quality

The proposal is for the demolition of an existing building to be replaced with a new dwelling. Whilst this scheme itself is of a small scale, and as such would not require an air quality impact assessment, there is a need for the Local Planning Authority to consider the cumulative impact of a large number of developments in a particular area. In particular, the impact of transport related emissions on Local Air Quality.

Modern Ultra Low Emission Vehicle technology (such as all electric vehicles) are expected to increase in use over the coming years (the Government expects most new vehicles in the UK will be ultra-low emission). As such it is considered appropriate to create infrastructure to allow home charging of electric vehicles in new, modern, sustainable properties. Accordingly, Environmental Health Officers have recommended a condition requiring full details of electric car charging infrastructure to be installed at the dwellinghouse in accordance with paragraph 112(e) of the NPPF.

A further condition recommending the installation of an ultra-low emission boiler has also been recommended by the Environmental Health Officers; however, it is not considered this condition would be readily enforceable and therefore fails to meet all six tests required for a planning condition.

Contamination

The application is for a proposed use that would be particularly vulnerable to the presence of contamination. Residential properties are a sensitive end use and could be affected by any contamination present or brought onto the site.

Conditions have been recommended by Environmental Protection Officers relating to the importation of soils onto the site, and the possible discovery of contamination during construction works.

Drainage

United Utilities have reviewed the details of the proposed development and state that the site should be drained on a separate system with foul water draining to the public sewer and surface water draining in the most sustainable way in accordance with the NPPF and NPPG. Specific conditions have therefore been recommended to reflect this approach.

Without effective management and maintenance, sustainable drainage systems can fail or become ineffective. United Utilities advise the Local Planning Authority of this potential risk to ensure the longevity of the surface water drainage system and the service it provides to people. United Utilities also wish to minimise the risk of a sustainable drainage system having a detrimental impact on the public sewer network, should the two systems interact. It is therefore recommended that a condition is also included regarding a management and maintenance regime for any sustainable drainage system that is included as part of the proposed development.

Other Matters

Requests have been made by Wilmslow Town Council and neighbours, for a condition to be included regarding controlling parking on Hawthorn Grove. In this instance, a condition would not be appropriate. The local highway network in the immediate locality is already controlled by parking restrictions. Any breach of those existing controls, or obstructions to the public highway during the construction period should be reported to the relevant authorities.

Concerns were raised that a site notice was not displayed. A notice was displayed on public view adjacent to the site and the consultation period opened for three weeks. The occupiers of adjoining properties were also notified of the proposed development via post.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

The proposed works are acceptable in principle and would accord with the relevant policies of the development plan. The application for planning permission is recommended for approval, subject to conditions.

Recommendation: **Approve subject to conditions**

Case officer: Thomas Higton

Date: 02-Nov-2021

