DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2020/0099 **Valid 25/02/2020**	**1 WILLOW END SPRINGFIELD DRIVE LEEK**	**PROPOSED SIDE EXTENSIONS** **(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)**

MAIN ISSUES

- Design, character and appearance;
- Impact on the residential amenity of nearby properties; and
- Highway safety.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

This application relates to a corner plot located between Springfield Drive to the east and Springfield Road to the west. The site is located within an area that is predominantly residential in character and is located approximately 40m to the south of the vehicular junction between Springfield Road and Buxton Road. The site is bound by residential properties to the north and east. The access road that serves numbers 2 and 3 Springfield Drive, which are located to the north of the application site, runs adjacent to the eastern site boundary. Springfield Drive serves to separate the application site and Leek High School to the south.

The application site comprise a detached circa 1950's dormer bungalow positioned centrally adjacent to the north site boundary. An attached flat roof single storey projection extends forward of the bungalow to the south west. Vehicular access is provided via Springfield Drive and off-street parking is located to the south of the bungalow. Landscaped gardens are located to the east and west of the bungalow and boundaries are serves by established hedge planting.

For the purposes of this assessment, the application site is located within the Leek Town Development Boundary.

PROPOSAL

This application seeks approval for the construction of a single storey living room extension the west elevation and a single storey office extension to the east elevation. The proposed extensions are to facilitate the wider internal reconfiguration of the bungalow.

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
SS5a Leek Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

Emerging Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan

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.

Emerging Policies:

SS1 Development Principles
1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
SS2 Settlement Hierarchy
SS5 Leek Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph(s) 1 - 14
Section(s) 12

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

There is no site history relevant to the determination of this application.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 06.04.2020
Neighbour consultation period ends: 17.03.2020
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

No comments received.

Town / Parish Comments

Leek Town Council – Refuse, is this retrospective?

Staffordshire County Council Highways

No comments received.

Severn Trent Water

No objection. No requirement for any drainage conditions.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) promotes a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. For decision takers 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 more important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission, unless: i) the application of policies in the Framework that

protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or ii) Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.

Paragraph 8 of the NPPF identifies three dimensions to sustainable development as being economic, social and environmental.

In accordance with policies SS1 and SS1a of the High Peak Local Plan/Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy the Council will expect all new development to make a positive contribution towards the sustainability of communities and to protecting, and where possible enhancing the environment. When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The application site is located within the Leek Town Development Boundary, where extensions to existing dwellings are considered to be acceptable in principle in accordance with local and national planning policy.

Design

Policy DC1 refers to design and seeks to secure development of a high quality designed to add value to the area and to respect the site and its surroundings. New development should promote a positive sense of place and identity through its scale, density, layout, siting, landscaping, character and appearance.

Paragraph 127 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires the design of a development to add to the overall quality of an area, by being sympathetic to local character and by being visually attractive as a result of good architecture.

The Council's Design SPD outlines the Council's expectations in respect of design and states that extensions should harmonise with the parent building. An extension should respect the dominance of the original building and be subordinate to it in terms of its size and massing.

This application seeks approval for two extensions, one to the east elevation and one to the west elevation. The proposed extension to the east elevation is to project 5m and is to measure 2.5m in width. A flat roof is proposed with an eaves level to match that of the existing dwellinghouse. Similarly external building materials are also to match those existing. The extension is to sit adjacent to the north site boundary, maintaining the 1m separation established by the existing dwellinghouse. The length and narrow layout of this extension is not considered to represent good design. However it is acknowledged that the extension meets the specifications of Class A, Part 1 of Schedule 2 of the Town and County Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended) and can therefore be constructed without the benefit of formal planning approval. As such a refusal on such grounds could not be substantiated at appeal.

The proposed extension to the west elevation is to project 2m and will measure 6m in width. Amended plans have been received to illustrate a raised deck that is to project 1m beyond the extension and then step down to the garden level below. The site slopes from east to west and accordingly the external ground levels to the west of the dwellinghouse are approximately 1m below that of the internal floor level of the dwellinghouse. The extension is to have a flat roof and external building materials are to match those of the host dwelling.

Due to the elevated position of the dwellinghouse compared to the highway level, the proposed extension would be visible from public vantage points along Springfield Road. Though the Council would ordinarily oppose the construction of a flat roof extension on the grounds of poor design, in this instance a flat roof respects the character of the existing dwellinghouse, which is of a typical 1950s design where a combination of steep roof slopes and single storey flat roof elements are distinctive. The flat roof is a continuation of the existing which is already visible from Springfield Road and the existing hedgerow does provide some screening so views are filtered. The proposed extension is proportionate to the scale of the existing dwellinghouse and would not be considered to appear incongruous within the streetscene setting. In this instance therefore a refusal on design grounds could not be sustained.

Amenity

Core Strategy policy DC1 and paragraph 127f) of the National Planning Policy Framework seek to secure development that protects the amenity, including residential amenity, in terms of satisfactory daylight, sunlight, outlook, privacy and soft landscaping.

The application site is bound by no.2 Springfield Drive to the north, which comprises of a detached dormer bungalow of a similar ilk to the host dwelling. The shared site boundary is served by an established hawthorn hedge. A carport serves to fill the gap between the south elevation of no.2 and the shard site boundary. The proposed extensions would not cross the 45 degree line taken from the nearest habitable room windows of this neighbouring dwellinghouse. No windows are proposed within the north facing elevation of the proposed extensions. The proposed decking is to project to a depth of 1m. The decking would therefore not present an elevated platform that would encourage individuals to gather at an elevated position. Furthermore, it would it not provide opportunities for overlooking back into neighbouring windows.

The site is also bounded by no 4 Springfield Drive to the east, but given the separation, which includes the Driveway to no.2 and the fact that the extension to this side could be undertaken under PD no other amenity issues are raised.

Highway Safety

Policy DC1 and T1 seek to achieve parking and access appropriate tot the development it serves.

The proposed development would not provide additional living accommodation. Similarly the development would not result in a loss of off-street parking. As such the development would not threaten highway safety.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

This application is considered to sufficiently accord with the relevant policies contained in the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy and National Planning Policy Framework.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : Approve

Case Officer: Lisa Howard
Recommendation Date: 21.04.2020

X B.J. Haywood

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council