Planning Statement

Proposal: Demolition of an existing single-storey side extension and the construction of a replacement single-storey side extension (amendment to SMD/2018/0754)

Site: 2 Dunwood House, Dunwood Lane, Longsdon, Staffordshire, ST9 9QW

for Mr Peter Wright

Emery Planning project number: 19-357

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Project	: 19-357
Site address	: 2 Dunwood House,, Dunwood Lane,, Longsdon, ST9 9QW
Client	: Mr Peter Wright
Date	: 15 August 2019
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1. Introduction

1.1 This planning statement has been prepared in support of a householder application seeking full planning permission for the demolition of an existing single-storey side extension and the construction of a replacement single-storey side extension.

1.2 This application is an amendment to application SMD/2018/0754 which was approved on 13 January 2019.

1.3 The site is located within the Green Belt as identified in the adopted local plan. It will be demonstrated that the proposed extension would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. However, if it is considered to be inappropriate then there are very special circumstances that would outweigh any harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness.

1.4 The very special circumstances include the approved planning permission for a single-storey side extension which would have a similar footprint to that now proposed by this application combined with the visual benefits of the new design. The proposed extension would be smaller than the approved in terms of floor space but the current proposal no longer includes the demolition of the existing two-storey side extension.

1.5 There would be no harm to the character, appearance or openness of the Green Belt having regard to the site characteristics and the approved fall-back option. The proposal would meet the Green Belt policy test and therefore in accordance with paragraph 11 of the Framework planning permission should be approved. There are no material considerations to indicate otherwise.

2. Context

Site location and description

2.1 The application site comprises a two-storey detached dwelling with single and two-storey side/rear extensions and a detached outbuilding. There are 3 levels of accommodation within the house including a second floor within the roof space of the original dwelling.

2.2 The site is located on the west side of Dunwood Lane to the west of Leek. The house backs onto Dunwood Lane. The ground level of the house is approximately 5 metres lower than the road with its main front elevation facing the open countryside to the west. The property is bordered by agricultural land to the north and west and dwellings to the east and south.

Relevant planning history

2.3 The earliest planning application at the site relates to the construction of a part single-storey and part two-storey side/rear extension. The application was submitted in 1961 and given reference 2192/61T. The application was subsequently approved. The proposal would partially replace the extension approved under this application.

2.4 The above file has been reviewed and there is little information available but having regard to this, it has been concluded that the extent of the original building is that which is outlined in orange on the floor plans submitted.

2.5 An application was later submitted for the construction of a two-storey rear extension. The application was given reference 09/22531/FUL and was approved on 17 July 2009.

2.6 A prior notification application was submitted for demolition of an existing part single-storey, part two-storey side/rear extension and construction of single storey side/rear extension. This was submitted under the GPDO 2015, Schedule 2, Part 1, Class A. It was given reference HNT/2018/0014 and was granted on 29 October 2018.

2.7 A householder development application was then submitted for the demolition of an existing part single-storey, part two-storey, side/rear extension and the construction of a single-storey side/rear extension. The application was given reference SMD/2018/0754 and was approved on 13 January 2019. The current application proposes an amendment to this approval.

3. Policy context

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2018)

3.1 Paragraph 11 states that "*Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development*".

3.2 It also states that for decision-taking this means:

> c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
>
> d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
>
> i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed6; or
>
> ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

3.3 The following sections of the NPPF are considered relevant to the consideration of this application:

- 2. Achieving sustainable development
- 4. Decisions making
- 6. Building a strong, competitive economy
- 13. Protecting Green Belt land

The Development Plan

3.4 The Development Plan for the determination of this planning application comprises the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy. The relevant policies are referred to below.

Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy (26 March 2014)

3.5 The site is located within the Green Belt and a Special Landscape Area as identified in the adopted local plan.

3.6 The relevant policies of the local plan are listed below.

- Policy R2 – Rural housing
- Policy SS6 – Rural areas
- Policy SS6c – Other rural areas area strategy
- Policy DC1 – Design considerations
- Policy DC3 – Landscape and settlement setting

3.7 The above policies will be assessed in the following section of this statement.

Other Considerations

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan 2016-2031

3.8 The replacement local plan was submitted for examination on the 29 June 2018. It can therefore be afforded limited weight in the consideration of planning applications.

Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide

3.9 This documents provides guidance on alterations and extensions to dwellings

4. Planning considerations

4.1 There should be no residential amenity concerns due to the relationship and distance between properties. There should also be no highway safety concerns as there would be no increase in vehicle movements and the extension would not affect parking arrangements. Indeed these matters were not raised as concerns in consideration of the previously approved application.

4.2 As the site is located within the Green Belt the main consideration is the effect on the Green Belt. This was the main consideration in determining the extant planning permission. An assessment of the development against Green Belt policy is set out below.

Green Belt

4.3 Government advice in the form of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides guidance on the types of development that would be acceptable in Green Belts.

4.4 Paragraph 145 of the NPPF advises that the construction of new buildings will be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Exceptions listed include:

> *"c) 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;"*

4.5 Policy SS6c of the Core Strategy refers to rural areas and includes land within the Green Belt and states that *"Strict control will continue to be exercised over inappropriate development within the Green Belt allowing only for exceptions as defined by Government policy"*.

4.6 Policy R2 of the Core Strategy refers to rural housing and states that the forms of housing development listed will be permitted in rural areas and this includes *"Extensions to existing dwellings provided they are appropriate in scale and design and do not have a detrimental impact on the existing dwelling and the character of the rural area."*

4.7 The original dwelling had a floor area of 373 m^2, measured externally. This is outlined in orange on the floor plans submitted.

4.8 A part two-storey, part single-storey side/rear extension was added following the grant of planning permission in the 1960s.

4.9 A two-storey rear extension was added (stair case) following the grant of planning permission in 2009. As a result, the existing house has a floor area of 506 m^2, measured externally. This represents a 35.6% increase above the original dwelling.

4.10 An existing single-storey side extension would be demolished to allow the proposed extension to be constructed. The existing two-storey side extension was previously proposed to be demolished as part of the extant planning permission. However, this is now to be retained under the new scheme.

4.11 The proposed extension would increase the floor space of the house to 595 m^2 in total, an increase of 59.5% above the original dwelling.

4.12 The proposed extension would be subservient to the main dwelling and at a lower level than the road. As such, it would not visually appear prominent or a disproportionate addition to the original dwelling and would not result in any harm to the openness of the Green Belt. Planning permission should therefore be approved. However, it is noted that in considering the previously approved scheme the council were of the view it was inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

4.13 If like the approved scheme the proposal is considered to be a disproportionate addition to the original dwelling then there are very special circumstances to justify approval.

Very special circumstances

4.14 The Framework advises that inappropriate development should not be approved except in very special circumstances. It also advises that very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt is outweighed by other considerations. In this case, should it be considered that the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt then there are very special circumstances to justify the approval of planning permission.

4.15 Consideration must be given to the 'fall-back' position. The Encyclopaedia of Planning Law, paragraph 70.30 of the commentary to Section 70 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 states that "The planning authority are entitled, and indeed obliged, to have regard to the 'fall-back' position, i.e. what the applicant could do without any fresh planning permission".

4.16 It is therefore important to consider what alternative options the applicant would have for developing this site should planning permission be refused.

4.17 The fall-back option of implementing the approved scheme is capable of being a very special circumstance and should be given significant weight in considering the scale of the proposed extension. It is clearly in the landowner's interest to alter and extend the property and construct the approved scheme if they were unsuccessful in obtaining planning permission for the proposed extension. It is therefore a realistic and viable alternative to that currently proposed.

4.18 Planning permission has already been granted for the construction of a single-storey side extension. The extant planning permission would be in the same location as that currently proposed and would result in a house with a total floor area of 588 m^2, measured externally (57.6% increase). This compares the proposed scheme which, as indicated above, would result in a total floor area of 595 m^2, 7 m^2 larger than the approved (59.5%). This additional floor area is not material.

4.19 The approved scheme included the demolition of a two-storey side extension which would be retained as part of these proposals. The approved development has a footprint of 330 m^2 and the proposed development a footprint of 318 m^2. As such, although the proposed development would be 7 m^2 larger than the approved development in terms of overall floor space, as noted above, it would be also 12 m^2 smaller in terms of footprint.

4.20 Furthermore, there would be significant improvements to the appearance of the dwelling compared with the approved scheme. The proposal would have a lower overall height than the extant planning permission through the removal of the pitched roof design and associated reduction in volume. The improved design would also be more complementary to the existing dwelling compared with the extant planning permission.

4.21 In addition to implementing the approved planning permission, the applicant also has the option of constructing a side extension on the south side of the house using permitted development rights to achieve additional accommodation and that would further exceed the side of extension proposed by this application.

4.22 The fall-back options as noted above are significant material considerations and very special circumstances that would outweigh any harm by reason of inappropriateness. Due to its scale and location the proposed single-storey addition it would not be prominent from any public vantage points and would not harm the character, appearance or openness of the Green Belt.

5. Summary and conclusions

5.1 This application seeks full planning permission for the demolition of an existing single-storey side extension and the construction of a replacement single-storey side extension.

5.2 This application is an amendment to application to application SMD/2018/0754 which was approved on 13 January 2019.

5.3 The site is located within the Green Belt as identified in the adopted local plan. Given the scale and location of the extension it is not considered to be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. However, if it is considered to be inappropriate then there are very special circumstances that would outweigh any harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness.

5.4 The very special circumstances include the approved planning permission for a single-storey side extension which would have a larger footprint to that now proposed by this application combined with the visual benefits of the new design. The proposed extension would be marginally larger than the approved in terms of floor space but the reduction in footprint, height and volume and benefits to the appearance of the house compared with the extant scheme amounts to very special circumstances that would outweigh any harm by reason of inappropriateness.

5.5 There would be no adverse harm to the character, appearance or openness of the Green Belt having regard to the site characteristics and the approved fall-back option. The proposal would meet the Green Belt policy test and therefore in accordance with paragraph 11 of the Framework planning permission should be approved. There are no material considerations to indicate otherwise.