

Our Ref: RB/BT/995

Your Ref:

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Dear Ms Ross

Alderley Edge Neighbourhood Plan: Emerging Policies Document: Representations on behalf of Mr and Mrs Sims

These representations have been prepared by Avison Young on behalf of Mrs and Mrs Sims (the family), in relation to the *Alderley Edge Neighbourhood Plan: Emerging Policies Document (NP)*.

Background

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)*.

Two Delivery Documents are attached to these representations which illustrate proposals promoted by the family and are referenced, where relevant, throughout these representations. The documents are important as they illustrate the benefits that could be achieved through the allocation of land for housing, and the use of additional land owned by the family to deliver attractive cycle and pedestrian links to Wilmslow.

Please note the 'Short' Delivery Document (3 pages) is the latest version prepared by the family this year and presents the current proposals for their land, updated to reflect recent discussions with CEC. The longer version, prepared last year (April 2018), provides additional background information which will hopefully also be of use when preparing the next version of the Neighbourhood Plan. Elements of the April 2018, such as the red line boundary, have been superseded by the Short version. By providing both versions you can see how proposals have evolved and that there is flexibility should the Neighbourhood Plan Group wish to see amendments to proposals. Hard copies will be provided in the post.

To date a number of discussions have been held with key stakeholders, and the family look forward to ongoing engagement going forward. They are extremely grateful for the opportunity to submit representations to the NP.

Structure of Representations

These representations have been prepared to respond to the NP, and in particular to the Vision, Objectives and Emerging policies. The representations seek to also explain how Land North of Beech Road could help achieve objectives and policy requirements, ultimately to a much greater extent than any other residential allocation currently being considered.

Responses to Emerging Policies

Vision and Objectives

The family firmly supports the Vision 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.

Seven objectives are identified. These are set out in turn below, with a response provided to each on behalf of the family.

1. *To improve the environment of Alderley Edge and the experience for all those who live, work, or visit Alderley Edge both now and in the future.*
 - The family supports this objective. The environment of Alderley Edge could be achieved in a number of ways, but the family believes a key way in which this could be achieved is to ensure new development is provided in the right places, to minimise reliance on the private car. Developments should also offer something that is more than simply additional houses for the village, in order that they can help achieve this objective, through for instance the provision of new or improved facilities that can be used not only by new residents but also existing ones as well.
 - Land to the North of Beech Road could deliver new, attractive, sustainable ways of moving between the village and Wilmslow, taking cars off the road and providing an improved environment. These links are illustrated in the Delivery Documents. The land could also be used to provide a significant extension to an existing children's play park, also improving the existing environment. Furthermore, significant land is proposed to be used for allotments, which also provide clear environmental benefits. There is scope to provide varying extents of allotment land to meet identified need (as can be seen in the Development Documents which show different extents of land identified for this purpose). The family is aware for example that there have been discussions regarding the possible relocation of allotments from Festival Hall to provide additional car parking. Land North of Beech Road is capable, if this proposal was supported by the community, of accommodating all of the existing allotments at Festival Hall.
2. *To deliver a strong, competitive economy that maximises the strength of existing assets in the village and supports successful start-ups and the growth of independent business.*
 - The family is supportive of this objective. One way in which the economy could benefit would be through additional footfall that could be generated by additional people moving sustainably between settlements. New pedestrian and cycle routes would be a viable alternative to visitors using cars when parking is difficult, potentially deterring visitors.
3. *To support new housing development that maintains and enhances the culture, identity, and character of Alderley Edge, and meets the local need and supports a balanced community.*

- The family believe new housing is required in the village to meet an identified local need and to respond to issues around affordability, which needs to be addressed to help support a balanced community. The objective is therefore supported.
 - The family have committed to ensuring through appropriate policy wording that at least 30% of new houses on their land would be affordable and have also confirmed that a minimum of 10 bungalows will be provided out of a total of approximately 50 homes the site is capable of delivering. This is set out in the attached Short Development Document.
4. *To ensure the rural and historic character of Alderley Edge is protected and enhanced while meeting 21st century needs.*
- The family supports this objective. Alderley Edge is an attractive place to live, work and visit as a result of these attributes, and it is important therefore that these are not diminished through inappropriate new development.
 - The family firmly believes that the land North of Beech Road is fully capable of providing much needed new homes without any detriment to the rural or historic character of the village. The site is not located in a sensitive location, being incredibly well-related to existing housing and infrastructure. It can be developed in a manner which will not only retain large swathes of agricultural land between Alderley Edge and Wilmslow, but which also makes that land accessible, so that many more people can access and enjoy the rural character of the village. How this can be achieved is illustrated in the attached Development Documents.
5. *To ensure that local character, heritage, green space, surrounding Green Belt, and other natural assets are preserved for the enjoyment of present and future generations.*
- The objective is supported by the family. These are also key assets which make Alderley Edge the attractive place it is today. The family agree that green space, Green Belt and natural assets should be preserved, but suggests they should also be 'enhanced' where possible.
 - It is acknowledged by CEC and other key stakeholders that some limited Green Belt release will be necessary in Alderley Edge to accommodate housing need. The family are clear that this should be the absolute minimum necessary to achieve this.
 - The site to the North of Beech Road is incredibly well placed to achieve this. Independent work (attached) carried out by SWECO (specialist landscape / Green Belt consultants) has confirmed that the site is very well placed to accommodate development with minimal detriment; in addition, they confirm that no site, proposed for development in Alderley Edge, scores better than the family's land in terms of having less landscape impacts and effects on purposes of Green Belt. The family believes the fact that a school was once proposed on the land supports these conclusions.
 - In short, the ability of sites to achieve these objectives should be carefully considered (i.e. the benefits they offer) as there are no Green Belt or landscape reasons to place other sites in a more preferable position. The family firmly believe this objective, and the others, can best be achieved by identifying their land for housing.
6. *To create a safe, pedestrian and cycle friendly environment with easy access throughout and improvements to public transport whilst addressing parking constraints.*
- The family believe this is one of the most important objectives of the NP. The provision of easy, safe pedestrian and cycle paths are not only critical to reducing reliance on the private car, but they also bring real health benefits.
 - As set out in the Development Documents, allocating land to the North of Beech Road for housing will also deliver new, safe cycle and pedestrian routes linking the village and

Alderley Edge. No other proposed sites could achieve such benefits. The links would allow easy, safe movement for children attending Wilmslow High School and also for people commuting to work. The benefits of this would be a reduction in vehicle movements and also parking need. The family are passionate about these benefits and believe that to date their potential has not been recognised by decision makers at CEC.

7. *To retain, and provide new, local services and amenities that will meet the changing needs of a growing community and mitigate the impacts of new growth.*
- This policy is also supported by the family. It is important that new housing does not increase the burden on existing facilities, many of which are already stretched. The family supports therefore any allocations being obliged, through policy, to make obligations which are fairly and reasonably related in scale to the development proposed, to ensure there are no negative impacts caused by additional residents.
 - Land to the North of Beech Road proposes:
 - Allotments;
 - An extension to the existing play park;
 - Sustainable links to Wilmslow;
 - A minimum 30% affordable housing;
 - Delivery of 10 bungalows as part of the development;
 - 2-5-bedroom properties;
 - Meeting necessary obligations (financial contributions to education or health provision for example).

The following part of the representations consider the identified policies but where there is clear cross over with the objectives points are not repeated.

Policy 1: Alderley Edge Development Strategy

The family support the need for development to be within easy walking distance of existing facilities and to mitigate any negative impacts through improvements to existing infrastructure. The Town Centre and other facilities such as the Train Station and schools can be easily reached safely on foot or cycle from Land North of Beech Road.

Policy 2: Housing Mix

The family support the need for affordable houses, smaller homes and bungalows to be provided, as well as self-build plots. The family confirms that all these requirements can be achieved and secured through appropriately worded policy in the NP for Land North of Beech Road should it be considered appropriate to allocate the land for housing.

Policy 3: Housing Design

In keeping with requirements set out in national planning policy, the family agrees that new development should be of high-quality design. The policy is fully supported and the family suggest this should be an integral part of the NP in order to protect the existing quality of the village.

Policy 4: Sustainable Housing Construction

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

Policy 7: Tourism 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.

Policy 13: Landscape Character and Access

The family notes that this policy would be intended to manage new development outside the settlement. Landscape character would need to be carefully considered, taking into account trees, hedgerows, field patterns and maintaining public access to the countryside. It is also noted the separation of Alderley Edge from Wilmslow should also be preserved.

The family fully supports this policy. The attached Short Development Document clearly sets out how development of Land to the North of Beech Road would not bring development closer to Wilmslow than existing and that a very significant buffer, owned by the family, would remain. In addition, the A34, railway line and trees maintain a very strong buffer. The site can also satisfy the requirement of policy to not only maintain but actually improve public access to the countryside. Please also see the attached SWECO report which confirms how landscape character has already been carefully considered.

Policy 15: Protection of 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 Road. In the event that there was local consensus for existing allotments to need to relocate, then the family's land could potentially accommodate this. You will see from the two Development Documents that there is scope to vary the location and size of the area of allotments to meet demand.

Policy 16: Sustainable Transport Routes

The family supports the principle of the policy, but considers it is currently too insular. A network of routes should not simply be established or enhanced within Alderley Edge, rather the network should seek to extend beyond the boundary to other settlements such as Wilmslow. As set out above, and in the attached Development Documents, 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.

Policy 17: Transport in New Development

The policy is strongly supported by the family, in that the new developments should connect and contribute to public transport, walking and cycle routes. Land North of Beech Road ticks all these boxes and is capable of achieving the policy to a much greater extent than any other site currently being considered for a residential allocation.

Aspiration E: Traffic Management

The family support this aspiration and consider that the provision of new walking and cycle routes will naturally lead to a reduction in vehicle movements, bringing multiple benefits to the village.

Conclusion

These representations are submitted on behalf of Mr and Mrs Sims who are very supportive of the policies and objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan. The family is absolutely steadfast in its belief that Land to the North of Beech Road is uniquely placed to help achieve all of the identified objectives and relevant policies.

Three documents are attached to support the representations:

- Short Development Document
- Development Document (April 2018)

- SWECO Landscape Appraisal

The documents help to identify the benefits of the allocation at Land North of Beech Road, and when read in conjunction with these representations, form a compelling case for a housing allocation with its associated benefits.

The family appreciates difficult decisions will need to be made going forward in identifying land to meet housing need, but they remain ready and willing to engage with all interested stakeholders to ensure the right decisions are made.

Finally, the family would like to place on record their thanks to the Neighbourhood Plan Group for agreeing to receive these representations.

Kind regards

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Barton', written in a cursive style.

Richard Barton
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For and on behalf of
GVA Grimley Limited t/a Avison Young

Enc. Short Development Document
Development Document (April 2018)
SWECO Landscape Appraisal