

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2023/0603
Valid 01/12/2023

10 WESTWOOD PARK
AVENUE
LEEK

PART RETROSPECTIVE
APPLICATION FOR
OUTBUILDING

(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)

MAIN ISSUES

- Impact on the character and appearance of the area
- Impact on the amenity of residential neighbours

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

Semi detached inter war dwelling. Red brick dwelling with a hipped tile roof. Front elevation has a central two storey bay projection with a rendered section between first and ground floor windows.

The dwelling is located on a corner plot, a steep cul de sac passes the side of the property providing access to semi detached neighbours on a higher ground level behind the applicant's plot.

To the side of the applicant's dwelling a flat roof garage has been provided within the plot. The applicant has more recently adjoined the garage to the side of the dwelling and built a large mono dummy pitch canopy roof to the front of the garage. Behind the canopy roof the applicant has built a timber clad summerhouse/shed on top of the garage roof.

PROPOSAL

The applicant seeks planning permission for the shed/summerhouse that has already been built on top of the garage roof.

During a discussion the applicant's architect suggested that the shed could be dark stained or clad in tile hangings to match the roof.

It also appears that the canopy roof also requires planning permission and has been constructed within the last 4 years. However, it is not explicitly stated in the application that permission is sought for this element of the development.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Local Plan Development Plan Document (Adopted 2020)

S01 Spatial Objectives
SS1 Development Principles
SS5 Leek Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations

T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide 2018

National Planning Policy Framework

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

03/00409/FUL First floor extension and pitched roof to garage. APPROVED.
(the approval for the pitch roof to garage was for a full pitch gable roof, not the canopy roof that has been recently constructed. The pitched roof approved in 2003 has not been carried out).

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 14/01/2024

Neighbour consultation period ends: 14/01/2024

Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

None

Town / Parish Comments

Leek Town Council: Awaited

Severn Trent

No Objection. Records do not currently demonstrate any public sewers on the property.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

In the Leek Town settlement Local Plan Area Strategy SS5 applies and makes provision for the alteration and enlargement of a dwellinghouse to meet the needs of a householder, providing the development constitutes good design that complies with design policy DC1 of the Local Plan and the Council's Design Guide.

Design and Impact on Character and Appearance

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 prevailing architecture of the applicant's dwelling and its neighbour's along Westwood Park Avenue and to the rear is that of inter war semi-detached suburban dwellings – red brick, each with hipped roofs, bay windows and sections of tile cladding or render. Many of the dwellings have subordinate sheds and garages discretely sited at either the side or rear. These properties, contribute to and dictate the character and appearance of the area and local distinctiveness in this location.

The flat roof garage to the side of the applicant's dwelling has already been made more prominent with the introduction of the large lean to canopy tiled roof. The roof does not relate well to the prevailing arrangement of hipped roof to the host dwelling and those in the surroundings. The lean to roof overhangs the front edge of the garage and is supported on steel posts. It is excessively dominant and top heavy. It does not benefit from planning permission.

From common positions of public vantage to the front and side of the dwelling the development appears peculiarly as a large timber shed sitting on top of a garage roof. It is exposed and unusually prominent within the street scene.

From the front of the garage the flat roof of the shed appears above the tiled canopy roof like a pillar box turret. From the side the shed comes up against the side of the dwelling at first floor level appearing as a two storey flat roofed addition that does not connect or relate well to the dwelling in scale, form or use of materials. The Design Guide SPD specifically states that “there is no tradition of external timber boarding in Staffordshire Moorlands”.

The applicant's architect suggested during discussions that the shed could become more in keeping by treating it with a dark stain or cladding it with tiles to match those of the roof canopy. However, dark treatment and/or tile cladding would only increase the dominance and top heavy presence of the canopy tiled roof above the garage and would not improve on the adverse impacts identified above.

The development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area and fail to preserve local distinctiveness. There would be conflict with Local Plan policy DC1 and the SMDC Design Guide 2018.

Impact on the Amenity of Neighbours

The shed/summerhouse has a large rear facing bi fold door that opens on to the roof. This has introduced an open terrace or balcony on the top of the garage roof to the front and sides of the shed. However the road and land steps up to the rear and side of the property so that the garden of the dwelling to the side and rear are essentially at similar level to the roof terrace. The terrace therefore does not provide unreasonable vantage or opportunity for the overlooking of its neighbours.

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 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: 26/01/2024

X *B.J. Haywood*

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council