

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2022/0030
Valid 20/01/2022

VETERINARY SURGERY
ST LUKES HOUSE
VICARAGE ROAD
LEEK

ALTERATIONS AND
EXTENSIONS WORK

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

- Impact on the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area.
- Impact on neighbouring amenity.
- Impact on highway safety.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site comprises a detached, two-storey building constructed of stone walls with a steeply pitched slate roof. The building is very attractive in appearance with stone mullioned windows and a gothic covered porch.

The building is sited in the northeastern corner of the plot, with a tarmac surface car park positioned to the front, side and rear. The building is currently used as a veterinary surgery. The building is set back from Vicarage Road by approximately 30 metres and is elevated above road level. The building is screened from the road by a dwarf stone wall with a hedgerow and mature trees planted behind.

Brough Park is located to the west of the application site, with the park's lodge located in the southwestern corner of the plot. Brough Park Leisure Centre is located to the north and east and residential properties are located on the opposite side of Vicarage Road to the south.

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

PROPOSAL

Full planning permission is sought for the construction of a single storey extension.

Revised plans were received during the course of the planning application that introduced a mullioned window to the front elevation of the proposed extension and included a stone parapet to the roof.

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

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/1980/0120	Change of use of ground floor to veterinary surgery Approved
SMD/1980/1367	Extensions to veterinary surgery Approved
SMD/1984/0332	Change of use of first floor to office Approved

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 08/03/2022
Neighbour consultation period ends: 15/02/2022
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments: None

Town / Parish Comments: Leek Town Council – Recommend for approval: 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 application site is located within the Development Boundary of Leek; a 'town' as identified by Local Plan policies SS2 and SS5. Policy SS5 seeks to create employment growth and increase the diversity of employment opportunities to meet existing and future needs through the retention and growth of existing businesses within the town.

The application seeks to extend an existing veterinary surgery business. It is therefore considered that the development is acceptable in principle.

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.

Attached to the northeastern side of the existing building is a single storey flat roofed extension constructed of stone. To the front elevation, the flat roof projects forward to create an open-fronted covered area. The extension appears to have been a garage, but has subsequently been converted and used as part of the veterinary surgery. The existing garage door has been retained to the front elevation. A wooden post and rail fence is positioned along the front elevation of the roof to prevent people from accessing the roof. The extension forms the boundary to Brough Park Leisure Centre to the east.

It is proposed to remove 2no. stone pillars positioned to the front of the former garage and construct a single storey extension. The proposed extension will infill the existing open-fronted section and project 3.1 metres beyond the front elevation of the original building. The extension will be constructed of dressed coursed stone to match the existing building and it will have a flat roof adjoining into the flat roof of the existing extension. The existing stone copings will be continued through into the proposed extension and a mullioned window will be positioned within the front

elevation. The window will be false, infilled with dressed coursed stone, and will match the existing adjacent ground floor window in proportion and design.

The proposed extension does not comply with the Council's Design Guide SPD as it will project forward of the building's front elevation and it will have a flat roof. However, the proposed extension will adjoin an existing flat roofed extension; it will be small in scale; it will not be highly visible from the street scene; it will appear as a garden wall when viewed from the adjacent leisure centre; and it will result in the removal of an unsightly garage door and fencing, thereby improving the overall appearance of the building and the surrounding area. Revised drawings have also been submitted to enhance the appearance of the proposed extension by including a false mullioned window to reduce the solid-to-void ratio of the front wall and to include stone copings to the roof.

The proposed extension is considered to improve the overall appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area and therefore, in this instance, the design is considered acceptable even though it does not follow the Council's Design Guide SPD.

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 application site is surrounded by Brough Park and Brough Park Leisure Centre to the north, east and west. The extension will be used as an x-ray room and it will have no windows, rather a false window. The proposed extension will be single storey and sited a considerable distance from the nearest residential properties to the south.

It is for these reasons that the proposed development will comply with policy DC1 of the Local Plan (2020) and the NPPF (2021) in terms of 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 veterinary surgery has a surface car park that surrounds the building to the front, side and rear. It comprises an area of informal parking, laid to tarmac with no spaces demarcated. The proposed extension will marginally extend onto part of the tarmac, however it will not result in the loss of any existing parking spaces (as observed during the site visit). The proposed extension will be used as an x-ray room and will not result in an increase in employees at the business.

The proposed development will therefore 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

For the reasons outlined above, the proposed development as shown on the revised drawings, 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: 04/04/2022

X 

Signed by: Jane Colley Signature

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council