

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2022/0038
Valid 27/01/2022

**LAND AT WESTFIELDS
COTTAGE
CLAY LAKE
ENDON**

**REAR SINGLE STOREY
EXTENSION TO FORM REAR
PORCH/UTILITY ROOM**

(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)

MAIN ISSUES

Impact on the character and appearance of the area and whether existing and future occupiers of dwellings would be afforded acceptable degrees of amenity.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The two bedroom bungalow at Laurel House has been provided on a large part of the garden that formerly belonged to the adjacent dwelling at Westfield Cottage, Clay Lake. The dwelling is located toward the eastern end of Clay Lake inside the 'larger village' of Endon. Running to the front of the dwelling, the very 'leafy' Stoney Lane provides an unmade private drive that serves a number of dwellings.

The bungalow has a dormer bedroom in a steep tiled roof space. The bungalow is arranged on a T shape footprint with a gable presenting front and rear. At the rear, Laurel House shares a boundary with the new dwelling formed through a part garage conversion within the grounds of Westfield House.

PROPOSAL

When the dwelling was approved it was a condition of the planning permission that no development was carried out under the terms of the GPDO without planning permission first being granted.

The proposal is to enlarge the dwelling with an addition that would sit within the corner alcove on an area of existing patio. The addition would have a flat roof and provide a utility room.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Local Plan Development Plan Document (Adopted 2020)

S01 Spatial Objectives
SS1 Development Principles
SS8 Larger Village Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations

SMDC Design Guide

National Planning Policy Framework

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

81/10169/OLDDC Site for four dwellings. APPROVED

85/13749/OLDDC Double Garage. APPROVED

SMD/2017/0708 Change of use of garage to form dwelling. APPROVED

SMD/2019/0073 Erection of dormer bungalow. APPROVED

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Nearest Neighbours Notified, Neighbour consultation period ends 17th Feb 2022

Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

None

Town / Parish Comments

Endon Parish Council: Awaited

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

The site is within the larger village settlement of Endon, as identified in the Local Plan. Here Local Plan strategy policy SS8 applies. Generally, as part of a strategy to meet housing needs, SS8 supports well designed householder development that would meet the needs of a homeowner. Such development must comply with the other policies of the Local Plan, in particular Design Policy DC1 and the SMDC design guide.

Design and Impact on the character and appearance of the area

Laurel House is a recently built dormer bungalow that occupies, what was, part of the large garden space belonging to the adjacent property at Westfields Cottage. The dwelling was carefully designed so that the size and spacing of the plot would relate well and be comparable to the other surrounding properties. The bungalow is of traditionally simple style and design, a t shape footprint with narrow gable ends and steep roof pitches. The dwelling has been built using a complimentary pallet of materials plain clay tile, render, stone window cills and lintels, and some brick detailing at verges.

Local Plan design policy DC1 states that all development shall be well designed and reinforce local distinctiveness by positively contributing to and complementing the special character and heritage of the area in line with the Council's Design Guide SPD.

The SPD guidance says that "Alterations need to be undertaken with care. Insensitive changes can easily spoil a building. The key to a sensitive approach is to take note of what is there already before preparing the design and to work with and not against the building's character (All 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. Setting back the new section from the building line and keeping the eaves and ridge lower than the parent building will help").

The proposed addition would sit in the corner alcove at the rear, squaring out and removing the shape and character from the footprint of the dwelling. The flat roof of the addition would relate and connect awkwardly to the original dwelling, the top of the roof would breach and overlap the eaves detail of the existing pitch tiled roof, without any harmony with the parent building. The addition would be an insensitive change that would work against the buildings character.

In these respects the development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area and contrary to the policy DC1 of the Local Plan and the Council's design guide.

Impact on Amenity

The dwelling was carefully designed and arranged to be positioned comfortably on a limited plot size.

At the rear, outlook and separation between windows and the solid boundary at the rear is limited – just 5m from a bedroom window and 8m from a kitchen window that is stepped further back by virtue of the T shaped footprint. The kitchen window is afforded an outlook onto a small patio area with a strip of lawn beyond. The rear amenity space is limited and there are no other meaningful areas to the front or sides of the dwelling. It relies on the patio area created with the recess in the elevation and shape of the footprint. Most of the gardens side, southern boundary is flanked by the walls of the adjacent neighbour's outbuildings that are built up to the boundary.

The proposed addition would consume much of this patio space, meaning that the applicant has even less outdoor private amenity space available, reducing it to little more than the 65 sqm minimum required by the Council's 'Space About Dwellings' guidance (73 sqm). The mean garden length/depth from the rear of the house to boundary would however be quite significantly reduced, where 8m is currently afforded with the elevation recess, the addition would reduce this to no more than 5m across the majority of the dwelling's rear elevation. With this the applicant's garden activity is more likely to be concentrated even closer to the boundary shared with Courtyard Cottage behind, which also has limited private amenity space. Because of this, the travel of sound between both properties associated with general enjoyment of the garden is more likely to cause disturbance and reduce privacy.

The proposed addition would also introduce a new window that is 4-5m from the boundary shared with Courtyard Cottage behind, a very limited outlook. While the window is not principle it would provide outlook from the utility room sink ('SAD' guidance requires 6m between principal window and boundary). The new utility room window would not overlook the property behind because the boundary provides screening.

Other than the bedroom window that is just 5m from the boundary, the existing kitchen window is the only principal window with rear garden outlook. It already has outlook limited to 8m by the proximity of the garden boundary. The proposed addition would further impede the quality of this outlook because the window would be flanked and over shadowed by the immediate proximity of the addition's side wall. The side wall would obstruct a horizontal 45 degree sight line from the centre of that window and

this would result in a significant breach of the Council's Space About Dwellings guidance.

The biggest impacts of the development would be on the applicant's own amenity, reducing levels of amenity even further below standard. When the dwelling was granted planning permission a flexible approach to amenity standards was adopted and a degree of relaxation was advocated, reasoning that a prospective purchaser would be aware of those arrangement before moving in. The adverse impacts would not demonstrably outweigh the benefits of providing the dwelling and contribution to housing supply. A further reduction in amenity and relaxation of standards would simply result in poor quality housing and living standards that does not represent good design, for which there is no justification.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The development would not harmonise with the parent building. The addition would be an insensitive change that would work against the buildings character. In these respects the development would be contrary to the policy DC1 of the Local Plan and the Council's design guide.

The development would further impede already substandard, limited levels of amenity available to the applicant's dwelling. This would result in poor quality design and planning and conflict with policy DC1 of the Local Plan and the Council's 'Space About Dwellings' guidance.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : REFUSE

Case Officer: Ben Hurst

Recommendation Date: 24th March 2022

X 

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council