

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2024/0533
Valid 04/12/2024

WEST AVON BLYTHE
BRIDGE ROAD
CAVERSWALL

**PROPOSED NEW FRONT
SINGLE STOREY EXTENSION;
REAR SINGLE STOREY
EXTENSION AND
EXCAVATION OF FRONT
GARDEN LEVELS AND
CONSTRUCTION OF NEW
RETAINING WALLS TO FORM
ENLARGED DRIVEWAY AND
CAR PARKING AREA.**

(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 semi-detached brick and tile dwellinghouse and its associated curtilage, situated in the Caverswall ward. The site is not located within the Development Boundary, instead it is on greenbelt land. Two direct neighbours adjoin the site; Meadow View, Blythe Bridge Road being located to the North and Clifton, Blythe Bridge Road (the adjoining dwelling) to the South. To the East is green belt and countryside and where the Caverswall 22 public right of way is located. The Blythe Bridge Road highway runs adjacent to the site to the West.

PROPOSAL

The proposed development comprises a proposed new front single storey entrance porch extension, rear single storey utility room extension, excavation of the front garden levels and construction of new retaining walls to form an enlarged driveway and car parking area.

The new porch extension would have a depth of 1.62 metres and would have a width of 2.52 metres. It would have a ridge height of approximately 3.86 metres and an eaves height of 2.80 metres. The proposed single storey rear extension would have

a depth of 3.04 metres and a width of 3.40 metres. It would have a maximum height of approximately 3.96 metres and an eaves height of 2.50 metres.

The proposed extensions would be constructed from materials to match those used in the construction of the host dwellinghouse, including brown facing brickwork, plain tiles (to the proposed porch extension), concrete interlocking tiles (to the rear extension) and brown 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
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 Greenbelt Land

Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide SPD

Part 5 – Alterations, Extensions and Conversions

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/2007/0560 – Single storey rear extension to West Avon, single storey rear extension, two storey side extension, front porch, conversion of roof space to living accommodation with two rear dormer extensions to Clifton. Withdrawn.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 29/01/2025
Neighbour consultation period ends: 10/01/2025
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

No public comments have been received.

Town / Parish Comments

No comments have been received from Caverswall Parish Council.

Staffordshire County Council Highways

The proposal is for the construction of a single storey extension to the front elevation of the property to provide a porch and a single storey extension to the rear will create a new larger utility room.

It is also proposed to remove some of the internal garden wall to create a larger parking area. The parking area is to be constructed in gravel the construction of the block paver buffer will prevent gravel from being dragged onto the adopted highway.

No modification to the front garden boundary wall (abutting the rear of the adopted highway) is proposed. However, an area of block pavers for a distance of 5 metres back from the boundary wall is proposed as shown in submitted plan Drawing No.343/005.

The existing access crossing and gates will not be modified.

There are no objections on Highway grounds to the proposed development subject to the following condition being included on any approval:- Parking are to be constructed in accordance with eh submitted plan.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

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 Caverswall. 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.”

Paragraph 154 of the NPPF (2024) outlines that the construction of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate in the Green Belt unless it meets an exception. Paragraph 153 of the NPPF (2024) 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 (2024) 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. Whilst it is acknowledged that 30% increase is not planning policy, it does represent a useful “rule of thumb”.

The proposed extensions combined would equate to an increase in volume of approximately 14%. As the extensions to the property would not exceed the 30% guideline, the Council do not consider that this will result in a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building.

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

Design

Policy DC1 seeks to ensure that all development is well designed and of a high quality, contributing to local distinctiveness and harmonising with sense of place. 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.

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. Both the front and rear extensions are single storey and therefore considered to be subordinate to the existing dwelling.

The proposed rear extension would have a simple mono-pitched tiled roof which would complement the roof form of the host dwellinghouse. Although the hipped style of roof on the porch would not be characteristic of the pitched roof of the host dwellinghouse, the neighbouring dwellinghouse at Clifton has an identical hipped roof over their porch. Thus, as the proposed front extension would essentially mirror the front extension at Clifton, it is viewed that the pair of dwellings would balance out and it is therefore considered acceptable.

The removal of the existing chimney flue would have minimal design impact on the dwelling. Notably, the chimney flue has already been removed from the neighbouring dwelling at Clifton, therefore it is clear that it does not comprise an important design feature of the pair of dwellings.

The proposed works associated with the creation a larger driveway would be considered to maintain the character of the site. Brick and stone boundary / retaining walls form an integral part of the character of the boundary treatments in the area, thus the creation of brick retaining walls to maintain support to the upper ground conditions would be appropriate. Other driveways amongst the streetscape are relatively varied in their appearance; incorporating elements of tarmac, block paving and gravel. Therefore, the use of block pavers and gravel to comprise the new driveway is acceptable.

Materials used in the construction of the proposed extensions would match those used in the construction of the existing dwelling, as well as from surrounding dwellings in the area. Brown facing brickwork, plain tiles (to the proposed porch extension), concrete interlocking tiles (to the rear extension) and brown UPVC would be used in the construction of the proposed extensions. Thus, the proposed materials would match the existing materials and harmonise with the host dwelling, not detracting from the character of the host dwelling.

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

Amenity

Paragraph 135 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.

The application site is bound by Meadow View, Blythe Bridge Road to the North and Clifton, Blythe Bridge Road (the adjoining dwelling) to the South.

The proposed single storey rear extension would not create a detrimental loss of light into the rear principal windows of the neighbour at Meadow View. After a site visit, an examination of the submitted site plan shows that the proposed single storey rear extension would not breach the 45 degree line from the closest rear window belonging to this neighbour. Furthermore, the approximately 1.8 metre high boundary fencing situated between the proposed rear extension and the neighbour, would aid in preventing any shadowing impact on the neighbouring property. There would be no windows on the side elevation of the proposed rear extension which would face towards the neighbours at Meadow View, thus there would be no privacy impact on these neighbours.

It is clear that the proposed single storey extension to the front of the dwelling would not breach the 45 degree rule to the closest window on the principal elevation of Meadow View. Regardless, due to the Northerly positioning of Meadow View to the site, the East to West sunlight trajectory would not lead to any shadowing being cast as a consequence of the proposed front extension. There would be no windows on the side elevation of the proposed front extension facing the neighbours at Meadow View, thus no privacy amenity impact would occur.

The proposed single storey rear extension would be sufficiently stepped off the common boundary to ensure that there would be no breach of the 45 degree rule to the closest rear fenestration at Clifton. An approximately 1.8m metre high boundary fence sits on the common boundary between the site and Clifton, which would additionally aid in mitigating any shadowing cast as a result of the erection of the proposed rear extension. There would be no side windows on the rear extension which would face towards Clifton, meaning that their privacy amenity would not be impacted.

No amenity impact would occur for the neighbours at Clifton as a result of the proposed single storey extension to the principal elevation. The extension is too small in its size to cast any detrimental shadowing over this neighbour. Furthermore, there would be no side windows on the front extension which would face towards the neighbours at Clifton, meaning that privacy amenity impact would not occur.

The excavation of the front garden levels and construction of new retaining walls to form an enlarged driveway and car parking area would not be considered to impact the amenity of any surrounding neighbours. If anything, a reduction in the ground level of a section of the front curtilage would slightly reduce any overlooking.

Highway Safety

Paragraph 109 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. Although one of the proposed single storey extensions would be on the front elevation of the dwellinghouse, it would not be large enough to compromise the available off road parking, comprising sufficient off road spaces, in compliance with Policy T1. If anything, more off-highway parking spaces would be created through the increase in the size of the driveway. Staffordshire County Council Highways have confirmed that they do not object to the proposed works, subject to compliance with the details submitted.

Thus, the proposal complies with Local Plan Policy T1 in this regard.

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, the greenbelt and no overall impact on the highway, it is deemed acceptable under planning policy. Therefore, the proposed development is recommended for approval, subject to compliance with all conditions.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE

Case Officer: Hannah Varley

Recommendation Date: 29/01/2025

X 

Signed by: Jane Colley Signature

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council