

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2022/0600
Valid 04/11/2022

**ROUGHSTONES CHEADLE
ROAD
DRAYCOTT IN THE MOORS**

**EXTENSION AND
ALTERATIONS.

(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)**

MAIN ISSUES

- Impact on the Green Belt and the character and appearance of the area

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site is located within the North Staffordshire Green Belt and comprises a modest detached red brick two storey dwelling built in the later 1970s/early 1980s. The dwelling is on a raised plot surrounded by private lanes that provide access to a loose scattered grouping of neighbouring properties. The dwelling is surrounded by groupings of woodland and mature hedgerow.

PROPOSAL

The proposal would enlarge the dwelling by adding a first floor to the existing flat roof garage. The addition would have a full pitched roof. Alterations would add a gable feature and a full height first floor glazing feature.

This is a repeat application following the refusal of a previous scheme, rejected fundamentally because it would have disproportionately enlarged the original dwelling and been inappropriate in the Green Belt.

With this proposal the first floor addition would be stepped back from the front and, in turn, this would drop the roof ridge below that of the original dwelling. The floor space provided at first floor would therefore be less than that which was previously proposed. Contemporary glazing alterations to the dwelling's front elevation, previously proposed, have been dropped from the scheme.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Local Plan Development Plan Document (Adopted 2020)

S01 Spatial Objectives

SS1 Development Principles

SS10 Other Rural Area Strategy

DC1 Design Considerations

T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

SMDC Design Guide

National Planning Policy Framework

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

77/04712/OLDDC Erection of dwelling. Approved.

89/00818/OLD Extension to form double garage. Approved.

SMD/2022/0434 First floor side addition. Refused.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 16th Dec 2022

Neighbour consultation period ends: 16th Dec 2022

Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

None

Town / Parish Comments

Draycott in the Moors PC: Awaited

Staffordshire County Council Highways

No Objection. Parking standard compliant.

Severn Trent

Records do not show public sewers on site

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

Where an 'other rural' area coincides with the Green Belt, the Local Plan strategy SS10 effectively defers to the tests of the national policy set out in the NPPF. While the strategy essentially provides some support in specific circumstances to householder development to meet housing needs, there is nothing in the strategy that overrides the Green Belt policy in the NPPF.

The site is in the Green Belt where development is inappropriate and, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt, unless it is provided for by one of the exceptions that appear on the closed list at paras. 149 and 150 of the NPPF.

One of those exceptions is 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'. Original building means, for the purposes of the NPPF, a building as it existed on 1st July 1948, or if built after 1948, as it was originally built.

The original dwelling was built in the early 1970s as a modest red brick detached dwelling. It was extended in 1989 with a flat roof garage to the side elevation. The garage almost doubled the size of the original dwelling's footprint (circa 76% increase) and added a further 43% to the original dwelling's volume.

Despite some changes that would narrow the width of the addition and reduce the floorspace provided with some step back in the front elevation and a dropped ridge

height, the proposal is to compound the size increase already imposed with the garage addition, by adding a first floor element above. Overall, the first floor addition would span the full width of the garage below, to the side of the original dwelling. There would be a doubling effect that would be apparent in terms of both footprint and volume. The addition would result in a disproportionately wide front elevation and what would, when compared to the size of the original, appear as a very large dwelling. The proposal would result in a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building and the development would be inappropriate and harmful to the Green Belt.

Any harm to the Green Belt must be attributed substantial weight and planning permission should only be granted if other considerations clearly outweigh that harm.

The applicant has submitted a drawn scheme to enlarge the dwelling with development that would not require planning permission, because it would be permitted by the GPDO. It includes a single storey addition that would extend from the dwelling's side wall, on the other side of the dwelling to the garage, and a single storey addition that would extend 4m from the rear elevation. It appears that these additions would sit within the criteria set out at Class A, Part 1 of Schedule 2 of the GPDO.

Sometimes, where the GPDO would permit development that would be clearly more harmful than development proposed by application, and there is realistic prospect of it being carried out, that can present good reason to favour a planning permission for inappropriate development proposed by application.

While it is acknowledged that the scheme presented as 'permitted development' might overall add a volume that can be calculated as being somewhat greater than that which would be added by the application scheme (the applicant suggests it would add a further 39% of the dwelling's original volume), overall (taking into account both green belt and character and appearance impacts) it is not clear that the development scheme permitted by the GPDO would be significantly more harmful than the scheme applied for, and as such it does not act as a particular lever in the balance of considerations.

Moreover, rather than finding that the GPDO scheme would be significantly more harmful, or even equally as harmful, it is considered that the GPDO scheme would actually be better, less harmful than the application scheme, in that it would separate the mass/volume into separate additions that would read as subordinate supplementary alterations to the original dwelling. They would not have such significant impact on the principle elevation, most visible from the front driveway, and from this aspect the dwelling's original/existing arrangement of shape and size would remain intact.

The ability to further enlarge the dwelling without planning permission, in the manner suggested in the drawn scheme, is not a consideration that clearly outweighs the harm to the Green Belt that would occur with the application scheme.

Design and Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area

Policy DC1 of the Local Plan requires all development to 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 side elevation of the dwelling is elevated and prominent when viewed from the lane to the front or south west. It makes a strong and relatively imposing contribution to local distinctiveness and the character and appearance of the area. The form and shape of the original dwelling is distinctly identifiable as a modest red brick dwelling, the large flat roof garage addition runs off with a simple and subordinate shape, form and character. There is a clear distinction between the garage element and the arrangement of the original dwelling.

The proposal however, would make an addition that would introduce shape and form that would not respect of the dwelling’s original simple form, character and scale. The side addition would be in a very exposed, prominent and elevated location above the private lanes to the south west. The first storey addition would be very wide, disproportionately so, when compared to the width of the dwelling’s original front elevation. The width, height and mass of the addition would be exposed and dominant in an elevated position, particularly when viewed from the front or driveway. The scheme applied for would make for a very dominant, disproportionately wide two storey dwelling that would appear significantly larger.

There has been an attempt, with this revised submission, to respond to some of the advice in the Design Guide by stepping the front elevation back and dropping the ridge height to introduce some subordination. This may assist in some limited way by introducing a visual break between original and addition, but overall this does not mitigate the conclusions made above relative to the introduction of a very wide dominantly large property in an elevated position.

The proposals would fail to reinforce local distinctiveness and be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. In these respects the development would be contrary to policies SS10 and DC1 of the SMDC Local Plan 2020 and the Design Guide 2018 for the area.

Amenity

No issues of harm are raised in respect of the developments impact on the living conditions or amenity of neighbours.

Highway Safety

The property would remain parking standard compliant.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

Inappropriate development that would be harmful, by definition, to the Green Belt. The development is not provided for by any of the exceptions listed at paragraphs 149 and 150 of the NPPF. There are no considerations apparent that would clearly outweigh that harm.

The proposal does not represent good design that would be compliant with the design guide or policy DC1 of the Local Plan. It would create development that is at odds with the original character of the dwelling and that of the neighbours. This would fail to reinforce local distinctiveness and be harmful to the character and appearance of the area.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : REFUSE

Case Officer: Ben Hurst

Recommendation Date: 6th January 2023

X *B.J. Haywood*

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council