

**Bromsgrove District Council
Planning Committee**

**Committee Update
3rd March 2023**

22/01228/REM Bordesley Hall, The Holloway

The Committee Report was published with a recommendation that the reserved matters for layout, scale, appearance, and landscaping are granted subject to final satisfactory comments from the Conservation Officer. The Conservation Officers' final comments regarding the reserved matters are outlined below, as well as a response by the applicant's agent submitted on Wednesday 1st March, the Planning Officers assessment of these comments and a revised recommendation.

Conservation Officer Comments (this should be read in conjunction with the Non-Designated Heritage Assets section of the committee report on page 66)

Whilst the principle of the development is already established, the detailed design of the scheme causes a degree of harm that should be avoided by amendments.

- The Non-Designated Heritage Assets (NDHAs) are considered to have low-medium significance.
- The proposed development is confined to the area surrounding Bordesley Hall and includes the erection of 46 dwellings plus associated works. The dwellings line an access road encircling the hall and are all two storey in height, with a mix of housing types that, although demonstrating some variation in size and style, are reasonably consistent in their design approach, which has a fairly typical, volume-housebuilding appearance that does not appear to reflect local character or quality.
- The proposed layout includes a row of houses to the southeast of the hall, which is likely to extinguish the limited views currently available between the hall and its landscape. Whilst the demolition of various incongruous buildings around the hall is a benefit, the proposed interruption to its southeast prospect would sever its landscape connection, causing harm to its significance as a historic hall with landscaped pleasure grounds.
- Additionally, the proposed site plan offers no proposals for the kitchen garden walls. The accompanying planning statement claims the place and what part of the proposals will help secure their long-term maintenance, in the absence of any information.

The proposals therefore do not accord with Paragraph 203 of the NPPF or Policy BDP20 of the Bromsgrove District Plan.

Applicant's Response

SJD Architects & Developments Ltd was selected by the applicant to prepare the architectural element of the Reserved Matters planning application due to their extensive experience in the sensitive restoration of Listed Buildings/Heritage and heritage assets and the development of their surrounding context in Bromsgrove District. There is familiarity with the local vernaculars and the issues relating to the Green Belt.

The Reserved Matters layout has increased the visual linkage to the open space by the repositioning of garages and plots to provide an increased vista and the reorientation of the

proposed plots to front onto and address the two principle South Eastern and South Western elevations of Bordesley Hall instead of angled side gables as proposed under the Parameters Plan. A substantial car port type structure that was shown on the Parameters Plan has been omitted in the Reserved Matters plan that now allows the SW elevation of Bordesley Hall to be visible from the public realm and through the repositioning of a garage and plot to the Eastern boundary of Bordesley Hall the entirety of the wall and steps to the front elevation of Bordesley Hall are now visible from the public realm, whereas on the Parameters Plan approximately one third was obscured by a garage serving an adjacent plot.

Rowney Green and the wider Alvechurch area consist of a wide variety of traditional architectural styles. Page 26 Section 4.4. Buildings of the Alvechurch Parish Design Statement dated January 2019 as extracted below provides a sample of the styles:

Alvechurch Parish Design Statement http://www.alvechurch.gov.uk/	2017
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Features of Rowney Green

Section 4.4 Buildings:



A recently built, traditional design cottage. Retention of the mature hedge is good practice



Sympathetic barn conversions also form part of the Seecham Area character.



A recently-built garage, making good use of reclaimed bricks, slate roof and wooden window frames, to blend with the original cottage



Retention and additional planting of native species of hedgerow and trees can help soften new properties



Holly trees and hawthorn hedges, allowed to grow to large scale - the houses behind them are set back substantially from the road



Residential development partly hidden behind mature native hedges and trees is a typical of Rowney Green character



Buildings, set within a spacious plot have room for substantial adjacent planting helping blend them into their rural surroundings



Rowney Green, like other hamlets within the Parish, has a small development of well-designed houses, originally council-owned



When altering or renovating old properties, the use of traditional materials and roof angles and other detailing helps retain original character

The proposed house types to the Reserved Matters application have been comprehensively and proactively reworked to provide sensitive high quality bespoke vernaculars with considered proportions and detailing reflecting the general design principle of Rowney Green and the wider Alvechurch area.

This proactive approach is further evidenced by the fact that 13no. individual housetypes have been proposed on a scheme of 46 dwellings. The subtle differences in the vernaculars and architectural detailing between the types, complement one another while offering variety and interest in the streetscape presenting a cohesive development, contributing to the sense of place. This combined with the improvements made to the Proposed Site Layout to enhance the setting of Bordesley Hall and allow a much-improved contextual setting and visual linkage to the Hall from the public realm to the South Eastern & South Western elevations provides a high quality development.

The applicant has now provided CGI images of the proposal. These can be viewed via public access under the application reference number but will also be presented as part of the officer's presentation to the committee.

Officer Assessment

As outlined in the committee report, in the Layout, Scale, and Appearance section of the report (pages 64–65), the scheme is not considered to have a typical volume housebuilder appearance and does not reflect the character of the local area, and overall, the proposed layout, scale, and appearance of the development are considered to accord with policy BDP19, Bromsgrove High Quality Design SPD, the ALVNP, and the NPPF.

In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation, the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities, including their economic viability; and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness (paragraph 197 of the NPPF). When considering the impact of a proposed development 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).

In relation to the impact on the non-designated heritage assets. NDHA's are on the lowest rung of the hierarchy of heritage assets; they do not have statutory protection however, the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application, as outlined in Paragraph 203 of the NPPF. The NPPF does not seek to prescribe how that balance should be undertaken or what weight should be given to any matter.

To that end, the balanced judgement under Paragraph 203 needs to consider the benefits against the impact on the non-designated heritage assets identified by the Conservation Officer. Following concerns raised regarding the kitchen garden walls, Condition 3 on page 69 is proposed. This will ensure that this element is retained, and further details regarding repair and future maintenance have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority, in conjunction with the Conservation Officer.

The benefits of the proposed redevelopment are substantial (and have remained considerable since the approval of the hybrid scheme). The reuse of a previously developed site, the removal of dilapidated buildings that are no longer viable for employment use, and the retention and conversion of Bordesley Hall itself. Furthermore, it is noted that the proposed scheme makes

efficient use of land and contributes to the housing supply within the District, for which there is a recognised shortfall and one that has increased since the 2022 consideration at planning committee (from 4.6 years to 3.24 years now). The proposal would also give rise to employment during the construction of the proposed scheme as well as economic and social benefits arising from its contribution to the area from the local spend of its occupiers. The proposal therefore contributes to public benefits that deliver economic, social, or environmental progress as identified within the NPPF. Overall, the objection from the Conservation Officer is not considered sufficient to warrant the refusal of this Reserved Matters application. The proposed development is acceptable when a balanced judgement is made in accordance with paragraph 203 of the NPPF and Policy BDP20.

Revised Recommendation

That the Reserved Matters for layout, scale, appearance, and landscaping are granted subject to conditions as set out on pages 68-69 of the agenda.