

PLANNING STATEMENT

**CHURNET CROFT COTTAGE
LONGSDON**

MAY 2021

Site Address:

Churnet Croft Cottage, Wood Road, Longsdon, Staffordshire, ST9 9QB

Applicants:

Mr. L. Millward / Ms. P. Walford

Proposal:

Proposed replacement of conservatory with orangery and
link section to garage

Planning Statement:

Date Issued: 25th May 2021

Job Reference: RDP/2021/094

Report Prepared By:

Rob Duncan BSc(Hons) MA MRTPI
Rob Duncan Planning Consultancy Ltd

Contact Details:

Rob Duncan Planning Consultancy Ltd.
70 Ferndale Road, Lichfield, Staffordshire, WS13 7DL
Email: rob78duncan@gmail.com
Tel. 07779 783521

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Rob Duncan Planning Consultancy has been instructed by Mr. L. Millward and Ms. P. Walford to prepare a Planning Statement to accompany a revised planning application for the erection of a replacement conservatory and link extension to the existing dwelling at Churnet Croft Cottage, Wood Road, Longsdon.
- 1.2 The application represents a submission following the refusal of application SMD/2020/0211 which had also proposed the removal of an existing semi-circular shaped UPVC conservatory and its replacement with a timber framed orangery, and formation of a link extension connecting with the detached garage. That application was refused on the grounds that its form, style and design would not harmonise with the traditional form, design and appearance of the dwelling. An appeal was subsequently lodged against that decision which was dismissed.
- 1.3 This revised application seeks to address the concerns raised by the Planning Inspector in the determination of that appeal, and incorporates a much more simplified design, removing the previously proposed fluted columns, raised and moulded panels and cornice detailing. The width and number of vertical columns has also been reduced compared to that previously refused scheme.

2 Site & Surroundings

- 2.1 The application site comprises a detached two storey cottage located on the eastern side of Wood Lane, that is located within the North Staffordshire Green Belt. The existing dwelling has modest proportions and is constructed from coursed natural sandstone with a Mossborough Red tiled roof atop.
- 2.2 Projecting off the southern wing of the dwelling is a semi-circular shaped UPVC conservatory, that sits atop a raised stone plinth. The UPVC is dark brown/red in colour and contrasts somewhat awkwardly with the more traditional appearance of the host property.
- 2.3 A close board fence encloses the eastern boundary of the site, beyond which lies the garden of Churnet Croft, which has a commanding presence in the background of the appeal site, emphasised by its visually strident rendered finish.
- 2.4 Wood Road encloses the western boundary of the side and descends in a southerly direction down towards the Caldon Canal Leek Branch to the south. Open land and trees lie to the south, with a further bank of trees located to the north. Open land extends to the west beyond Wood Lane, dropping away in a broadly westerly direction.

3 Planning Policy

3.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires proposals to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan taking into consideration any material considerations relevant to the determination of the application. The Development Plan for the area comprises the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan 2020, of which the following policy is cited within the reason for refusal:

3.2 Policy SS10 of the Local Plan relates to the 'Other Rural Areas Strategy' and states that the Council will allow extensions or additional domestic outbuildings to existing dwellings provided they are appropriate in scale and design and do not have a detrimental impact on the existing dwelling and the character of the rural area. The policy goes on to state that strict control will continue to be exercised over inappropriate development in the Green Belt allowing only for exceptions as defined by Government Policy.

3.3 Policy DC1 of the Local Plan relates to 'Design Considerations' and states that 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 Guide SPD. In particular, new development should (amongst other requirements):

- 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, height, density, layout, siting, landscaping, character and appearance;

4 Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

- 4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) seeks to secure the delivery of sustainable development, and sets out guidance, *inter-alia*, in respect of safeguarding the Green Belt and securing high quality design. The content of the NPPF has been taken into consideration in the preparation of this document.

SMD/2018/0687 – Churnet Croft Cottage, Longsdon

- 4.2 This application granted consent for the replacement of the existing UPVC conservatory on the site with a timber framed orangery and link extension to the detached double garage. The application was amended during the determination process in order to secure approval for the proposed development, encompassing the link extension constructed from an aluminium frame with glazing. This previously approved application has subsequently been implemented by way of construction of the side extension to the garage to form the utility and constitutes a material consideration in the assessment of this application.

Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide SPD (2018)

- 4.3 The adopted Design Guide SPD sets out guidance aimed at securing high quality design within the Staffordshire Moorlands. The content of this document is discussed in more detail within the Statement of Case.

SMDC Extensions to Dwelling SPD

- 4.4 This document also sets out guidance aimed at securing high quality design within the Staffordshire Moorlands. The content of this document is discussed in more detail within the Statement of Case.

5 Planning Assessment

Green Belt

- 5.1 The planning application proposes the removal of the existing poor quality UPVC conservatory that projects off the southern elevation of the dwelling, and its replacement with a timber framed orangery, and timber framed link extension connecting to the adjacent detached garage.
- 5.2 The application site is located within the Green Belt, wherein extensions to dwellings are permissible where they do not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. The principle of replacing the existing conservatory and having a physical link to the existing garage has already been established by virtue of the planning consent granted under application SMD/2018/0867. That scheme has since been implemented via the construction of the side extension off the existing garage, and therefore represents a material fall back in the assessment of the application.
- 5.3 Under previous application SMD/2020/0211 consent was sought for an alternatively designed link extension to that approved under SMD/2018/0867, and whilst this was refused on design related grounds, it was found to be acceptable in the context of Green Belt policy, with the Local Authority concluding that:

“Single-storey extensions of at least equal size to the one proposed could be carried out without planning permission if built closer to the track on the west elevation of the cottage. This would result in a more harmful form of development to the one proposed as it would be more prominent when viewed from the road and would also be more likely to be more out of keeping with the form of the cottage, as well as potentially resulting in an even

larger dwelling. I therefore consider that the proposed link extension, although to the “front” of the cottage, would be preferable in terms of Green Belt openness, than what can be carried out under permitted development, which represents a realistic fall-back position”

- 5.4 This revised proposal encompasses the same scale, massing and volume as the previous application and in light of the extant consent on the site and the conclusions of the Local Authority in its assessment of application SMD/2020/0211, is considered to be acceptable in the context of Green Belt policy. The proposed development is therefore in accordance with policy SS10 of the Local Plan.

Design

- 5.5 The previously refused application on this site (SMD/2020/0211) had proposed a more ornate style of link extension and conservatory compared to that which had been previously approved under application SMD/2018/0687. The refused scheme incorporated fluted columns, raised and moulded panels, cornice and dentil work, and changes to the approved aluminium / glazed link to construct it from a timber frame, with detailing to match that of the orangery. The link extension also included a number of thick vertical columns, of which some were up to half a metre in width.
- 5.6 In determining the subsequent appeal against the refusal of application SMD/2020/0211 the Planning Inspector concluded that:

“There is much that would render the development in-keeping with the host property. Its form and scale would be subservient to the existing dwelling and its timber framing and stone base would complement the materials evident in the main house. However,

details including fluted columns, raised and moulded panels and cornice work would create an elaborate extension that would be unsympathetic to the more benign and rustic character of the cottage. Furthermore, the width and number of timber columns proposed would give the extension a cumbersome look which would contrast awkwardly with the more relaxed appearance of the existing house”.

- 5.7 Following receipt of that appeal decision the applicants have sought to constructively address the Planning Inspector’s concerns, and in doing so have had due regard to the adopted Design SPD which states that:

“All extensions should harmonise with the parent building. Alterations need to be undertaken with care. Insensitive changes can easily spoil a building. The key to a sensitive approach is to take note of what is there already before preparing the design and to work with and not against the buildings character”

And:

“An extension should respect the dominance of the original building and be subordinate to it in terms of its size and massing. Setting back the next section from the building line and keeping the eaves and ridge lower than the parent building will help”.

- 5.8 The Local Authority’s Extensions to Dwellings SPG also identifies a number of design aspirations, including:

“the subdivision of windows into separate panes is appropriate where it is in keeping with the style of the dwelling”.

“there should be an emphasis on vertical proportions which is in keeping with the style and tradition of the district”.

“window openings should be relatively small or subdivided and limited in number to retain the solid to void relationship, i.e. the wall dominates”

“The design of the conservatory should complement the main house in terms of style”

“The conservatory should be subordinate to the main house so that this remains dominant”

“A small plinth wall at the base is preferable to the glazing extending from floor to apex”

“When considering extensions, the aim should be to match the existing wall and roof materials”

- 5.9 The revised scheme submitted in this application retains the general scale and massing as the previous scheme, which itself achieves a clearly subservient relationship to the two-storey form of the host dwelling, with the link extension being subservient to the orangery and having a narrow profile that is set back from the front elevation of the orangery. The Planning Inspector found those elements to be in the scheme’s favour, confirming that the form and scale would be subservient to the existing dwelling and its timber framing and stone base would complement the materials evident in the main house.
- 5.10 The application nevertheless omits the previously proposed fluted columns, the raised and moulded panels, as well as the cornice and dentil work. By

resultant effect the 'elaborateness' that was previously identified as a concern by the Planning Inspector has been removed, and a more simplified style of design achieved, which is considered to be in keeping with the character and appearance of the existing cottage. In addition, the number of columns has been reduced, along with a reduction to their respective widths, such that there is less bulkiness and dominance to the design of the link extension.

- 5.11 The resultant development constitutes a high-quality design that is respectful to the character and appearance of the existing cottage and the surrounding rural area and is in accordance with policy DC1 of the Local Plan and guidance set out within the SMDC Design Guide SPD and Extensions to Dwellings SPG.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 For the reasons set out within the Planning Assessment above, it is submitted that the proposed extension is acceptable within the Green Belt and will achieve a wholly subservient relationship to the host dwelling and by reason of its revised style and design will have a harmonious relationship to the existing property and will not detract from its character and appearance.
- 6.2 The proposed development is therefore considered to meet the requirements of policies SS10 and DC1 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan, and guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework, and the Local Authority's adopted Design Guide SPD and Extensions to Dwellings SPG.