

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2022/0127
Valid 24/06/2022

**WETLEY VIEW CHEADLE
ROAD
WETLEY ROCKS**

**EXPANSION OF LIVING
ACCOMMODATION INTO
ATTACHED DOMESTIC USE
OUTBUILDING**

(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)

MAIN ISSUES:

- Whether or not the proposal amounts to inappropriate development in the Green Belt
- The principle of the development
- The impact on the character and appearance of the area
- The impact on residential amenity
- The impact on highway safety
- The impact on the ecological value of the site

DESCRIPTION OF SITE:

Wetley View is a dwelling with an existing outbuilding attached to the dwelling. The site lies within the Green Belt. The site is accessed via an existing driveway, which emerges onto Cheadle Road.

PROPOSAL:

This is for the expansion of living accommodation into attached domestic use building.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES:

Local Plan (Adopted September 2020)

SS8 Larger Villages Areas Strategy
H1 New Housing Development
DC1 Design Considerations
NE1 Biodiversity

National Planning Policy Framework – Revised July 2021

- Section 12 (Design)
- Section 13 (Green Belts)
- Section 15 (Natural Environment)

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- Design Principles for Development in Staffordshire Moorlands (Conversions)

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD//2008/0500 – Single Storey Rear Extension. PERCON.

SMD/2001/1156 – Agricultural Building. PERCON.

SMD/2001/0593 – Agricultural Building. DECINV.

CONSULTATIONS:

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 11/08/2022

Neighbour consultation period ends: 11/08/2022

Press Advert: 11/08/2022

Public Comments

No comments received.

Town / Parish Comments

No objection.

Public Access

Neither.

Ramblers Association

Neither.

Staffs Wildlife Trust

SUMMARY – HOLDING OBJECTION - There is currently insufficient information to determine the full ecological impact of the application and to demonstrate there will be a biodiversity net gain, where possible.

Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment (PRA)

The buildings proposed for alteration are pre-1914 stone buildings. Due to the building age, type and location, the site is considered to have bat roost potential, in line with guidance in the Planning Application Validation: Staffordshire Requirements for Biodiversity and Geological Conservation 2011 which can be found here:

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/environment/Environment-and-countryside/biodiversity/Documents/0030703233Planningapplicationvalidationbiodiversity.pdf>

Proposed works to roof spaces/ walls would impact bat roosts if present, and therefore a PRA (and possibly further bat survey) is required to inform the application, before determination.

Nesting birds also need to be considered, as well as potential precautions for other protected species such as great crested newts if likely to be present in the area.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Policy NE1 in the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan Adopted September 2020, expects that 'all development where possible seeks to deliver a net gain in biodiversity proportionate to the size and scale of the development. In circumstances where adverse impacts are demonstrated to be unavoidable, developers will be required to ensure that impacts are appropriately mitigated, with suitable compensation measures towards loss of habitat used only as a last resort where there is no alternative'

The proposal should show, through landscaping, that any loss of green areas will be balanced by new planting.

In order to maximise wildlife value of landscaping, the following should be considered: short flowery lawn mix for amenity grassland; climbers on walls and fences; fruit trees; new native hedges on boundaries; enhancement of existing hedges with trees/ additional species; re-seeding disturbed areas with wildflower meadow mix; and creating wetland features for surface and treated water discharges.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development and Impact on the Green Belt

Policy SS8 states that these settlements shall retain and enhance their role as rural service centres, providing for the bulk of the housing requirement of the rural areas and also for employment needs of a scale and type appropriate to each settlement having regard to infrastructure capacity and character.

Policy H1(5) states:

(d) The conversion of rural buildings for residential use where the building is suitable and worthy in physical, architectural and character terms for conversion; or where such development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets
Policy H1 (6) states When development is located in the Green Belt, national Green Belt Policy will apply.

Paragraph 150 of the NPPF states that certain other forms of development are not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. The relevant criteria for this application is:

- the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction;

The application has not submitted a structural appraisal report to support the application and therefore an assessment cannot be made as to whether the outbuilding could be safely converted for residential use.

Insufficient information has been provided to demonstrate whether the building is of substantial construction contrary to NPPF and whether the building is suitable and worthy in physical, architectural and character terms for conversion contrary to Policy H1 of the Local Plan.

The proposed development however will not have a detrimental impact on the Green Belt as the existing dwelling is not being extended and therefore the openness of the Green belt will not be impacted.

Overall, the principle of development is unacceptable.

Impact on character and appearance of the area

Paragraphs 126 and 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) state that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, and that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area and are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping.

Policy DC1 of the Core Strategy refers to design considerations. It states that new development should be well designed to reinforce local distinctiveness and complement the special character and heritage of the area. Development should be of high quality and add value to the local area, incorporating creativity, detailing and materials appropriate to the character of the area.

The Staffordshire Moorlands Guidance for the conversion of rural buildings states "The provision of new door and window openings will be discouraged. Where essential these should relate closely to the position, size and appearance of the existing openings".

The application site benefits from the dwelling which is currently used for domestic use. The application proposes the conversion of an outbuilding that is attached to the dwelling to expand domestic use. There are limited alterations to the outside of the application property with only alterations to openings, this includes the addition of openings, as these are close in position, size and appearance these are considered acceptable additions to the host dwelling. The plans state the materials proposed for the openings which are considered an acceptable addition.

Overall, the proposed development is not considered to have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the area and is considered acceptable in terms of design.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

Core Strategy policy DC1 (Design Considerations) is in place to protect the amenity of the area, including residential amenity in terms of satisfactory daylight, sunlight, outlook and privacy. Equally, Policy DC1 addresses matters of residential amenity, stating that matters of daylight, sunlight, outlook privacy as well as noise concerns should be addressed in regard to the proposed development. Whilst some overlooking can occur within residential areas this does not mean that all overlooking relationships are acceptable.

Given the plot size and location of the development, the proposed development would not adversely impact neighbouring properties, which are all located a significant distance from the site.

Impact on Highway Safety and Parking

The application does not propose any additional bedrooms and will not result in a loss in car parking on site. As such there are no concerns regarding parking as part of this application.

Impact on Ecological Value of the Site

Policy NE1 states the biodiversity and geological resources of the District and neighbouring areas will be conserved and enhanced by positive management and strict control of development (and having regard to relevant ecological evidence) by:

- (1) By ensuring all development schemes have regard to the surveys and actions recommended by the Council's Extended Phase 1 Habitat Surveys and Local Wildlife Assessment, and include measures for protection and enhancement of site biodiversity and protection of any geodiversity as appropriate.
- (8) Protecting and enhancing habitats and species of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity as identified in legislation, and recognising and implementing appropriate measures, including landscape-scale conservation management, to take account of the fact that the distribution of habitats and species will be affected by climate change.

Staffordshire Wildlife Trust have been consulted on the application and recommend a holding objection as there is currently insufficient information to determine the full ecological impact of the application and to demonstrate there will be a biodiversity net gain, where possible.

An email was sent to the agent requesting the following information; however the documents relevant documents have not been submitted to support the application. It is considered that the Local Planning Authority require this information to be able to assess the application fully. Therefore, due to the insufficient information provided the application cannot be supported.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

It is considered that the principle of the development is not acceptable and Contrary to the NPPF and Policy H1 of the Local Plan. The application is considered to have insufficient information submitted in support of the application and therefore a full

assessment cannot be completed with regard to how the proposed development would affect Ecology and Biodiversity of the application site. Furthermore, it is considered that insufficient information has been submitted to confirm whether the building is of substantial construction to be converted into residential accommodation.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : REFUSE

Case Officer: Nicole Quinn

Recommendation Date: 24/05/2023

X *B.J. Haywood*

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council