SMYTHEMAN ARCHITECTURAL

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Planning Statement

Single storey rear extension to provide 'Sun Room' / Study area to:
Rock Cottage, Bagnall Road, Bagnall, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST9 9JY

Householder planning permission
PP-09246845

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1.0 Introduction

This Planning Statement has been prepared by Smytheman Architectural in support of an application for ‘Householder Planning Permission’ submitted to Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (SMDC).

This is commissioned on behalf of applicants Mr & Mrs A Lyttleton, who live at the site; ‘Rock Cottage’.

This purpose of this document is to demonstrate the applicant and agent have carefully considered the site, the building and the wider context when formulating the proposals taking on board the advice from Pre-Application discussions with the Local Authority.

This document should be read in conjunction with the following drawings:

Existing & Proposed Drawings by ‘Smytheman Architectural’

- RCAL-SA-XX-XX-VS-A-0001_Existing_Massing_&_Axo
- RCAL-SA-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0201_Existing_Plan_Elevations_&_Location
- RCAL-SA-XX-XX-VS-A-0002_Proposed_Visuals_&_Axo
- RCAL-SA-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0202_Proposed_Plan_Elevations_&_Block_Plan

2.0 Location & Site

National Grid Reference: **SJ 92900 50240**
Easting: **392900**
Northing: **350240**

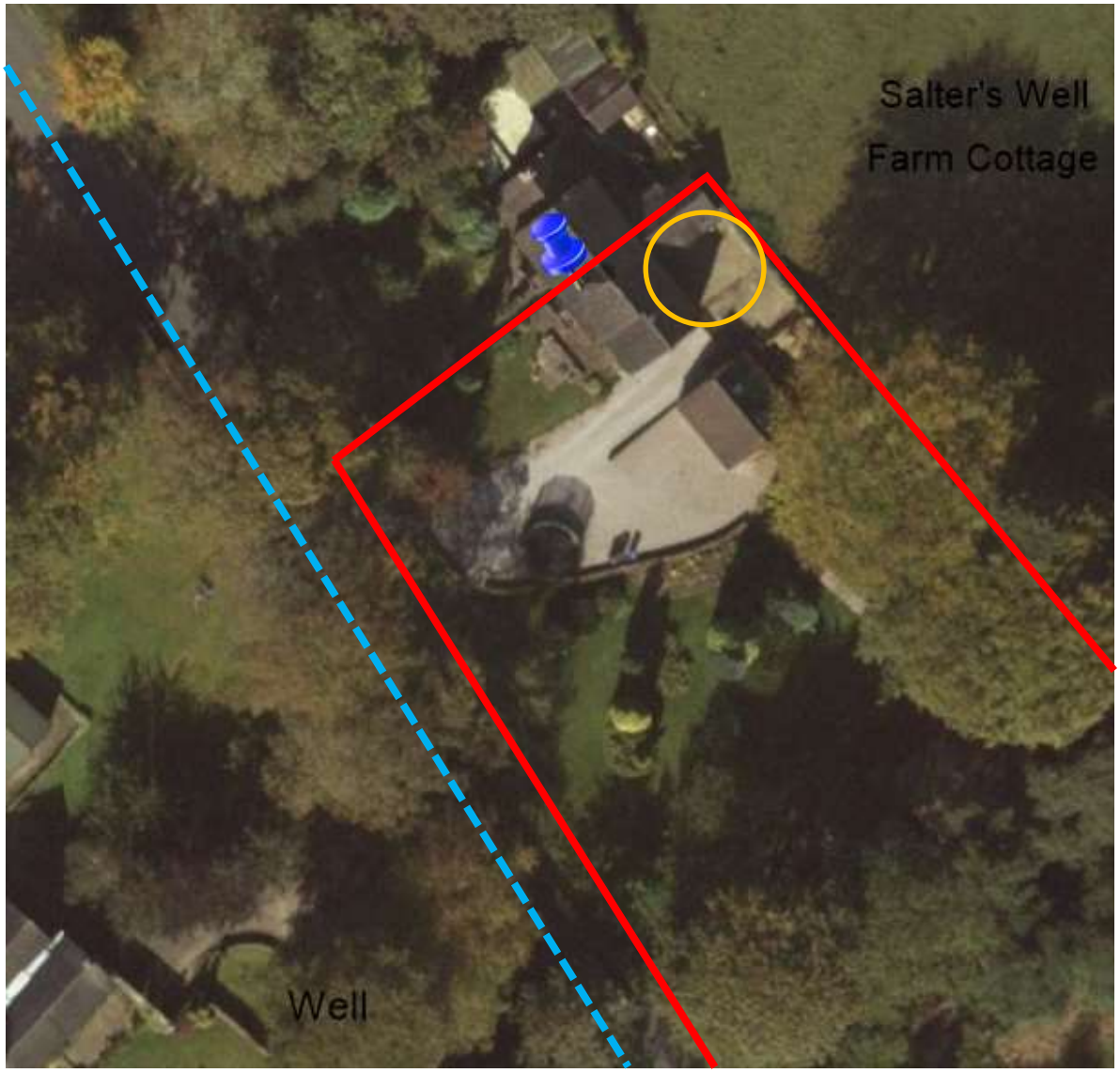

Figure 1: Aerial view of the site from the SMDC Interactive Map. Assessment by Smytheman Architectural. Site Edged Red with area of the site affected by the proposals circled in Orange edged boundary. Public Highway in Blue Dashed. Note that the proposals in this location will not be prominent from the public realm.

'Rock Cottage' is an attractive traditional dwelling set in Bagnall within the Staffordshire Moorlands district. The local geology has been shaped by the 'Millstone Grit Series' landscape formation which includes gritstones and sandstones. This created the landscape of Bagnall.

Rock Cottage is one of the two 'Salter's Well Cottages' and reference is made to this name for the buildings on various map versions. Currently, the sub-divided dwelling; now known as 'Rock Cottage' has a **gross footprint of 79 m^2**

The original structure of ‘Rock Cottage’ appears to date back to pre-1880. Historically this is thought to have been one single pile dwelling (single linear run of two storey roof). The building is a strong example of vernacular architecture in Bagnall. It is assumed, that like other historic buildings in the local area such as the ‘Island Cottages’, the building was constructed from locally sourced materials, most likely originating from the ‘Millstone Grit Series’ as detailed in the Bagnall Conservation Area Appraisal (SMDC).

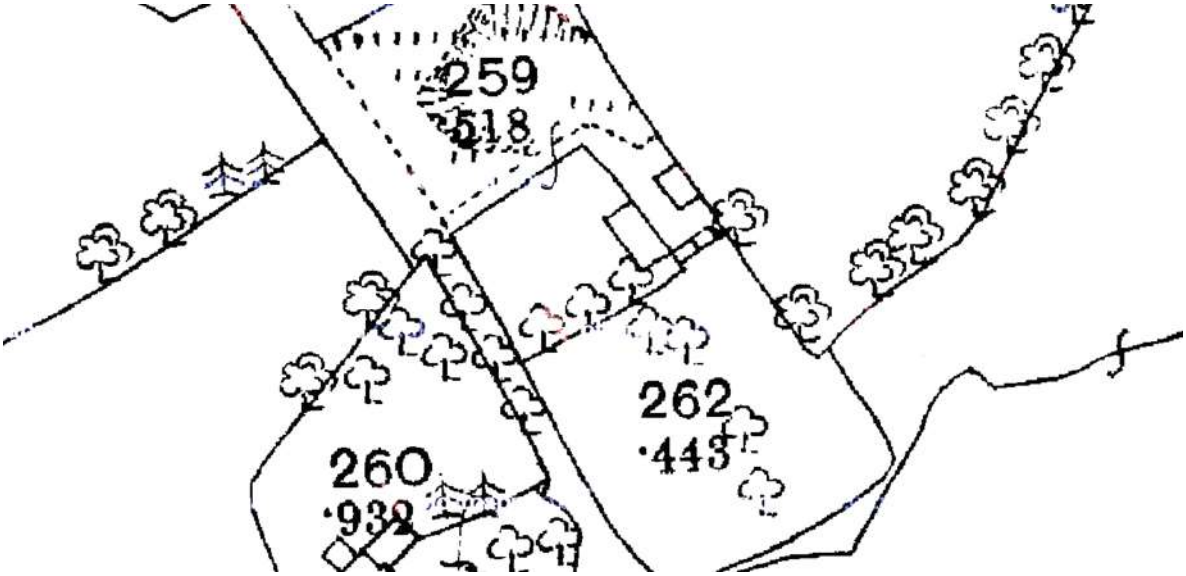

Figure 2: Extract from the 1st OS County Series Survey Map in 1880 with the site now known as ‘Rock Cottage’ shown to be a single dwelling. This dwelling is referred to as a ‘cottage style’ building in the Bagnall Conservation Area Appraisal (SMDC). There appears to be a main single dwelling with outbuildings. Perhaps as many as four other structures.



Figure 3: Suggested footprint of the single dwelling in 1800 based on historic mapping evidence. At the time this was one single dwelling. The entrance porches were later additions as were the extensions to both sides. Map Evidence suggests a ‘Coal Store’ building might have existed to the rear along with detached ancillary structures. It is likely there were chimneys to each gable end as a heating source and the fireplace on the ground floor plan confirms this.

Between 1880-1899 the house was extended to the rear as the below map shows.
It is thought that at this time the building was subdivided to form two dwellings referred to as the 'Salter's Well Cottages'. The porches appear vaguely on the plan below.



Figure 4: Extract from the OS County Series Survey Map in 1899 demonstrates the building has received an extension to the rear and the plot was subdivided. The site is referred to as the 'Salters Well Cottages'. This extension can be considered part of the 'original house' in planning terms, dating prior to 1st July 1948. This evidence is supported by the traditional aesthetics of the building exterior.

This created the 'original' semi-detached dwelling of Rock Cottage with a significantly reduced footprint. It is possible that these buildings had a function associated with the farmstead named 'Salter's Well Farm'. They may have been workers cottages.

The cottage is not listed, nationally, nor locally and it is not within a conservation area, however, the site and its wider surroundings are designated greenbelt land.

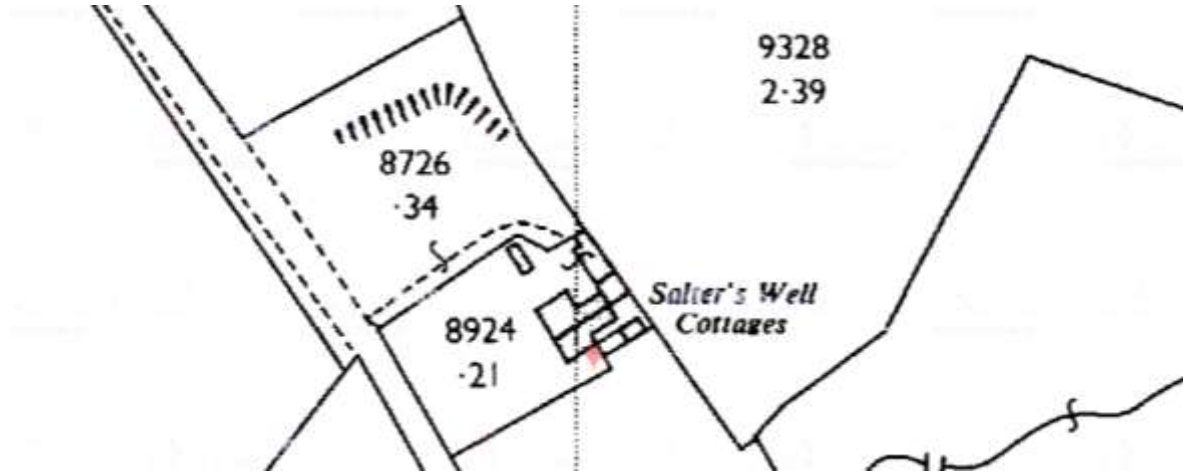

Figure 5: Extract from the OS County Series Survey Map in 1963. There are a number of adjacent buildings to the 'Salter's Well Cottages', a division line centrally down the rear extensions no longer reflects todays site boundaries. PLEASE NOTE. This is an exact reflection of the 1937 maps (however the linework is clearer).

As shown in Figure 5 these parts of the house shall be considered to be ‘original’ by definition.

This is by virtue of the fact they were constructed prior to 1st July 1948 as described in the Technical Guidance for ‘Permitted development’. (DCLG.2017.)

In the later 20th century Rock Cottage appears to have received a low-quality flat roof extension.

This likely complied with ‘permitted development’ at that current time and the buildings to the rear had varying roof styles. None of which were particularly high quality.

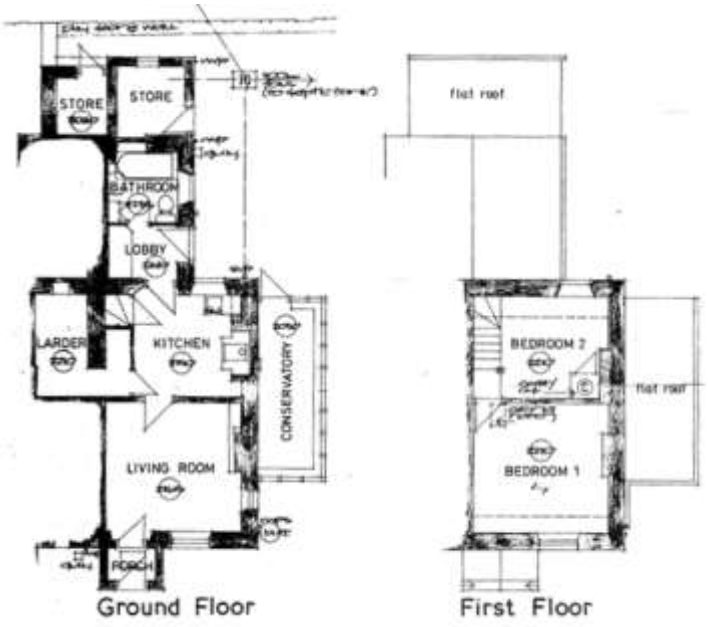

Figure 6: Rock Cottage plan prior to 2004 extensions and alterations. Extract from the SMDC interactive planning map (planning application details).

As result when planning was approved for a two storey side extension and ‘alterations’ which likely included the extension of the pitched roof to the rear these would have been favourable as they enhanced the building aesthetics, although they would not have increased the building volume by all that much. The Rock Cottage was still a small building although the extension provided a further double bedroom (2 person) making the house a 3 bed layout.



Figure 7: Prior to 2004 the façade of ‘Rock Cottage’ was far wearier. The windows were a modern inappropriate style. Evidence of a flashing shows the scale of the former side extension. The roofs featured stone copings to parapets on each gable and a chimney to each gable existed.

3.0 Planning History

In 2004 permission was granted for the Two Storey side extension as discussed in the previous section. This was approved under application reference **SMD/2004/1448**. This proposal increased the building footprint by 22m^2 and the structure had a volume of 128m^3.

Then in 2005 consent was granted for a detached Garage, set slightly lower than the house. This was approved under application reference **SMD/2005/0695**.

Finally, in 2013 a single storey 'Sun Room' gained approval. This was a modest structure very similar to the proposals discussed in this application. This proposal was not built, and the planning consent has now lapsed. This was approved under application reference **SMD/2013/0215.**

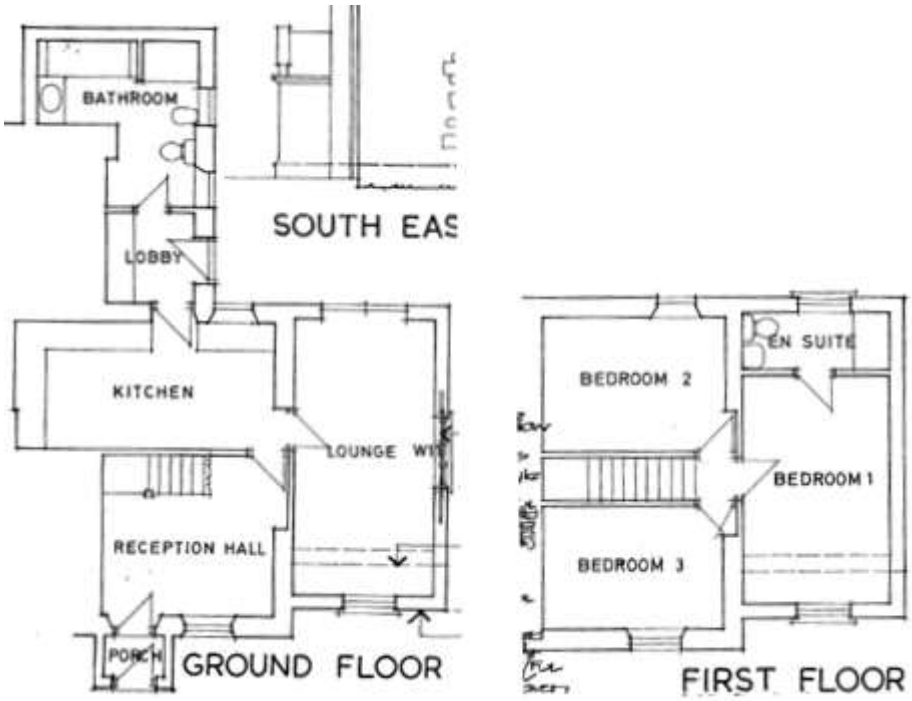

Figure 8: SMD/2004/1448 - 'Alterations and two storey side extension'. Approved 14/10/2004



Figure 9: SMD/2005/0695 - Erection of a detached garage. Approved 04/07/2005

The final application approved in 2013 for the Sun Room is most pertinent to this application. As result, details are provided below. A concise summary was that a modest proposal in this location could be approved because:

- *"it is not considered to be disproportionate and not inappropriate in greenbelt terms"* this is thought to be due to its modest proportion. A very slight increase in footprint is submitted within this proposal.
- *"it would not impact on open-ness and is an appropriate design"* in essence the glazed oak frame design complimented the house and by its siting in the patio area of the site behind the house it did not reduce the 'open-ness' of the greenbelt. This will be retained within these proposals.
- *"The development will not harm the amenity of neighbours"* the scale, mass and location of the proposals means there is no effect on amenity.

4.0 Previous Approval

SMD/2013/0215 - 'Erection of single storey extension to the rear to form a sun lounge. Approved PERCON 11/06/2013

Conditions of approval:

- The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

- The development hereby approved shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the submitted plans and specifications as follows:- Drawing No. - 984-13-02 Rev B - Planning Drawing.

- The external roofing materials shall match in colour, form and texture those of the existing building and there shall be no variation without the prior consent in writing of the Local Planning Authority.

Informative:

1. POLICIES CONSIDERED
   The policies taken into account in the determination of this application are as follows:

   The Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan - Policy B13, N2 and N7Core Strategy (Revised Submission Document) - Policy DC1, DC3 and Space about Dwellings - Supplementary Planning Guidance

2. REASONS FOR GRANTING PERMISSION:
   In view of the modest nature of the development, it is not considered to be disproportionate and not inappropriate in greenbelt terms as it would not impact on open-ness and is an appropriate design. The development will not harm the amenity of neighbours nor impact on highway safety and complies with the relevant policies of the Development Plan, and there are no material considerations that warrant making a different decision.

3. POSITIVE AND PRO-ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT WITH THE APPLICANT/AGENT
   The development followed pre-application discussions and was acceptable as submitted and no other involvement was necessary as application was considered against current policy and considered to be acceptable.

5.0 Current Proposal

The proposal is for a single storey rear extension to the property to form a 'Sun lounge'. Previously, a similar application was made and approved with conditions as per Section 4.0.

The proposed extension will be a modest increase to the footprint of the building, built using traditional style materials such as an 'oak frame', a masonry rear wall with stone cladding to match the existing random ashlar walls. Plain clay rooftiles will weather the new section of roof, these will match the existing tiles on the dwelling. A single new roof window will replace the two removed from the existing building.

This material palette was selected with the aspiration to create an extension of a 'high quality of design' that is 'visually attractive as a result of good architecture'. These objectives follow the ethos of Section 12 in the National Planning Policy Framework, hereafter referred to as the NPPF. (MHCLG.2019)

The existing structure is a 3-bedroom, 4-6 person dwelling with a **97m² gross internal area.** This includes the previous side extension to the property.

As demonstrated in the table below, even when the previous extensions are included, the gross internal area of the dwelling, Rock Cottage barely complies with the 'minimum standards' set by the Government. This itself supports a case to provide modest extensions to the dwelling. Through the proposals the building would have a **112m² gross internal area.**

Table 1 - Minimum gross internal floor areas and storage (m²)

Number of bedrooms(b)	Number of bed spaces (persons)	1 storey dwellings	2 storey dwellings	3 storey dwellings	Built-in storage
1b	1p	39 (37) *			1.0
	2p	50	58		1.5
2b	3p	61	70		2.0
	4p	70	79		
3b	4p	74	84	90	2.5
	5p	86	93	99	
	6p	95	102	108	
4b	5p	90	97	103	3.0
	6p	99	106	112	
	7p	108	115	121	
	8p	117	124	130	
5b	6p	103	110	116	3.5
	7p	112	119	125	
	8p	121	128	134	
6b	7p	116	123	129	4.0
	8p	125	132	138	

Figure 10: National Space Standards set the minimum internal gross areas for new housing.

Furthermore, the proposals for a 'light', 'open plan' extension to the rear will enable better user comfort. The existing cottage features low ceilings and floor to floor heights, the proposals looks to benefit from an open vaulted ceiling with a roof window.

6.0 Design

Use: The existing two storey building is a dwelling (C3 use class) this will remain the case. The proposals entail a single storey modest extension of 12.5m^2 to form a Sun Lounge/Study Room that will have an 18 m^2 in total floor area (including the former Utility Room). This room along with minor structural alteration to increase light within the floor plan will enable comfortable 'work from home' facilities for the applicant and their family.

Existing Amount:

Area breakdown:

Gross external site footprint area (dwelling):	79.2 m^2
Gross Internal Footprint Ground Floor:	58 m^2
Gross Internal Footprint First Floor:	39 m^2

Volume breakdown:

Original Dwelling Volume (demonstrated pre 1948):	213.7 m^3
Current Dwelling Volume:	350.6 m^3

The above figures represent a 64% increase in volume between 1948 and the present day.

The side extension in 2004 increased the volume by 128m^3 whilst the roof additions to the former 'Coal Store' structure to the end increased the building volume by circa 8.9m^3.

It should also be noted that when the site extension was approved there was a conservatory type structure which would have **increased the above figures by circa 25m^3**, however, as this was not part of the 'original' footprint it has been discounted from the above figures.

Proposed Amount:

Area breakdown:

Gross external site footprint area (dwelling):	93.725 m^2
Gross Internal Footprint Ground Floor:	73.3 m^2
Gross Internal Footprint First Floor:	39 m^2

Volume breakdown:

Proposed Extension Volume:	44.55 m^3
Proposed Dwelling Volume:	395.15 m^3

The increase now proposed would represent an 84% increase in volume from 1948.

Summary

The 'Sun Room' approved in 2013 had a volume of 24m^3 and a footprint of 7.2m^2. This approved scheme represented a 75% increase on the volume of 1948.
In comparison the **proposal has a volume 20m^3 greater and a floor area 5.3m^2 greater.**

These small increases in size are not thought to create a 'disproportionate' addition and due to the siting will not have an adverse effect on the greenbelt. The proposal is a 9% volume increase on the previously approved scheme from 2013.

Layout: The proposal is for a single storey extension to form an additional room to the ground floor. The room will serve as a sunroom/ entrance hall to the rear of the property.

Scale & Massing: The proposal will be subservient to the existing cottage in scale and mass. It comprises a single storey intersecting gable abutment in simple terms, with an area of lowered eaves that creates a catslide effect.

It complements the traditional building as a well-designed, high quality, attractive new addition that can be interpreted as contemporary. The extension will be single storey and the ridge of the proposal will match the ridge of the existing 1890's addition which was created when the single cottage became two dwellings.

This area of the site has seen various eclectic additions over the last three centuries, many of which were difficult to 'interpret' without significant research.

Appearance and Materials: The proposals will have a similar material palette to the existing site structures using a masonry rear wall with random ashlar cladding to the outside and plain clay rooftiles. The proposals will have a mixture of traditionally proportioned windows with dressed ashlar cills and heads in part, whilst the main 'Sun Room' frontage will comprise a traditional 'Oak Framed' glass façade as a modern contrast using a sensitive high-quality material.

This will increase light into the floor plan improving the quality of internal conditions for the occupants whilst creating an attractive design. With the current increase in working from home this will have an incredibly important effect on the occupants. At present the Cottage is a dark, 'cosy' space internally due to its low 2.1m ceiling height which whilst charming, does not provide much user comfort for working.

Landscaping: The position of the extension will be to the rear of the existing dwelling on the existing patio area, this is the same location as the previously approved 'Sun Room' in 2013. As result, the thought remains that the proposals will not affect neighbour's amenity, nor would they reduce the 'open-ness' of the greenbelt.

In terms of other landscaping no alterations will need to be made to the site to allow these proposals with exception to the loss of a small area of existing Indian Stone hardstanding.

7.0 Relevant planning policies

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (the 2004 Act) requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material circumstances indicate otherwise.

In Staffordshire Moorlands 'The Local Plan' was adopted on 9th September 2020 and sets out the council's vision and strategy for the District until 2033.

National planning policy guidance in the form of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) underpin the general strategy for new development with which all development plans must be in broad conformity. The proposals have been assessed against these documents in the following sections:

Local Plan
The Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy defines the strategy at the heart of the new plan making. This strategy sets out the overarching spatial planning framework for the long-term regeneration. Relevant policies include:

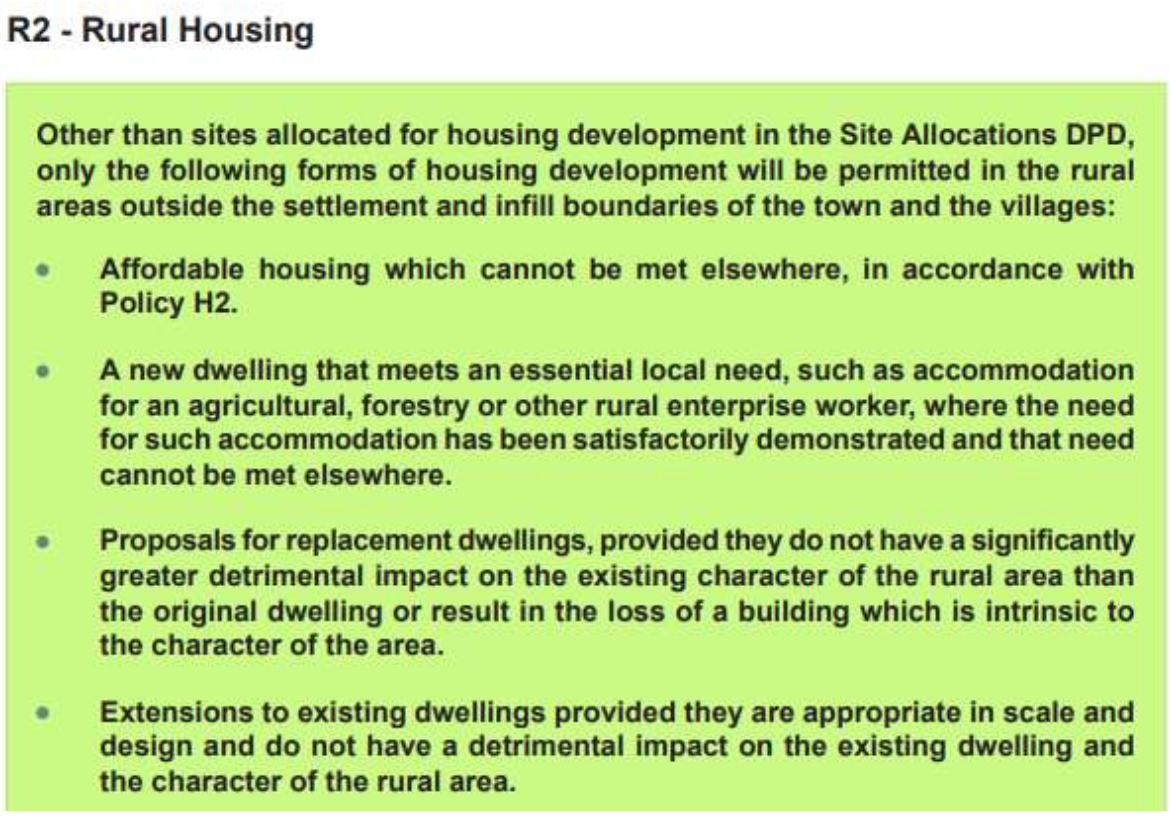

Figure 11: Policy R2 supports extensions to existing dwellings within the greenbelt where they 'do not have a detrimental impact on the existing dwelling and the character of the rural area'

Response:
The proposed extension will be to the rear of the property and will be single storey causing no effect to the adjacent property or to the area. Additionally, it is proposed to use traditional materials and methods matching the existing building. This is recognised to be appropriate in the SMDC Conservation Area Appraisal for Bagnall. This will safeguard the character of the rural area.

8.6 Design and Conservation Policies

Spatial Objectives

SO8. To promote local distinctiveness by means of good design and the conservation, protection and enhancement of historic, environmental and cultural assets throughout the District.

Figure 12: Policy SO8 relates to the benefits of 'good design' and 'conservation of historic assets' throughout the District

Policy S08 Response:
The issue of 'erosion of historic detail' is largely highlighted within the SMDC Bagnall Conservation Area Appraisal. Images such as Figure 7 in this report demonstrate the lack of sensitivity by the various owners of this building. However, the recent changes to Rock Cottage have all been carried out to a high standard, materials used on this side of the former single dwelling have all been higher quality than existed previously. This is positive and is due to the current owner's care and attention to detail.

Neither the previously approved, nor proposed Sun Lounge will contribute to this erosion. Instead, the applicant aims to enhance the minor historic asset that is 'Rock Cottage'. The proposal will use an 'oak frame style' glazed panel and traditional Ashlar. Stone and timber are listed in the Conservation Area Appraisal as some of the primary building materials in the original dwellings of Bagnall. The applicant is committed to achieving a high quality of design, despite the setting being out of the public view.

DC1 - Design Considerations

All development shall be well designed and reinforce local distinctiveness by positively contributing to and complementing the special character and heritage of the area in line with the Council's Design SPD. In particular, new development should:

- **be of a high quality and add value to the local area, incorporating creativity, detailing and materials appropriate to the character of the area;**
- **be designed to respect the site and its surroundings and promote a positive sense of place and identity through its scale, density, layout, siting, landscaping, character and appearance;**

Figure 13: Design Policy DC1 from the Core Strategy

Core Strategy policy DC1 was raised by Planning Officer Jane Curley during the 'Pre-Application' advice process, this relates to 'Design Considerations'. Design is of course, a subjective matter, however, the following extracts have been selected as relevant to the aims of a good proposal:

- Be of a high quality and add value to the local area, incorporating creativity, detailing and materials appropriate to the character of the area;

The materials chosen will match those typical to the Staffordshire Moorlands area. For instance, the extension is proposed to have a masonry rear wall with stone to match the original vernacular stone used on Rock Cottage. It is noted in the Bagnall Conservation Area Appraisal that timber, specifically oak, is also a recognised original material used on buildings similar to Rock Cottage. Hence, the proposed glazed façade will be a traditional style with an 'oak frame style' infill.

The roofing tiles will be 'Staffordshire Blue' clay tiles which are seen in most traditional buildings across the Moorlands.

- Be designed to respect the site and its surroundings and promote a positive sense of place and identity through its scale, density, layout, siting, landscaping, character and appearance;

  The extension is modest in scale representing a 20% volume increase on the existing and an even smaller 9% volume increase over the previously approved scheme in 2013. With being single storey, this ensures it is not disproportionate to the site or area density, this is further lessened with the proposal being to the rear.

  The proposal will use glazing to improve the 'openness' of the building despite the footprint increasing. The use of bi-fold doors will allow the owners to open the building out into the garden and the fields to the rear of the property, offering a bridge between the interior and the exterior.

- Protect the amenity of the area, including residential amenity, in terms of satisfactory daylight, sunlight, outlook, privacy and soft landscaping;

  The intention of the extension is to improve the immediate amenity of the building occupants. This space will have adequate daylight and provide much needed floor area to enable comfortable modern living and the opportunity for 'Working from Home'.

  The proposal is single storey and therefore will not lead to loss of light for the adjacent dwelling. Additionally, glazing has been orientated such that privacy is unaffected.

  Existing soft landscaping is unaffected by the proposal.

Other relevant policies include Housing Policy SO4. This states the intent to *"provide new housing that is affordable, desirable, well-designed and meets the needs of residents of the Moorlands"* and Transport Policy SO11. This state's SO11. the intent *"to reduce the need to travel or make it safer and easier to travel by more sustainable forms of transport".*

By supporting the proposals which requests that existing housing stock be altered in a way that 'Working from Home' can be facilitated this meets the needs of residents can be met whilst reducing the dependence on car travel whilst not limiting employment opportunity. As a result, the proposals are thought to comply with 'Spatial Objective' 4 and 11.

National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) key message is that the *"presumption in favour of sustainable development"* is considered to be *"the golden thread running through both plan-making and decision making"* which should be applied by local planning authorities when assessing and determining planning applications.

The relevant sections of the NPPF would be:

Section 12: Requiring good design
Section 13: Protecting Green belt land

Section 12

Policy 124 of the NPPF relates to *"requiring good design"*, policy states: *"The creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve."*

Policy 127 states design should: *'respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation.'* It also asks that designs are visually attractive as result of good architecture.

Response:
The proposals aspire to be of a high quality of design in response to policy 124 and 127 through carefully respecting the site, taking influences from the existing property, vernacular materials and the surroundings. The proposal is a Sun Lounge with glazing to allow for natural light and to allow for an appreciation of the view to the rear of the property. The proposed extension will use traditional materials and construction methods to match the existing property and the other historic buildings of Bagnall as described in the Bagnall Conservation Area Appraisal. The choice to use an Oak frame as a contrasting material comes from the advice found in the Conservation Area Appraisal.

Policy 130 states that *"where the design of a development accords with clear expectations in plan policies, design should not be used by the decision-maker as a valid reason to object to development"* and that the proposed design should take any local design standards into account.

Response:
The material palette selected reinforces the local sense of place with similarity to other local dwellings. Nevertheless, an element of innovation and creativity has been provided in the proposal and this is thought to enhance the design quality, whilst retaining the character of the building in its concept. Obviously, design is a subjective matter, however, policy suggests that this should not be used as a reason to object to the proposals.

Section 13

Section 13 of the NPPF relates to greenbelt policy and rural development. Relevant NPPF policies are as follows:

Policy 133 states *'The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.'*

Response:
The application is for a modest single storey rear extension to ‘Rock Cottage’ that does not contribute to ‘urban sprawl’. As shown in Figure 5 (1963 Historic OS Plan), the site is now less developed even with the inclusion of this proposal in comparison to the development shown in 1963. This is positive as it retains the ‘open-ness’ of the green belt and it reinforces the ethos that well-designed proposals can still be approved in a sensitive location.

7.0 Conclusion

To conclude, the proposal accords with greenbelt planning policy creating a small increase of only 20% volume beyond the existing site structures. When it is considered that historically the building was subdivided, thus becoming approximately half the size it is unsurprising that extensions have been required over the years.

The author acknowledges that the cumulative 84% increase over the original structure in 1948 is not necessarily in the spirit of greenbelt guidance, however, by siting the proposal tightly knitted to the rear, maintaining low scale and by using sensitive materials the proposed increase is thought to have a 'benign' effect of the wider site.

This is thought to be a similar opinion to that of the Case Officer in 2013. (Refer to Section 3.0 and 4.0).

The proposals meet local policy R2 by 'meeting local needs' without any detrimental effect on the rural character of the site. If anything, it represents enhancement by providing a higher quality of dwelling that is fit for the needs of its occupant providing 'Work from Home' facilities. This is supported by SMDC objectives SO4 and SO11.

The proposals result in modest increase to the site footprint and a volume increase of 9% over the previously approved Sun Room. This is such a modest increase to a building that is demonstrated to be under-sized by modern day space standards. As result the proposals would be a welcome, and necessary enhancement.

For the reasons rehearsed it is considered that the application is appropriate development and should be **approved.**