

## **Barrowford and Western Parishes Committee – Planning Update – 4<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

### **23/0516/FUL - 147 Wheatley Lane Road, Barrowford**

#### **Growth Lancashire**

##### Site Location

The application site is the rear garden of a large semi-detached dwelling located on the south side of Wheatley Lane Road, Barrowford.

##### Designations

The site is in the Carr Hall/Wheatley Lane Conservation Area.

**Legislation** The principal statutory duty under the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is to preserve the special character of heritage assets, including their setting. LPAs should, in coming to decisions, consider the principal Act, Which states the following:

Conservation areas - Section 72(1) In undertaking its role as a planning authority the Council should in respect to conservation areas pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

In relation to conservation areas decision makers should consider the impacts on the character and appearance of a conservation area (which includes its setting) separately and that development proposals need to satisfy both aspects (to preserve or enhance) to be acceptable.

##### Planning Guidance and Policy NPPF P197 of the

NPPF states in determining planning applications LPAs should take account of:

- a. The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b. The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c. The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

P199 states that when considering the impact of proposals on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be applied. This is irrespective of whether any harm is identified as being substantial, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

P200 identifies that any harm to heritage assets requires clear and convincing justification.

P202 states that where a proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

Local Plan Core Strategy (2011-2013)

Policy ENV 1, Protecting and Enhancing our Natural and Historic Environments

Policy ENV 2, Achieving Quality in Design and Conservation Carr Hall/Wheatley Lane Road Conservation Area Character Appraisal (July 2010) Assessment I have read the supporting documents including the proposed and existing site plan, proposed and existing plans and elevations, Design and Access and Heritage Statement, Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Tree Survey report, boundary treatment plan and visualisation plan.

I note also the Appeal decision APP/E2340/W/21/3288226 that granted approval for permission in principle (PiP) for two dwellings to the rear of No's 145 and 147 Wheatley Lane Road. A previous planning approval also exists (22/0417/FUL) for the conversion and extension of the existing adjacent garage outbuilding to form a single dwelling. I note that this permission included the additional parking at the front of No.147 and the revised entrance.

The proposal

The proposal is for the erection of a new dwelling with associated infrastructure and parking with access via the existing side driveway off Wheatley Lane Road, which also provides access for parking to the adjacent garage/outbuilding. The proposed dwelling is a 2 storey, four bedroom house with gables to the east and west which is set back behind the frontage property in the existing garden area. The new house would be faced in red and contrasting paler brick, timber cladding with aluminium panelling and a natural, slate roof. A surface parking area for three cars would be located north east of the new dwelling.

The key heritage consideration is as follows:

1. Whether the proposed development preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the Carr Hall/Wheatley Lane Conservation Area.

The site

The application site is the garden of an early C20 semi-detached dwelling set within a characteristically large plot, set back from the roadside bounded by a stone wall. The semi-detached dwelling has an attractive Domestic Revival character. The generous garden plots are reflective of the history of the conservation area, reinforcing its special character.

The Carr Hall/Wheatley Lane Conservation Area's special interest lies in its origins as part of the Carr Hall estate and surrounding farms, which was gradually sold off in large plots for new bespoke, high status dwellings to be constructed. The appraisal notes the overall density of development is very low (para 4.2). The application site formed a field belonging to the Carr Hall estate which is extant to the southeast on the 1848 OS map.

The dwelling to the north of the site and the application site, currently the garden belonging to the house, make a positive contribution to the significance of the conservation area, enabling an understanding of its development in the late C19-early C20 from the Carr Hall estate and its subsequent development for high-status housing in generous plots. The 2010 CAA however makes no further assessment and no.147 is not marked out in the appraisal as making a special contribution.

I note there is an existing fence that divides the garden and the application site from another property behind and so the visual contribution that the garden currently makes to the special interest of the CA has been greatly reduced, as this does not readily read as being part of the garden of the house.

### Impact

The existing frontage dwelling to the northwest of the site and its contribution to the CA will be preserved through the scheme. The gardens will be subdivided to accommodate the proposed new dwelling. I am mindful that the subdivision of the garden for a new house has previously been accepted in principle through the recent Appeal decision, which granted permission in principle for the plot sub-division. Given the planning history I raise no substantive objection to the loss of the garden space and largely raise no objections to the design or scale of the new house.

While the proposed property would be a considerable new 'built' addition to the conservation area it will only be partially visible from the roadside, on approach in either direction. The new house is set well back and the public views would be somewhat filtered by existing development, including the existing garage/outbuilding and frontage trees, which characterise the CA. The proposed visualisation in the submission documents illustrates this point.

The design and use of gables mimics the Coach House/garage and its set back location results in a somewhat regressive scale, which I feel is not overly prominent. In this context, I feel the principal views of the conservation area would be preserved. Whilst the development would involve the removal of some trees and hedging, along the western boundary these are set well back from the roadside and will have little or no impact on the character or appearance of the CA.

I am mindful that the intensification and upgrading of the 'domestic' drive and the need to add new hardstanding/parking areas to compensate for lost drive space has been agreed under the permission to convert and extend the garage/Coach house. Whilst I would prefer to see a different parking arrangement, given the permission in place, I raise no concerns. Notwithstanding I do however accept that the parking spaces are already partially screened by garden planting and that any visual harm can be adequately mitigated by applying suitable conditions re materials and additional landscaping/hedging etc.

As the principle of development for a new dwelling on this site has already been agreed the principal issue/threat to the character of the conservation area, through increased plot density and sub-division, has already been accepted. Whilst I am mindful that the design of the new house is modern in concept I do not feel the qualities of the conservation area are necessarily compromised by this approach.

Given the limited views and set back location of the new house I do not feel development on the site necessarily warrants a more period or traditional approach. In such circumstances, whilst the new dwelling will be noticeable, I do not find it to be unduly prominent and its design will cause no discernible harm to the character or appearance of the conservation area and therefore preserves its special interest.

I suggest that details of suitable materials are secured via suitable worded Conditions.

### **Conclusion / recommendation**

As I am required to do so, I have given Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 considerable weight in my comments.

For the reasons outlined above, I feel the proposal will cause no discernible harm and will preserve the special interest of the Carr Hall/Wheatley Lane CA. As such the application accords with Chapter 16 of the NPPF and policies ENV1 and ENV2 of the Local Plan.

If the LPA is minded to approve the application then as indicated above, I feel that Conditions should be added requiring approval of the facing materials, landscaping, the treatment of the frontage wall and surfacing of the car parking/hardstanding areas.

### **Ecology**

An ecology report has been submitted. It assesses the site for its ecological value and confirms that there is no specific ecological value for species on the site which is part of the garden of number 145. It suggests bat boxes and bird boxes be incorporated to enhance the value of the site.

### **Officer Comments**

The comments from Growth Lancashire confirm the view that the development will not harm the conservation area or other heritage assets. The ecological assessment also confirms that the site has low ecological value.

The recommendation is that the application be approved subject to the conditions set out in the main report.