

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2018/0436
Valid 09/07/2018

5
TENNIS CORNER CHURNET
VIEW ROAD
OAKAMoor

PROPOSED CONVERSION OF
GARAGE TO FORM
ADDITIONAL LIVING
ACCOMMODATION

(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)

MAIN ISSUES

- Principle of development;
- Design, visual impact and impact upon the Conservation Area;
- Neighbour amenity;
- Parking arrangements

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site is number 5 Tennis Corner, Churnet View Road, Oakamoor. The previously extended, end of terrace dwelling sits within a large, rectangular shaped domestic curtilage, fronting, but set back from, Churnet View Road behind an off-road, brick paved parking area. The dwelling forms part of a short row of terraced dwellings and has a pebble dash, render finish. Churnet View Road is characterised by short, terraced rows, sitting behind generously sized garden, parking, hard standing areas. Some of the terraces are designed to have eaves intersecting dormer windows. The applicant's terrace is a block of 5 dwellings with feature, forwards projecting gables. For the purposes of planning policy consideration the application site is located within the Oakamoor Village Development Boundary, Oakamoor Conservation Area and is covered by a relatively recently formed Article 4 Direction (made 20/07/2016).

PROPOSAL

The application is for the conversion of an existing integral, single garage to a dining room and utility. External alterations would involve the removal of the garage door and its replacement with a single width door and adjacent window. At the side of the house the applicant also proposes to insert two high level, non-opening and obscure glazed windows. As the proposed window and door combination will form smaller openings than the garage door, a section underneath the window would have to be infilled and the applicant intends for this to be finished with pebble dash render to match that used on the existing property. It is noted that the submitted drawings (proposed elevations and proposed floorplans) do not correspond. The proposed floorplan shows a window-door-window arrangement whilst the proposed elevations show a double pane window-single door arrangement.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Core Strategy Development Plan Document (Adopted 2014)

SS1	Development Principles
SS1a	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
SD1	Sustainable Use of Resources
DC1	Design Considerations
DC2	The Historic Environment
T1	Development and Sustainable Transport

Emerging Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan

National Policy Guidance

Paragraph 48 of the newly adopted NPPF states that:

“...decision-takers may also give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

- the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced the preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).

Local Plan process

The Council agreed to publish the Local Plan Submission Version for representations in February 2018. At this point, the Council agreed that the Local Plan was “sound”. Formal representations were then invited from residents, businesses and other stakeholders to provide them with the opportunity to support or challenge the soundness or legal compliance of the Local Plan. This stage in the process followed three previous public consultations since 2015 which had informed the preparation of the Local Plan alongside a comprehensive evidence base.

In June 2018, the Council subsequently agreed to submit the Local Plan Submission Version to the Secretary of State for examination. An examination in public will now be held this Autumn in order to determine whether the Local Plan is sound and legally compliant. Subject to the findings of the appointed inspector, the Local Plan is expected to be adopted in the Spring of 2019. At this point, it will supersede the adopted Core Strategy and become part of the statutory development plan for the District.

In this context, the Council’s position on the weight to be given to the policies contained in the Local Plan Submission Version in terms of the three criteria set out in Paragraph 48 of the NPPF is as follows:

- The stage of preparation – the Local Plan is now at an advanced stage of preparation as the Council has submitted it to the SoS for examination
- The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies – this varies depending on the policy in question. The Officer Comments section of this report identifies the level of outstanding objections to each policy and recommends the amount of weight to be given to them at this stage in the process
- The degree of consistency of policies with the NPPF – given that the Council has submitted a Local Plan that it considers to be sound, all policies are deemed to be consistent with the NPPF.

Emerging Policies

The following policies (including their weighting) are considered to be relevant to this application:

SS1	Development Principles (Moderate)
SS1a	Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development (Significant)
SD1	Sustainable Use of Resources (Limited)
DC1	Design Considerations (Moderate)
DC2	The Historic Environment (Significant)
T1	Development and Sustainable Transport

Supplementary Planning Guidance

1. Design Principles for Development in the Staffordshire Moorlands. New Dwellings and Extensions to Dwellings.

Supplementary Planning Document

1. Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide

Oakamoor Conservation Area Character Appraisal (July 2016)

National Planning Policy Framework

Sections

- 2: Achieving sustainable development.
- 9: Promoting sustainable transport.
- 12: Achieving well-designed places.
- 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

03/00661/FUL Vehicular access and single storey side extension. Approved.

12/00501/FUL	First floor extension to provide additional bedrooms. Approved.
PAD/2018/0022	Internal garage conversion to a dining room. Replacement of up and over door with windows.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 28/08/2018

Neighbour consultation period ends: 02/08/2018

Press Advert (Cheadle and Tean Times) expires 15/08/2018.

Public Comments: None received within the consultation period.

Oakamoor Parish Council: No objections to the application.

Conservation officer (SMDC): Only comment relates to the design of the infill. The resulting scheme would result in 3 doors in a row which would look rather odd in terms of the legibility of the property.

Flood Risk Management Team (Staffordshire County Council): The site is not within the uFMfSW 1 in 100 year outline and there are no recorded flooding hotspots within 20 metres or Ordinary Watercourses within 5 metres. There will be no increase in impermeable area, so no change in the surface water runoff generated by site. There are no surface water flood risk issues shown on the site. The site is partially within Flood zone 2, although this does not extend to the footprint of the proposed works.

Severn Trent Water: The proposal has minimal impact upon the public sewerage system therefore there are no objections and no drainage condition is required. Severn Trent Water advise that there may be a public sewer located within the application site. Although statutory sewer records do not show any public sewers within the area specified, there may be sewers that have been recently adopted under the Transfer Of Sewer Regulations 2011. Public sewers have statutory protection and may not be built close to, directly over or be diverted without consent and contact must be made with Severn Trent Water to discuss the proposals. Severn Trent will seek to assist in obtaining a solution which protects both the public sewer and the building.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

Although the application site is subjected to Conservation Area and Article 4 Direction restrictions this does not necessarily mean that alterations/extensions to dwellings within these areas are unacceptable in principle. In this instance the main matter to consider is that of design and visual impact upon the application dwelling and the surrounding Conservation Area.

Design/visual impact

In order to properly consider the impact of the proposed alterations upon the application dwelling it is firstly necessary to establish an understanding of its origins, importance, design features and impact upon its surroundings; this understanding can be obtained from information contained within the Council's Oakamoor Conservation Area Appraisal (C.A.A) (July 2016). The C.A.A identifies that by the time of the 1900 Ordnance Survey map there had been a rapid growth in the amount of housing within the Oakamoor area. This was concentrated on the flattened ground that formed the line of the old canal and was renamed Churnet View Road. Four terraces had been built by 1900 and a tennis ground cut into the hillside below the school (applicant's address is 5 Tennis Corner). Paragraph 5.2.5 states that most of the terraced cottages along Churnet View Road were constructed by Thomas Bolton and Sons to house workers at the expanded Brass and Copper Works within the village. Between 1900-1920 the second period of construction took place which included numbers 1-5 Tennis Corner with its ornate molded terracotta date plaque and initials FAB (Francis A Bolton) 1907. It is important to note that the C.A.A identifies each terrace as having a distinct style but notes that they have borrowed a number of elements from other traditional buildings in the locality, that their designs are very conservative and many share small-paned sash windows. Paragraph 8.9 states that the distinctive character of uniform terraces, in particular along Churnet View Road and at The Square, is being slowly eroded by incremental changes to windows and doors (applicable to this application).

Although this application is not for a domestic extension, the Council's adopted Design Principles for Development (SPG) and Design Guide (SPD) must be considered in light of their requirements concerning securing good design detailing. Importantly, after extensions/alterations have taken place, the original building must dominate so as not to lose its original character or its importance within the landscape/its surroundings. This application proposes a further incremental change to the character and simplicity of the original Thomas Bolton terrace. The two storey side extension has already contributed to unbalancing the terrace but the proposal was considered acceptable as it had been modestly designed, it clearly reads as an extension and includes appropriately proportioned window and door openings as well as matching rendering. The legibility of the original house has already been somewhat lost due to the insertion of the French doors (to the sitting room), their surrounding window openings and the small set of steps leading to the door. The size and central positioning of this doorway now means that it reads as the principal entrance and the white window/door frames draws attention away from the original front door. The adopted Design Guide (SPD) recognises that details can add interest to a building but the eye can be drawn to them resulting in them becoming a main or competing main feature of a dwelling. Traditional elevations tend to be simple with an uncomplicated arrangement of small window and door openings which are limited in number and give a strong solid to void relationship. Whilst the proposed floor and elevation plans do not correspond in terms of the design of the door/window arrangement they are sufficient in demonstrating that either arrangement would have a detrimental visual impact upon the simplicity of the dwelling by adding an overlarge opening. It is appreciated that the garage door opening is already there but it does not necessarily mean the replacement of a solid door with glazed openings is acceptable. The alteration would result in a very different and detrimental visual change, over windowing a principal elevation and visually weakening the visual

appearance of the front of the dwelling to the detriment of the host building and surrounding area. Whilst alterations have been made to some of the surrounding dwellings the C.A.A recognises the fact that incremental change (and therefore the requirement of an Article 4) can be detrimental and that there is identified concern that the character of the Conservation Area is under threat. The Article 4 Direction seeks to retain the traditional terraced houses and cottages and recognises the importance of retaining traditional building details. This scheme is more akin to the window/door arrangement normally found to the rear of dwellings.

Accordingly the proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the Conservation Area (a designated heritage asset) and as such the tests in the NPPF must be applied. Paragraph 196 states that *“where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.”* In this case there are no public benefits and the building is already in its optimum viable use as dwellinghouse. Therefore the balance tips to refusal of the application.

Neighbour Amenity

The scheme does not raise any neighbour amenity concerns. The proposed front door would not result in any neighbour overlooking due to the alignment/positioning of the application property with its neighbours. It is noted that the two proposed high level windows within the side elevation are to be obscure glazed. This would allow privacy for both the applicants and their neighbours at 1 Riverside, Churnet View Road.

Parking

The proposed works would involve the loss of a garage/parking space however it is not considered that this matter would justify refusal of the application. If the application was to be approved then there would still be plenty of off-road parking space to the front of the dwelling and no alterations are being made to the current drive/access arrangement.

Other Matters

Prior to the submission of this application the applicant did approach the council for pre-application advice. The pre-application scheme was slightly different to the submitted proposal now being considered. The applicant wanted to increase the size of the current French door opening and insert a full height, three pane glazed door. The photograph proposal appears to show that the new door would be of a concertina design and that this overall design would be replicated where the garage door currently is. Council officer's provided comments confirming that there were no concerns with the garage being converted into living accommodation but that there would be objections to the change of the existing window opening and that which would replace the garage door. The applicant was advised that large door/window openings would unlikely be supported, they are not features which would be expected to be seen at the front of a house.

Secondly, the planning agent has been made aware of concerns raised about the application and an alternative design idea has been suggested. It is likely that a single window opening, similar in size and design to that directly above the garage at

first floor level, may be acceptable but this would have to be properly considered at application stage and is not a binding opinion upon the Planning Authority. The agent declined the opportunity to amend the plans and accept an extension to the application determination period and confirmed that the application should be determined as submitted.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

Whilst there are no 'in principle' objections concerning alterations to Conservation Area and Article 4 Direction properties, other material planning matters must be considered in order to establish the acceptability of proposed schemes. In this instance the application property is a visually prominent end of terrace dwelling, its historical importance and character already being established within the main body of the report. It is considered that the proposed design alterations would have a harmful visual impact upon the design of the dwelling, the simplicity of the terraced row and the Conservation Area of which the site forms a part. This harm would be less than substantial but in the absence of any public benefit the planning balance tips towards refusal of the application.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: Refuse

Case Officer: Lisa Jackson

Recommendation Date: 31/08/18

X *B.J. Haywood*

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council