DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2023/0374 **Valid 27/07/2023**	**WILD THORN FARM** **ASHBOURNE ROAD** **BOTTOMHOUSE** **LEEK**	**PROPOSED SIDE EXTENSION** **(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)**

MAIN ISSUES

- Impact on Character and Appearance of the Area and Landscape

DESCRIPTION OF SITE
The stone farmhouse cottage is located on the high ground of a sloping moorland hillside just below the brow. The ground slopes up from Ashbourne Road to the south. The farm house, yard and sheds are surrounded by open rough grazing land but their edges are softened by mature trees, hedge row and planting which provides sense of place in an otherwise wild open landscape.

Landscape character type as identified in the Landscape Character Assessment - Gritstone Highland Fringe

PROPOSAL
The application proposes the addition of a large squared out single storey family room to the side elevation, to replace an arrangement of gabled outriggers. The addition would have a shallow sloping mono pitch roof sloping down from front to back.

At the rear an existing two storey stone gable would be altered and enlarged with the addition of an adjacent two storey gable with a wide flat roof section running between the two at eaves level.

At ground floor the first floor section above would be supported by steel columns with open canopy beneath.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Local Plan Development Plan Document (Adopted 2020)
S01 Spatial Objectives
SS1 Development Principles
SS10 Other Rural Area
DC1 Design Considerations
DC3 Landscape Character
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS
None relevant

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity
Site Notice expiry date: 19/09/2023
Neighbour consultation period ends: 19/09/2023
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments
None

Town / Parish Comments
Parish Council: Awaited

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development
In an 'other rural' area, outside of a defined settlement, the Local Plan strategy SS10 does make provision for modest well designed householder development to meet the needs of a home owner. The development is expected to respect the size, scale and character of the original dwelling and to comply with policy DC1 and the SMDC design guide.

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 dwelling is orientated at roughly 45 degrees to the Ashbourne Road to the south west. This means that both the side/end and the front elevation have a presentation towards the road and they appear elevated and prominent toward the top of the hillside and the brow of the moorland edge. The dwelling and its most prominent elevations therefore make strong and relatively imposing contribution to local distinctiveness and the character and appearance of the area and that of the landscape.

The form and shape of the original dwelling is distinctly identifiable as a modest stone moorland's farm cottage, the single storey gabled outriggers to the end gable step down and resolve in sequence or taper. They have a simple and subordinate shape, form and character.

The proposal however, would make an addition that would replace that sequence of gabled subordinate outriggers with one large building block with a shallow mono pitch roof. That would be at the expense of the existing dwelling's character and arrangement of shape and presence within the landscape. The development would introduce inconsiderate shape and form that would dominate the dwelling and appear bulky, boxy and detrimental to the character and presentation of the dwelling's most prominent elevations. In these regards the development 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 road to the south west.

At the rear of the dwelling a very odd arrangement of shape and form would be introduced. The development would be top heavy, first floor mass supported above thin columns where there would be no substance or continuity. An awkward connection with a wide flat roof section at eaves level would disrupt and relate poorly to the roof arrangement of the original dwelling. This would make for a very incongruous and awkwardly arranged development in the landscape. At the rear and sat down beneath rising land, the development would be less conspicuous, however, overall its harm to character and appearance derives from a failure of the development to respect the form and character of the existing dwelling and a failure to comply with policy DC1 and the design guide.

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.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

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. This would fail to reinforce local distinctiveness and be harmful to the character and appearance of the area and the landscape.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : REFUSE

Case Officer: Ben Hurst
Recommendation Date: 21st September 2023

X B.J. Haywood

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council