DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2023/0494 **Valid 03/10/2023**	**IVY HOUSE FARM** **CONSALL LANE** **WETLEY ROCKS**	**PROPOSED EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL ALTERATIONS** **(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)**

MAIN ISSUES

- Whether the proposal comprises an exception to inappropriate development in the Green Belt
- Design
- Amenity
- Highway Safety

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The proposed site comprises a detached render and tile dwellinghouse and its associated curtilage, situated in the Cheddleton ward. The site is not located within the Development Boundary, instead it is on greenbelt land. The dwelling has previously been extended a number of times. The site is blanketed by open greenbelt countryside land in all directions. A barn at Ivy House Farm named Owls Hoot Barn is situated South-East of the site. The Consall Lane highway which serves the site is located to the North.

PROPOSAL

The proposed development comprises a series of external and internal alterations to the dwelling. These alterations include: replacing an existing conservatory extension with a single storey extension on the East facing side elevation, replacing a single storey flat roof extension on the rear elevation with a two storey projecting gable extension, adding a dormer window to the front elevation, changing the flat roof dormer window on the rear elevation to a gable style dormer window, removal of the chimney, removal of a small flat roof extension on the existing front elevation and a series of window alterations. The extensions would be constructed from materials including render, grey composite timber effect cladding, plain clay tiles and grey UPVC.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (Adopted 2020)

SS1 Development Principles
1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

SS2 Settlement Hierarchy
SS9 Smaller Villages Area Strategy
SS10 Other Rural Areas Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph(s) 1 – 14
Section(s) 4 – Decision making, 12 – Achieving well designed places, 13 – Protecting Green Belt land

Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide SPD

Part 5 – Alterations, Extensions and Conversions

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

N/A

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 13/12/2023
Neighbour consultation period ends: 16/11/2023
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

No public comments have been received.

Town / Parish Comments

Consall Parish Council have commented to say that they support the application.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development / Impact on the Greenbelt

Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 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 identifies three dimensions to sustainable development as being economic, social and environmental.

In accordance with Policies SS1 and SS2 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan the Council expects all new development to make a positive contribution towards the sustainability of communities and to protect and where possible enhance the environment. A more limited focus on future growth is to be directed to smaller villages, including the rural area of Wetley Rocks. When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The application site is located in the Open Countryside and Green Belt whereby Policy SS10 of the Local Plan (2020) is applicable. Policy SS10 states that these rural areas will provide only for development that has an essential need to be located in the countryside, supports the rural diversification and sustainability of the rural areas, promotes sustainable tourism or enhances the countryside.

Part (3) of policy SS10 seeks to protect the quality and character of the area and requires all development proposals to respect and respond sensitively to the distinctive qualities of the surrounding landscape.

The site is located within the Green Belt. Part (6) of Policy SS10 states that the Council will *"maintain the Green Belt within Staffordshire Moorlands. Strict control will continue to be exercised over inappropriate development within the Green Belt allowing only for exceptions as defined by Government policy."*

The proposal is for a series of external and internal alterations to the dwelling. Paragraph 149 of the NPPF (2021) outlines that the construction of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate in the Green Belt unless it meets an exception. Paragraph 147 of the NPPF (2021) states that 'inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances'. One such exception is (c) 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.

Neither the Local Plan nor the NPPF (2021) provide a definition of what is regarded as being 'disproportionate' for the purposes of Green Belt policy. However, previous policy guidance considered a development resulting in a 30% increase in the size of the original building as being acceptable.

The existing extensions combined with the proposed extension would equate to an increase in volume of approximately 48%. The property has been previously extended a number of times, meaning that it has already exceeded a 30% increase over the size of the original building. Whilst it is acknowledged that 30% increase is not planning policy, it does represent a useful "rule of thumb".

Notwithstanding this with the building being extended over 30%, there can be no doubt that any further extensions will result in a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building.

This will result in harm to the Green Belt by way of inappropriateness and harm to openness and should not be allowed unless there are very special circumstances to outweigh that harm. In this case, it is considered that weight can be given to permitted development rights which the dwelling has. Whilst the proposed extensions would be considered disproportionate additions to the dwelling under greenbelt policy, I note that extensions of the same footprint and nearly the same volume could be erected under permitted development rights. Thus, a PD fallback position is valid in this circumstance and the extensions can be considered acceptable. Furthermore, if the proposed side extension were to be reduced in height to make it permitted development, the roof of the extension would have a shallower pitch. A shallower roof pitch on the extension would be out of character with the steeper roof pitch of the dwelling, thus there are design grounds which are considered to be very special circumstances to warrant supporting the proposal as presented to the Council.

It is now necessary to identify whether there is any other harm arising from the proposed development.

Design

The Council's Design 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. The proposed development consists of a series of external and internal alterations to the dwellinghouse.

These alterations include: replacing an existing conservatory extension with a single storey extension on the East facing side elevation, replacing a single storey flat roof extension on the rear elevation with a two storey projecting gable extension, adding a dormer window to the front elevation, changing the flat roof dormer window on the rear elevation to a gable style dormer window, removal of the chimney, removal of a small flat roof extension on the existing front elevation and a series of window alterations. For a development to be considered appropriate in terms of its size and massing, the Council would universally expect to see extensions subordinate to the dominance of the original building.

All extensions have been designed in a proportionate matter in comparison with the host dwellinghouse. The proposed side extension to replace the conservatory would be single storey, therefore the eaves and maximum heights of the extension would be set down from the parent building. Thus, it would be considered appropriate development in accordance with the Council's Design SPD. I note that the side extension would be set back from the principal elevation of the dwellinghouse, again reiterating its subordinate nature to the parent dwelling.

As the site is located on open, countryside land and the boundary treatment around

the rear of the site is low in height, the proposed extension would be relatively visible from the wider public domain (particularly the North-East facing elevation). A number of the proposed alterations involve changing or removing flat roof elements of the dwellinghouse, including the extension and dormer on the rear elevation, the extension on the side elevation and the small extension on the principal elevation. The existing flat roof areas of the dwelling are not complimentary to the roof style of the dwelling, thus their removal or alteration to a different roof type is considered to be a design improvement. Furthermore, flat rooves are not supported in the Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide SPD. Thus, the dwelling no longer having any flat roof elements as a result of the proposed development would accord with the Council's Design Guidance.

The removal of the chimney would be considered acceptable in this instance, due to the remote location of the site. There is no character established in the area as there are no nearby dwellings for comparison. Similarly, the addition of triangular shaped windows on gable ends would not be considered out of character with the surroundings, due to the distance of the site from any neighbouring dwellings.

The Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide SPD states that development needs to be designed and built in sympathy with the property which it serves, and that materials used in the construction of extensions and alterations to dwellings should generally match those of the parent building. The host dwelling is a render and tile dwellinghouse, with feature elements of composite white timber cladding, namely on gable ends and previous extensions. Materials proposed to be used in the construction of the proposed extensions consist of white render, anthracite grey composite timber cladding, plain grey tiles and grey UPVC. The dwelling is remotely sited, thus there is not a surrounding streetscape or a specific character to the area.

Timber cladding is not usually considered an appropriate material to be fitted on proposed extensions and alterations. The Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide SPD states that: "There is no tradition of external timber boarding in Staffordshire Moorlands…. Vertical boarding has been used more recently on large agricultural sheds as an alternative to metal sheeting but such buildings are regarded as exceptions, as the development is seen in the context of traditional buildings or open landscape." Additionally, the Design Guide SPD states that "new materials need to respect the building and its setting". It is felt that as the host dwelling has a render and timber clad exterior, the proposed grey composite timber effect cladding would be appropriate, particularly given that it is limited to use on the dormer only. Furthermore, anthracite grey composite timber cladding would match the colour of the window frames and the grey tiled roof. Thus in this instance, the proposed materials would somewhat harmonise with the character of the dwelling.

The works, by virtue of their size, scale and siting maintain the character of the existing dwelling and area. The works would therefore accord with the provisions of local plan policy DC1 and section 12 of the NPPF in this regard.

Amenity

Paragraph 127 f) of the NPPF seeks to secure a high standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants. Local Plan Policy DC1 requires development to achieve a satisfactory relationship to adjacent development and to not cause unacceptable effects by reason of visual intrusion, overlooking, shadowing, overbearing effect, noise, light pollution or other adverse impacts on local character and amenity.

Notably, there are no direct neighbouring dwellings to the site; the site is completely blanketed by open greenbelt countryside land. Owls Hoot Barn at Ivy House Farm is the closest building to the site, situated to the South-East of the site. Therefore, amenity impact assessment is required on this neighbouring building.

Although Owls Hoot Barn, Ivy House Farm is the nearest neighbouring building, it sits approximately 25.5 metres South-East of the dwelling. Therefore, it is clear that the proposed extensions and alterations would not impact the light amenity of this neighbouring building if it were to become occupied. Although there would be three glazed areas on the side elevation of the proposed side extension which would face towards Owls Hoot Barn, it is clear that privacy amenity would not be impacted due to the distance between the site and this neighbour.

Highway Safety

Paragraph 102 of the NPPF states that patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes and contribute to making high quality places. Policy T1 seeks to provide safe and sustainable access and ensure that development does not lead to an increase in on street parking.

The proposed extensions would not increase the number of bedrooms of the dwelling. Therefore, it is clear that no additional parking spaces will be required for the number of people inhabiting the dwellinghouse. Furthermore, the available off-road parking to the front and side of the dwelling would not be compromised as a result of the proposed development.

Thus, the proposed extensions would have no impact on highway safety, in accordance with Policy T1.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

In consideration of all of the above, the application is recommended for approval. Due to the application having no adverse effect upon neighbour or street scene amenity and no overall impact on the highway, it is deemed acceptable under planning policy. Therefore, the proposed extensions and alterations are recommended for approval, subject to compliance with all conditions.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE

Case Officer: Hannah Varley
Recommendation Date: 13/12/2023

X 

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council