

TWC/2015/0192

Site of Windhover, Buildwas Lane, Little Wenlock, Telford, Shropshire  
Erection of 1no. detached dwelling with associated access and landscaping

**APPLICANT**

M Miller

**RECEIVED**

10/03/2015

**PARISH**

Little Wenlock

**WARD**

Wrockwardine

**OFFICER** Ian Lowe

**OBJECTIONS RECEIVED: Yes**

**LITTLE WENLOCK PARISH COUNCIL HAVE REQUESTED THAT THIS APPLICATION BE DETERMINED AT PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**1. THE PROPOSAL**

- 1.1 This application seeks full planning consent for the erection of a single dwelling house on land adjacent to Windhover, with associated parking and landscaping. The proposed residence would be subdivided from the main house which is being sold separately, and would provide accommodation for the applicant and due to disability, their carer. The development would allow the applicant to continue to tend to the equestrian property which includes stables, arena and approximately 15 acres of pasture land.
- 1.2 The proposed dwelling would be single storey and built as an eco-home. External features include a sedum roof and solar panels and it is proposed to use an air source heat pump and wood burning stoves. The walls of the building would be constructed with red cedar wood cladding and windows are to be constructed in either hardwood or timber aluminium composite. The development is sited to the south east of Windhover and immediately south of the existing stable buildings. A parking area would be created to the front of the building with new access from the highway along a driveway approximately 42m in length. To the rear, an existing garden area would be landscaped including the use of an existing pond to the south east of the building. The proposed dwelling would measure approximately 25m wide and 8m deep with a maximum height of 3.6m.
- 1.3 Following officer concerns in respect of the design and appearance of the proposed development, amended plans have been received from a new agent. Although the layout remains similar, the new plans show more detail and improved design features such as deep overhangs and window layouts.

- 1.4 The application is accompanied by a design and access statement, planning statement, ecology report, coal mining risk assessment and tree report.

## **2. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

- 2.1 The application site is located within the rural village of Little Wenlock which is approximately 4miles west of Telford Town Centre and around 1.2miles west of the built up area of Telford and Wrekin. The village is also visible from The Wrekin which is located nearby to the west.
- 2.2 The village contains a village hall, church (St. Lawrence C of E) and a public house (The Huntsman). There is no shop, school or post office. Dwellings in the village vary between historic listed properties to more modern dwellings of both two storey and single storey designs. The village is surrounded by open countryside with land sloping away gradually towards the southern end of the village providing open views in this direction.
- 2.3 The application site is located at the southern tip of the village and within the existing boundary of Windhover. Located to the east of Buildwas Lane, Windhover is a two storey dwelling sited close to the highway with stables sited immediately to the south east. Paddocks are located to the east of the stable and a path leads to a manège further to the south and immediately adjacent to the highway. A pond is located in the vicinity of the proposed site and to the south of this is a group of mature trees. Although the land relating to the application site is fairly level, it slopes away to the south and east with prominent views towards the Severn Gorge.

## **3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 3.1 09/05/2003 – W2003/0221 – Erection of a Detached Two Bedroomed ‘Eco’ Dwelling – Full Refused. Appeal Dismissed 10/02/2004

## **4. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT**

- 4.1 National Planning Guidance:  
National Planning Policy Framework
- 4.2 Wrekin Local Plan:  
UD2 Design Criteria  
OL11 Woodland and Trees
- 4.3 Core Strategy:  
CS1 Homes  
CS7 Rural Area  
CS12 Natural Environment

## **5. SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

### Standard Consultee Responses

- 5.1 Little Wenlock Parish Council: Object on grounds that the proposed dwelling would be contrary to the Parish Plan as it would involve an unwanted extension to the village, that it would not be integrated into the village and that it would not reinforce local character through scale and design. Also consider that it would be contrary to national planning guidance and local guidance including CS1, CS7 of the Core Strategy and OL7 of the Wrekin Local Plan. These objections have not altered following consultation on amended plans.
- 5.2 Mark Pritchard MP: Objection on grounds that the development would be out of character with other properties within the area and that the proposed property would be built outside the existing boundaries of the Little Wenlock settlement, in open countryside. Concerned that this may set a precedent for similar development.
- 5.3 Arboriculture: No objection
- 5.4 Highways: Support subject to conditions relating to parking and turning, visibility splays and hard surfacing.
- 5.5 Ecology: Support subject to conditions for the erection of bird/bat boxes and submission of a lighting plan together with informatives setting out the legislation applying to the protection of bats and the approach that should be taken during the construction works relating to nesting wild birds, the storage of materials to prevent usage as refuges by wildlife, and the timely provision of trenches and open pipework to ensure that no animal is trapped.
- 5.6 Drainage: Support subject to conditions relating to suitable soakaways.
- 5.7 The Coal Authority: No objection

### Neighbours and local groups

- 5.8 Neighbouring occupiers have been consulted on both the original submission and on amended plans and a total of 2 objections have been received on grounds that the scale and appearance, notably the use of timber cladding, would be out of character with other properties within the village, and that the development would create an unsuitable form of development in open countryside contrary to development plan policies.

## 6. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 Having regard to the development plan policy and other material considerations including comments received during the consultation process, the planning application raises the following main issues:

- The principle of a new dwelling on this site
- Design of development including the impact on the character and appearance of the area
- Impact upon neighbouring occupiers
- The technical implications of development including access and parking, drainage trees and ecology

### **Principle of Dwelling**

6.2 In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, March 2012), Telford & Wrekin Council is required to identify a supply of housing land deliverable over the next five years to meet its housing requirement. When this application was originally validated (March 10<sup>th</sup> 2015), Telford and Wrekin was publishing a shortfall (2.5 years supply). However, on March 20<sup>th</sup> and following the submission of this application, Telford and Wrekin announced that a 5 year housing supply could now be achieved following an assessment carried out by consultants Peter Bret Associates. Although the presence of a 5 year housing supply does not determine whether a planning application should be approved or refused, it does mean that the council's policies in reference to the location of new housing (CS7) can be more rigidly applied. In this example, the development site is proposed within a rural location on the edge of Little Wenlock Village.

6.3 Policy CS7 states that development within the rural area will be limited to that necessary to meet the needs of the area and will be focussed on the settlement of High Ercall, Tibberton and Waters Upton. Outside of these settlements development will be limited and within the open countryside strictly controlled. The application site is within the village of Little Wenlock and therefore the application must be considered as a departure to the development plan for Telford and Wrekin.

6.4 In paragraph 49 of the NPPF, it states that applications for housing should be 'considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development'. Furthermore it encourages Local Planning Authority's to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes identifying the size, type and range of housing that is required in particular locations. The guidance seeks the development of brownfield land first and gives weight to strong designs; advising LPA's to refuse development of poor design which fails to take the

opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

- 6.5 Paragraph 55 of the NPPF suggests that in order to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should avoid being isolated and should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. In this instance, close to other residential property, officers do not consider the development is isolated although it is acknowledged that the development would be an extension to the south of village. It is considered that the development accords with the special circumstances set out in para.55 including the essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work and that the design is of an innovative nature with the potential to offer significant sustainability credentials.
- 6.6 Officers recognise that in the circumstances of this application, the applicant is required to sell the main house following divorce. However, in order to maintain the equestrian activities on the site they would need to remain in this location. In doing so they have sought to create a property that has minimal visual impact as possible upon the surrounding area, whilst also attempting to propose a high quality design with the addition of eco-friendly energy alternatives. In consideration of the policies outlined above, Officers consider that it would be the type of limited development envisaged by policy CS7 and would allow the rural equestrian activities to be retained. Furthermore, the design and eco standards of the dwelling meet the criteria and principles set out in para.55 of the NPPF. The principle of development in this location is therefore considered acceptable.

**Design of development including the impact on the character and appearance of the area**

- 6.7 The design of the proposed development and in particular the use of cedar wood cladding has been raised as a significant concern by the Parish Council and local residents. It is suggested that its design and appearance would adversely affect the appearance of the village whereby other dwellings with the village are mainly constructed with brick or render.
- 6.8 The amended plans submitted demonstrate improved architectural features and door/window layouts after Officers originally raised concerns about the design of the development. Officers consider that the design of the amended development is well thought out and that the proposed materials, including green sedum roof and wooden cladding, would help it to blend naturally into the rural environment, softening its overall impact. The single storey design with a shallow roof pitch also further reduces any impact. Whilst there are no similarly designed properties within the village, the contemporary design

which incorporates sustainable eco features is not considered harmful to the visual appearance of the area.

- 6.9 Further to the above, the maximum height of the proposed dwelling would be below 4m with a shallow green roof design; therefore the new dwelling would not be highly visible from the highway or wider area. As the property is well set back within the site, the development would also be screened by existing vegetation and boundary treatment (further planting to be conditioned through landscaping condition). Officers also note that the scale of the development integrates well with the adjacent stable buildings which are built to a similar height and also constructed in timber.
- 6.10 Notwithstanding the objections received, Officers therefore consider that the development is well designed and respects and integrates with the wider landscape setting and topography. Furthermore, it utilises the outlook from the site without adversely affected the character and appearance of the local area. There is no established house design within the village and there are other single storey bungalows along Clee Rise within close proximity to the application site. In this instance, Officers do not consider that there are sustainable reasons to warrant refusal of the application based upon its design, appearance or its impact upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The development therefore accords with the principles contained within UD2 (Design Criteria) of the Wrekin Local Plan and CS15 of the Core Strategy.
- 6.11 Materials are of significant importance and in order to ensure that the development is built to a high quality, a condition requesting samples of all materials to be used in the construction of the building is attached. In addition, conditions for further details of windows and doors to be used and a landscaping plan are also attached. The landscaping plan should provide details of suitable boundary treatment and additional planting.

#### **Impact upon neighbouring occupiers**

- 6.12 The proposed dwelling would be sited approximately 30m from the side elevation of Windhover which is the nearest residential dwelling. As such, the development would not adversely affect light or privacy to neighbouring occupiers.

#### **The technical implications of development including access and parking, drainage, ecology**

- 6.13 A new access is proposed from the highway creating a gap in the existing hedgerow and which will lead to a parking area to the front of the new

dwelling. There have been no objections from the Highway Officer in this instance subject to conditions ensuring that the dwelling is not used until parking and turning has been properly laid out and drained and that a suitable visibility splay is created at the new access. Officers concur with these views and agree that there are no highway implications.

6.14 The Drainage Officer also raises no objection to this development subject to a condition for a soakaway test to be carried out with details on the location of the soakaway submitted prior to the commencement of the development. It is proposed to dispose of foul sewage into the existing mains sewer.

6.15 An extended phase 1 habitat survey was carried out and report submitted as part of this application. The Ecology Officer raises no objections and recommends conditions for the erection of bat and bird boxes and a suitable lighting scheme.

## **7. CONCLUSIONS**

7.1 The proposed site does not sit within one of the three service centres defined in CS7 as the focus for development in the rural area over the plan period, thus falling within the realms of limited development imposed by this policy, and its consideration under para. 55 of the NPPF. In this case, it is found that there is a local defined need for the applicant to remain in this location in order to attend to the existing equestrian use of the site and the upkeep of the existing farm buildings. Furthermore, the special design of the development which includes some eco credentials is commendable; the shallow roof design limiting the impact upon the visual character of the surrounding area. As a result, Officers consider that there would be no sustainable reasons to warrant refusal of the application and the proposal is duly presented to Members of Planning Committee for approval.

## **8. RECOMMENDATION**

Based on the conclusions above, it is recommended that the Committee **GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION** subject to the following conditions:

1. A04 Time Limit - Full
2. B017 Samples of materials
3. B019 Details of windows and doors
4. B079 Surface water – Soakaways
5. B121 Landscaping Design
6. C013 Parking and Turning
7. C014 Visibility Splay
8. C020 Driveway Details

9. C109 Ecology – Lighting Plan
10. C109 Ecology – Erection of artificial nesting / roosting boxes
11. C38 Development in accordance with deposited plans
12. D01 Removal of Permitted Development Rights

Informatives

I11 Highways

I35 Ecology Informatives

I40 Conditions

I41 Reasons for Grant

RANPPF2 Approval Following Amendments