DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2020/0077	**LONG EDGE HOUSE**	**PROPOSED BAY WINDOW**
Valid 18/02/2020	**PINES LANE**	**EXTENSION**
	BIDDULPH PARK	
	BIDDULPH	**(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)**

MAIN ISSUES

- Green Belt
- Design

DESCRIPTION OF SITE
Traditional lone rural farm house style property with 19thC origins latterly extended and modified but essentially retaining rugged rural simplicity.

PROPOSAL
To attach a rectangular bay with hipped pitched lean-to roof towards the rear of a previously extended side elevation (1985 consent). The bay would project 0.94m with length c.3m and height 3.12m to top of lean-to roof slope. The bay would take the place of a modest side window of width c.1m forming an interior opening of c.2m width. The bay is proposed to have stone mullion uprights and would have a stone base wall with cill top at 0.8m height.



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
SS6c Other Rural Areas Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
DC2 The Historic Environment
DC3 Landscape and Settlement Setting
R1 Rural Diversification
R2 Rural Housing

Local Plan Submission Version (February 2018)
SS1 Development Principles
SS1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
SS10 Other Rural Areas Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
DC2 The Historic Environment
DC3 Landscape and Settlement Setting

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 is ongoing in order to determine whether the Local Plan is sound and legally compliant. Hearing sessions were conducted in October 2018 and the Inspector issued his initial post-hearing advice in January 2019 which set out some actions for the Council and a range of modifications that would be necessary to make the plan sound. The full schedule of modifications was agreed by the Council and the subject of public consultation between 18th September 2019 and 31st October 2019. The schedule consisted of modifications that the Inspector has deemed necessary to make the Local Plan sound. Following the consultation, the Inspector concluded that further hearing sessions were necessary to consider; proposals for safeguarded land at Gillow Heath in Biddulph, housing land supply, Local Green Spaces in Cheddleton (Ox Pasture), Biddulph (Dorset Drive and implications for the emerging neighbourhood plan) and Blythe Bridge. They were held on 4th and 5th February.

On 27th February, the Inspector issued his post hearing advice. Key recommendations in the letter include:

- The proposed safeguarded land at Gillow Health, Biddulph should be removed. Neither should the site be allocated for housing as requested by the landowners as the case for exceptional circumstances has not ben met. The land will remain Green Belt as per the Local Plan Submission Version agreed by the Council in June 2018.
- No further housing allocations in Biddulph are required.

- No further amendments to the housing trajectory are required aside from pushing back the predicted commencement of the Wharf Road, Biddulph site (excluding BDNEW) until 2022/23.
- Monitoring of housing supply will determine if a full or partial Local Plan review is required within 5 years.
- Land at Ox Pasture (Cheddleton) and Dorset Drive (Biddulph) should revert back to the Local Green Space designations as per the Local Plan Submission Version as agreed by the Council in June 2018.
- Other modifications were considered during the recent hearings sessions are necessary to make the plan sound, including; updating neighbourhood area housing requirements (Policy SS4) to reflect the latest monitoring data, updating the employment land area for the Tunstall Road allocation to reflect the masterplan and other adjustments to the wording of Policy SS4 and Policy DC2.

No further representations will be sought by the Inspector. As such, the Local Plan policies as proposed to be modified in September 2019 along with the Inspector recommended revisions (February 2020) provide a strong indication of the final policies likely to be adopted in the Local Plan. The Inspector's final report is expected within 2 months and will reflect the post hearing advice. The Council will be able to consider the adoption of the Local Plan at this point. As such, the plan is at a very advanced stage of preparation with some of the key outstanding objections now having been resolved following the February 2020 hearing sessions.

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 considered below:

- The stage of preparation – the Local Plan is now at an advanced stage of preparation as the main modifications have been subject to consultation
- The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies this varies depending on the policy in question – the Inspector wishes to explore outstanding objections on a limited number of issues at the February hearing sessions further before drawing conclusions.
- The degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to this Framework – policies have been modified to address soundness issues identified by the Inspector to date. It is the Council's view that the policies (as modified) are consistent with national policy. The Inspector has yet to draw final conclusions, particularly on the matters subject to further hearing sessions.

Given the above, the majority of policies (as modified) can be given substantial weight.

National Planning Policy Framework July 2018
Paragraph(s) 1 – 14;
Section(s) 4 – Decision making; 11 – Making effective use of land; 12 – Achieving well designed places; 13 – Protecting Green Belt Land; 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Local Adopted Design Guidance

Design Principles for Development in the Staffordshire Moorlands – SPG
Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide 2018 – SPD

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS
85/14250/OLDDC Extensions to form lobby and study with bedroom over and porch – approved – implemented

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity
Site Notice expiry date: 9th April 2020
Neighbour consultation period ends: 12th March 2020
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments
None

Town / Parish Comments
Biddulph Town Council – "no adverse comments"

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

General approach

In its general approach, in accordance with policies SS1 and SS1a, the Council expects the development and use of land to contribute positively to the social, economic and environmental improvement of the Staffordshire Moorlands. When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF. This means that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Core Strategy shall be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:

(a) any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or
(b) specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.

Policy SS6c for the rural areas supports only development which meets an essential local need and supports rural diversification and sustainability of the rural areas (or supports sustainable tourism or enhances the countryside).

In the rural areas outside of the development boundaries Policy SS6c is that strict control will continue to be exercised over inappropriate development within the Green Belt allowing only for exceptions as defined by Government Policy.

Subject to Green Belt requirements Policy SS6c provides for the extension of an existing rural building in accordance with policies R1 and R2.

Green Belt Extensions

The NPPF states at paragraph 144 that: "When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt."

The fundamental aim of the Green Belt is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. The Government identifies five purposes of the Green Belt:

- To prevent the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas;
- To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;
- To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic market towns and
- To assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Inappropriate development is by definition harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances (NPPF 143). '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 (NPPF 144).

NPPF paragraphs 145 and 146 set out specific exceptions by which certain forms of development can be considered as being not inappropriate in the Green Belt. One of these exceptions 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" (NPPF 145 c).

From wall thicknesses in the submitted plans it appears that the core original building had a plan area of c.78m2 and a building of length of c.15.5m. OS historic maps suggest a slightly longer building of 18m. This may be due to map discrepancy or perhaps that additional elements have been present at different times. The LPA considers that an additional 18m2 may have been present as of 1948 giving an original building plan area for planning purposes of 96m2. The 1985 approved extension and porch added 29m2 and the 'family room' to the west has added c.30m2. These pre-existing post 1948 extensions amount to an increase of some 60% in plan area over the apparent original building. Even increases in excess of 30% above the original may commonly be found disproportionate and this is more certainly the case once in excess of 50% which it is considered evidently the situation here. The proposed bay window extension would further exacerbate these impacts resulting it must be concluded in disproportionate additions and therefore contrary to the NPPF and policy SS6c.

Core Strategy policy R1 expects a balanced consideration of the extent to which a proposal protects and benefits rural qualities and supports rural economic and community needs stating that “appropriate development should not harm the rural character and environmental quality of the area”.

Policy R2 allows “extensions to existing dwellings provided they are appropriate in scale and design and do not have a detrimental impact on the existing dwelling and character of the rural area”.

Design

In design this proposed bay window with its lateral spread rather than up-right proportions and its hipped lean-to roof has design form akin to mid 20thC suburbia and is wholly out-of-keeping with the plain and solid vernacular simplicities of this rugged rural stone farmhouse style building. Traditional Moorlands farm houses such as this are characterised by small window openings, with vertical emphasis and a high solid to void ratio. The proposed bay window, is bay contrast a large expanse of glazing with horizontal emphasis with glazing also wrapping around the sides. This is considered to be out of keeping with the modest origins of the building. The problems are compounded in this proposal being on a side elevation where a dominant principal window is always unlikely and therefore further out-of-keeping.

The Council’s adopted design SPG is that extensions should be sub-ordinate and fit neatly with the old. In this plain-form side elevation the proposed bay presents an elaboration of the building rather than being sub-ordinate and is discordant in style and appearance.

The additional adopted 2018 design SPD makes the following points:

5.2 Alterations need to be undertaken with care. Insensitive changes can easily spoil a building…

5.4 It is best to use existing openings to the full, if necessary rearranging the functions of the rooms to suit, before considering their alteration.

5.5 All extensions should harmonise with the parent building…

5.8 Irrespective of size, however, all buildings can reach a threshold point beyond which further extension is just not possible without destroying their character.

Amenity

With no near neighbouring dwellings in the vicinity the nearest being in excess of 130m of this elevation there would be no conflicts of amenity such as privacy or over-looking to be of concern.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

Given the extent of previous additions – certainly in excess of 50% – over and above the size of the original dwelling taken as of July 1948 the additional c.3m2 of this

proposal would further exacerbate the overall sense of disproportionate additions and is therefore contrary to the NPPF and policy SS6c aims of protecting the Green Belt.

In design the broad lateral proportions of this proposed bay window extension are at odds with the upright relatively small form wall window openings of this building and the typical form of a rural building of this period and character in this area. The hipped lean-to roof is wholly out-of-keeping with the plain and solid vernacular simplicities of this rugged rural stone farmhouse style building as are the stone mullions which represent an aggrandisement again out-of-keeping with this humble erstwhile farm house dwelling. The problems are compounded in this proposal being on a side elevation where a dominant principal window is always unlikely and therefore further out-of-keeping. The proposal is therefore found contrary to policies SS6c, R1, R2 and DC1 and to the adopted design SPG and SPD.

Consideration has been given as to whether an amended design could be found acceptable but it is concluded that in this side elevation, coupled with the in-principle Green Belt conflict, there is no alternative scheme that could be suggested.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : refuse

Case Officer: Arne Swithenbank
Recommendation Date: 14th April 2020

X B.J. Haywood

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council