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| No.4 | APPLICATION NO. | 2019/0799/WL3 |
| | LOCATION | 3 Beech Avenue Parbold Wigan Lancashire WN8 7NS |
| | PROPOSAL | External refurbishment including replacement of timber cladding with insulated render, replacement windows and doors, recovering of roofs and replacement porch canopies |
| | APPLICANT | West Lancashire Borough Council |
| | WARD | Parbold |
| | PARISH | Parbold |
| | TARGET DATE | 6th November 2019 |

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The proposed development involves the external refurbishment of a Council owned residential dwelling. This refurbishment including new render finish, replacement windows and doors, recovering of roofs and replacement porch canopy is acceptable in principle. It is considered the proposal will not have any significant impact on the street scene or visual amenity of the area. The proposal is considered acceptable in respect of ecology subject to suitable conditions mitigating impacts on bats and breeding birds. The proposed development is therefore considered compliant with the NPPF and Policies GN1, GN3 and EN2 of the West Lancashire Local Plan 2012-2027 DPD.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION- APPROVE with conditions

3.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 3.1 The site comprises of a two storey semi-detached dwelling which is owned by West Lancashire Borough Council. There is a drive with a grassed area to the front and a garden to the rear.

4.0 PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The application proposes the external refurbishment of the dwelling house including new render to all elevations, replacement windows and doors, recovering of roofs and replacement entrance canopy.
- 4.2 It is noted that owing to the proposed removal of timber cladding which may offer suitability for roosting bats, the application has been on hold whilst the requisite ecological surveys have been completed prior to determination.

5.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 Bat Survey. HB Bat Surveys (07.11.2019)
Phase 2 Bat Survey (19.08.2020)

6.0 PREVIOUS RELEVANT DECISIONS

- 6.1 None.

7.0 OBSERVATION OF CONSULTEES

- 7.1 **MEAS** (09.09.2020) No objections subject to condition.

8.0 OTHER REPRESENTATIONS

8.1 Merseyside and West Lancashire Bat Group (04.10.2019)

I note that this application includes the removal of timber cladding which can offer opportunity for bats. Prior to determination the cladding should be investigated by an ecologist to determine whether bat roost potential exists. If such potential is found then dusk emergence or and dawn re-entry surveys should be recommended and undertaken prior to the determination of the application.

8.2 Merseyside and West Lancashire Bat Group (23.12.2019)

We note the content of the Bat Survey undertaken. Due to the categorisation of moderate bat roost potential, we concur with the recommendations of undertaking additional dusk surveys. Request to place holding objection to this application until such time full bat activity surveys can be undertaken.

9.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

9.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the West Lancashire Local Plan 2012-2027 Development Plan Document provide the policy framework against which the development proposals will be assessed.

9.2 National Planning Policy Framework – (NPPF)

Section 7: Requiring Good Design

9.3 West Lancashire Local Plan (2012-2027) DPD – (Local Plan)

GN1 – Settlement Boundaries

GN3 – Criteria for Sustainable Development

EN2- Preserving and Enhancing West Lancashire's Natural Environment

Supplementary Planning Document – (SPD)

Design Guide (Jan 2008)

All the above Policy references can be viewed on the Council's website at:

<http://www.westlancs.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy.aspx>

10.0 OBSERVATIONS OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF PLACE AND COMMUNITY

10.1 The main considerations for this application are:

Principle of Development

Design

Impact on Residential Amenity

Ecology

Principle of Development

10.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the West Lancashire Local Plan 2012-2027 DPD provide the policy framework against which the development proposals will be assessed.

10.3 Paragraph 124 of the NPPF states that the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Paragraph 127, (part f) sets out a need to create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

- 10.4 It is my view that the principle of the external refurbishments to the dwelling house are supported by the NPPF. On that basis the principle of this development is acceptable provided it complies with other relevant national and local planning policies.

Design

- 10.5 The NPPF and Policy GN3 supported by the Council's SPD Design Guide requires that development should be of high quality design, integrate well with its surroundings, promote sustainable development principles and respect its setting. The NPPF states that planning policies should ensure developments will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development.
- 10.6 It is my view that the design of the proposed alterations are in keeping with the appearance of the existing building and the development does not adversely impact on the street scene and would better integrate the buildings within the local area. On that basis the development complies with the requirements of Policy GN3.

Impact on residential amenity

- 10.7 Policy GN3 of the Local Plan requires that new development should retain reasonable levels of privacy and amenity for occupiers of the neighbouring properties.
- 10.8 Due to the scale and characteristics of the development I am satisfied that there would not be any significant adverse impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties. I therefore consider that the proposal complies with Policy GN3.

Ecology

- 10.9 Policy EN2, Part 2 of the WLLP states that where there is a reason to suspect that there may be priority species or their habitat, on or close to a proposed development site, planning applications should be accompanied by a survey assessing the presence of such species and where appropriate making provision for their needs. This allows for the LPA to screen the projects against the Habitats Regulations and relevant national and local policy.
- 10.10 The proposed removal of timber cladding to the property can offer potential opportunities for roosting bats and as such the applicant has been requested to submit ecology reports in accordance with Local Plan Policy EN2.
- 10.11 MEAS have been consulted on the surveys and accept the findings which found no evidence of bat presence. As such they have advised the Council does not need to consider the proposals against the three tests in the Habitat Regulations and the proposal satisfies the requirements of Policy EN2.
- 10.12 As the building has moderate suitability for roosting bats and their habitat (timber cladding) will be lost to facilitate development, in compensation the erection of bat boxes is recommended and can be dealt with by condition. Built features on site may also provide nesting opportunities for breeding birds and therefore a condition relating to the timing of building works is also recommended.
- 10.13 Subject to the conditions outlined, the proposal is considered accordant with Policy EN2 of the Local Plan.

11.0 CONCLUSION

- 11.1 The external refurbishment of this residential dwelling is acceptable in principle and will not have any significant impact on the street scene or visual amenity of the area. The ecological impacts are acceptable subject to suitable conditions relating to bats and breeding birds. The proposed development is therefore compliant with the NPPF and the relevant policies in the West Lancashire Local Plan 2012-27 and is recommended for approval.

12.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 12.1 That planning permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions

Conditions

1. The development must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.
Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
2. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with details shown on the following plans:-
Number 3 Beech Avenue Proposed Plans and Elevations Dwg No: 007 received by the Local Planning Authority on 1st August 2019
Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure compliance with the provisions of Policy GN3 in the adopted West Lancashire Local Plan 2012-2027 Development Plan Document.
3. All external facing and roofing materials shall be as detailed in section 9 of the submitted application form received by the Local Planning Authority on 3rd October 2019. If the applicant or developer has any doubts as to whether the proposed materials do match they should check with the Local Planning Authority before commencement of the building works.
Reason: To ensure that the external appearance of the building(s) is satisfactory and that the development therefore complies with the provisions of Policy GN3 in the adopted West Lancashire Local Plan 2012-2027 Development Plan Document.
4. Details of the location of bat boxes to be incorporated into the scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The bat boxes shall be installed in accordance with the approved details prior to the commencement of the hereby approved refurbishment works.
5. No building works are to take place during the period 1 March to 31 August inclusive. If it is necessary to undertake works during the bird breeding season then all buildings are to be checked first by an appropriately experienced ecologist to ensure no breeding birds are present. If present, details of how they will be protected are required to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Notes

1. The applicant, their advisers and contractors should be made aware that if any bats are found during the works, then as a legal requirement, work must cease and advice must be sought from a licensed specialist.

Reason for Approval

1. The Local Planning Authority has considered the proposed development in the context of the Development Plan including, in particular, the following Policy/Policies in the adopted West Lancashire Local Plan 2012-2027 Development Plan Document:

GN1 - Settlement Boundaries

GN3 - Criteria for Sustainable Development

together with Supplementary Planning Guidance and all relevant material considerations. The Local Planning Authority considers that the proposal complies with the relevant Policy criteria and is acceptable in the context of all relevant material considerations as set out in the Officer's Report. This report can be viewed or a copy provided on request to the Local Planning Authority.