

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2021/0405
Valid 29/06/2021

ST ANNES COTTAGE
CHURCH ROAD
BROWN EDGE

**PROPOSED
RECONSTRUCTION OF
EXISTING STONE REAR
ELEVATION EXTERNAL WALL
AND RAISING OF THE REAR
BEDROOM ROOF LEVEL TO
MATCH THE ADJACENT
EXISTING HOUSE ROOF; NEW
FIRST FLOOR ENSUITE
EXTENSION AND RAISING OF
THE EXISTING GARAGE FLAT
ROOF LEVEL;
IMPROVEMENTS TO REAR
VEHICLE ACCESS.**

(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.
- Impact on the setting of 2no. Grade II Listed Buildings.
- Impact on ecology.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site comprises a detached, two-storey, stone built dwellinghouse with a pitched tiled roof. It is set back from the road by a small front garden that is bound by a stone wall with a hedge above. To the rear of the property, the ground slopes steeply down from east to west, resulting in the rear garden being terraced on a number of different levels. To the rear of the application site is Boardman's Bank. The dwellinghouse has off-street parking and a double garage accessed from this road.

The application site is in the Development Boundary of Brown Edge, within a row of dwellinghouses. On the opposite side of Church Road is the Grade II Listed St Anne's Church, Brown Edge village hall and St Anne's Primary School. To the rear of the application site are dwellinghouses, one of which is Grade II Listed (Boardman's Bank Farmhouse). The dwellinghouses to the rear of the application site are located within the North Staffordshire Green Belt.

PROPOSAL

Full planning permission is sought to:

- Increase the eaves and ridge height of an existing first floor to the rear to create a full height first floor.
- To replace an existing glazed roof to the side elevation with a tiled roof.
- To erect a first floor side/rear extension.
- To increase the height of the existing parapet wall above the existing flat roofed garage for safety reasons; and
- To alter the boundary walls to either side of the existing parking area from square to curved to improve visibility.

Permission was also originally sought to create an off-street parking space to the front of the dwellinghouse, with access gained from Church Road. However, concern was raised by both the Conservation Officer and the Highways Engineer regarding this aspect of the development. Subsequently it was omitted from the scheme.

The removal of a chimney was also amended following comments from the Conservation Officer, with the stack now proposed to be re-built.

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
SS8 Larger Villages Areas Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport
NE1 Biodiversity and Geological Resources

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph(s) 1 - 14
Section(s) 4, 12, 16

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/1985/0882	Detached garage Approved
SMD/2001/1268	Domestic extension Approved

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 03/08/2021

Neighbour consultation period ends: 26/07/2021
Press Advert: 04/08/2021

Public Comments: One comment was received from a neighbour who objected to the proposed development as they felt that the increase in height to the existing garage would impact on the privacy to their two front bedroom windows. They request that if permission is granted, that some type of screening is placed across the top of the garage to maintain their privacy.

Officer comment: The height of the existing garage roof will be raised 300mm and the parapet wall increased by 1.1m. The area behind the parapet wall is already used as part of the applicant's rear garden. The change is mainly for the re-roofing of the garage and the height of the wall of the garage, which will be increased to prevent anyone from falling over the edge. There is therefore no change to the level of privacy that will be experienced by the neighbouring property.

Town / Parish Comments: Brown Edge Parish Council have no objection to the extension to the rear of the property as long as it is built of the same stone in keeping with the current style of the property to reflect the central village of Brown Edge. The Council do object to the removal of the front wall and parking space being made at the front. The wall is built of the same brick as St Anne's Church itself and to remove the wall would expose a parking space and ruin the aesthetic view of the property and a historic part of the Village Centre. With the wall removed an open parking space would be a hazard in this area due to the busy school time and the general main thoroughfare of traffic through the centre of the village.

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

SCC Highways:

First Response: The proposal is to reconstruct the stone wall to the rear access of the property which will improve visibility for drivers egressing from the hardstanding. The current hardstanding and double garage provide off highway parking for 4 vehicles. Staffordshire Moorlands Parking Standards state; Detached/Semi-detached property of 3 bedrooms will require 2 spaces and a property of 4 bedrooms requires 3 spaces (2.4 x 4.8m each space). It is therefore considered the current parking arrangement is adequate and meets with the Parking Standards. However, the proposed parking area to the front elevation of the property off Church Road does not meet the minimum dimensions for a parking space, a vehicle would overhang into the carriageway causing a danger to other highway users.

This application should be refused for the following reason:- The proposed parking space off Church Road is geometrically substandard in that it does not provide sufficient space to park a vehicle within the curtilage of the dwelling.

Second Response (following submission of revised drawings): No objection

Conservation Officer:

First Response:

The building first appears on historic mapping in 1922, formerly divided into two houses. The building is of coursed rubble stone with an ashlar frontage and distinctive stone ashlar chimneys. Listed Buildings adjoin the front and rear of the property so changes have the potential to impact on their setting.

At the rear, the application proposes the raising of the height of the lowest rear wing, taking it up to the height of the original building. The chimney is also proposed to be demolished. Whilst the building is set back from the road, the development will impact on views of the church spire from this direction so must be handled with care. I have no objection to raising the roof but would request that there is still a step down in the ridge height so that there is a break in the building line, allowing the extension to be read as a subordinate addition. I would also request the chimney be retained as this is part of the distinctive roofscape in views across the buildings to the church spire.

At the rear the application proposes the retention of the existing garage but raising it in height and constructing a higher wall above to comply with fall from height regulations. The application also proposes the rounding off of the site access to improve visibility. I have no objection to this subject to the retention of the central pillar in the garage, and careful alteration of the walling to ensure that it is retained as a dry-stone construction, matching current appearance.

I note that there is a mature tree in the neighbour's garden which may be impacted by the works.

Revised plans required.

Condition:

- Facing materials and pointing
- Joinery details
- Garage doors (if to be replaced)
- Boundary walling to match existing

Second Response (after pointing out the proposed parking space to the front):

Harmful to the wall, enclosure along the street and very visible at the road junction, especially opposite the Listed church.

Third Response (following submission of revised drawings): Revised drawings are acceptable.

Staffordshire Wildlife Trust: We have identified this application from the weekly applications list as having potential ecology issues. Due to the age, type and location of the buildings, they are considered to have bat roost potential. Proposed works to roof spaces and walls would impact bat roosts if present. Therefore, a Preliminary Roost Assessment (and possibly further bat survey) is required to inform the

application, before determination. An ecologist should also check the rest of the site and advise whether precautions regarding construction work, especially if vegetation or stone walls are to be removed.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021) 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 (2021) 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 (2021).

The dwellinghouse is located within the Development Boundary of Brown Edge; a 'larger village' as identified by Local Plan policies SS2 and SS8. Extensions to dwellinghouses in villages 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 130 of the NPPF (2021) 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 Guide 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. In terms of alterations it 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 existing dwellinghouse has a 1.5 storey outrigger to the rear of the dwellinghouse. It is proposed to increase both the eaves and ridge height of the first floor in order to create a full height first floor. It will also require the reconstruction of the ground floor rear wall. The eaves and ridge height of the proposed extension will be lower than the existing outrigger that it will be attached to, resulting in a subordinate design. The extension will be constructed of stone and tile to match the existing dwellinghouse.

A first floor extension will be erected to the north of the existing rear outrigger, above an existing single storey mono-pitched roof. The extension will have the same eaves height as the outrigger it will be attached to, but the ridge height will be lower, resulting in a subordinate design. The extension will be constructed of stone and tile to match the existing dwellinghouse.

A single storey to the south of the existing outrigger will have its glazed roof replaced with a tiled roof to match the existing dwellinghouse, whilst a ground floor window within the side elevation of this part of the dwellinghouse will be reduced in size and the wall made good. An existing chimney will be re-built at the request of the Conservation Officer.

To the end of the rear garden there is a detached double garage that is set back from Boardman's Bank by an off-street parking area. The garage is located on a significantly lower ground level than the dwellinghouse. The roof of the garage is used as part of the dwelling's rear garden and has a parapet wall above the existing garage doors. It is proposed to increase the height of the parapet wall to 1.1 metres to prevent people from falling off the garage roof. This will be undertaken using stonework to match the existing parapet wall/garage. Due to the set back from Boardman's Bank and the marginal increase in height proposed, it is not considered that the proposed alterations to the parapet wall will be highly prominent within the street scene. It is also proposed to alter the existing corners of the boundary walls to the parking area from square to curved to improve visibility. This will result in a minor alteration and will not harm the character or appearance of the existing boundary wall.

Subject to those conditions proposed by the Conservation Officer (with the exception of the garage doors as the drawings state these will be existing), the proposed development will comply with policy DC1 of the Local Plan (2020), the Design Guide SPD and the NPPF (2021).

Heritage

Policy DC2 of the Local Plan (2020) states that the Council will safeguard and where possible, enhance the historic environment by resisting development which would harm or be detrimental to the special character and historic heritage of the District's towns and villages and those interests of acknowledged importance; promoting development which sustains, respects or enhances buildings and features which contribute to the character or heritage of an area; and preventing the loss of

buildings and features which make a positive contribution to the character or heritage of an area through appropriate re-use and sensitive development.

Paragraph 199 of the NPPF (2021) states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Paragraph 200 of the NPPF (2021) states any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.

The application site is within the setting of 2no. Grade II Listed Buildings; St Anne's Church to the front of the application site and Boardman's Bank Farmhouse to the rear. The Conservation Officer has assessed the application, raised a number of concerns and requested revised drawings. Revised drawings were duly submitted that took on board the Conservation Officer's comments. The Conservation Officer therefore confirmed that the revised drawings were acceptable and raised no objection to the proposed development.

The proposed development (as shown on the revised drawings) is not considered to adversely affect the setting of the 2no. adjacent Listed Buildings. As no harm has been identified, it is not necessary to weigh the development against the public benefits of the proposal. The development is therefore considered to comply with policy DC2 of the Local Plan (2020) and chapter 16 of the NPPF (2021).

Amenity

Local Plan policy DC1 and paragraph 130(f) of the NPPF (2021) seek to secure development that protects amenity, including residential amenity, in terms of satisfactory daylight, sunlight, outlook, privacy and soft landscaping.

To either side of the application site are dwellinghouses; Sunny Bank to the south and East View to the north. The proposed extensions to the rear of the dwellinghouse will comply with the 45-degree guideline when measured from both neighbouring dwellinghouses, thereby not resulting in an overbearing effect or a loss of light. No windows will be positioned in the side elevations of the proposed extension and therefore neither neighbouring property will be affected by a loss of privacy.

The existing garage and parking area are located on a significantly lower ground level than the dwellinghouses fronting onto Church Road and a significant distance from the dwellinghouse on the opposite side of Boardman's Bank. The alterations to the boundary walls and the increase in the height of the parapet wall above the existing garage will not adversely affect neighbouring amenity.

No dwellinghouses are located on the opposite side of Church Road and the proposed extensions will be sited over 40 metres from the dwellinghouse to the rear,

and on a significantly higher ground level. No direct view will therefore be gained towards the neighbouring property and the windows will come no closer to this property than those in the existing dwellinghouse.

It is for these reasons that the proposed development will not adversely affect the amenity of neighbouring properties and will comply with policy DC1 of the Local Plan (2020) and the NPPF (2021).

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 has made the following comments:

The proposal is to reconstruct the stone wall to the rear access of the property which will improve visibility for drivers egressing from the hardstanding. The current hardstanding and double garage provide off highway parking for 4 vehicles. Staffordshire Moorlands Parking Standards state; Detached/Semi-detached property of 3 bedrooms will require 2 spaces and a property of 4 bedrooms requires 3 spaces (2.4 x 4.8m each space). It is therefore considered the current parking arrangement is adequate and meets with the Parking Standards. I have no objection to the alterations off Boardman's Bank.

It is therefore not considered that the proposed development will have a detrimental effect on highway safety and it will comply with policies DC1 and T1 of the Local Plan (2020) and the NPPF (2021).

Ecology

Policy NE1 of the Local Plan (2020) seeks to protect and enhance site biodiversity and expects all development, where possible, to deliver a net gain in biodiversity proportionate to the size and scale of the development.

In response to the comments received from Staffs Wildlife Trust, the planning agent responded with the following comments:

'The existing pitched roof areas of the main house are not affected by the planning application. The existing rear outrigger first floor bedroom, whose roof is proposed to be removed and the wall heights raised and a new dual pitched roof constructed, has no roof space for any bats or wildlife to muster, since the internal roof shape is vaulted and sealed to the shape of the roof tiling, so there is no roof space. It is also separated from the remainder of the house by the existing stone gable wall.

Furthermore, as the clients are also currently undertaking their own internal upgrading works, there is no sign of any consequence of bat roosting, in any event within the property.

Moreover, the clients extension proposals and rebuilding of the rear elevation wall to the dwelling do not involve any additional alterations to the existing garden land and which have no implication on the application and therefore there are no effects for any other ecological factors raised. The rear garden of the site is already steeply sloping downwards and terraced in level and is being maintained, towards the rear boundary.'

In addition, the Council's own Ecologist stated:

'The newer part which is to be raised, is evidently tightly mortared and also appears securely tiled, including what appear to be tightly fitting 'dry-verge' tiles mortared to the wall.'

In respect of the garage proposals, he stated that much of the development could be undertaken as permitted development. In addition, the chimney stack that was originally proposed to be removed will now be retained and therefore there will be no disturbance to the loft space of the original dwellinghouse.

The concerns of the Wildlife Trust have been noted however, they have not had the benefit of a site visit to the property. The site visit has confirmed that the rear outrigger's roof construction would provide a negligible potential for bats, which has been further confirmed by the planning agent in his description of the interior of the property. In addition, works to the boundary walls could be undertaken as permitted development. It is for these reasons that the development will have a negligible potential for bats and therefore a Preliminary Roost Assessment is not required. The proposed development will therefore comply with policy NE1 of the Local Plan (2020) and the NPPF (2021).

Other Considerations

The Conservation Officer noted the presence of off-site trees to the rear of the application site. These trees are not TPO protected, nor are they protected by virtue of being sited within a Conservation Area. The works to the rear of the dwellinghouse involve the increasing of the height of an existing parapet wall (which will not involve any ground works) and the altering of the corners of the existing boundary walls (which will comprise minor development that is unlikely to adversely affect the health and wellbeing of the existing trees). It is for these reasons that the proposed development is not considered to adversely affect the health and wellbeing of the existing unprotected trees.

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 (2021). As such the application is recommended for approval.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE subject to Conditions

Case Officer: Ailsa Berry

Recommendation Date: 12/10/2021

X 

Signed by: Jane Colley Signature

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council