**DELEGATED DECISION REPORT**

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| **SMD/2020/0411** | **54 WINDSOR DRIVE** | **PROPOSED ENLARGEMENT** |
| **Valid 29/07/2020** | **LEEK** | **OF PARKING AREA** |
| | | **(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.

**DESCRIPTION OF SITE**

The application site comprises a detached bungalow that is raised above the height of the road by approximately one storey. A flat roofed garage projects forward of the bungalow at street level and a parking space is located adjacent to the garage with a retaining wall behind. To the side of the parking space is a terraced front garden. Pedestrian access to the bungalow is via steps located to the side of the existing garage.

The application site is located on a residential street within the Development Boundary of Leek. The properties on the eastern side of the road are built at a height of approximately one storey higher than the road, whilst the properties on the western side of the road are built at a height of approximately one storey lower than the road. The street scene comprises a mix of detached and semi-detached bungalows and two-storey dwellings. To the rear of the property is a playing field, with the rear garden boundary forming the edge of Leek's Development Boundary.

**PROPOSAL**

Full planning permission is sought to extend the existing parking area to the front of the property by excavating part of the front garden and extending the existing retaining wall. Part of the existing dwarf boundary wall with railings on top will be removed from the front boundary and railings will be placed along the edge of the retaining wall.

**RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES**

**Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (Adopted Sept 2020)**

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) 4, 12

**SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS**

None

**CONSULTATIONS**

**Publicity**

Site Notice expiry date: 26/10/2020
Neighbour consultation period ends: 25/08/2020
Press Advert: N/A

**Public Comments:** None

**Town / Parish Comments:** Leek Town Council recommends the application for approval subject to the following comment: Not unneighbourly.

**Severn Trent Water:** No objection and do not require a drainage condition to be applied.

**Staffordshire County Council Highways:** No objection subject to a condition in respect of the installation of a surface water drainage interceptor and an informative in respect of dropped kerbs.

**OFFICER COMMENTS**

**Principle of Development**

The dwellinghouse is located within the Development Boundary of Leek; a 'town' as identified by Local Plan policies SS2 and SS5. Extensions to dwellinghouses in towns are considered acceptable in principle as they accord with both local and national planning policy.

**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 *'alterations need to be undertaken with care. Insensitive changes can easily spoil a building…The aim is to revitalise the building without altering its fundamental character'*.

The proposed development will result in the existing tiered, largely hard landscaped, front garden being excavated to the same level as the property's existing parking space and the existing stone retaining wall will be extended behind the new parking area. A section of the existing dwarf wall with railings on top will be removed from the front boundary to allow a vehicle to access the newly created area of hardstanding. A 1.1 metre high railing will be erected on top of the existing and extended retaining wall to prevent anyone falling. The proposal will reflect the design and materials of the existing parking area, retaining wall and boundary treatment and therefore will not have an unacceptable impact on the character or appearance of the existing dwellinghouse.

A key feature of the eastern side of Windsor Drive is flat roofed garages projecting forward of the building line, at a lower-ground level than the dwellings, level with the road and hard engineered and/or excavated front gardens with retaining walls that provide off-street parking spaces or steep driveways. The proposed development will therefore reflect the character and appearance of the street scene and will not appear out-of-character.

**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.

A key characteristic of the eastern side of Windsor Drive is flat roofed garages and parking spaces located below, and projecting forward of, the ground floor of the dwellinghouses, within the front gardens of the properties. The proposed development will extend the existing parking area closer to No. 52 Windsor Drive, however this will be adjacent to No. 52's driveway and detached garage. It is therefore not considered that the proposed development will have an adverse effect on neighbouring amenity.

**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 Highway Engineer has assessed the application and raises no objection subject to a condition that requires a surface water drainage interceptor, connected to a surface water outfall to be provided across the access prior to the use of the development hereby approved. The Engineer also recommends an informative be

attached to the Decision Notice should there be a requirement for a dropped kerb to be provided. Subject to the imposition of the aforementioned condition and informative, the proposed development does not raise any issues on highway safety grounds.

**CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE**

For the reasons outlined above, the proposed development is considered to accord with the relevant policies contained in the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (2020) and the NPPF (2019). As such the application is recommended for approval.

**OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE subject to Conditions**

**Case Officer: Ailsa Berry**
**Recommendation Date: 27/10/2020**

X B.J. Haywood

Signed by: Ben Haywood

**On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council**