2020/0551

Applicant: Mr Darren Hewitt-Craft

Description: Erection of 6 no. dwellings including associated access and parking

Knowles Quarry Site adjacent 80 Barnsley Road, Cudworth, Barnsley

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Site Description

The site is a former quarry face prominently located at the southwestern 'gateway' into Cudworth; on the left side of the main Barnsley Road, when entering Cudworth from Barnsley. Opposite the site is a recreation ground with play area and sports pitch. To the northeast, the site adjoins terraced houses, to the southwest is a field and farm. To the northwest, the top of the quarry face adjoins an open field located between the quarry and Cudworth Parkway.

The immediate area broadly to the northeast and west of the site is residential in character consisting of a mix of terraced and semi-detached houses. The main commercial centre of Cudworth is further to the northeast and in a linear form along Barnsley Road.

Proposed Development

The proposed development is for 6 dwellings, 4 semi-detached and 2 detached houses. Located in front of the quarry face, they form a line up against Barnsley Road with small front gardens / yards. Vehicular access is shared, located in the middle of the site, with a parking court to the rear, adjacent the quarry face. Each of the houses has a rear garden with direct access from the parking court.

All the properties are four beds with a kitchen / diner, lounge and W/C off the entrance hall at ground floor, 3 beds and a family bath at first floor and a master suite in the roof space. There is a rear dormer with a small terrace on the rear elevation; roof lights only are located on the front elevation.

Policy Context

Planning decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise and the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. The new Local Plan was adopted at the full Council meeting held 3rd January 2019 after it was found to be sound by the appointed Planning Inspector following the examination process. This means that it now takes on full weight for decision making process in planning law terms as the development plan for the Borough, superseding the remaining saved policies from the Unitary Development Plan (adopted in the year 2000) and the Core Strategy (adopted in 2011).

Site Allocation: Urban Fabric and a site recognised as having biodiversity and/or geological value. In addition, the site is located within the Nature Improvement Area: Dearne Valley Green Heart.

SD1 ‘Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development’.

GD1 ‘General Development’ provides a starting point for making decisions on all proposals for development setting out various criteria against which applications will be assessed.

LG2 ‘The Location of Growth’

H1 ‘The Number of New Homes to be Built’ sets the target of new homes for the plan period 2014 to 2033 at 21,546

H2 ‘Distribution of New Homes’ states 6% of new homes to be built in Cudworth.

H4 ‘Residential Development on Small Non-allocated Sites’ will be allowed where the proposal complies with other relevant policies in the Plan.

H6 ‘Housing Mix and Efficient Use of Land’

T3 ‘New Development and Sustainable Travel’.

T4 ‘New Development and Transport Safety’

D1 ‘High Quality Design and Place Making’

GS1 ‘Green Space’ requires new development to provide or contribute towards green space in line with the Green Space Strategy.

GS2 ‘Green Ways and Public Rights of Way’ seeks to protect rights of way from development.

BIO1 ‘Biodiversity and Geodiversity’ requires development to conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity.

CC1 ‘Climate Change’

CC2 ‘Sustainable Design and Construction’

CC3 ‘Flood Risk’

CC4 ‘Sustainable Urban Drainage’

CL1 ‘Contaminated and Unstable Land’

Poll1 ‘Pollution Control and Protection’

PI1 ‘Infrastructure and Planning Obligations’

SPD’s

-Design of Housing Development
-Parking
-Open Space Provision on New Housing Developments
-Trees and Hedgerows
-Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Other

South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide

NPPF

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. At the heart is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Consultations

Biodiversity: No objections subject to conditions and a legal agreement securing access to the quarry face for educational purposes and long term management and maintenance of biodiversity mitigation on the site.

Coal Authority: Standard Advice only.

Contaminated Land: This is a difficult application to provide comments on. It is an old quarry, and could have material filled into the site which might have contaminated material. The report has risk assessed this and said it will not be a problem. However, without some intrusive investigations and sampling, this cannot be confirmed. It is not envisaged that contamination would prevent the development, but some level of Phase 2 investigation would be required to properly assess the risk. This can be secured by condition.

Drainage: No objections subject to a condition.

Highways: Initial concerns about the sightlines achievable at the access point have been resolved through the submission of a revised layout. No objections subject to conditions.

Pollution Control: No objections, subject to a written method statement, setting out the methods that will be used to prevent nuisance from noise and dust, is submitted and approved prior the granting of planning permission.

SYMAS: We note the Coal Mining Risk Assessment in regard of the proposals, as prepared by Design It Structural Solutions Ltd ref: Dit/19/156-Rev 0; dated March 2020. This report concludes that an intrusive site investigation is required to determine the nature of the anticipated shallow coal seam/s; namely to determine any further stabilisation requirements should any ground instability issues be present.

Tree Officer: There is no objection to this proposal from an arboricultural perspective providing the trees that are retained are adequately protected and full details of the proposed new tree planting as noted on the plans is provided. A condition is recommended.

Ward Councillors: Councillor Wraith has supported the development of this site. Councillor Houghton has confirmed no objections given that amended plans were received which showed a re-positioning of the access together with a revised parking arrangement and has been agreed with the Council's Highways Section.

Yorkshire Water: No objection subject to conditions

Representations

The application was advertised by neighbour letters and site notice, no comments have been received.

Sheffield Area Geology Trust (SAGT) have been consulted as the council's partner in dealing with geological sites. In their response they have confirmed the following:

"SAGT appreciates the time and thought that has gone into making this application amenable to geoconservation concerns. The Geoconservation Impact Report conducted on behalf of the architect, fairly describes the geoconservation issues as far as they impinge on this site, and some attention has been paid to accessibility and visibility of the face. Further detail is required in relation to the long-term maintenance and accessibility of the quarry. This will be secured through the legal agreement."

Assessment

Principle of Development

The site is located within the urban fabric as identified on the Local Plan proposals map, where the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies. Cudworth is a Principle Town as identified in the Local Plan where 6% of new housing growth is planned; this excludes windfall sites such as this one, but they are allowed for within the 5 year housing supply. Local Plan Policy H4 relates specifically to small non allocated sites, supporting these where the proposal complies with other relevant policies in the Plan. On this basis, there is no in principle objection to the proposed development subject to an assessment of it against the wider policies in the Local Plan, undertaken below.

Part of the site is recognised as having biodiversity and/or geological value. This refers to the quarry face to the rear of the site which is a RIGS site: Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Site. RIGS sites are important places for geology and geomorphology outside statutorily protected land such as SSSI's. The Plan states that allocation as a RIGS site does not necessarily rule out development, but their special nature needs to be taken into account. In the case of this application, the quarry face is to the rear of the site and will not be affected directly by the development. The applicant has agreed that the parking provision takes into account that it could also be used by visitors wanting to study the quarry face and for the long-term maintenance of the quarry face to be secured. This will ensure the special characteristics of the site are protected. Access arrangements will be secured in the S106 and likely be arranged through the maintenance company and SAGT or the Council. In this respect the proposed complies with Local Plan Policy BIO. Further assessment on the ecological impact is later in this report.

Visual Amenity

The route into Cudworth, along Barnsley Road is characterised by terraced housing with small front gardens or yards. The proposed, being a line of closely spaced properties with similarly small front yards will not appear out of place in this regard. Further, by locating parking to the rear, there is avoidance of a predominance of cars along the frontage.

The proposed houses are all two storey and whilst there is accommodation in the roof space the applicant has removed the front dormer windows originally proposed as these were viewed as out of keeping with the area. The design of the dwellings is relatively simple with pitched roofs, small porches and simple window detailing, including lintels and cills. The materials are to be confirmed but are stated to be good quality reconstituted stone or bricks, as both are present in the area it is accepted that more detail can be agreed though condition.

The site is currently hardstanding with some areas overgrown with self-set trees and scrub. There are remnants of the former quarry buildings on the site and the cliff face to the rear is overgrown. The applicant has provided a tree survey which identifies that most trees are semi-mature, with little significance, which the Council's Tree Officer agrees. A number of trees will be removed to enable the development and the site cleared of vegetation. These do have a limited value in visual amenity terms however and their loss is a negative impact of the development. Larger trees located along the top of the western cliff however will be retained and the proposed development will deliver well designed houses which are in keeping with the character of the area.

Therefore, the proposal has a neutral impact on visual amenity as assessed in accordance with Local Plan Policy D1.

Residential Amenity

The new houses will continue the existing building line along Barnsley Road and do not project rear-ward any further than the existing houses. On this basis, there will be no impact in terms of overshadowing.

No.80 Barnsley Road has two windows at first floor level in the side elevation; one located in an extension to the rear albeit there is no planning history on file for this property. The new houses will be to the side with a blank elevation 6m from one of these windows (the other one overlooking the proposed gardens). No objection or comment has been received from this property. It is not clear from the site visit if these windows are secondary or habitable windows, nevertheless there is an impact on residential amenity of this property as a result of the proposed. The distance does mitigate this impact to some degree as does the fact that the main elevations (front and rear) are not affected by the development. The window overlooking the proposed gardens has an impact on the new residents, albeit they will be aware of this at the time of purchasing and the overlooking is limited to external areas. On balance, whilst this situation is not ideal it is acceptable, taking account of the other benefits of the scheme.

The proposed houses all meet internal and external spaces standards and do not overlook the neighbouring properties. The small terraces to the rear of the new houses are in the roof slope and could potentially overlook the adjacent gardens, however, they are modest in size and because of the distance and angle of view this impact is limited.

Therefore, the proposed is acceptable in residential amenity terms and complies with Local Plan Policy D1.

Ecology

The application site includes Knowle Quarry a Regionally Important Geological or Geomorphological Site (RIGS). RIGS are also known as Local Geology Sites and are a non-statutory conservation designation which affords some recognition and protection through the Planning system. This RIGS/LGS is identified in the Local Plan (2019). Applicants should also have regards to the LPA's Biodiversity and Geodiversity SPD (2019). The applicant has agreed to allow access to the RIGS site for educational purposes, to be requested in advance through RIGS and the Council. In addition, the applicant has provided improved biodiversity mitigation on site and agreed to conditions further detailing this and the long-term management. These can be secured through condition and legal agreement.

Highways

The site layout and access originally proposed raised concerns with regards to highway safety and in particular the sightlines achievable at the access. This has been addressed through an amendment to the layout and highway officers are now satisfied that appropriate sightlines can be achieved and maintained on the site. Adequate parking provison has been provided in the parking court propsoed. Therefore, the proposed is acceptable in Highway Safety terms and accords with Local Plan Policy T4.

Conclusions

The proposed development will deliver 6 houses in a Principle Town where there is good access to a range of amenities and public transport, it is therefore sustainable development. In addition, the proposed will secure the future maintenance of an important geological site and access to it for interested parties. This is a clear benefit of the scheme.

The site is not subject to any specific protection that would preclude its development and although there is some visual and ecological benefit to the trees and scrub which has grown on the site, the

loss of this is outweighed by the long term benefits associated with the formal management and maintenance of the quarry face, secured from the development.

Therefore, the proposed is recommended for approval.

Recommendation

Grant subject to conditions and S106 Agreement