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DEVELOPMENT CONSULTING
4 Ridge House, Ridge House Drive, Festival Park, S-O-T. ST1 5SJ
Office 01782 216912 WWW.FOREFRONTDC.COM

Supporting Statement

Detailed planning application for extension to dwelling at Dams Lane Cottage, Dams Lane, Gratton. ST9 9AJ

1. Introduction

This is a detailed planning application for the erection of an extension to an existing dwelling, known as Dams Lane Cottage, which has been substantially altered and extended in the past.

The dwelling lies on the southern side of Dams Lane and its residential curtilage extends east and west of the building

Dams Lane Cottage is located within the area of Gratton, close to Endon within the Staffordshire Moorlands district of Staffordshire, It is approximately 4 miles (6.4 km) southwest of Leek and 6 miles (9.7 km) north-northeast of Stoke-on-Trent. It lies within the designated Green Belt.

The dwelling is a four bedroom detached stone cottage situated on a substantial plot with established gardens to either side of the property mainly laid to lawn with mature trees as well as an orchard. The driveway provides ample off street parking with access to the property's garage, which is attached to the dwelling, The garage has a large games room at the rear. The field adjoining the site immediately adjoins the side and rear wall of the garage/games room.

The original property was a modest two storey traditional cottage and was extended substantially by a two storey extension to the west. After that the garage and games room element was added to the south of the house.

There is a single storey pitched roof partly open sided element linking across the west elevation of the house to join to the garage/games room wing. The garage doors face west and the front entrance door into the house also lies on the western elevation of the dwelling accessed from the driveway.

The northern elevation has eaves dormer window to first floor, looking across Dams Lane. The eastern elevation is the rear wall of the original cottage, and faces the rear garden.

2. Planning history

SMD/1980/0465 Extension to form patio, larger kitchen, hall, larger garage and billiard room. Approved and implemented.

3. Proposal

The plans are for a single storey extension to the western elevation of the dwelling. This with a flat roof behind a parapet detail. A lantern roof would be installed in the flat roof, mainly hidden from view by the parapet walls. The extension would extend sidewards to the south edge of the existing garage element. This front extension would project 3.6m from the two storey western gable of the existing house.

The plans also include a small narrow infill extension between the house and the games room wing. This would have a floor area of 8.5 sq.m.

The works will not affect heritage or biodiversity assets. There are no nearby neighbours whose amenities would be affected the extension. Highway and parking issues would be unchanged.

4. Relevant Planning Policies

Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2014)

SS1 Development Principles

SS6c Other Rural Areas Strategy

SD1 Sustainable Use of Resources

DC1 Design Considerations

DC3 Landscape and Settlement Setting

R1 Rural Diversification

R2 Rural Housing

Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide SPD

Design Principles for Development SPG

National Planning Policy Framework

Achieving Sustainable Development Chapter 2

Promoting Sustainable Transport Chapter 4

Achieving Well Designed Places Chapter 12

Protecting Green Belt Land Chapter 13

5. Principle of Development

The application site lies outside the development boundary in the open countryside in the North Staffordshire Green Belt.

National planning policy on development in the Green Belt is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, which advises that the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and permanence. There is a general presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt unless very special circumstances exist.

The Council's approach to extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt is set out in policy SS6c of the Core Strategy which references the exceptions as defined by Government policy.

Policy SS10 of the Emerging Local Plan and allows for extensions and alterations to rural dwellings in accordance with Policy R2, which supports extensions to existing dwelling 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.

Paragraph 143 of the NPPF states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 145 sets out the types of development that are not deemed to be inappropriate development, and thus acceptable in principle (subject to all other material considerations). One such exception includes:

"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 definition of original building is contained within Annex 2 of the NPPF and comprises the building as it stood on 1st July 1948 or if built after that date. In the case of this application the original dwelling forms the eastern part of the present dwelling. Post 1948 the original dwelling has been extended to the west and then further by the garage/games room element.

There is no definition within the Staffs Moorlands Core Strategy or indeed the NPPF as to what constitutes 'disproportionate additions', and as such, each proposal for extensions and alterations in the Green Belt should be determined on its own individual merits.

A useful starting point for assessing whether proposed extensions represent 'disproportionate additions' is to calculate the overall percentage increase in floor area and overall volume (comparable to the original building) as a result of the additions. In many cases a percentage increase of up to between 30-40% over and above the original building is usually considered to satisfy the test as to whether proposed extensions represent 'disproportionate additions'.

Disproportionate extensions are inappropriate and therefore harmful to the openness of the Green Belt, and not usually acceptable. Dams Lane Cottage has been enlarged considerably more than might be considered proportionate additions if a percentage based analysis is used.

Nevertheless an implicit part of this consideration is whether harm, by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, be clearly outweighed by other considerations. If so, would this amount to the very special circumstances required to justify the proposal.

In the case of Dams Lane Cottage the very special circumstances constitute Permitted Development Rights.

The eastern elevation of the house is the rear wall of the original dwelling facing into the rear garden. This part of the dwelling could still be extended without requiring planning permission by utilising Permitted Development Rights. Specifically under

Schedule 2, Part 1 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (“the Order”) as amended, a single storey extension could be added to the eastern elevation providing

1. Only half the area of land around the "original house" is covered by extensions or other buildings.
2. Extensions are not higher than the highest part of the existing roof; or higher at the eaves than the existing eaves.
3. Where the extension comes within two metres of the boundary the height at the eaves does exceed three metres.
4. Extensions are not built forward of the ‘principal elevation’ or, where it fronts a highway, the ‘side elevation’.
5. The work does not include:

- Verandas, balconies or raised platforms.
- A microwave antenna (e.g. TV aerial or satellite dish).
- A chimney, flue or soil and vent pipe.
- Any alteration to the roof of the existing house.

6. The materials used in any exterior work are of a similar appearance to those on the exterior of the existing house.
7. Single-storey rear extensions cannot extend beyond the rear wall of the original house by more than four metres if a detached house; or more than three metres for any other house.
8. Single-storey rear extensions do not exceed four metres in height.

This means that a single storey stone extension could be added to the eastern elevation of Dams Lane Cottage with a depth of 4m max and a height not exceeding 4m. This could be constructed without requiring planning permission although it would represent a disproportionate addition to the original dwelling.

The applicants however wish to extend to the western elevation of the property, as this suits their requirements best. In this location a similar sized extension would not constitute Permitted Development as it would not be added to the rear wall of the original house.

It is considered that the potential to add an extension to the eastern elevation is a relevant factor and constitutes a “Fall Back” position, which has a reasonable expectation of being built if planning permission was not granted for the western extension.

The proposed western extension would project 3,6m and have a height of less than 4m. This is smaller than the PD eastern extension

The proposed plans for the western extension would enlarge the kitchen/diner. The “fall back Extension” to the east would extend the lounge but with internal changes could provide a kitchen diner, with the lounge relocated to the western part of the house. Accordingly there is a reasonable expectation that if the western extension is not allowed, the eastern extension would be built.

In floor area and percentage changes the Permitted Development eastern extension and the proposed western extension the subject of this application, together with the southern infill addition, are approximately the same.

Accordingly the same reduction in the openness of the Green Belt would arise if the Permitted Development extension were built. These constitute very special circumstances sufficient to justify the erection of the extension proposed.

Under such circumstances it would be relevant to remove Permitted Development Rights for the potential eastern extension if planning permission were granted. The clients are in agreement to this.

6. Conclusion

It is considered that very special circumstances exist to justify the proposed Development, because of the potential to add a similar sized extension to the eastern elevation as Permitted Development. There is a reasonable potential that the Permitted Development extension would be built if planning permission is refused. Either extension would have the same impact on the openness of the Green belt.

The Local Planning Authority is therefore requested to grant planning permission for the proposed development.