

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2021/0259
Valid 09/04/2021

MARCLIFF
LIMES AVENUE
LONGSDON

PROPOSED EXTENSION TO
FORM KITCHEN/LIVING AREA

(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)

MAIN ISSUES

- Whether the proposal comprises an exception to inappropriate development in the Green Belt.
- 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 semi-detached bungalow constructed of brick with a hipped roof covered in plain tiles. The bungalow has a bay window to the front with a small gable roof above facing towards the road. The dwellinghouse is stepped back from Limes Avenue by a front garden that has been paved to create 2no. off-street parking spaces. Limes Avenue comprises a no-through road, with dwellinghouses located along the northern side that comprise a mix of semi-detached and detached single storey and two-storey houses. The application site is located in the North Staffordshire Green Belt.

PROPOSAL

Full planning permission is sought for the erection of a single storey rear extension.

Revised plans were received during the course of the application that reduced the ridge of the proposed extension from 4.7 metres to 4 metres and altering the pitch of the roof. This was done to overcome concerns regarding the impact of the extension on the amenity of the attached neighbouring property's rear window. It also results in the extension now complying with the criteria for larger single storey rear extensions.

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
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

None

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 21/05/2021
Neighbour consultation period ends: 13/05/2021
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments: None

Town / Parish Comments: Longsdon Parish Council agreed to forward no objections, subject to normal planning guidelines.

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

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

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 1a of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan, 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 Open Countryside and Green Belt and therefore policy SS10 of the Local Plan is applicable. This policy restricts development in these areas to those which have an essential need to be located in the countryside, supports the rural diversification and sustainability of the rural areas, promotes sustainable tourism or enhances the countryside. The policy goes on to list a number of types of development that the policy will support, one of which is: *'Allowing 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 principle of the development is therefore considered acceptable.

Green Belt

The application site is located in the Green Belt whereby policy SS10 of the Local Plan (2020) and chapter 13 of the NPPF (2019) are applicable. Policy SS10 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.

The proposal is for the erection of a single storey rear extension. Paragraph 145 of the NPPF (2019) outlines that the construction of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate in the Green Belt unless it meets an exception. One such exception is (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.

Neither the Local Plan nor the NPPF (2019) provide a definition of what is regarded as being 'disproportionate' for the purposes of Green Belt policy however, previous policy guidance considered a development resulting in a 30% increase in the size of the original building as being acceptable.

The proposed extension would equate to an increase in floorspace of 42%. The property has not been previously extended. The extension to the property will exceed the 30% guideline and it will therefore result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

Paragraph 143 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'*.

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'*.

The proposed extension, as shown on the revised plans, would comprise permitted development under the prior approval procedure for large rear extensions (as no objections have been received from neighbours). This is considered to equate to a

Very Special Circumstance that clearly outweighs the harm caused by reason of inappropriateness. It is now necessary to identify whether there is any other harm arising from the proposed development.

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 proposed extension will project 4.4 metres from the rear of the dwellinghouse. It will be marginally stepped in from the boundary shared with the attached neighbouring property, 'St Claire' and will occupy approximately three-quarters of the width of the original dwellinghouse. It will be constructed of brick and tile to match the original dwellinghouse and will have a pitched roof that will adjoin into the rear roof slope of the original dwellinghouse. No windows are proposed within the side elevations of the proposed extension. Bi-fold doors are proposed overlooking the rear garden with a glazed feature window positioned above. 2no. rooflights will be positioned within the western roof slope and 1no. roof light will be positioned within the eastern roof slope.

The proposed extension has been designed to be subordinate to the original dwellinghouse due to its scale and a ridge height that is lower than the ridge of the original dwellinghouse. It will not be highly visible from the street scene due to its siting to the rear of the dwellinghouse and the close proximity of the adjacent dwellinghouses. The extension will complement the character, roof design and materials of the original dwellinghouse. It is for these reasons that the proposed extension is considered to comply with policy DC1 of the Local Plan (2020) 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 dwellinghouse to the west of the application site is 'Ash Lea', which comprises a semi-detached bungalow that has extended into its roof space with the insertion of 2no. pitched roof dormers to the rear. Ash Lea is located on a slightly lower ground

level than the application site and the dwellinghouse is marginally stepped back from both the front and rear building lines of 'Marcliff'.

The proposed extension will comply with the 45-degree guideline when measured from the rear windows within Ash Lea and no windows are proposed within the side elevation of the proposed extension. 1no. additional window is proposed within the side elevation of the original dwellinghouse, however, this will serve a bathroom and could be inserted as permitted development. Ash Lea has a ground floor window and a door within its side elevation however, the window is a secondary window and directly faces the original dwellinghouse at Marcliff, rather than the proposed extension. It is for these reasons that the proposed extension is not considered to have a detrimental effect on the amenity of Ash Lea.

The dwellinghouse to the east of the application site is 'St Claire' which comprises the attached neighbouring bungalow. St Claire has been extended to the rear with a single storey flat roofed extension that is centrally located. The extension projects approximately 4.7 metres from the rear elevation and is stepped approximately 1.5 metres from the shared boundary. It has 2no. windows located in its side elevation facing towards the application site and patio doors within the rear elevation leading out into the garden. A privet hedge of approximately 1.5 metres in height forms the boundary treatment between the two properties, whilst a closed boarded fence of approximately 1.8 metres has been positioned adjacent to the hedge on the side of St Claire for the first 4 metres. A window is positioned between the shared boundary and the neighbour's rear extension.

The proposed extension will be marginally shorter in depth than the extension at St Claire (4.4 metres in depth rather than 4.7 metres). The proposed extension will cross the 45-degree line when measured from the neighbour's window that is adjacent to the shared boundary and will therefore result in some overbearing effect. However, as previously discussed, the proposed extension could be erected as permitted development under the prior notification procedure due to no objection having been received from neighbouring properties. Therefore in this instance it is not considered expedient to refuse the application on amenity grounds.

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 existing dwellinghouse has 2no. bedrooms. Whilst it is proposed to re-design the internal layout of the bungalow, the number of bedrooms will remain at two. The proposed extension will not affect the existing off-street parking area to the front of the dwellinghouse. It is therefore not considered to have a detrimental effect on highway safety and it will comply with policies DC1 and T1 of the Local Plan (2020) and the NPPF (2019).

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The proposed extension will comprise inappropriate development in the Green Belt as it will result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original dwellinghouse. However, the extension could be erected as permitted development . This comprises a Very Special Circumstance.

Harm has been identified in respect of the extension resulting in an overbearing effect on the neighbouring property's ground floor rear window positioned closest to the proposed extension. However, as the development could be erected as permitted development, it is not considered expedient to refuse the application on amenity grounds.

No other harm has been identified from the proposals. It is therefore considered that Very Special Circumstances exist that clearly outweigh the harm caused by reason of inappropriateness and the other harm identified. The proposed development is therefore 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: 25/06/2021

X 

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council