

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2024/0508
Valid 14/11/2024

HIGHWAYMAN COTTAGE
ALTON ROAD
THREAPWOOD

**PROPOSED SINGLE STOREY
PORCH EXTENSION AND 2
STOREY EXTENSION ON THE
HOUSE. PROPOSED
CONVERSION AND SINGLE
STOREY EXTENSION OF
GARAGE TO FORM ANNEX.
PROPOSED RAISED DECKING.**

(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)

MAIN ISSUES

- Principle of development
- Design and visual impact
- Neighbour amenity
- Highways
- Coal

1. DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

1.1 The application site is Highwayman Cottage, a detached (stone and render), two-storey, three-bedroom dwelling. The dwelling has its own garden, parking/turning area, decked area and detached garage. There are no significant land-level alterations. Boundary lines are marked with timber fencing and vehicular access is via a shared drive at the northern side of the plot. There are residential dwellings surrounding the site, whilst to the east there is an open field

1.2 For the purposes of planning policy consideration, the application site is located within the open countryside (not Green Belt) and a low-risk, coal development area. The site is not within any Conservation Area and there are no listed buildings/structures or protected trees which need to be considered.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

2.1 Permission is sought for the erection of a two-storey side extension, a ground floor front extension and the extension and conversion of a detached garage to form a residential annex. Together with internal alterations, the extensions would allow for the newly laid out ground floor accommodation to consist of an open-plan kitchen/lounge area, third bedroom, utility room and enclosed porch. At first floor level the internal alterations would see the use of the existing third bedroom as a large bathroom area and the enlargement of the existing master bedroom (with ensuite). The plans show that the utility extension would be rendered to match existing render on the dwelling, and the porch and two-storey side extension would be constructed using matching stone.

2.2 Works to the garage to convert it to a domestic annex building would include a ground-floor, pitched-roof extension. Internally the annex would have one bedroom (including wardrobe space), a bathroom, utility room, inner hallway and a large open-plan living/kitchen area. Bi-fold/concertina-style glazed doors would allow access to an enlarged, raised deck area. The plans show matching roof tiles, walls clad with painted cement fibre timber effect boards and the addition of roof mounted solar panels.

2.3 The application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement. The application, the details attached to it, including the plans, any comments made by residents and the responses of consultees can be found on the Council's website by using the following link:- <http://publicaccess.staffs Moorlands.gov.uk/portal/servlets/ApplicationSearchServlet?PKID=180247>

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

SMD/2014/0049	Amendment to approval 12/01138/FUL proposal to split approved unit 6 into two smaller dwellings. Approved.
12/01138/FUL	Conversion of vacant premises to 8 residential units. Approved.
04/01548/FUL_MJ	Conversion of vacant premises to 10 residential units, garaging and parking. Approved.

4. PLANNING POLICIES RELEVANT TO THE DECISION

4.1 The following Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan policies are relevant to the application:-

SS1	Development Principles
SS10	Other Rural Areas Strategy
H1	New Housing Development
DC1	Design Considerations
DC3	Landscape and Settlement Setting
T1	Development and Sustainable Transport
Appendix 2	Parking Guidance

4.2 The National Planning Policy Framework is relevant for the consideration of the application, including sections;

2	Achieving sustainable development
6	Building a strong, competitive economy
9	Promoting sustainable transport
12	Achieving well-designed places

National Planning Policy Guidance

Supplementary Planning Guidance

1. Design Principles for Development in the Staffordshire Moorlands
2. Space About Dwellings

Supplementary Planning Document

1. Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide
2. Churnet Valley Masterplan

Checkley Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan (2021-2035).

5. CONSULTATIONS CARRIED OUT

Site Notice: Expired
Neighbour Consultation. Expired.

Public Comments

Two letters of representation received, one clearly supporting the application, the other raising concerns. The comments can be summarised as follows:

Support

- Support the application in its entirety, commenting that 'I can only see that they would add to the developments appearance.
- Writer notes that if any windows overlook other properties, they could be altered to let light in but to not overlook.

Objection

- Concern that a two-storey extension would be imposing and only provide a dressing room off the master bedroom;
- Single-storey extension would be better;
- Velux windows appear low enough to be able to overlook into neighbours bedrooms and kitchen/family room;
- Request that the windows are positioned higher to prevent overlooking;

Checkley Parish Council: The Parish Council are of the opinion that the proposal appears to be sound taking into account the applicants legitimate reasons for the extensions as stated in their Design and Access statement and their pre-application discussions with the Planning Officer. Provided it is in keeping with neighbouring property, there are no local objections and it conforms with planning policies as defined in the Checkley Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan, the Staffordshire Moorlands District Council Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework, Checkley Parish Council would fully support this application.

Waste Services (SMDC): No issues regarding waste collections

Staffordshire County Council Highways

Recommendation Summary: Conditional

Site Visit Conducted on: 03-Dec-2024

Personal Injury Records

Current records show that there was 2 personal injury collision (PIC) on Alton Road within 215 metres of the access to Highwayman Cottage from 30/12/2019 to 29/12/2022. Although all PICs are regrettable, the overall volume of collisions does not suggest there are any existing safety problems that would be exacerbated by the proposed development.

Background

Highwayman Cottage is located off Alton Road (Road No. B5032), a B classification road, it is subject to a 60-mph speed limit there are no streetlights, there is a short section of footway from the access which terminates at Sandy Lane. Highwayman Cottage is a 3-bedroom property and benefits from a garage. Vehicle access off Alton Road is shared with several properties and provides access to a parking area and Highwayman Cottage.

Description of Proposal

Proposed single storey porch extension and 2 storey extension on the house. Proposed conversion and single storey extension of garage to form annex. Proposed raised decking.

Comments on Information Submitted

The proposal is for the construction of a single storey and a 2-storey extension to Highwayman Cottage. The single storey will create a porch and utility room, the 2-storey extension will provide a kitchen with master ensuite bedroom above. The property will retain 3 bedrooms. The proposal also includes the conversion of a garage into a 1-bedroom residential annex. A single-storey extension to the garage will provide a kitchen and living area. The garage to be converted lies within the domestic curtilage of Highwayman Cottage as shown on the submitted plan titled Existing and proposed block plans Rev D. The existing vehicular access to Highwayman Cottage (off Alton Road) which is shared with several properties will also be shared with the proposed annex. The overall footprint will increase from 3 to 4 bedrooms and the conversion of the garage will incur the loss of parking. The Parking Standards state: Detached/Semi-detached property of 4 or more bedrooms will require 3 spaces (2.4 x 4.8m each space) for residents and visitors within the curtilage of the dwelling. The parking area within the curtilage of Highwayman Cottage can accommodate parking for 3 vehicles as shown in the submitted plan titled Existing and proposed block plans Rev D and therefore meets with the Parking Standards. It is noted that an area of the garden is to be gravelled to extend the current gravel driveway however, it may be more beneficial to increase the gravelled section to facilitate turning movements within the curtilage of the property and prevent having to reverse out onto the shared driveway and parking area. The proposal will not have a detrimental impact on the adopted highway and therefore there are no objections on Highway grounds to the proposed development subject to the following condition:-

The development hereby permitted shall remain ancillary to Highwayman Cottage and shall not be sold or let independently.

The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until the parking and turning areas have been provided in accordance with the approved plan titled Existing and proposed block plans Rev D. The parking and turning areas shall thereafter be retained unobstructed as parking and turning areas for the life of the development.

6. OFFICER COMMENT AND PLANNING BALANCE

Policy Context and Principle of Development

6.1 The Local Planning Authority is required to determine applications in accordance with the Development Plan, unless there are material circumstances which indicate otherwise and in determining these applications, it shall have regard to the provisions of the Development Plan, in so far as material to the application and to any other material considerations. The Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan 2020 is the adopted Local Plan for the district.

6.2 Policy SS1 of The Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan 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; this echo's the stance of the

National Planning Policy Framework. The Local Plan aims to deliver a wide range of development and includes support in principle for domestic developments.

6.3 Local Plan policy SS10 gives some support for *'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.'* SS10 also stipulates that priority is given *'to the need to protect the quality and character of the area and requiring all development proposals to respect and respond sensitively to the distinctive qualities of the surrounding landscape.'*

6.4 This application raises no 'in principle' objections as it is clear there is support for domestic developments within the open countryside. However, support or otherwise of the application depends on all other material planning matters being satisfied, which the following report will address. For ease of reference each planning matter will be split into two sections (where necessary), allowing separate assessment of the house extension and proposed annex.

Design and Visual Impact (Character and Appearance)

6.5 Local Plan policy DC1 requires that all developments shall be well designed and reinforce local distinctiveness by positively contributing to and complementing the character and heritage of an area. Development should be of a high quality, adding to the value of a local area, incorporating creativity, be designed to respect the site and its surroundings and promote a positive sense of place and identity. Policy DC3 cites 'resisting development which would lead to prominent intrusion into the countryside.'

House Extension

6.6 The house extension proposals include a single-storey front extension which would provide a utility room and a porch, and a two-storey side extension. The single storey front element has the appearance of a combined lean-to and porch extension. Following on from officer advice, matching stonework is now to be used for the area around the front door, rather than the original proposal of the addition having a purely rendered finish. The change to stone now ensures the front door remains (visually) the central, focal point of the principal elevation whilst providing the applicant(s) with additional internal space. The combined use of stone and render will ensure the addition sits comfortably against the existing house (proportionately sized and will not dominate the principal elevation), it will add further interest in terms of the varied materials used.

6.7 The two-storey side extension raises no design concerns. As it currently stands, the dwelling has the appearance of having previously benefitted from a two-storey side extension, however the site's planning history shows that this two-storey stone section was part of the originally formed dwellinghouse when the former Highwayman pub site was being developed. The proposed two-storey element would be adding a modestly sized extension to the original dwelling. The proposal gives the impression that (in the event of the extension being approved), the house would have been extended disproportionately, however this is not the case. The original dwelling appears to have been intentionally designed to look like it had already been extended.

6.8 Whilst extension proposals are generally designed to be set back from the principal elevation with lower ridgelines and breaks/steps in the roof slope plane, it is considered in this case that the best option would be to continue the line of the front and rear walls and ridgeline. Stepping the addition back would give the appearance of an extension being added to an

extension, resulting in a cascading row of ridgelines and an overly complicated principal elevation. The use of matching stone and tiles is welcomed.

6.9 In terms of visual impact the porch and utility extension will have very little impact beyond the application site, due to its enclosed location close to the property boundaries and neighbouring dwellings. Views of the single-storey extension may be possible from surrounding dwellings, but this is not a reason to refuse the scheme. The two-storey side extension would have wider visual impact in that it would be seen from several surrounding dwellings as well as the access/shared car park area to the north. There are no concerns relating to visual impact, this is a simply designed, two-storey extension which would sit comfortably within its surroundings.

In conclusion, there are no objections to the proposals to extend the dwelling in terms of design or visual impact.

Annex

The applicant sought pre-application advice regarding the house extensions and the annex provision. The pre-application annex proposal was considered unacceptable in terms of size and overall appearance. This submission sees a reduction in the proposed annex size. Whilst there is some concern regarding the size of the extension compared to the size of the existing garage, it is considered that in this instance and on balance, that the proposal is acceptable. The roof ridge is no higher than the existing, external materials can be conditioned, and window and door openings are proportionately sized and reasonable. A condition to secure the Annex external materials is considered reasonable. Composite cladding is not always considered to be suitable and in the interests of good design/visual impact, the addition of a materials condition allows for further consideration of an appropriate material for the application site setting. A natural timber would be considered more appropriate in this rural location.

The annex proposal will not result in overdevelopment of the plot. Whilst there will be visual impact beyond the application site this is not considered to be a sufficient reason for refusal. The former Highwayman site consists of development of varying sizes and design together with outbuildings. This scheme is not considered to be visually harmful to the surrounding area, it will not form a visually prominent part of the streetscene.

Amenity

House extensions

The porch and utility proposal does not raise any material planning concerns in terms of neighbour amenity, there are no overlooking or overbearing concerns.

The two-storey extension will have some amenity impact upon the neighbouring 'Cuthbert Cottages' to the north. It is noted that some concerns have been raised by a neighbour regarding the rooflights on the rear elevation (in terms of potential overlooking) and the extension being overbearing and this is assessed as follows.

Highwayman Cottage (application site) sits close to the shared boundary with number 5 Cuthbert Cottages. Whilst the proposed extension would have some impact upon number 5, it is noted that the existing Highwayman Cottage already significantly projects beyond the rear elevation of the Cuthbert Cottages terrace. In terms of the Space About Dwellings standards, the proposed extension would not bring about a breach of the 45-degree angle, this standard is already surpassed by the existing dwelling as it was first developed. The extension would be a good distance from the rear wall of 5 Cuthbert Cottages which would result in minimal impact.

The proposed elevation plans show two rooflights on the rear roof slope, however one of the openings already exists. The extension proposes only one additional rooflight opening which would serve an ensuite. In response to the neighbour's concerns, the applicant has submitted a photograph of the existing ensuite which shows the current positioning of the skylight within the room, the plans do not show any intent to relocate this opening. It is clear from the photograph that the rooflight is sufficiently high enough not to allow overlooking, and, when the proposed rear elevation plans are studied, it is noted that the new (extension) rooflight would be positioned a few centimetres higher than the existing.

Annex

Whilst the proposed garage extension is large, it will not result in any neighbour amenity harm. The proposed annex location on the eastern side of the application site is far enough away from neighbouring dwellings to ensure there will be no overbearing relationships, overlooking or harmful amenity impact upon surrounding properties. The raised deck area also causes no neighbour amenity issues due to its location on the eastern side of the site, on the other side of the annex building.

Highways/Access

The National Planning Policy Framework and Local Plan policies DC1 and T1 require that all development proposals secure safe and suitable access to a site whilst contributing towards meeting parking requirements and ensuring that all new development can be satisfactorily accommodated within the highway network.

The application does not propose any alterations to the existing vehicular access, save for the simple replacement of the existing gates with a timber sliding gate. The Council's adopted Parking standards (Appendix 2 of the Local Plan) set out the number of vehicle parking spaces required for residential dwellings with varying numbers of bedrooms. Whilst the conversion and extension of the garage will result in the loss of potential parking spaces, the total number of bedrooms (house and annex) will be four, meaning that the number of parking spaces required is three. The plans clearly show the provision of three spaces, the site being large enough for potentially more.

The County Highways officer has visited the site and confirms there are no highways objections to the scheme subject to conditions including ensuring that the annex remains ancillary to the existing house (not sold or let separately) and provision of the parking/turning areas prior to first use of the proposed development.

Checkley Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan

The application site lies within the Parish of Checkley. The Checkley Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan supports residential development including meeting identified needs within sustainable locations and provision of accommodation for those wishing to downsize. This application clearly demonstrates an identified need, the applicant has submitted details regarding why a family member wishes to occupy the annex. Whilst the site is not really within a sustainable location in terms of transport (reliance upon private vehicle ownership), the site is already developed for residential purposes, therefore the annex is not introducing a new or particularly intensive use.

In addition, it is considered that the proposal complies with the parking requirements of policy DES1 'Design' of the Checkley Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan. Policy DES1 requires that parking should be well-designed and form an integral part of the development; this is achieved through adequate curtilage parking/turning space, rather than potentially adding pressure on roadside parking and visually impacting upon the street scene. The

scheme provides adequate onsite parking. The scheme is also 'DES1' compliant by reason of satisfactory design whilst having no adverse landscape/character impact (DES3).

Coal

The application site is within a low-risk coal development area. Latest advice contained on the Gov.uk website is that 'If you are submitting a planning application in a Development Low Risk Area then there is no statutory requirement to submit a CMRA to the LPA' however 'the proposed development still lies within a coal mining area and could contain unrecorded hazards.' The advice is that if any coal mining feature is encountered it must be immediately reported to the Coal Authority.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

For the reasons outlined within the report, it is recommended that the application is approved subject to conditions and informative notes.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : Conditional approval.

Case Officer: Lisa Jackson

Recommendation Date: 14.02.2025

X 

Signed by: Jane Curley

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council