

PLANNING STATEMENT

**DARLEYSHIRE FARM
WETLEY ROCKS**

JUNE 2025

Site Address:

Darleyshire Farm, Leek Road, Wetley Rocks, Staffordshire, ST9 0AR

Applicant:

Mr. & Mrs. Chadwick

Proposal:

Erection of single storey extension to residential annex

Planning Statement:

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Report Prepared By:

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Rob Duncan Planning Consultancy Ltd. has been instructed by Mr. & Mrs. Chadwick to seek householder planning permission for the erection of a single storey extension to an existing residential annex at Darleyshire Farm, Leek Road, Wetley Rocks, to provide an additional bedroom.
- 1.2 By way of background, planning permission was granted under application SMD/2020/0421 for the erection of a detached annex building on the site. That annex has subsequently been erected and its accommodation comprises an open plan lounge kitchen / dining area, utility with store, bedroom and bathroom. The annex has a gross internal floor area of 63.07 square metres.
- 1.3 The application proposes a single storey extension off the southeastern elevation of the building to provide a further bedroom along with associated internal remodelling of the existing accommodation to reduce the existing bedroom to a single bedroom. The application also proposes the provision of a new window in the north elevation of the building to serve the reduced sized bedroom. The extension will see the gross internal floor area of the building increased to 76.91 square metres.
- 1.4 The annex is to be occupied by the applicant's mother and father who are in need of care, having previously been occupied by the applicant's daughter. The single bedroom resulting from the proposed works will provide space for a carer to live on site during periods when the applicants are not present on site to undertake it themselves., with their parents using the new double bedroom. The annex will continue to remain in the same ownership as the farmhouse, sharing its parking spaces and service provisions and will not result in the creation of a new planning unit.

2 Site & Surroundings

- 2.1 The application site is located within the North Staffordshire Green Belt and comprises a single storey detached annex located to the south of the existing farmhouse. The building is constructed from red/orange facing brickwork with a Staffordshire Blue tiled roof atop.
- 2.2 To the north of the site lies the main two storey farmhouse, which is also constructed from facing brickwork with a Staffordshire Blue tiled roof atop. To the east of the annex lies a yard area, whilst to the southwest lies a recently constructed detached dwellinghouse, as approved under application SMD/2019/0765.
- 2.3 The front garden of the farmhouse extends to the west of the existing annex building, beyond which runs the Leek Road. Vehicular access to the site will continue to be shared with the farmhouse, which connects with the Leek Road to the southwest.
- 2.4 The site is not within a Conservation Area, nor are there any statutorily listed buildings located in close proximity of the site.

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.

5 Planning Assessment

Green Belt

- 5.1 The application site is located within the rural area and forms part of the North Staffordshire Green Belt. Policy SS10 of the Local Plan confirms 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 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. It is therefore open to some degree of interpretation. The term ‘original building’ is nevertheless defined by the glossary to the NPPF, and comprises:

*“A building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after 1 July 1948, **as it was built originally**”. (our emphasis)*

- 5.4 The annex building is a newly constructed building, first constructed in late 2021 / early 2022 and is consequently held to amount to the original building for the purposes of this assessment. The original building has a gross floor area of 63.97 square metres, and will be increased by the proposed extension up to 76.91 square metres, representing an increase of some 20%. The scale,

massing and design of the extension (discussed in more detail below) will also be subservient and proportionate in size to the original building.

- 5.5 For these reasons we submit that the proposed extension to the annex constitutes a proportionate addition in relation to the size of the original building and thus amounts to an appropriate form of development within the Green Belt in accordance with paragraph 154(c) of the NPPF and policy SS10 of the Local Plan. The principle of development is consequently held to be acceptable.
- 5.6 Notwithstanding the above, and without prejudice to the applicant's case, if the Local Authority were to conclude that the Green Belt assessment should instead be on the basis that the annex was a replacement building and thus assessed as to whether the proposal would result in a building that is materially larger than the buildings that were replaced, the proposal is still held to be acceptable.
- 5.7 The previous outbuildings on the site had a collective floor area of 70.1 square metres (excluding a metal framed greenhouse). The proposal will result in a building with a floor area of 76.91 square metres and thus represent a very modest increase in size (9.7%) compared to those previous outbuildings on the site. This is not held to be 'materially larger'.
- 5.8 If one includes the greenhouse in that assessment, which we submit should be the case given that it constituted a building that was permanently affixed to the ground, then the original floor area would have amounted to 81.9 square metres. In that context the submitted proposal, coupled with the previously approved annex building, would represent an overall reduction in floor area (minus 6%) compared to those previous buildings.

- 5.9 In either case the extension is appropriate in scale and design and will not have a detrimental impact on the existing dwelling or the wider character of the rural area. The proposal therefore amounts to appropriate development in the Green Belt and is consistent with the requirements of policy SS10 of the Local Plan and paragraph 154 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Design & Layout

- 5.10 The character of the surrounding area is particularly varied in terms of the type, architectural style, and land uses that it exhibits. There is a mixture of residential properties, as well as evidence of agricultural activities and commercial uses (haulage yard located opposite to the west). Buildings within the locality encompass a mixture of dormer bungalows and two storey dwellings, as well as various types of portal framed and brick built commercial buildings. There is a variable palette of materials observable that includes facing brickwork, render, and stone, with Staffordshire Blue tiles being the only common denominator.
- 5.11 The existing annex building relates well to the character and appearance of the wider area, and the proposed extension has been sympathetically designed so that its scale, design and massing will be subservient to it. The proposal will also incorporate a complementary roof pitch, similar fenestration detailing, and have a ridge line which is wholly subservient to the ridge of the annex. By resultant effect the annex will remain the dominant feature within the site, with the extension having a harmonious, subservient relationship to it. The design and appearance of the extension is consequently held to be in accordance with the adopted Design Guide SPD in this regard.
- 5.12 The proposed extension will furthermore occupy a very discreet position within the site, tucked away behind the existing annex building. On approach to the site along the Leek Road from the north, the extension will be screened

by the existing farmhouse and neighbouring buildings to the north, as well as by mature landscaping.

- 5.13 On approach to the site from the south, the presence of the existing annex building will preclude any notable views of the extension, with any glimpses of the development reading it against a backdrop of mature vegetation beyond, and as a wholly subservient addition to the building. The proposed development is consequently held to meet the requirements of policies SS1 and DC1 of the Local Plan in this regard.

Residential Amenity

- 5.14 The proposed extension will not result in any contravention of the Local Authority's Space About Dwellings standards, with the nearest neighbouring property lying circa 26 metres to the south of the existing annex (circa 34 metres from the nearest part of the proposed extension). The nearest other neighbour to the northwest lies circa 35 metres distant also, and therefore no harm to neighbouring amenity will ensue as a consequence of the proposed extension.
- 5.15 The proposed insertion of the new ground floor window to serve the existing bedroom will not cause harm to residential amenity. The window will lie in excess of 30 metres from the northern site boundary and thus not give rise to any conflict with the Space About Dwelling standards. The window will instead look out over the existing rear / side garden of the farmhouse, reinforcing the ancillary relationship between the annex and the host dwelling. The proposed development is consequently held to meet the requirements of policies SS1 and DC1 of the Local Plan in this regard.

Ancillary Relationship To Dwelling

- 5.16 The judgment in *Uttlesford DC v SSE & White [1992] JPL 171*. Serves to confirm that even in circumstances where annex accommodation provides facilities that would allow for independent day-to-day living, the accommodation would not necessarily become a separate planning unit from the main dwelling; it would be a matter of fact and degree in each case.
- 5.17 In this case there is already a residential annex on the site which has been, and will continue to be, occupied by dependant relatives. The applicants' parents will soon be moving into the building and the extension has been proposed in order to add a second bedroom so that a carer may reside on site when the applicants are away in order that their parents will have continuity of care.
- 5.18 The annex will continue to share its means of access to the site, its parking area, its gardens, and its service connections with the main farmhouse. It will also remain in the same ownership. The provision of a new bedroom window overlooking the side/ rear garden of the farmhouse also serves to reinforce its ancillary relationship the annex building has to the host dwelling. The proposed development will therefore not result in the creation of a new planning unit on the site.

6 Conclusion

6.1 The submitted proposal constitutes a sustainable form of development having regard to the following conclusions:

- The proposal constitutes an appropriate form of development within the Green Belt.
- The scale, massing and design of the extension will be wholly subservient and harmonious with the existing building and will not detract from the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
- The proposal will not give rise to any loss of amenity to neighbouring residential occupiers.
- The annex will maintain an ancillary relationship to the main farmhouse and will not result in the creation of a new planning unit.

6.2 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.