DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2017/0185 **Valid 21/03/2017**	**BENTLEY HOUSE** **NEWTOWN ROAD** **NEWTOWN** **BIDDULPH**	**PROPOSED 2 STOREY SIDE EXTENSION, SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION, DEMOLITION OF EXISTING GARAGE,** **(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)**

MAIN ISSUES

- Impact on Green Belt
- Design
- Amenity

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site comprises a parcel of land to the south of Newtown Road, set in a rural location approximately 2km north of Biddulph Moor within the Green Belt. The curtilage of the site contains a two storey residential dwelling (Bentley House), together with ancillary outbuildings, and a single storey garage.

The layout of the dwelling is such that the front principal (southern) elevation which contains the entrance to the dwelling sits on the opposite side to that which faces the public highway. An area of garden lies to the side and front of the house. The surrounding agricultural land to the south and east (south of Newtown Road), lies within the ownership of the property.

The site is bounded by Newtown Road to the north, which beyond that lies a cluster of building associated with Lower Brown Edge Farm set back from the public highway some 60m distant. To the east of the site on the northern side of Newtown Road stands a small number of scattered farmsteds of which the nearest is Middle Brown Edge Farm which lies approximately 120m away. Open agricultural land lies to the south and west of the site, with Saltsers Ford Farm being the closest farmsted in this direction some 200m distant.

The main dwelling is two storey and is constructed of natural stone. The dwelling stands at a height of 4.8m to eaves level and has an overall height of 6.73m. The roof is characterised by two chimney stacks which stand at either end of the dwelling.

The rear elevation which faces Newtown Road and the site entrance comprises a gable which comes out at right angles to the main dwelling which contains a ground floor study and first floor bathroom. A small lean to extension is present on this part of the dwelling which faces the access track and ancillary outbuilding which serves

as a utility room. The rear gable sits subordinate to the main dwelling standing at a height of 6.15m to the main ridgeline.

A single storey garage with a pitched roof sits in parallel with the front elevation and stands at a height of 2.53m. This garage appears to be in a state of relative neglect and is considered to have a negative influence of the character of the site.

The front (south facing) elevation is characterised by a standard layout which comprises an entrance door; two ground floor windows; and two first floor windows. The rear elevation which faces the public highway has a single ground floor window. This elevation is heavily screened from the road by natural vegetation.

The side (eastern) elevation is characterised by a gable end which incorporates two small non habitable windows and a set of double doors which opens out onto the rear garden area. The side elevation facing inwards to the site contains a ground floor window in the lean to extension and a first floor window.

PROPOSAL

As stated within the application form, the original plans (Drawing Ref: 1679/02) sought consent to construct a two storey side extension, a single storey sun room extension and the demolition of the existing single storey garage.

During the determination process, it was considered that the sun room would be unacceptable in design terms and that it would be more appropriate to incorporate a single storey extension to the side of the proposed two storey extension.

Subsequent revisions were submitted before a final design (Drawing Ref: 1679/02 Rev C) showed a side extension encompassed a downstairs lounge with additional bedroom space above. The final revised plan shows the ground two storey aspect of the side extension to protrude outwards from the side elevation by 4.0m. The single storey aspect of the extension is shown to extend a further 3.8m.

Following discussions with the applicant's agent, the design has been amended so that both aspects of the extension are subordinate to the main dwelling and to each other.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004 requires proposals to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan taking into consideration any material considerations relevant to the determination of the application.
The local development plan for this site comprises the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy (adopted 26th March 2014) and any relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD's).

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in March 2012 sets out the Governments planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. As stated in paragraph 2 of the NPPF, the document is a material consideration which must be taken into account in planning decisions.

Core Strategy Development Plan Document (Adopted 2014)

S01 Spatial Objectives
SS1 Development Principles
SS1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
SS6a Other Rural Areas Strategy
R1 Rural Diversification
DC1 Design Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework

Achieving Sustainable Development	Paragraphs 1-17
Requiring Good Design	Chapter 7

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/2005/00272/FUL Erection of Conservatory (Refused)

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 21st April 2017
Neighbour consultation period ends: 12th April 2017
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

No public comments received

Town / Parish Comments

Biddulph Town Council – No Objection

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

The site is situated outside of the development boundary within the Green Belt and is therefore subject to policies SS6a of the adopted core strategy and restrictive policies referring to Green Belt within Chapter 9 of the NPPF. The presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in policy SS1a of the adopted core strategy and paragraph 14 of the NPPF is therefore not engaged.

Policy SS6c of the core strategy refers to proposals outside of the settlement boundaries in open countryside or the Green Belt. It states that priority will be given to the need for protecting the quality and character of the area and requiring all development proposals to respect and respond sensitively to the distinctive qualities of the surrounding landscape.

Paragraph 87 of the NPPF highlights that as with previous Green Belt policy, inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

Paragraph 88 of the NPPF goes on to states that when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Paragraph 89 of the NPPF lists the type of development which are exceptions to inappropriate development. One such exception is "*the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building*."

The principle of development is therefore only considered to be acceptable if the proposal can demonstrate that it is not disproportionate to the original dwelling; respects the unique characteristics and qualities of the landscape; is of an appropriate high quality design; and does not result in any adverse impacts relating to residential amenity.

Impact upon the Green Belt

As set out above, NPPF policy allows for the extension and alteration of a building within the Green Belt providing it can demonstrate that it is not disproportionate to the size of the original dwelling.

There is no set definition within the NPPF or the adopted core strategy as to what constitutes 'disproportionate additions'. Previous policy attempted to quantify proportionate development as being up to a 50% increase in the overall volume of development. Whilst this policy has long since been revoked, it remains a useful tool to planners as a starting point for assessing an application and its impact on the Green Belt.

For the purposes of what constitutes the original building, it is considered that the main dwelling as exists today, which includes a small utility room, comprises the original dwelling for the purposes of paragraph 89 of the NPPF as there is no evidence available to suggest otherwise.

Based on the revised submitted plans the overall increase in volume of development stands at 39%. Both the two storey and single storey aspects sit subordinate to the main dwelling and to each other and as a whole is considered to represent proportionate development.

As such it is considered that that the application complies with restrictive NPPF policies relating to Green Belt as set out in Chapter 9.

Design

Policy SS1 of the adopted core strategy sets out a number of development principles which new development should adhere to in order to contribute positively to the social, economic, and environmental improvement of the Staffordshire Moorlands.

Policy SS1a of the adopted core strategy reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It states that planning applications that accord with relevant policies in the Local Plan will be approved without delay.

Policy SS6a of the adopted core strategy refers to all sites located outside of the settlement boundaries within the open countryside or Green Belt. The policy allows for the conversion, extension or replacement of an existing rural building in accordance with policy R1.

Policy R1 of the adopted core strategy relates to rural diversification. It states that appropriate development should not harm the rural character and environmental quality of the area.

Policy DC1 of the adopted core strategy sets out a list of design considerations that new development should incorporate into any new scheme. It states that all development shall be well designed and reinforce local distinctiveness by positively contributing to and complementing the special character and heritage of the area.

Chapter 7 of the NPPF highlights the importance of good design, that good design is indivisible from planning and should contribute positively to making places better for people.

The layout of the site is such that the front principal elevation of the main dwelling is viewed as the rear from the public highway and is well screened by natural vegetation from the main road. The application for a conservatory refused in 2005 was located to the rear (nearest Newtown Road).

The demolition of the single storey garage is considered to represent a visual improvement to the site given its current state, and as such will enhance the character and appearance of the open countryside in accordance with Policy SS6a and policy R1 of the adopted core strategy.

The original plans showed the proposals to include a conservatory/sun room which projected out beyond what is considered to be the front elevation to the south west. This was considered to be inappropriate design within the landscape context. The applicant's agent was advised that it would be more appropriate to incorporate a single storey side extension constructed of stonework which would relate better to the main farmhouse.

Following positive discussions with the applicant's agent, a further revised plan was submitted (Drawing No: 1679/02 Rev B) which incorporated a single storey extension to the side of the proposed two storey extension, constructed of matching materials.

The ridgeline of the proposed single storey extension would sit 1.22m below that of the proposed two storey extension and incorporate a chimney stack which is in keeping with the existing character and design of the main dwelling. A further revision was sought that showed the building line of the single storey to be set back slightly from the two storey aspect. This was duly submitted (Drawing Ref: 1679/02 Rev C).

This final revision shows the retention of a chimney stack on the single storey aspect of the extension. Whilst it would be more desirable for this chimney stack to be incorporated on to the two storey aspect in line with the existing chimney stacks on the main dwelling, it is considered that the chimney stack as proposed will retain some visual relationship with the existing small chimney stack to the rear of the property.

In light of the above It is considered that both the proposed two storey extension and subordinate single storey extension as shown in the further revised plan (Drawing No: 1679/02/ Rev C) respects the rural character and environmental quality of the area, and constitutes good design, in accordance with policies SS1, SS6a, DC1 and R1 of the adopted core strategy and relevant paragraphs within Chapter 7 of the NPPF.

Amenity

Policy DC1 of the adopted core strategy requires development to protect the amenity of the area, including residential amenity, in terms of satisfactory daylight, sunlight, outlook, and privacy.

Paragraph 17 of the NPPF highlights twelve principles that should underpin both plan-making and decision taking. One such principle is that planning should always seek to secure high quality design and good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.

The site is situated in a rural location and a relatively significant distance from any neighbouring properties. As such it is not considered that the proposed development will result in any adverse impacts regarding the residential amenity of any neighbouring property, and therefore the application is considered to comply with policy DC1 of the core strategy and paragraph 17 of the NPPF.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The application seeks consent for a proposed two-storey side extension, a single storey extension to the front elevation (stated as rear in application form) and the demolition of an ancillary single storey garage at Bentley House, Newtown Road.

The site is situated outside of the development boundary and is therefore subject to policies SS6a and R1 of the adopted core strategy. It is not subject to any restrictive NPPF policies as listed at footnote 9 to paragraph 14 of the NPPF. The presumption in favour of sustainable development is therefore engaged.

The original plans presented a two-storey side extension and a conservatory/sun room which projected outwards from what is considered to be the front principal elevation to the south west. Revisions were sought in the first instance to ensure that the extension sat subordinate to the existing dwelling.

Having reviewed these plans it was considered by the local authority that a single storey side extension constructed of similar stonework to the existing dwelling, subordinate to the proposed two-storey extension, would be more appropriate in design terms. Positive discussions with the applicant's agent resulted in further revised plans being submitted which are considered to relate well to both the proposed two-storey extension and the existing dwelling.

These revised plans are thought to accord with the design principles set out within the adopted core strategy and supporting SPD and constitutes sustainable development and demonstrate that the character of the open countryside will be maintained.

The removal of the single storey garage is considered to represent a visual improvement and will enhance the character and appearance of the site and the wider open countryside.

In conclusion, I consider the application to accord with all relevant national and local planning policies and constitute sustainable development. In the context of Paragraph 14 of the NPPF, this application is recommended for approval subject to appropriate conditions being attached.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: Approve with Conditions

Case Officer: James Stannard
Recommendation Date: 19TH June 2017

X B.J. Haywood

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council