DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2023/0041 **VALID 25/01/2023**	**161, PARK LANE, KNYPERSLEY, STAFFORDSHIRE, ST8 7PN**	**PROPOSED LEVEL CHANGES AND CONCRETE BASE, AND DRIVEWAY WORKS (FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)**

MAIN ISSUES

- **Principle of Development**
- **Design Considerations**
- **Impact upon Residential Amenity**
- **Highway Safety**

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site lies relates to a dwelling which is located within the Green Belt as defined by the Local Plan policies map. The site relates to a large detached bungalow which is located within ribbon development along Park Lane. The dwelling enjoys a large rear garden beyond which is the countryside. A detached garage is located to the front of the dwelling, accessed via a driveway and gated access off Park Lane. The dwelling is sited on higher land than the public highway.

PROPOSAL

This application proposes engineering operations which include the creation of a larger parking area to the front of the dwelling, including construction of retaining walls. The scheme also includes the change in land levels to the rear to create a concrete platform below the existing land level. The platform would measure 12.8m in length and 7.2m in width, and would be 0.8m below the existing land level at its deepest. A ramped access is proposed to the platform.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (Adopted 2020)

SS1 Development Principles
SS10 Other Rural Areas Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
DC3 Landscape and Settlement Setting
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

Space About Dwellings
Design Principles

Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide (2018)

National Planning Policy Framework

Section 12: Achieving Well-designed Places
Section 13: Protecting Green Belt Land

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/1989/0438 - Conversion of flat roof to pitched roof on bungalow – Approved – 10/10/89

SMD/2014/0370 - Proposed single storey side & rear extension – Approved – 06/08/14

SMD/2018/0745 - Proposed garage conversion & replacement detached garage – Approved – 21/01/19

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 03/03/23
Neighbour consultation period ends: 15/02/23
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

None received

Town / Parish Comments

Recommend approval subject to no County Highways concerns, the inclusion of sustainable drainage and no neighbours valid planning concerns

SCC Highways

No objection

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

The application proposes householder development, comprising engineering operations to a dwelling which is located within the Green Belt. Policy SS10 relates to development in the rural areas, including the Green Belt, and allows for extensions provided they are of appropriate scale in the context of the original dwelling. However, in this instance, the proposed development does not relate to an extension to a dwelling and is not relevant. Criterion 6 of Policy SS10 states that

development within the Green Belt will only be acceptable where it meets one of the exceptions set out in national policy.

The NPPF identifies that the construction of new buildings within the Green Belt will be considered to be inappropriate development and will only be allowed where it meets one of the exceptions identified within paragraph 149. Paragraph 150 identifies other forms of development which are not inappropriate development in the Green Belt provided that they preserve openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including the land in the Green Belt. P.150b) confirms that engineering operations may not be inappropriate development subject to the openness and purposes assessments.

Impact on openness

The proposed alterations to the front of the curtilage which includes a larger parking area and retaining structures would be contained wholly within the context of the existing dwelling and boundaries and as such cannot be considered to result in any loss of openness both visually or spatially.

The proposed sunken hardstanding would be below existing land levels and contained within the boundaries of the application site. In the context of the overall site, the hardstanding would be relatively modest in curtilage take up. The hardstanding would be visually contained within the site, and does not involve above ground development. Therefore it is concluded that the proposals would not harm openness both visually and spatially.

It is concluded that openness would be preserved.

Purposes of including the land in the Green Belt

The NPPF at paragraph 138 confirms that the Green Belt have 5 purposes. The most relevant in this instance would be safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.

The proposed development, both to the front and rear, would be contained wholly within the existing parameters of the application site boundaries. Furthermore, the proposals are low level and do not amount to the introduction of buildings. It is considered that the proposals would not result in any encroachment into the countryside and would not conflict with the purposes of including the land within the Green Belt.

Green Belt Conclusion

For the above reasons it is considered that the proposals would preserve openness and not conflict with the purposes of including the land in the Green Belt. It is therefore concluded that the proposed engineering operations would be appropriate development in the Green Belt.

Design Considerations

Policy DC1 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. Development should *"be of a high quality and add value to the local area"* and "*be designed to respect the site and its surroundings and promote a positive sense of place and identity through its scale, height, density, layout, siting, landscaping, character and appearance"*.

Policy DC3 states that development should protect and where possible enhance local landscape. Development which would lead to a prominent intrusion into the countryside should be resisted, while development which respects and enhances local landscape character should be supported.

It is understood that the purpose for the sunken hardstanding would be so that the applicants could erect a building under class E permitted development rights. The reason for setting any building into the existing land levels would be to ensure that any building that may be added under Class E would be less visually intrusive and allow for views across the countryside to the rear to be retained.

Clearly no building is proposed under this current application, and therefore the proposals can only be assessed on its merits and the impact that the engineering operations and hardstanding would have. Given that the proposed development would be set below the existing land levels, it is not considered that the proposals would cause undue harm to the character and appearance of the countryside given the location within the curtilage of the dwelling. The application site benefits from a large curtilage and rear garden, and the proposed development would not result in a disproportionate erosion of the curtilage. Significant hardstanding could be laid without the benefit of planning permission which is a material consideration.

The proposed rear development would not be visible from the public highway.

The proposed engineering operations to the front of the dwelling to create an extended parking area, would be set within the existing land levels and require the creation of modest retaining walls. The development would be set against the context of the existing dwelling which would be sited to the rear of the parking area proposed. The area is screened from public view by the high gates to the front of the premises. In the context of the existing dwelling, it is considered that these works would not be prominent or cause harm to the character and appearance of the area or host dwelling.

Amenity

Policy DC1 requires development to *"protect the amenity of the area, including creation of healthy active environments and residential amenity, in terms of satisfactory daylight, visual impact, sunlight, outlook, privacy, soft landscaping as well as noise, odour and light pollution"*.

The proposed engineering operations by reason of their modest scale, nature and siting would not result in any harm to the amenity of neighbouring properties.

Highway Safety

The proposed development would increase the off street parking provision at the site. The proposals would not affect manoeuvrability or compromise vehicles being able to enter and exit the site in a forward gear. SCC Highways have no objection to the proposals and no highway safety issues would arise.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

It is considered that the proposals would comply with the policies contained within the Development Plan and guidance within the NPPF, and as such it is recommended that the application be approved.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE

Case Officer: Declan Cleary
Recommendation Date: 24/03/23

X 

Signed by: Jane Colley Signature

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council