DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2016/0373	**THE DIMBLE**	**RETENTION OF A DWELLING**
Valid 16/06/2016	**LIMEKILN LANE**	**WITH BASEMENT**
	ALTON	
		(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

- Conservation Area
- Within the Alton Larger Villages Area Development Boundary
- Design
- Neighbour Amenity

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The site is a recently completed detached house on three levels built following grant of planning consent SMD/2013/1161 for a detached bungalow. The development is narrowly outwith the Alton Conservation Area, the boundary of which runs north south alongside the western edge of the development. The land falls sharply away to the west dropping down to Dimble Lane. This land is included as garden with the property and includes some tree and shrub cover but it appears to have been subject to some significant tree pruning and shrub removal. The development is prominent and imposing on views from Dimble Lane within the Conservation Area.

PROPOSAL

The proposal seeks retrospective consent for a development which is significantly different from that approved. In particular the western gable elevation includes a basement level with patio doors and a retaining structure wall which extends the elevation to project southwards beyond the approved footprint. The eaves heights have been built to 2.9m whereas in the approved drawings the eaves were shown as being at 2.5m. The ridge height however is found to be c.7m, as in the approved development, save in respect of the western gable where the incorporation of the basement has resulted in a ridge height of c.9.5m.

In the original drawings submitted with this application a conservatory extension was proposed at ground floor level projecting southwards and above the extended basement wall. However the applicant was advised that this would be recommended for refusal due chiefly to its prominence and odd relationship resulting in poor design and it is no longer included.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Core Strategy Development Plan Document (Adopted 2014)

S01 Spatial Objectives
SS1 Development Principles
SS1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

SS6a Larger Villages Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
DC2 The Historic Environment
DC3 Landscape and Settlement Setting

National Planning Policy Framework
Paragraphs 1 to 17
Sections
7 – Requiring Good Design;
12 – Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS
SMD/2010/0414 two dormer bungalows, outline – refused
SMD/2011/0512 one dwelling, outline – approved
SMD/2013/1161 one dwelling, full – approved
SMD/2016/0139 rear conservatory – withdrawn

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity
Site Notice expiry date: 3rd August 2016
Neighbour consultation period ends:
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments
None received

Town / Parish Comments
Alton Parish Council – no objections

Highways Officer
No objection subject to conditions

Conservation Officer
There continue to be issues with this application as it is apparent that the building as a whole appears higher than the approved scheme and the combined impact of the basement storey and clearance of vegetation on the bankside has given this building an overbearing aspect on the Conservation Area below when viewed from Dimble Lane. The proposal for a conservatory will add further to the massing and prominence of the building as well as it not sitting comfortably with the design of the gable.

I cannot support the conservatory proposal and if the enlarged height of the dwelling and basement are to be accepted then mitigation needs to be proposed to help the building integrate with its surroundings which might be a combination of altering ground levels and planting to screen the lower levels.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development
The development in principle has already been established as being accepted by the grant of consent SMD/2013/1161 for a detached bungalow.

Design
The design of the development as built and as detailed in this retrospective application is in many aspects found to be of high quality and well suited to its setting. Concerns arise however in respect of the western gable elevation which is significantly more prominent than envisaged by the original approval. The proposal for the further addition of a conservatory in the prominent elevated SW corner was found to be substantially out of place and, following discussion with the applicant, was dropped from the scheme. A terrace remains and a balustrade is proposed as being necessary to protect its exposed edge to the west. The submitted revised drawing implies a modern glass panelled balustrade and this is likely to be considered appropriate but the exact details, not having been provided, need to be reserved by condition.

Amenity
There are no adverse implications for the amenity of neighbouring properties. Consideration has been given to the possible implications for the bungalow, Fellcroft, below and c.45m to the west but the formation of a terrace, whilst potentially having the impacts of a balcony due to its elevation relative to the west, in this situation is unlikely to be any more significant than a garden terrace used in association with the immediate rear of the house. The separation distance, intervening trees and garden vegetation will all serve to mitigate any impacts to acceptable levels.

Highway Safety
Acceptable subject to conditions. The conditions which applied to the original permission would need to be re-attached to this application if approved.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE
The scheme is generally of high quality appropriate for its proximity to the Alton Conservation Area. The western elevation however is of concern due to its prominence. A planting scheme on the slope of land below, towards the public road (Dimble Lane) to the west, would help mitigate this impact and on balance subject to a planting condition the development with the omission of the conservatory is considered acceptable.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : Approve

Case Officer: Arne Swithenbank
Recommendation Date: 26th September 2016

X 

Signed by: Haywood, Ben

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council