

PLANNING STATEMENT

**STONE HOUSE
MACCLESFIELD ROAD, LEEK**

FEBRUARY 2024

Site Address:

Stone House, Macclesfield Road, Leek, Staffordshire, ST13 8SF

Applicant:

T A & H Lancaster

Proposal:

Erection of first floor extension above existing garage to provide a residential annex

Planning Statement:

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Job Reference: RDP/2024/014

Report Prepared By:

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1 Introduction

1.1 Rob Duncan Planning Consultancy Ltd. has been instructed by T A & H Lancaster to seek planning permission for an extension and alterations at Stone House, Macclesfield Road, Leek to provide a residential annex, ancillary to the host dwelling.

1.2 The application represents a resubmission following the refusal of application SMD/2022/0181 which had proposed the erection of much larger annex with double garage, along with a large extension to form a family room. That application was refused under delegated authority for the following reasons:

1. *The application site is in the Green Belt. Policy SS10 of the Council's Local Plan (adopted September 2020) requires strict control over inappropriate development in the Green Belt. The government planning guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in paragraphs 149 and 150 sets out the forms of development which are not inappropriate development in the Green Belt. It includes the enlargement of buildings providing this would not be disproportionate in relation to the original building. The proposal, by virtue of the garage building's height, scale, form and siting in relation to the dwellinghouse, together with the extensions to the dwellinghouse, would lead to a substantially disproportionate enlargement of the original building. The proposal therefore amounts inappropriate development in the Green Belt and is therefore harmful to its openness. Inappropriate development should only be allowed where there are very special circumstances, considered to outweigh the harm to the Green Belt, however no very special circumstances have been demonstrated or exist. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy SS10 of the Local Plan and also the NPPF.*

2. *The enlargement of the garage building and provision of an "annex" would by virtue of its scale, layout, form and siting in relation to the dwellinghouse, lead to a building which effectively would be a separate dwelling to the existing dwelling on site. Policy SS10 and H1 'New Housing' of the Local Plan only allows the conversion of rural buildings into new dwellings where the building is suitable and worthy in physical, architectural and character terms. It is not considered the flat-roofed garage building is worthy and suitable in architectural and character terms. The proposed extensions to the garage building are not appropriate in scale in relation to the existing dwelling and the overall extensions and conversion would create a development which is not subservient to the existing dwelling on site, in conflict with the Council's Design Guide (adopted in February 2018) and would be harmful to both the character and appearance of the dwelling and the character, appearance and amenities of the rural area. The proposal would therefore not comply with policies SS10, H1 or DC1 'Design Considerations' of the Local Plan and Sections 5 and 12 of the NPPF.*

1.3 This revised application encompasses a much reduced proposal, with the proposed annex reduced in size, and the family room omitted in its entirety. The annex will occupy the ground floor area of the existing triple garage, with additional living space provided via a first floor extension, resulting in accommodation comprising of an open plan kitchen / living area and utility at ground floor, with two bedrooms and a bathroom at first floor.

1.4 The annex will be directly connected to the existing dwellinghouse via the utility room. It will also share the same domestic curtilage and parking areas of the existing dwelling, will remain in the same ownership, will be occupied by a dependant family member, and will share all of its service connections and postal address with the main dwelling.

2 Site & Surroundings

- 2.1 The application site is located within the North Staffordshire Green Belt and comprises a detached two storey dwellinghouse located within a substantial curtilage that is enclosed along its northern, western and southern boundaries by mature vegetation. The property has been extended to the rear by way of a flat roofed triple garage and flat roofed link between an original outbuilding and the main dwellinghouse.
- 2.2 The dwelling stands isolated in relation to its neighbours, the closest being Daisy Bank and Daisy Bank Cottage to the north of the site, and Woodlands Farm to the west. Further residential development is located to the east, on the opposite side of the Macclesfield Road.
- 2.3 Vehicular access to the site is taken direct off the Macclesfield Road, and is shared with Woodlands Farm. To the front of the property lies a large area of hardstanding that is capable of accommodating parking for 3+ cars. The hardstanding also extends around the western flank of the dwelling providing access to the existing garage.
- 2.4 The site is not located within a Conservation Area, nor are there any statutorily listed buildings nearby.

3 Planning Policy

3.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the Development Plan taking into account any relevant material considerations. The Development Plan for this area comprises the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (2020) of which the following policies are of relevance to the determination of the application:

3.2 Policy SS1 of the Local Plan relates to 'Development Principles' and states that the Council will expect the development and use of land to contribute positively to the social, economic and environmental improvement of the Staffordshire Moorlands in terms of delivering, in partnership with other agencies and services:

- a mix of types and tenures of quality, affordable homes, including starter homes, to meet the needs and aspirations of the existing and future communities
- quality local services, including provision for education, healthcare, leisure, community, cultural and tourist facilities in response to anticipated population change and visitor numbers;
- easy access to jobs, shops and transport services by all sections of the community;
- increased economic prosperity and opportunities for employment and greater local capacity with an educated, skilled and flexible workforce;

- a healthy, safe, attractive, active, well-designed and well-maintained environment;
- development which maintains the locally distinctive character of the Staffordshire Moorlands, its individual towns and villages and their settings;
- development that is undertaken in a way that protects and enhances the natural and historic environment of the District and its surrounding areas, including the Peak District National Park, both now and for future generations.
- support development which secures high quality, sustainable environments, efficient and effective use of resources and contributes effectively to tackling climate change and reduced carbon emissions.

3.3 Policy SS10 of the Local Plan relates to the 'Other Rural Areas Strategy' and states that these areas will provide only for development which 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. The policy goes on to state that the Council will allow extensions or additional domestic outbuildings to existing dwellings provided they are appropriate in scale and design and do not have a detrimental impact on the existing dwelling and the character of the rural area. The Council will assess schemes having regard to the original dwelling, in cases where cumulative change has occurred. The policy also states that strict control will be exercised over inappropriate development in the Green Belt, allowing only for exceptions as defined by Government policy.

3.4 Policy DC1 of the Local Plan relates to 'Design Considerations' and states that all development shall 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. In particular, new development should:

1. be of a high quality and add value to the local area, incorporating creativity, detailing and materials appropriate to the character of the area;
2. 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;
3. create, where appropriate, attractive, active, functional, accessible and safe public and private environments which incorporate public spaces, green infrastructure including making provision for networks of multi-functional new and existing green space (both public and private), landscaping, public art, 'designing out crime' initiatives and the principles of Active Design;
4. incorporate sustainable construction techniques and design concepts for buildings and their layouts to reduce the impact of the development;
5. protect the amenity of the area, including creation of healthy active environments and residential amenity, in terms of satisfactory daylight, overbearing development, sunlight, outlook, privacy, soft landscaping as well as noise, odour and light pollution;
6. promote the maintenance, enhancement, restoration and re-creation of biodiversity and geological heritage, where appropriate;

7. provide for safe and satisfactory access and make a contribution to meeting the parking requirement arising from necessary car use;
8. require new developments to be well integrated for car, pedestrian and cycle use as well as other sustainable transport links;
9. ensure that existing drainage, waste water and sewerage infrastructure capacity is available, and where necessary enhanced, to enable the development to proceed;
10. ensure, where appropriate, equality of access and use for all sections of the community;
11. be served by high speed broadband (>30mbps) unless it can be demonstrated through consultation with Next Generation Access Network providers that this would not be possible, practical or economically viable. In all circumstances during construction of the site sufficient and suitable ducting should be provided within the site and to the property to facilitate ease of installation at a future date.

4 Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework seeks to secure the delivery of sustainable development and sets out policies, *inter-alia*, in respect of safeguarding the Green Belt and securing high quality design. The content of the NPPF has been taken into consideration in the preparation of this application.

SMDC Design Guide SPD

- 4.2 The adopted Design Guide SPD provides advice aimed at securing the delivery of high-quality built development within the District. The content of the Design Guide SPD has been taken into consideration in the preparation of this application.

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- 4.3 The above application had proposed the erection of a larger annex building on the site along with a double garage to replace the existing buildings on the site, as well as a family room extension. The conclusion of the Local Authority in their assessment of that application have been taken into consideration in the preparation of this application.

5 Planning Assessment

Green Belt

5.1 The application site is located within the rural area and is designed as part of the North Staffordshire Green Belt. Policy SS10 of the Local Plan makes provision for the extension of existing dwellings within the rural area, provided that they are appropriate in scale and design and do not have a detrimental impact on the existing dwelling and the character of the rural area. The policy goes on to confirm that the Council will assess schemes cumulatively having regard to the original dwelling in cases where cumulative change has occurred. Policy SS10 also states that strict control will continue to be exercised over inappropriate development, allowing only for exceptions as defined by government policy.

5.2 Paragraph 154 of the recently revised National Planning Policy Framework confirms that the erection of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate within the Green Belt unless it is for one of a limited number of exceptions. Those exceptions include:

“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”

5.3 The term disproportionate is not defined within either the National Planning Policy Framework. nor within the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan. The aforementioned provisions of policy SS10 nevertheless provide some clarification on the matter, confirming that extensions must be appropriate in scale and design and not have a detrimental impact on the existing dwelling and the character of the rural area.

- 5.4 In determining the previous application the Local Authority calculated that the original floorspace of the property (house and original outbuilding) had a combined floor area of 252.5 square metres. The previously refused application was stated to represent an increase in size of 212.6 square metres, equivalent to an increase in size of 84.2%.
- 5.5 This revised proposal is substantially smaller than the previously refused scheme, owing to the removal of the previously proposed double garage, a reduction in the size of the annex so that it now occupies the same footprint as the existing flat roofed garage, and the removal of the family room. The revised proposal represents a net increase in size of 114.5 square metres over and above the size of the original dwellinghouse and outbuilding, thereby representing an increase in size of 45%.
- 5.6 The correspondence enclosed as Appendix A comprises an email from a Planning Officer at the Local Authority (since departed to another Authority) which serves to confirm that the Local Authority will accept an increase of size of between 30 – 50% when assessing proposals in the Green Belt. The proposed development is firmly in keeping with that spectrum and will not result in a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building.
- 5.7 We also draw attention to the fact that the extension will sit atop the existing flat roofed garage, and consequently will not result in any encroachment of built development over and above that which already exists on the site.
- 5.8 Another important consideration in the assessment of this matter are the provisions of policy SS10 which give support to extensions to dwellings that are appropriate in scale and design and do not have a detrimental impact on the existing dwelling and the character of the rural area. This revised proposal is substantially smaller than the previously refused application, with the annex

having a much reduced floor area comparative to the refused application, that was much wider, and which also had a double garage attached at its westernmost end.

5.9 The proposal will also serve to remove the existing poor quality flat roofed elements of the existing dwelling, replacing them with a traditional, pitched roof style of design that is wholly in keeping with wider Moorlands vernacular and which embraces the recommendations set out within the Design SPD. It will harmonise with the host dwelling, having a lower ridge line and much lower eaves line, thereby appearing subordinate to the parent property. The existing flat roofed extension by contrast encompasses a style of design that is not traditional to the Moorlands and which detracts from the character and appearance of the host property.

5.10 It is consequently submitted that the proposed extension will not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building, and that it will be appropriate in scale and design and not have a detrimental impact on the existing dwelling and the character of the rural area. The proposal consequently amounts to an appropriate form of development within the Green Belt in accordance with policy SS10 of the Local Plan and the provisions of paragraph 154 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Ancillary Relationship To Dwelling

5.11 In determining the previous application, the Local Authority expressed concerns that the proposal would result in an annex that would be akin to the size of a separate dwellinghouse, only weakly linked to the existing dwelling, with no internal door connecting the two. It was consequently held that no works would be needed to use the building as a separate dwelling.

- 5.12 This revised proposal encompasses an annex with a much reduced floorspace comparative to that previous application, and has a direct connecting corridor through to the existing dwelling. The annex is to be occupied in the first instance by the applicant's daughter and family, with the anticipation of them moving into the house in the coming years, with the applicant's moving into the annex, allowing their daughter to provide care and support to them into their later years.
- 5.13 The annex continues to provide accommodation that is capable of providing for day-to-day living, but that in itself does not automatically mean a dwellinghouse is, or would, be created. The Local Authority's attention is drawn in this regard to the Judgment in *Uttlesford DC v SSE & White [1992] JPL 171*. The Court held in that case that even if the accommodation provided facilities for independent day-to-day living, it would not necessarily become a separate planning unit from the main dwelling; it would be a matter of fact and degree in each case.
- 5.14 In this case the proposed annex is to be occupied by the applicant's daughter and family, who will share the amenity space of the existing dwelling, as well as its parking area, postal address, utilities and service connections. No subdivision of the existing site is proposed. The annex will also remain in the same ownership as the host dwelling, and be subservient to it in terms of its overall floorspace.
- 5.15 The proposed development will consequently not result in the subdivision of the existing planning unit, nor give rise to a material change of use of the land. The annex will have a wholly ancillary relationship to the host dwelling and has been designed for its intended purpose. The imposition of a suitably worded planning condition can be imposed to restrict the occupancy of the dwelling. The concerns raised by the Local Authority in the determination of the previous

application are consequently considered to have been resolved, and no conflict with policies SS10 or H1 of the Local Plan will arise.

Design & Appearance

- 5.16 The existing garage constitutes a flat roofed structure which contrasts with the more traditional form of the host dwelling and its original outbuilding. It contributes little to the character and appearance of the area, and in many respects can be said to detract from it.
- 5.17 The submitted proposal takes the opportunity to remove that flat roofed appearance, replacing it with a more traditional pitched roofed design, with roof pitch that matches that of the existing property. The eaves and ridge height of the extension will sit below that of the host dwelling, and consequently the annex will have a subservient relationship to the existing property. There will furthermore be no increase in the size of the footprint of the property compared to that which already exists.
- 5.18 The extension will also be constructed using a palette of materials that matches that of the host dwelling (coursed natural stone with a Staffordshire blue tiled roof atop). In doing so the extension will have a much improved appearance comparative to the existing flat roofed extension and will have a complementary, subservient relationship to the host dwelling.
- 5.19 The site is relatively secluded in views from the Macclesfield Road, owing to the sunken position of the highway, the presence of mature boundary vegetation and the distance of the dwelling from the highway (80+ metres). The extension will present a new gable end towards the eastern site boundary, and in such views the extension will appear akin to that of a traditional Moorlands outbuilding. There are no public views of the site from the north. The design and layout of the development is consequently held to meet the

requirements of policies SS1, and DC1 of the Local Plan and guidance contained within the Design SPD.

Residential Amenity

- 5.20 There are no immediate neighbouring properties that will be affected by the proposed development, and no conflict with the Local Authority's Space About Dwellings standards will arise. No harm to neighbouring residential amenity will therefore ensue as a consequence of the development. The Local Authority concluded likewise in its determination of the previous application on the site. The proposed development is consequently held to meet the requirements of policy DC1 of the Local Plan in this regard.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 The proposed extension to the existing garage to form a residential annex constitutes an appropriate form of development within the Green Belt, as it will not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original dwelling and it will be appropriate in scale and design and not have a detrimental impact on the existing dwelling and the character of the rural area.
- 6.2 The proposed annex will have an ancillary relationship to the host dwelling and not result in the creation of a new planning unit. Its occupancy as an annex can furthermore be secured by way of an appropriately worded planning condition.
- 6.3 The design and layout of the development will be subservient to the host dwelling and not materially harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The proposal also takes the opportunity to enhance the appearance of the existing building by removing the poor quality flat roofed elements of the existing garage. The proposal is also acceptable in respect of its impact on neighbouring residential occupiers.
- 6.4 The submitted proposal is consequently held to meet the requirements of policies SS1, SS10 and DC1 of the of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (2020), the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework, and guidance contained within the Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide SPD.