

Our Ref: RB/RM/04B810947
Your Ref:

27 February 2020

The Clerk,
Alderley Edge Parish Council,
Festival Hall
Talbot Road
Alderley Edge
SK9 7HR

Submitted via email: clerk@alderleyedge-pc.gov.uk

Norfolk House
7 Norfolk Street
Manchester
M2 1DW

T: +44 (0)161 228 1001
F: +44 (0)161 956 4009

avisonyoung.co.uk

Dear Sir / Madam,

**Alderley Edge Neighbourhood Plan -Response to the Statutory
Consultation Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General)
Regulations 2012**

We act on behalf of Mr and Mrs Sims (the family) and are responding to the opportunity to submit representations to the emerging policies of the Alderley Edge Neighbourhood Plan as set out within Regulation 14 Consultation Draft.

These comments are submitted in relation to Mr and Mrs Sims land holding 'Land to the North of Beech Road' and supplement our comments which were submitted in September 2019 as part of the previous round of consultation. To avoid repetition, I have attached the previous representations at **Appendix One**.

We thank you for this opportunity to provide comments on this next stage of the plan and complement the Neighbourhood Group on the clear presentation of this version of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The key draft policies considered within these representations are:

- Draft Policy AE2: Location, Design, Scale and Type of New Housing
- Draft Policy AE3: Sustainable Housing Design
- Draft Policy AE7: Encouraging Visitor Support for Local Businesses
- Draft Policy AE9: Landscape Character and Access
- Draft Policy AE13: Key Views and Townscape
- Draft Policy AE14: Sustainability Transport Routes
- Draft Policy AE19: Protecting and Enhancing Local Community Facilities

Visions and Objectives

It is noted that the Visions for Alderley Edge remain the same from the previous round of consultation in September 2019. As previously noted, the family firmly support the Visions for Alderley Edge, believing it to be of utmost importance that whilst growth and evolution is required to attract

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investment, businesses, workers and tourists by delivering economic, social and environmental improvements simultaneously, it should not be at the expense of all that is good about the village.

Draft Policy AE2: Location, Design, Scale and Type of New Housing

The family continues to support the strategic direction of this policy and acknowledges the importance of delivering high quality development. However, it is noted that the policy still recommends a split of dwellings which does not allow much flexibility for developers to respond to market signals and local needs which are likely to change over the Plan period.

Draft Policy AE3: Sustainable Housing Design

The family continue to support this policy vision and acknowledge the importance of new developments striving to be as sustainable as possible.

Draft Policy AE7: Encouraging Visitor Support for Local Businesses

The family are pleased that this policy, which proposes better links between visitor attractions, remains in the latest version of the Plan. This is an importance policy and there is significant scope for Alderley Edge to draw additional footfall through the provision of sustainable links to, and through the village.

Draft Policy AE9: Landscape Character and Access

This policy seeks to ensure that proposals do not erode the green gap between the built-up area of Alderley Edge and Wilmslow. Developments on the edge of settlements will be required to provide landscaping scheme to provide an appropriate transition between the wider rural area and the built form.

As stated in the previous representations, the family fully support this policy. The allocation of this land would not bring development closer to Wilmslow than existing and that a very significant buffer, owned by the family, would remain.

The site can also satisfy this requirement of the policy to not only maintain but actually improve public access to the countryside. One of the unique benefits of this site is its ability, courtesy of the extensive land to the north in the family's ownership, to provide sustainable, safe pedestrian and cycle links between Wilmslow and Alderley Edge. Extensive discussions have taken place with officers at the Council and these benefits are considered to be considerable, as there are currently no genuinely comparable links between the two settlements.

The site is extremely well placed to meet the requirements of this policy.

Draft Policy AE13: Key Views and Townscape

This policy seeks to preserve key views that make a contribution towards local visual amenity and Alderley Edge's townscape. The family continues to support this policy and believes that when development is brought forward on their site, the proposals can be delivered in a way that the scale, height and layout protects key views.

Draft Policy AE14: Sustainability Transport Routes

The family supports the principle of the policy to establish a route of networks which extend beyond the boundary.

There is potential for the 'Land to the North of Beech Road' to support this policy and make significant improvements to achieve this which is unique to the site and cannot be matched by any alternative allocation.

Draft Policy AE19: Protecting and Enhancing Local Community Facilities

The family continue to support the intention of the policy to resist the redevelopment of such facilities for non-community use unless they are no longer needed. However, the family continue to believe that this policy should be expanded to allow for redevelopment where suitable alternatives can be delivered.

The family has promoted for some time the ability to provide allotments adjacent to the existing allotments on Land North of Beech Close. In the event that there was local consensus for existing allotments to need to relocate, then the family's land could accommodate this.

The Site: Land to the North of Beech Road

It is noted that the Neighbourhood Plan does not seek to allocate sites for development; leaving this function to CEC via the Local Plan process. However, the Neighbourhood Plan does support the delivery of sites that will be allocated through the Cheshire East Council: Site Allocations and Development Policies Document, and the family welcomes this approach. Land to the North of Beech Road currently benefits from CEC Draft Allocation ALD4: Site at Beech Road, and as previously noted, the site represents a highly sustainable and logical option for Green Belt release which will contribute to meeting the housing requirement for Alderley Edge.

Concluding Remarks

Mr and Mrs Sims are grateful for the opportunity to make further comments on the emerging Alderley Edge Neighbourhood Plan. As you will see from this letter, there is broad support for the Plan's proposals.

We would be grateful if you would confirm safe receipt of these representations. Mr and Mrs Sims wish to maintain an ongoing dialogue with the group preparing the Plan and is committed to an open dialogue to ensure its proposals for 'Land to the North of Beech Road' are of high quality.

Yours sincerely



Richard Barton
Director
+44 (0)161 956 4082
Richard.barton@Avisonyoung.com
For and on behalf of GVA Grimley Limited t/a Avison Young

Appendix One - Previous Neighbourhood Plan Representation

Our Ref:
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4 September 2019

Cheshire East Council
Spatial Planning
Westfields
Middlewich Road
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Norfolk House
7 Norfolk Street
Manchester
M2 1DW

T: +44 (0)8449 02 03 04
F: +44 (0)161 956 4009

avisonyoung.co.uk

Submitted via email: neighbourhoods@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Dear Sir / Madam,

Alderley Edge Neighbourhood Plan – Response to the Statutory Consultation Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012

We act on behalf of Mr and Mrs Sims (the family) and are responding to the opportunity to submit representations to the emerging policies of the Alderley Edge Neighbourhood Plan as set out within the Regulation 14 Consultation Draft.

These comments are submitted in relation to Mr and Mrs Sims land holding 'Land to the North of Beech Road' and supplement our comments which were submitted in March 2019 as part of the previous round of consultation (attached for your reference) which was undertaken in November 2018.

We thank you for this opportunity to provide comments on this next stage of the plan and complement the Neighbourhood Group on the clear presentation of this version of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Background to the Site

The family are the owners of land to the north of Alderley Edge and have been promoting 'Land to the North of Beech Road' for a number of years through both the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (CELPS) and the emerging Site Allocations and Development Policies Document (SADPD).

The site is located immediately adjacent to the settlement boundary of Alderley Edge and extends to approximately 2.9 hectares. The land, which is currently identified as Green Belt, is in agricultural use, lying immediately to the north of Beech Close, Beech Road and Fairbourne Avenue. It is relatively devoid of features aside from a belt of trees.

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The site is extremely well related to established residential development and is bound to the west by the mainline railway. It is in a very sustainable location, within walking distance of Alderley Edge Town Centre which offers a variety of facilities and services. A parade of shops is located within 100 metres of the site which includes a general store, takeaway, laundrette and a news agent.

The following sets out Mr and Mrs Sims' position in respect of this version of the Neighbourhood Plan and provides commentary on the policies and allocations within the Plan. We would note that there are a number of policies which are not applicable to the family's land holding and therefore this letter remains silent to these matters.

Vision and Objectives

It is noted that the Visions for Alderley Edge remain the same from the previous round of consultation. As set out in the previous representations, the family firmly support the Visions for Alderley Edge, believing it to be of utmost importance that whilst growth and evolution is required, it should not be at the expense of all that is good about the village.

Overarching Approach to Development

The most recent version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in February 2019 and states that neighbourhood Plans are required to be tested through an independent examination before proceeding to referendum. Paragraph 29 of the NPPF states:

"Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area or undermine those strategic policies¹".

The current allocations proposed by the Neighbourhood Plan show 'Land to the North of Beech Road' as being located within the Green Belt. It should be noted that as part of the emerging Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (SADMPD), the site is proposed to be removed from the Green Belt and allocated for around 35 new homes as site ALD4: Land North of Beech Road. Green Belt release has been justified by the Council in the Local Plan Strategy as there is insufficient land within the urban area of Cheshire East, particularly in the north of the borough, to meet future housing requirements.

The Sims' family believe that there are no better alternative sites that exist in Alderley Edge which would make a positive contribution to the market and affordable housing requirements. A review of the site's performance and suitability for Green Belt release is summarised below in relation to the five purposes as set out in the NPPF.

To Check Unrestricted Sprawl

The land is extremely well related to the existing development to the south and is bounded to the west by allotments and the West Coast Main line. The eastern and northern boundaries are defined by vegetation and Whitehall Brook.

The development of the site would not bring development any closer to Wilmslow than existing development. Furthermore, the railway line and A34 are extremely prevalent man-made boundaries which will maintain a strong sense of separation.

¹ Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in any development plan that covers their area.

No aspect of the proposed development could be described as sprawl, rather it is contained and entirely logical.

To Prevent Neighbourhood Towns Merging

There are no immediately adjacent neighbouring towns lying to any boundary of the site. The closest town is Wilmslow to the north of the site however, significant additional land lies between the proposed site and Wilmslow, as well as strong, defensible boundaries.

To Safeguard the Countryside

The site is very well related to the existing residential development and other built form such as the railway to the west. The land is adjacent to extensive areas of countryside and it is considered there is no need to safeguard this land as countryside, given the benefits of developing this site will outweigh any impacts of retaining it in its current form.

To Preserve the Setting and Special Character of a Historic Town

There are no statutory or non-statutory designated heritage assets within the boundary of the site and the surrounding urban area of Alderley Edge is not considered an historic town. The removal of the site from the Green Belt would therefore not contravene the purpose of preserving the setting and character of Alderley Edge.

To Assist in Urban Regeneration

There are very few brownfield sites available for redevelopment to accommodate the future housing requirements of this borough. It is clear from the Local Plan Part Two that changes to the Green Belt boundaries will be necessary to accommodate development over the next two decades. As such, the removal of the site from the Green Belt would not conflict with this purpose of assisting in urban regeneration.

Given that the two documents are progressing concurrently, we would request that the sites allocation is amended in the Neighbourhood Plan to accord with the emerging SADMPD to reflect the Council's proposed allocation.

Draft Policy AE2: Location, Design, Scale and Type of New Housing

The family acknowledges the importance of delivering high quality development that protects the existing quality of the village and therefore supports this policy. The policy also recommends a split of dwellings and whilst the principle of this is welcomed, the policy should be flexible enough to allow developers to adequately respond to market signals and local need which are likely to change over the Plan period.

Draft Policy AE3: Sustainable Housing Design

This policy is supported as the family consider it important that new development should be as sustainable as possible.

Draft Policy AE7: Encouraging Visitor Support for Local Businesses

The policy proposes that better links should be provided between visitor attractions. The family believes this is an important policy and believes that there is significant scope for Alderley Edge to draw additional footfall through the provision of sustainable links to, and through the village.

Draft Policy AE9: Landscape Character and Access

This policy seeks to ensure that proposals do not erode the green gap between the built-up area of Alderley Edge and Wilmslow. Developments on the edge of settlements will be required to provide landscaping scheme to provide an appropriate transition between the wider rural area and the built form.

As stated in the previous representations, the family fully support this policy. The allocation of this land would not bring development closer to Wilmslow than existing and that a very significant buffer, owned by the family, would remain.

The site can also satisfy this requirement of the policy to not only maintain but actually improve public access to the countryside. One of the unique benefits of this site is its ability, courtesy of the extensive land to the north in the family's ownership, to provide sustainable, safe pedestrian and cycle links between Wilmslow and Alderley Edge. Extensive discussions have taken place with officers at the Council and these benefits are considered to be considerable, as there are currently no genuinely comparable links between the two settlements.

The site is extremely well placed to meet the requirements of this policy.

Draft Policy AE13: Key Views and Townscape

This policy seeks to preserve key views that make a contribution towards local visual amenity and Alderley Edge's townscape. The family supports this policy and believes that the allocation can be delivered in a way that the scale, height and layout of the development protects the key views.

Draft Policy AE14: Sustainable Transport Routes

The family supports the principle of the policy to establish a route of networks which extend beyond the boundary. As set out draft policy AE9, there is great scope to make significant improvements to achieve this policy on land owned by the family, which we consider cannot be matched by any alternative allocation.

Draft Policy AE19: Protecting and Enhancing Local Community Facilities

The family supports the intention of the policy to resist the redevelopment of such facilities for non-community use unless they are no longer needed but suggests it should be expanded to allow for redevelopment where suitable alternatives can be delivered. The family has promoted for some time the ability to provide allotments adjacent to the existing allotments on Land North of Beech Close. In the event that there was local consensus for existing allotments to need to relocate, then the family's land could accommodate this.

Concluding Remarks

Mr and Mrs Sims are grateful for the opportunity to make further comments on the emerging Alderley Edge Neighbourhood Plan. As you will see from this letter, there is broad support for the Plan's proposals, with the main suggested change the inclusion of Land to the North of Beech Road as a housing allocation to match that shown in the latest Site Allocations and Development Plan Document prepared by Cheshire East Council.

We would be grateful if you would confirm receipt of these representations. Mr and Mrs Sims wish to maintain an ongoing dialogue with the group preparing the Plan, and is committed to an open dialogue to ensure its proposals for this site are of high quality.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Barton', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Richard Barton
Director
+44 (0)161 956 4082
Richard.barton@Avisonyoung.com
For and on behalf of
GVA Grimley Limited t/a Avison Young

Enc. Previous Neighbourhood Plan Representations