

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2021/0639
Valid 01/10/2021

GREENSIDE HILLSWOOD
AVENUE
LEEK

RETENTION OF TIMBER
GARDEN ROOM/CHALET AND
ASSOCIATED DECKING

(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)

MAIN ISSUES

Impact on character and appearance and the amenity enjoyed by near residential neighbours.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

Greenside is one of two dwellings served from a private drive that has an access with Hillswood Avenue which provides a loop road within a suburban residential area to the north west of Leek Town Centre. The dwelling sits on the edge of the hill top above Bridge End, Leek Town FC and Mill Street. The land to the rear falls away steeply and the back of the dwelling opens into an open paddock type area that slopes down from south to north, surrounded by traditional hawthorne. The bottom edge of the land to the north, drops away with a significant step down to the dwellings below.

PROPOSAL

The applicant has built a single storey timber chalet style summerhouse or outbuilding to the rear of his garage. The building has a character and appearance similar to that of a lodge style caravan. It has long narrow dimension with a gable at each end facing north and south. Its long side sits against the rear of the garage. The outbuilding perches into sloping land with the southern end, facing out toward Bridge End below, built up and supported from the lower ground level. The southern end contains patio style windows that open up to and are accessed from a timber deck surround that provides a terrace above the sloping land.

The application statement describes the purpose and use of the outbuilding as being incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Local Plan Development Plan Document (Adopted 2020)

- S01 Spatial Objectives
- SS1 Development Principles
- SS5 Leek Area Strategy
- DC1 Design Considerations
- DC3 Landscape Character and Settlement Setting
- T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

SMDC Design Guide - SPD

National Planning Policy Framework

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

05/00273/OUT Erection of bungalow Outline. Approved.

08/00841/FUL Two storey extension and replacement garage. Approved.

09/00426/FUL Erection of dwelling and detached garage. Approved.

The planning history reveals that in 2009 a full permission was granted for a detached dwelling and garage to be built centrally within the paddock plot. The permission was not implemented and has expired, but the case officer report identified the paddock area as the former garden to the neighbouring dwelling at Scarroway. The land is now in the ownership of the applicant and owner of Greenside.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 11th Nov 2021

Neighbour consultation period ends: 11th Nov 2021

Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

None

It appears as though the complainant that brought this matter to the Council's attention provided a false address and so could not be notified. Little indication as to what the complainant's concern might have been, simply states the cabin can "be seen from Sainsburys"

Town / Parish Comments

Leek Town Council: Not unneighbourly

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

The land is in the Leek Town settlement where Local Plan Area strategy SS5 applies. The strategy makes provision for well designed householder development that meets the needs of a homeowner and is compatible with policies DC1 and DC3 in particular.

Design and Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area

The applicant's dwelling, curtilage structures and garage can be seen perched on the hillside from the land below. It is not unusual in these respects, there are other dwellings and buildings visible on the hillside and toward the hilltop from Mill Street below. The small summer house outbuilding and its decking is seen in this context and its narrow profile has been positioned tightly against the rear of the garage. In these respects the development does not appear intrusive, prominent or overbearing in the landscape. It does not harm the landscape and settlement setting and there is no conflict with policy DC1 or DC3 of the Local Plan.

Impacts on Amenity

The issue for consideration relates to the obvious vantage and outlook that the summerhouse and decking give over the land below to the north, and whether this outlook unreasonably affects the privacy of those dwellings below to the north. The nearest dwellings to the north are about 30m from the edge of the decking. However, from the applicant's northern boundary the land drops with significant step down to these dwellings so that their rear elevations face onto what is essentially a steep retained land level, and from the applicant's land above and indeed the new decking area, it is only the dwelling's roof tops that are visible. Because of the fall in levels the decking and out building therefore, only provide views over the roof tops and it is not possible to see into windows or gardens. Other dwellings are much further away, 60-80m, and while their front elevations are visible it is not possible to see into windows, or reasonably feel overlooked, at those distances. The orientation of these dwellings screen and conceal their private rear gardens from any overlooking.

No harm to privacy or conflict with policy DC1 in these respects, by reason of distances involved, orientation of dwellings, and fall in levels.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The outbuilding and decking has acceptable form and presence against the existing garage and the dwelling's other curtilage structures. It does not appear as prominent or intrusive, despite its elevated position and nor does its vantage adversely affect the privacy of the residents below. No conflict with the Local Plan Policies listed above.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : APPROVE

Case Officer: Ben Hurst

Recommendation Date: 22/11/2021

X *B.S. Haywood*

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council