

Design and access statement in relation to proposed demolition of number 2 War Office Road and the construction of three detached houses – revised proposal following refusal planning ref:22/01175/FUL.

2 War Office Road,

Rochdale,

OL11 5HR.

Context;

A.J.Cocker Associates have been instructed to prepare a revised planning application for the demolition of the existing bungalow and the construction of three houses on the site.

The site currently comprises a detached bungalow in a large plot on the corner of War Office Road and Bury Road. The existing property is currently accessed directly from War Office Road which serves a driveway and circulation area to the west of the current bungalow. The site is currently bounded by adopted roads to the north, south and west and residential properties, and gardens to the east. Surrounding properties are a mix of bungalows, dormer bungalows and traditional semidetached houses. The topography of the area means that there are some marked differences in level between properties at the western end of Arnside Drive.

Comments in response to the pre-application submission, reference PREAPP/00019/21, were considered when preparing the original submission. The pre-application submission was for a development of four houses and the officers' main concerns were that this number of houses would constitute an over development of the site. These proposals were revised and submitted as a full planning application, under planning reference 22/01175/FUL, for a development of three properties, thereby removing the perception of overdevelopment. During consideration of this submission discussions took place with the planning officer resulting in comprehensive revisions being made to the scheme in terms of design and massing of the development. These revisions resulted in a scheme which was supported by the planning officer and recommended for approval at committee level. However, concerns raised by neighbouring residents regarding the effect the scheme would have on their property, despite the proposals complying with the council's planning policy separation distances, resulted in a refusal by committee.

On June 6th, 2023, following refusal, the applicant and their agent met with the planning officer who dealt with the original application. It was felt that if revisions could be made to the scheme to address the issues raised at committee and the reasons given for the refusal then the council would support a revised scheme subject to technical consultations.

One of the local Ward Councillors kindly offered assistance in mediating between the applicant and objector and during the following 2/3 weeks a number of meetings took place between the applicant, the Councillor and the objector which has resulted in revisions being made to the original proposals. Initially the first floor was reduced in depth to reduce any perceived overshadowing to neighbouring gardens. To compensate for the reduced floor area, rooms in the roof proposed resulting in a gabled property. Unfortunately, the perceived impact of the gable wall was greater on the neighbouring property and the scheme was revised to a low hipped roof, incorporating the reduced depth first floor, and plots 2 and 3 relocated towards Arnside Drive. A minor enlargement to the footprint at the front of the properties enabled reasonable internal arrangements to be maintained within the two-storey property.

The relocation of plots 2&3 results in the rear wall of the proposed properties being in-line with the rear wall of number 2 Arnside Drive. This, along with the level of plots 2&3 being some 1.2 – 1.5m

below the level of the adjoining property, results in a significant reduction in the perceived impact the development might have on the garden area of number 2 Arnside Drive.

In addition, the applicant met with the neighbour on site to clarify the relationship between the proposed properties and number 2 Arnside Drive as the neighbour was under the misapprehension that the plots were closer to his boundary than were actually proposed.

Revisions agreed during the meetings which have taken place have addressed the concerns raised by the objector which is evidenced by the fact that no objections have been received by the council to the current submission. The final revisions which have taken place are briefly outlined in the following 'proposal' section.

Proposal;

The proposal is to demolish the existing bungalow and construct one detached house and two semidetached houses, three in total on the site. The properties will provide four-bedroom accommodation. The proposed buildings comprise what might be termed a contemporary design in terms of their appearance, incorporating brickwork detailing, and windows proportioned to reflect the brick detailing and provide elements of verticality to the facades. These details, and the form and massing of the properties, have been the result of careful consideration of the scheme by the planning officer who has provided the opportunity to work closely to present a scheme which can be supported at officer level. Brickwork will be used as a facing material for the external walls subject to local authority consent. Roofs will be finished in interlocking concrete roof tiles, again to local authority approval. Therefore, the proposal preserves the general nature of the built environment using masonry construction and modern roofing materials.

The buildings are positioned on the site to respect Local Authority standards in terms of overlooking distances from adjoining buildings around the site whilst reflecting the general density of existing developments in the area, therefore preserve the general nature of the immediate built environment. Revisions have been incorporated into the current scheme to address specific concerns raised by neighbouring properties. These revisions relate specifically to the semidetached properties and include: -

- Reduction of the semidetached properties at first floor level to reduce the length of the gable wall adjacent the adjoining property. This revision reduces the ridge height slightly when compared to the previous proposals and therefore reduces the impact of the roof on the adjoining property.
- Formation of a single storey portion at ground floor, within the footprint of the previous proposal, which is less intrusive on the adjoining property.
- A repositioning of the units towards Arnside Drive to further reduce the impact of the development on the rear of the adjoining property.

Pedestrian access to the building entrances will be via separate footpaths and driveways and the site levels indicate stepped or ramped access in accordance with current disabled access regulations will be achievable. Pedestrian and vehicular access to the proposed houses will be taken from Arnside Drive.

The development provides two car parking spaces per dwelling which meets the Council's parking standards. The proposal is to reconstruct the footway on Arnside Drive to accommodate the new access crossings. Driveway access to plot 1 is located some 10m from the junction of Arnside Drive and War Office Road which is in accordance with Highways Guidance. In addition, each driveway will be provided with pedestrian visibility splays in accordance with the Highways Department's requirements. There will be no conflict with existing driveways on the opposite side of Arnside Drive.

as the first property served by a driveway directly off Arnside Drive is beyond the boundary of the development site. We understand from the councils Highways Department that there are existing waiting restriction at the junction which should stop any overspill on street parking.

The formation of access drives off Arnside Drive will improve road safety by the natural prevention of sporadic car parking along this section of Arnside Drive close to the junction with War Office Road. The removal and permanent blocking up of the existing vehicle access onto War Office Road will further improve road safety at this junction. The work to the footway along Arnside Drive and War Office Road will be carried out under RMBC Highways Department consent and to their specification.

Driveways and parking areas are to be SUDs compliant and subject to drainage engineer design and details. Therefore, we feel there would be no detrimental impact on road safety or highway capacity as a result of the development and we understand that Highway Officers are happy to support this proposal based on the above and the development plans.

Private garden areas will be provided to the rear of the properties where existing boundary walls and mature hedging will be retained, with hedging extended to screen the rear of the property closest to War Office Road. Trees along the boundaries of the site would be retained wherever possible. This will preserve the appearance of the site from both Bury Road and War Office Road. In addition, inside the existing hedge a margin of pleached tree planting is proposed. This will add height to the existing hedge whilst maintaining the soft, green aspect of the boundary and providing adequate screening to the rear garden areas of the proposed dwellings.

The following text comprises a Design and Access Statement to comply with relevant local authority requirements.

DESIGN;

Quantity.

The proposal involves the development of three dwellings. The proposed dwellings are comparative with surrounding properties in terms of scale and mass and will be constructed in materials which match adjoining houses. Parking spaces will be provided in accordance with current council policy. Parking spaces will be accessed from Arnside Drive along with pedestrian access to the proposed properties.

Layout.

The scheme has been designed, and incorporates revisions, to maximise the development potential whilst protecting the privacy of the occupants of neighbouring properties. The proposal takes account of the differing levels across the site by the incorporation of retaining structures within the fabric of the proposed dwellings and external retaining walls where indicated. Retaining walls will be faced in materials which match the external walls of the proposed houses.

Scale.

The proposed houses respect their surroundings, in terms of scale and mass, whilst reflecting and taking account of the topography of the site. Separation distances, both within the development and to surrounding houses, follow the council's current policy in terms of separation distances. These separation distances have been further enhanced by the revisions presented in the current proposals.

Appearance.

The proposed materials used in the construction of the dwellings are what might be termed 'traditional', facing brickwork and interlocking tiles. Adopting this approach, along with contemporary

detailing and design features means that the proposed dwellings are considered sympathetic to their residential setting whilst adding architectural interest to a prominent site in the area.

ACCESS;

The site is currently accessed by vehicles and pedestrians at the corner of War Office Road and Arnside Drive. The proposal is to access the proposed properties directly from Arnside Drive, for both vehicles and pedestrians and site levels suggest that ramped access in accordance with current Building Regulations will be achievable. Level access will be provided at the main entrance doors to the properties therefore the design will make it suitable for people of varying levels of mobility in accordance with current Building Regulations.

Summary;

This proposal provides benefits in terms of providing additional residential accommodation on a previously developed site, increasing housing provision and providing the type of accommodation desirable in the borough and appropriate to the area in which the site is situated. The current proposals reflect revisions discussed and agreed with the planning officer during the previous planning submission. In addition, revisions have now been incorporated to address the concerns raised in relation to the previous submission and the effect it might have on neighbouring properties.

We would therefore hope that the council would feel it appropriate to support this revised proposal.

Prepared by;

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