DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2020/0136 **Valid 10/03/2020**	**TROUGHSTONES FARM** **TROUGHSTONES ROAD** **BIDDULPH COMMON**	**PROPOSED TWO AND SINGLE STOREY EXTENSION** **(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)**

MAIN ISSUES

- Impact on the character and appearance of the existing dwellinghouse and the surrounding area.
- Impact on neighbouring amenity.
- Impact on highway safety.
- Whether the proposed development comprises an exception to inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site comprises a detached, previously extended dwellinghouse located in an isolated position within the Green Belt. Vehicular access to the dwelling is from a private track on the northern side of the property. Parking and turning space is provided within the grounds including a detached garage.

PROPOSAL

Full planning permission is sought to erect a two-storey and single storey extension.

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
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

Emerging Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan

On July 20th 2020, the Council published the Inspector's final report thereby drawing a close to the examination in public. The report concludes that with the recommended main modifications, the plan satisfies the requirements of Section 20(5) of the 2004 Act and meets the criteria for soundness in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). As such, the main modifications which accompany the Inspector's report provide a clear indication of the final policy wording when read in conjunction with the Local Plan Submission Version (2018).

In this context, the Council's position on the weight to be given to the policies (as modified) 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 the most advanced stage of preparation prior to adoption as the Inspector has concluded that the Local Plan is sound subject to the recommended modifications being made.
- The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies – the Inspector has now drawn his final conclusions and there are no further matters to resolve
- The degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to this Framework – the policies (as modified) have been found by the Inspector to be sound in the context of the 2012 NPPF under which the Local Plan has been examined. One of the "tests of soundness" that the Local Plan has successfully been measured against is whether it is "consistent with national policy". Because the Local Plan has been prepared and examined under the 2012 NPPF, it should be noted that in some limited cases, its policies do not directly reflect current national policy. However, planning law requires that applications be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Current national policy is a material consideration and should be given weight accordingly.

Given the above, all policies (as modified) should be given substantial weight.

Emerging Policies:

SS1 Development Principles
1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
SS2 Settlement Hierarchy
SS10 Other Rural Areas Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph(s) 1 - 14
Section(s) 4, 12, 13

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/1984/0119 Two-storey extension to form porch with bathroom over
Approved

SMD/2002/1286 Single storey extension
Approved

SMD/2018/0746 Two-storey extension
Refused
Dismissed on appeal (APP/B3438/D/19/32299)

SMD/2019/0017 Lawful development certificate for a proposed single storey side extension and single storey rear extension
Negative certificate issued

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 28/05/2020
Neighbour consultation period ends: N/A
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments: None

Town / **Parish Comments**: Biddulph Town Council make the following comments: This seems to be well out of the way, no problems for neighbours. The extension is out from the rear of the house and a new footprint. Recommend as long as it doesn't contravene the Green Belt

Severn Trent Water: No objections to the proposals and do not require a drainage condition to be applied.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Planning History

Planning application SMD/2018/0746 sought permission for a two-storey extension on the same footprint as the extensions proposed by this application. The application was refused on the grounds of inappropriate development in the Green Belt and an unacceptable design.

The application was appealed to the Secretary of State (ref: APP/B3438/D/19/32299) and dismissed on 19th July 2019. The Planning Inspector concluded that the additions would go beyond what could reasonably be considered to be proportionate additions and therefore they would constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt. The Inspector however did not agree with the Local Planning Authority that the extension's bulk and size would adversely affect the character and appearance of the dwellinghouse.

The Planning Inspector attached limited weight to the applicant's requirement for additional floorspace, limited weight to the removal of the non-conforming dormer window and limited weight to the extant single storey extension. The Inspector did acknowledge the potential of a permitted development fallback position. However as the applicant had not applied for a Lawful Development Certificate, nor had any detailed plans or Building Regulations approvals been submitted, he considered the fallback position to be a theoretical exercise to which he afforded limited weight.

Since the 2018 application was dismissed on appeal, the applicant submitted a Lawful Development Certificate to the Local Planning Authority, obviously in

response to the Planning Inspector's comment within his decision letter. The Local Planning Authority issued a negative certificate for the proposed extensions.

Principle of Development/Green Belt

Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2019) 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 (2019) identifies three dimensions to sustainable development as being economic, social and environmental. In accordance with policies SS1 and SS1a of the 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 NPPF (2019).

The application site is located in the Green Belt. Policy SS6c 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. Paragraphs 143 and 144 of the NPPF (2019) states *'that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances'* and *'when considering a planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt'*.

Paragraph 144 of the NPPF (2019) states, *'local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations'.*

Paragraph 145 of the NPPF (2019) states that Local Planning Authorities *'should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt'* however exceptions to this 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'*.

Historical maps of the application site indicate that the original building comprised a simple rectangular shape. The property has been extensively extended since it was erected however it is unclear exactly when all of the additions were added.

For the purposes of Green Belt policy, the NPPF (2019) clarifies within its glossary that *'original building'* is defined as '*a building as it existed on 1st July 1948 or, if constructed after 1st July 1948, as it was originally built'*. The building was erected prior to 1st July 1948. From historical maps dating between 1937 and 1939, it is noted that the property had been extended since it was originally built. Taking this as the best guide as to what would be classed as the 'original building' as of 1st July 1948 and noting the Local Planning Authority's own planning history of the property, it can be confidently said that the property has been extended with:

- A single storey to the western elevation;
- A single storey adjoining the previously detached outbuilding; and
- A two-storey extension to form a porch and bathroom.

Further to this, the property was granted planning permission in 2002 for a single storey extension. The footings and floor slab for this extension are in place and the permission is extant.

The existing extensions, together with the extant single storey extension equate to an increase in floorspace of 48% and therefore already comprise disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. It is also unclear why the Local Planning Authority granted permission for the extant extension given its scale and impact on the openness of the Green Belt. However this was some 18 years ago.

Increasing the dwellinghouse with a further first floor extension above the already extant single storey extension (as proposed by this application) will result in an increase in floorspace of 61% over and above the size of the original building. Cumulatively the existing, extant and proposed extensions will comprise disproportionate additions that are inappropriate development in the Green Belt. No very special circumstances have been advanced by the applicant or their agent. No very special circumstances therefore exist that would clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness. The development is contrary to paragraph 145 of the NPPF (2019) and policy SS6c of the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy (2014).

Design

Policy DC1 refers to design and seeks to secure development of a high quality which is 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 NPPF (2019) 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.

The proposals involve an ‘L’ shaped footprint (derived from the implementation of application 02/01183/FUL for a single-storey extension; the floor slab and footings of which have already been constructed). The application has been amended from the recently refused/dismissed application (SMD/2018/0746) in that the first floor of the extension has been reduced. The two-storey extension will now extend from the projecting porch/wc for 5.3 metres, with the remainder of the L-shaped footprint being single storey. The two-storey extension will have a pitched roof that will have an eaves height that is marginally lower than the eaves of the existing dwellinghouse, whilst the ridge height will be the same. The single storey part of the proposed extension will have a part hipped/part pitched roof that ties into the blank gable of the two-storey extension. The extensions will be constructed of stone and tiles to match the existing dwellinghouse.

The extension will be located centrally on the property and will project over 9 metres from the existing elevation, creating an unusual arrangement. The joining of the single storey extension to the two-storey extension results in an awkward roof design and a mismatch of roof shapes, resulting in an incongruous design. The extensions will not relate well to the size and proportions of existing the building or the overall form and bulk of the house. The large new ‘wing’ of the house and new front door would take the focus away from the original building, losing its principality.

It is acknowledged that the Planning Inspector in the recently dismissed appeal did not share the Local Planning Authority’s concerns regarding the design of the proposed extension. However this scheme differs from the previously dismissed scheme which has introduced new features that aren’t considered acceptable in design terms.

It is appreciated that the scheme would remove a sloping dormer but this is a small feature which sits within the roof slope and does not interrupt the identifiable eaves line of the building whereas the extensions will mask a lot of the northern elevation. The Planning Inspector afforded this limited weight when weighing the planning balance in the recently dismissed appeal.

Impact upon the wider landscape will be limited however footpath Number 32 (Biddulph Town) runs to the west of the dwelling with part of the route running along the access track from Troughstones Road.

It is acknowledged that the proposals are being influenced by the extant single storey extension however this should not be the reason why a poorly designed extension should be accepted. The Planning Inspector also afforded the extant extension limited weight when weighing the planning balance in the recently dismissed appeal.

For these reasons it is concluded that the proposed extensions are unacceptable in terms of their design, visual impact and overall size. They will therefore be contrary to policy DC1 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy (2014) and the NPPF (2019).

Amenity

Core Strategy policy DC1 and paragraph 127(f) of the NPPF (2019) seek to secure development that protects amenity, including residential amenity, in terms of satisfactory daylight, sunlight, outlook, privacy and soft landscaping.

The application site comprises an isolated property in the Green Belt. There are therefore no amenity issues associated with the proposed extensions.

Highway Safety

Policies DC1 and T1 seek to achieve a level of parking and an access that is appropriate to the development it serves.

The application proposes no alterations to the vehicular access or the parking and turning areas within the site. There is ample space within the site to accommodate the parking requirements for a 5 bed dwelling. The Local Plan submission version requires 3 spaces for dwellings with 4 or more bedrooms and this site can achieve this standard.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The application site is located within the Green Belt where development is strictly controlled. The size of the proposed extensions (when considered cumulatively with the previous additions) would result in disproportionate additions to the original building. The proposed extensions will therefore reduce openness and comprise inappropriate development within the Green Belt. No very special circumstances have been demonstrated. The proposal is contrary to policy SS6c of the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy (2014), the NPPF (2019) and policy SS10 of the emerging Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan.

The 'L' shaped extensions would add considerable and disproportionate bulk to the dwelling and will not relate well to the dwelling's existing design and proportions, particularly in respect of the roof design to the single storey extension. The proposed extensions do not harmonise or integrate well with the parent building, they aren't subordinate in terms of size and massing and they dominate the original building. The extensions are contrary to policy DC1 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy (2014), the NPPF (2019) and policy DC1 of the emerging Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan.

For these reasons it is recommended that the application is refused.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: REFUSE

Case Officer: Ailsa Berry
Recommendation Date: 19/08/2020

X 

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council