

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2021/0757
Valid 19/11/2021

17 SOUTHLANDS CLOSE
LEEK

TWO STOREY SDE
EXTENSION, SINGLE STOREY
REAR EXTENSION AND
ASSOCIATED WORKS

(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.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site comprises a detached, two-storey dwellinghouse constructed of brick with a concrete tiled pitched roof. The ground floor front elevation of the dwellinghouse is rendered and painted white. The dwellinghouse is 'gable-on' to the road and has a flat roofed garage attached to the northern side elevation that projects forward of the dwellinghouse. A flat roofed canopy extends from the garage, across the front elevation of the dwellinghouse and is positioned above the front door and ground floor bay window.

The dwellinghouse forms part of a housing estate and is sited, along with one other dwellinghouse, off Southlands Close. The application site is surrounded by detached two-storey dwellings and detached bungalows, whilst an area of open space is located to the north/northeast.

The application site is located in the Development Boundary of Leek.

PROPOSAL

Full planning permission is sought for the erection of a two-storey side extension, a single storey rear extension and a front porch. This has been amended from the original submission.

The Planning Officer raised concerns regarding a proposed two-storey front extension. This has been omitted and replaced with a porch. Concern was also raised regarding the use of render and timber panelling, which has also been omitted. The extensions are now proposed to be constructed of brick to match the existing dwellinghouse. Concern was also raised regarding the pitched roof of the

two-storey side extension. This has now been altered to a hipped roof to reflect the design of the existing 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
SS5 Leek Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework

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

Other Considerations

The Design Guide SPD
Space About Dwellings SPG

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

None

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 04/01/2021
Neighbour consultation period ends: 13/12/2021
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments: None

Town / Parish Comments: Leek Town Council – Not unneighbourly

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 Leek; a 'town' as identified by Local Plan policies SS2 and SS5. Extensions to dwellinghouses in towns 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, *'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'*.

It is proposed to demolish the existing attached garage and utility room and construct a replacement two-storey side extension (although the drawings indicate that the ground floor will be retained and a first floor will be erected above). The extension will occupy the same footprint as the existing garage and utility room, will be constructed of brick to match and will have a hipped roof, tiled to match the existing dwellinghouse. A garage will be retained to the ground floor, which projects forward of the existing dwellinghouse (as existing). The first floor front elevation will be set back from the front elevation of the original dwellinghouse.

A mono-pitch canopy will be positioned between the ground and first floor of the proposed two-storey side extension that will extend across the front elevation of the original dwellinghouse, replacing the existing flat roofed canopy. A section of the

canopy in front of the front door will be infilled to create a porch. The porch will not extend beyond the existing building line of the dwellinghouse.

To the rear of the dwellinghouse, a single storey extension will extend 4 metres into the rear garden, occupying the full width of the original dwellinghouse, including the attached garage/utility room. The rear extension will have a parapet roof with a glazed roof lantern and will be constructed of brick to match the existing dwellinghouse.

Due to concerns in respect of the two-storey side extension having an overbearing effect on the adjacent bungalow (see the 'Amenity' section below), the applicant submitted a revised drawing. The revised drawing has resulted in the roof of the two-storey extension having a lower eaves height than the original house, the front and rear windows are contained within half dormers, and the hip of the roof has been drastically reduced so that its pitch is the same as the half dormers. The amendments have resulted in the roof design that is incongruous to the original dwellinghouse and aesthetically unpleasing.

Parapet roofs are not usually accepted within the district, however, the existing dwellinghouse has flat roofs, and flat roofs are a feature of the housing estate. In addition, a similar rear extension could be erected as permitted development. On this basis, no objection is raised to the design of the proposed single storey rear extension.

The application site is located off Southlands Close, in a corner of the street, with one other detached dwellinghouse that is of a similar appearance. The existing dwellinghouse, due to its siting, is not highly visible from Southlands Close. This will be the same for the proposed extensions.

To the north/northeast of the application site is an area of open space and therefore the side/rear of the dwellinghouse is visible from North Street and Eastbourne Close to the north and east. From this viewpoint, the proposed extensions will be viewed against the backdrop of the existing dwellinghouse. The omission of render and its replacement with brick will assimilate the proposed extensions with the existing dwellinghouse and the neighbouring properties and reduce its prominence. However, the awkward revised roof design of the proposed two-storey side extension will also be highly visible, detracting from the street scene.

No objection is raised to the proposed infill porch or the single storey rear extension on design grounds. However, the roof design of the proposed two-storey side extension is incongruous to both the existing dwellinghouse and the street scene. The proposed two-storey side extension is therefore contrary to policy DC1 of the Local Plan (2020), the Design Guide SPD and the NPPF (2021) in terms of its design/appearance and its impact on the street scene.

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 extensions will comply with the separation distances outlined in the Space About Dwellings SPD in respect of the two-storey dwellinghouse to the rear (No. 2 Eastbourne Close). The proposed extensions will therefore not adversely affect the amenity of this property.

The proposed single storey rear extension will marginally cross the 45-degree line when measured from the nearest ground floor opening in the rear elevation of the adjacent dwellinghouse (No. 19 Southlands Close). However, this room is served by an additional opening further away from the application site. Therefore the siting of the proposed extension is not considered to have an overbearing effect on the amenity of this room. The proposed extension will not result in a loss of sunlight to No. 19 due to its siting due north of the neighbouring property, its overall height, and due to No. 19 being constructed on a higher ground level. In addition, a similar sized extension could be constructed under permitted development rights with a similar impact on the amenity of No. 19 Southlands Close.

To the front of the application site is No. 15 Southlands Close. The front elevation of No. 17 directly faces towards the side elevation and rear garden of No. 15, with No. 17's front garden and driveway separating the two properties. No. 15 has been extended to the rear with a single storey extension, with the side wall of this extension and a closed boarded fence forming the boundary treatment. The first floor window within the front elevation of the proposed two-storey side extension will serve a bedroom and will be positioned approximately 13 metres from the side boundary of No. 15. The proposed bedroom window will have an outlook across the rear garden of No. 15. However, given the separation distance, it is not considered that this will have a detrimental effect on neighbouring amenity, especially given that two-storey rear extensions can be built up to 7 metres from a shared rear boundary under permitted development rights and the existing front bedroom window in No. 17 had a similar outlook across the rear garden of No. 15 prior to the neighbour's single storey rear extension being constructed.

To the side (north) of the application are 2no. bungalows (No. 17 and 19 North Street). These bungalows are located on a lower ground level than the application site. The Council's Space About Dwellings SPG states that the *'distance required between the principle window on the rear elevation of a dwelling and a flank wall and the flank wall of a neighbouring dwelling where the flank wall has no principle windows or has obscurely glazed or high level windows is at least 14 metres'*.

The proposed two-storey side extension will be sited between 11 and 12 metres from the rear elevation of these bungalows, where principal windows are located. The proposed extension does not therefore comply with the Space About Dwellings SPG and will result in an overbearing effect on the adjacent bungalows. This will be exacerbated by the bungalows being sited on a lower ground level, resulting in the proposed extension appearing as three-storeys rather two. At this substandard separation distance, and being located on higher ground it will also cause overshadowing due to its position directly to the south of the principal windows concerned.

The applicant has tried to overcome this issue by lowering the eaves height and ridge height of the proposed two-storey side extension in order to comply with the

25-degree line when measured from the rear windows within the adjacent bungalows. However, as detailed in part (12) of the Space About Dwellings SPG, the 25-degree rule is in respect of daylight, not an overbearing affect. Reducing the eaves and ridge height of the extension's roof has not resulted in the proposed extension being located any further away from the adjacent bungalows; it will still be 11-12 metres from the adjacent bungalow and it will still present itself as a three-storey building, due to the difference in ground levels. The revised drawing has therefore not overcome this issue.

No objection is raised in respect of the impact of the single storey rear extension and the porch infill on amenity grounds. However, the proposed two-storey side extension will result in an overbearing effect on the amenity of the adjacent bungalows due to its proximity and its siting on a higher ground level. The proposed two-storey side extension will not comply with the separation distance detailed within the Space About Dwellings SPG and therefore the proposal is contrary to policy DC1 of the Local Plan (2020) and the NPPF (2021) in terms of its impact on neighbouring amenity.

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 proposed development will result in the number of bedrooms increasing from 3 to 4. According to the parking standards contained at Appendix 2 of the Local Plan (2020), a four-bedroom dwellinghouse is required to provide 3o. off-street parking spaces.

It is proposed to retain a garage within the two-storey side extension. However, the dimensions of the garage do not conform with those outlined within Appendix 2 and therefore it is too small to accommodate a vehicle. The submitted Site Plan indicates that the front garden is to be replaced with pervious block paving to create a larger area of off-street parking. This area will be large enough to accommodate 3no. off-street parking spaces, in compliance with Appendix 2.

Subject to a condition requiring the parking area to be provided prior to the use of the proposed extensions, the proposed development will not have a detrimental effect on highway safety and will comply with policies DC1 and T1 of the Local Plan (2020) and the NPPF (2021).

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

No objection is raised to the proposed single storey rear extension or the proposed porch infill. However the roof design of the proposed two-storey side extension is incongruous to the existing dwellinghouse and its siting and scale relative to the adjacent bungalows results in an overbearing effect, that is exacerbated by the bungalows being sited on a lower ground level.

The proposed development is therefore considered to be contrary to policy DC1 of the Local Plan (2020), the Space About Dwellings SPG, the Design Guide SPD and the NPPF (2021). As such, the application is recommended for refusal.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: REFUSE

Case Officer: Ailsa Berry

Recommendation Date: 08/02/2022

X *B.S. Haywood*

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council