

Site: Oakdale, Pant Lane, Gresford, Wrexham

Development: Demolition of existing bungalow and construction of two dwellings

Planning Application Reference P2018/071

Appeal reference APP/H6955/A/19/3227191

Dear Sir,

We are aware that WCBC refused the planning application referenced above and that the applicant Mr McKinlay, has submitted an Appeal against the decision.

We live in the property Langside, next door to the proposed development and support the decision by WCBC. To this end, having considered the Appeal documents submitted by the applicant we would like the opportunity to provide further comments (in addition to our opposition to the planning application) for your consideration.

Having looked at the information and supporting documents on your website, in particular APP03 Statement of Case and APP03f Highway statement, we would like to submit the following.

1. Reason 1 of the Particulars of decision that permission was refused, identifies an S.106 Agreement would be required. As the owners of Langside this is not something that we would agree to as we believe that additional vehicles would compromise the safety of the existing vehicular accesses of Langside and neighbouring properties. The accentuated arc of the bend at that point in the road serves as a blind spot for the vehicles exiting properties along that stretch of Pant Lane.

There is barely a week goes by when, in exiting our drive in the car, that we have to reverse back momentarily or break and wait for cars to pass due to poor visibility in both directions. The access at Oakdale property is the same. Statement of Case Point 5 (c) is inaccurate. Case in point: On the morning of 13/06/2019 it was witnessed (by residents of Langside and Lynwood) that a car pulling out of Oakdale had to break sharply and drive back into the property due to poor visibility and having not seen the oncoming vehicle. This incident is not an unusual occurrence for residents and demonstrates the development would not provide a safe vehicular access. The bend presents a momentary blind spot for drivers and we exit our properties with enhanced caution!

At the point of writing, it is our understanding that WCBC Highways department had not reviewed the data detailed in APP03f. Our interpretation of the data details that during the period that the traffic flow monitoring occurred, 85% of the traffic was travelling within the 30mph speed limit, averaging 28-29mph. It is very concerning that 15% (>1 car in every 10) of the traffic monitored was identified to be travelling greater than the speed limit, and on that stretch of Pant Lane where there is a bend. Again, this demonstrates that some drivers routinely speed along Pant Lane. The associated risks are accentuated when some drivers (notably Carer's attending disabled OAP's multiple times daily) park on the bend, causing the flow of traffic to cross over onto the path of oncoming traffic. Images to this effect were taken on 3rd and 4th July and can be provided if necessary.

The description of the road layout in APP03f is inaccurate; there are no traffic calming measures on Pant Lane. To suggest Pant Lane is relatively lightly trafficked and carries

only that traffic associated with local residential needs is subjective and inaccurate and demonstrates that the author of the report is not familiar with the area. The amount of traffic has notably increased with people from outside the village travelling to Maes-y-Pant. Similarly, the opening of the Co-op store at the top of Marford Hill has resulted in a noticeable increase in traffic flow. Pant Lane is used as a regular route from Llay and the traffic is expected to increase even further when the new housing development that is underway is completed and there is also a proposal for the construction of an Aldi supermarket to be located at the Crown / Gresford Road area in Llay.

The woodland referred to in the report, is Maes-y-Pant, a 67.3-acre site purchased by the community as a recreational open green space. The site is undergoing a conservation management programme. Trees along the boundary of the proposed development is protected by a blanket TPO. Maes-y-Pant is extensively used by dog-walkers from the local area as well as from people travelling from Chester and neighbouring villages, as well as an educational resource for the local primary schools, and for outdoor fitness activities and conservation groups. A car park has been provided to accommodate the increase in vehicular activity. Due to the popularity of the site, parking regularly overflows onto Pant Lane.

2. We do not agree with the points raised in Statement in Case Point 5.3;

The proposed two-storey flat-roofed development in place of the existing bungalow will impact on the light (as detailed on the plans) alongside the boundary with Langside.

The proposed house at the rear of the development will encroach on the privacy and visual amenity of Langside (as it will No.3 The Confers) and we believe will significantly impact on our well-being. In our letter of opposition to the planning application, we submitted an image of the rear development with the boundaries extrapolated – visibility from the rear development encompasses the entirety of Langside property. The upper floor of the proposed rear development will overlook the rear of Langside, period, resulting in an unacceptable total lack of privacy.

There are no other developments in Pant Lane similar in design to the proposed development. The development would not accord the character of the site and would not make a positive contribution to the appearance of the locality. The material design is not in keeping with the area. It has been distastefully commented locally that the design is commensurate to that of the design of a Community Centre rather than a residential dwelling.

We concur with the Council's concerns and believe it would be at odds with the general pattern and character of the development in the area. The proposed development could not be more not in-keeping with the surrounding area. The development to the rear may not be readily visible in views from the public realm, but the neighbouring visual amenity will be severely affected.

Points in 7.8 are subjective and incorrect; Langside and Helm Rigg are bungalows, Westmead is a dormer bungalow. The proposed development is for houses, which will tower above the neighbouring bungalows. The development will impact on the privacy and visual amenity of the area.

Use of the word 'probably' is too subjective when the proposed plans readily detail the heights and the 45-degree shadow cast across Langside by the proposed front property which will result in loss of light.

We would like it to be noted that with respect to maintaining the privacy of the property Langside, when The Conifers development was undertaken, the proximity of the first floor of the house to Langside was restricted and no windows overlooking Langside property were permitted.

3. The Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Method Statement by Tree Solutions referenced in APP03 is inaccurate and incorrect.

Points 1 and 2 of the Statement of Case refers to T5 holly tree; implying one tree. It should be noted that there is not just one tree, there are a cluster of holly trees; notably two of which are mature and easily identified as a male and female of the species.

Contrary to the Statement of Case, none of the holly trees are on Langside property. The applicant is aware of this. Specifically, when he undertook the extensive removal of all the established trees and hedges prior to submitting the planning application, we approached the tree surgeon to let Mr McKinley know that we were not opposed to the group of holly trees being reduced in height or removed, as they had been left to grow rampant and precariously overhang the boundary of Langside. The response was that Mr McKinley had instructed the trees surgeon not to touch the holly trees.

There was no communication advising any of the adjoining properties that he was removing the mature hedge the length of the boundary with the properties in the Conifers and a small part of our boundary, which remains open access between Langside and Oakdale, as Mr McKinley has elected not to put anything in place of the laurel.

Mr McKinley has not attempted at any time to communicate with ourselves or any of the neighbouring community with his proposed development ideas. It is common knowledge that Mr McKinley secured the sale at a lower price than other prospective purchasers, having assured the son who agreed the sale, as executor of his late mother's estate, that he intended to live in the bungalow and intended to maintain the character of the property. Mr McKinley does not reside at the Oakdale; he lives and works in Europe, occasionally visiting the property in Gresford. The bungalow was let for a period prior to the planning application. Mr McKinley does not interact with the community and has no regard for his neighbours. It is evident that the purchase of Oakdale was purely for commercial gain.

As residents of Langside, Pant Lane, we respectfully request that you reject the Appeal submitted by Mr McKinley and uphold the decision by Wrexham County Borough Council to refuse application P/2018/7013.

Yours faithfully,

Mr Eric Nicholls & Mrs Denise Nicholls