

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2021/0739
Valid 17/11/2021

SPRINK VIEW COTTAGE
11 UNDER THE HILL
BIDDULPH MOOR

PROPOSED SINGLE STOREY
SIDE EXTENSION. PROPOSED
NEW FIRST FLOOR WINDOW.

(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 two-storey terraced cottage constructed of stone with a tiled, half-hipped roof that appears to have not been lived in for some time. The dwellinghouse is the end cottage in a row of three dwellinghouses. It previously comprised a two-up, two-down arrangement but has been subsequently extended with a single storey side extension. The property does not have any off-street parking and the private amenity space associated with the property is to the front and side.

The row of three terraced cottages are sited on the southern side of Under the Hill, a single track rural lane. Immediately to the rear of the application site is the driveway and yard associated with the attached neighbouring cottage, with open fields located beyond. The surrounding area is characterised by open fields interspersed with dwellings. The application site is located in the Open Countryside and North Staffordshire Green Belt.

PROPOSAL

Full planning permission is sought to demolish the existing single storey extension and construct a replacement single storey extension. Permission is also sought to insert a first floor window within the western side elevation of the dwellinghouse.

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

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph(s) 1 - 14
Section(s) 4, 12, 13

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/2021/0605 Certificate of lawfulness for a proposed loft conversion with hip to gable extension and insertion of rooflights to the front and rear roof slopes
Positive Certificate Issued 12/11/2021

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 04/01/2022
Neighbour consultation period ends: 08/12/2021
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments: Three comments were received.

The first raises concerns regarding the granting of the Certificate of Lawfulness.

The second considers the proposed plans will bring the cottage back to life rather than derelict and rundown. They consider the plans to be in keeping with the surrounding area and respectful to the existing building.

The third supports the planning application. They feel that what looks like a derelict cottage will be given a new lease of life; that the development will be in keeping with the character of the original building; and will improve the practicality of making it a family home. The rooflights add a modern element of sustainability to the overall aesthetic of the building, whilst also creating a warm feeling within the building utilising natural light.

Town / Parish Comments: Biddulph Parish Council recommends refusal as the changes are out of character with the original cottages.

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 application site is located in the Open Countryside and Green Belt whereby policy SS10 of the Local Plan (2020) is applicable. Policy SS10 states that these rural areas will provide only for development that has 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.

Part (1) of policy SS10 seeks to meet housing requirements and specific needs by 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 Council will assess schemes having regard to the original dwelling, in cases where cumulative change has occurred.

The principle of the development is therefore considered acceptable as it will comply with policy SS10 of the Local Plan (2020).

Green Belt

The application site is located in the North Staffordshire Green Belt whereby policy SS10 of the Local Plan (2020) and chapter 13 of the NPPF (2021) are applicable. Part (6) of 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 an extension to the rear of the dwellinghouse. Paragraph 149 of the NPPF (2021) 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 (2021) provide a definition of '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 original dwellinghouse has been previously extended with a single storey side extension however, this will be demolished as part of the proposed development. There are no further extensions. The replacement single storey side extension will equate to an increase in floorspace of approximately 15% over the floorspace of the original cottage. The proposed extension will therefore not result in a disproportionate addition to the original building and will comply with part (c) of paragraph 149 of the NPPF (2021).

The proposed development therefore does not comprise inappropriate development in the Green Belt and complies with policy SS10 of the Local Plan (2020) and chapter 13 of the NPPF (2021).

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.

It is proposed to demolish the existing single storey side extension comprising a bathroom and lobby and construct a replacement single storey extension that will be open to the existing kitchen to create a kitchen/living/dining room. The extension will project 4.4 metres from the western side elevation of the dwellinghouse and will occupy approximately half the depth of the original cottage. Attached to the front of the proposed extension will be an entrance porch that will be set 1.3 metres behind the front elevation of the original cottage.

The proposed extension will be constructed of coursed natural stone and a blue tiled roof to match the original cottage. It will have a pitched roof, with 2no. rooflights proposed within both the north and south roof planes. Bi-fold doors will be positioned in the western side elevation that will provide access into the small side garden. The proposed extension will improve the living space in what is a small cottage and result in the repositioning of the bathroom to the first floor. The extension will also help to bring back into use what is currently a dilapidated cottage that appears to have been vacant for a number of years.

The proposed extension will be subordinate to the existing dwellinghouse due to its scale and its siting towards the rear of the property. The existing row of three cottages is currently unbalanced due to the existing extension at the application site and the detached garage positioned adjacent to the cottage at the opposite end of the row. However, due to the set back of the proposed extension from the front elevation, it is considered that it will not be highly visible when the terrace is viewed

from the front. It is for these reasons that the proposed extension is considered to have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the existing cottage.

The existing dwellinghouse has a ground floor and a first floor window within the western side elevation. It is proposed to block up both of these windows and insert a new first floor window closer to the front elevation of the dwellinghouse. As originally submitted, it was proposed to insert a large floor-to-ceiling window. This was considered to be out of character with the cottage and therefore a revised drawing was received that reduced the scale of the window to match the existing windows in the front elevation of the dwellinghouse. The revised window is of a scale that is similar to the existing first floor window within the western side elevation of the cottage that is to be blocked up. The revised window design is therefore considered to reflect the character and appearance of the existing cottage and has overcome the Officer's concerns.

It is for these reasons that the proposed extension is considered to comply with policy DC1 of the Local Plan (2020), the Design Guide SPD and the NPPF (2021) in terms of design.

Amenity

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.

The proposed extension will be attached to the western side elevation of the existing dwellinghouse, and will not project beyond either the front or rear elevations of the original building. No dwellinghouses are located to the front or rear of the dwellinghouse, and the nearest dwellinghouse to the west (Rockfields Farm) is sited approximately 37 metres from the proposed extension; exceeding the separation distance outlined in the Space About Dwellings SPG.

The private amenity space associated with the dwellinghouse is to the front and side and equates to approximately 45 square metres. The construction of the proposed extension will result in the size of the private amenity space reducing to approximately 31 square metres. Both are significantly below the 65 square metres detailed in the Space About Dwellings SPG. However, the small size of the private amenity space is a historic character of the dwellinghouse and the proposed extension is required to bring the dwellinghouse up to modern standards. The dwellinghouse is located across the road from a Public Right of Way (PRoW), with other PRoWs located in close proximity. The occupiers of the dwellinghouse will therefore have access to the surrounding countryside. It is for these reasons that a smaller garden area is considered acceptable in this instance and will not adversely affect the amenity of the occupiers of the dwellinghouse.

It is for these reasons that the proposed extension will comply with policy DC1 of the Local Plan (2020) and the NPPF (2021) in terms of neighbouring amenity and the amenity of future occupiers.

Highways

Policies DC1 and T1 seek to achieve a level of parking and an access that is appropriate to the development it serves.

According to Appendix 2 of the Local Plan (2020) a dwellinghouse with up to three bedrooms is usually required to provide 2no. off-street parking spaces. The existing dwellinghouse does not have any off-street parking, nor the land to be able to provide any off-street parking. The two attached cottages have off-street parking available and the road to the front of the dwellinghouse is not subject to any Traffic Regulation Orders. As with many terraced properties, the occupiers will have to park on the highway and will be aware of the lack of parking when deciding to occupy the property. On this basis, it would not be expedient to require off-street parking to be provided when historically the property has not previously had any.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The principle of the development is acceptable. It will not result in a disproportionate addition to the original dwellinghouse and therefore it does not comprise inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

The design, scale and materials of the proposed extension shown on the revised drawings will reflect the character and appearance of the existing dwellinghouse and the row of three cottages. The dwellinghouses in the surrounding area comprise a mix of designs and therefore it will not adversely affect the character or appearance of the surrounding rural area. No neighbouring properties will be affected by the proposed development.

As such the application is recommended for approval.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE subject to Conditions

Case Officer: Ailsa Berry

Recommendation Date: 12/01/2022

X 

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council