

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2021/0358
Valid 01/06/2021

CHURNET CROFT
COTTAGE WOOD ROAD
LONGSDON

PROPOSED REPLACEMENT
OF CONSERVATORY WITH
ORANGERY AND LINK
SECTION TO GARAGE

(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)

MAIN ISSUES

- Whether or not the proposal amounts to inappropriate development in the Green Belt
- The impact on the character and appearance of the area
- The impact on residential amenity

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site is within the countryside about a mile to the south of Longsdon village and is within the Green Belt. It comprises a detached cottage close to the end of a long track off Wood Road, which joins onto Sutherland Road to the west. The cottage lies to the east of the track and the side elevation appears to face the track with the original front elevation facing the garage to the south (as old plans show the presence of a front door there although the current front door faces the track and is on a previous extension to the house). There is one adjacent dwelling to the east. Elsewhere the site is surrounded by open land and several trees and woodland.

PROPOSAL

This is a full householder planning application for the removal of a conservatory and its replacement with an “orangery” and single-storey extension to link from the orangery to the garage. The conservatory replacement would have a traditional orangery design with flat roofs and a roof lantern, large windows (with several glazing bars) separated by painted timber. These would sit on a stone base. The rear wall would have a rendered crushed aggregate finish. This “orangery” form and design would be continued along the link extension to the existing outbuilding.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Local Plan (adopted September 2020)

DC1 Design Considerations
SS10 Rural Areas Strategy.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Revised July 2021)

Sections 12 (Design) and 13 (Green Belts)

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

1983 0466 – two storey side extension (which adjoins conservatory) (old ref: 11822). Approved and built.

1988 1467 –Conservatory (00161). Approved and built.

1991 0313 – two storey extension to provide bedroom and extension to dining room (extension onto east elevation) (01091). Approved and built.

SMD/2018/0545: Lawful development certificate for proposed extension to replace orangery. Withdrawn.

SMD/2018/0687: Orangery with link extension. Amended plans approved.

SMD/2020/0211: Orangery with link extension (revised scheme of above). Refused. Appeal dismissed.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 16.7.21

Neighbour letters expiry date: 16.7.21

Press Notice: N/A

Public Comments

None.

Town / Parish Comments

None.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Policy SS10 requires strict control over inappropriate development in the Green Belt. The NPPF in paras 149 and 150 lists the forms of development which are not considered to be inappropriate and therefore not, by definition, harmful to the openness of the Green Belt. The enlargement of buildings is listed but this would not be considered inappropriate providing this would not lead to a disproportionate enlargement to the original dwelling (i.e. the dwelling as it was built or stood in 1948 before any extensions). There have been significant previous extensions. The allowance of this new extension, which would be larger than the conservatory it would replace, would result in an approx 63% increase in the original floorspace of the cottage. This would normally be deemed to be disproportionate and therefore amount to inappropriate development in the Green Belt and harmful to its openness. However, there are very special circumstances which lead this extension to be acceptable and not harm Green Belt openness.

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.

However, this is only on the basis that permitted development rights would need to be removed from the property (via a planning condition) to prevent such further enlargements without planning permission being carried out at some stage in the future.

This was also the view taken in approving an earlier scheme for an orangery and link extension, in 2019. However, there were concerns about the particular design of the extension and amended plans were submitted before approval was given. The original plans were for a complete extension with a rather “ornate” and fussy design, with columns, cornices and decorative features, which was considered to detract from the less complex form of the traditional stone cottage and not sympathise with it. It was also considered to appear disproportionate to the cottage as a result of a combination of its form and design. Amended plans were received which comprised largely of the retention of the general design of the orangery to replace the conservatory but a radical change of design of the link extension which was presented as a simple flat-roofed aluminium framed structure with large expanses of glazing. This was to create a contrast between the orangery and the link so that the orangery appeared as an entirely subservient extension to the cottage and to differentiate it from the link which had the purpose of an actual “link” between the cottage and the outbuilding and make it appear as a link and not a elongated enlargement of the cottage.

The following scheme in 2020 reverted back to the complete ornate approach, with the applicants claiming it was not practical to build the metal framed largely glazed link. This was refused for the following reason:

The proposed extension, by virtue of its particular form, style and design, including its features, fenestration and detailing, does not harmonise with the traditional form, design and appearance of the dwelling and appears as a single sprawling, disproportionate, and awkward addition and therefore does not comply with Policy DC1 'Design Considerations' of the Council's Local Plan, adopted September 2020 and also therefore does not accord with the government planning guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Section 12 'Achieving Well Designed Places'. It is also contrary to the Council's adopted Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document.

An appeal against the decision was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate but was dismissed. In the appeal decision, the following comments by the Inspector are pertinent to the case:

“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.

The approved orangery would encompass timber framing with ‘pegs and brackets’ detailing and with a base that has a different appearance to that proposed. Whilst these differences in design are subtle, they are sufficient for the permitted orangery to be a more sympathetic addition to the host dwelling.”

This new application again puts forward a complete orangery and link with the same form continually (as opposed to the previous approved scheme with a simple metal link contrasting with the stone and timber orangery), but with a much simpler design removing the columns and raised and moulded panels and although there is cornice work, it is a simpler form, with the large glazed windows with several glazing bars and separated by timber and above a stone base. The orangery would be a simplified version of the one already approved and which the Inspector considered was acceptable. It was the replication of the overall “elaborate” design approach continued into the link which the Inspector found fault with.

Although the simplified orangery design has been continued onto the link (removing that visual interruption which was key to the approved scheme), it is important to note that the Inspector did not find fault with the actual form and scale of the overall extension stating that it would still have remained subservient to the cottage and that the timber and stone materials were in keeping with the cottage. It was the elaborate particulars of the design of the orangery continued onto the link which was considered to be at fault. However, those features, including the width and number of timber columns (considered to give the extension a cumbersome appearance), have been removed. I consider that this does achieve a more simplified design and appearance which does now succeed in respecting the more simple and rustic form of the cottage.

For the above reasons, I consider the proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the area as it respects the host dwelling and therefore I recommend the further revised application for approval.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The new amended proposal, like the previous schemes, would not amount to inappropriate development in the Green Belt. The new amended proposal also overcomes the concerns with the particular design and appearance of the extension that led to the previous application being refused by the Council and the appeal being dismissed. The latest proposal is an improvement on the previous scheme and

is considered to not harm the visual (or residential) amenities of the area. It therefore complies with the Council's Local Plan and the government planning guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : APPROVE

Case Officer: Chris Johnston

Recommendation Date: 27.7.21

X 

Signed by: Jane Colley Signature

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council