

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2025/0266
Valid 05/06/2025

2 LIMWOOD CLOSE
BLYTHE BRIDGE

SINGLE STOREY SIDE
EXTENSION

(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)

MAIN ISSUES

- Design
- Amenity
- Highway Safety

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The site comprises a semi-detached brick, render and tile dwellinghouse and its associated curtilage, situated in the Forsbrook Ward. The site is within the Blythe Bridge Development Boundary, where the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan seeks to concentrate development. No. 4 Limewood Close (the adjoining semi-detached dwelling) is situated to the East of the site and No. 74 Elmwood Drive is located to the South. The site occupies a corner plot; the Limewood Close highway runs adjacent to the proposed site on the North and the Elmwood Drive highway runs parallel to the Western curtilage.

PROPOSAL

The proposed development comprises of a single storey side extension to the dwelling. The proposed extension would allow for a store, a utility room and a WC. The extension would have a width of 3.00 metres beyond the Western side elevation of the dwelling and a depth of 6.15 metres. It would have a maximum height of approximately 3.60 metres and an eaves height of 2.48 metres. It would be constructed from materials which would harmonise with the existing dwellinghouse, including fair faced brickwork, concrete tiles and white 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
SS8 Larger Villages 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

Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide SPD

Part 5 – Alterations, Extensions and Conversions

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

N/A

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 04/07/2025

Neighbour consultation period ends: 03/07/2025

Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

One public comment has been received from the residents of No. 74 Elmwood Drive, as follows:

We can say that we have no aesthetic objections to raise, our only concern is, could the development cause an increase of surface water discharge onto our lower lying property during adverse weather conditions. Would precautions to prevent this be included before approval of the plans?

Our house at the rear of 2 Limewood Close is built on a level two to three feet lower so over the years we have worked with previous residents to contend with surface water drainage. If the proposed extension is to be built we would like to be assured that we will not experience an increase in drainage on to our property as a result, especially during adverse weather conditions.

Town / Parish Comments

No comments have been received from Forsbrook Parish Council.

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 concentrated focus on future growth is to be directed to larger settlements, including Blythe Bridge. 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).

In compliance with Policy SS8, new development should be directed to the most sustainable locations. The site lies within the village of Blythe Bridge, which constitutes a larger village within the Staffordshire Moorlands. The Larger Villages Areas Strategy is based around areas where a focus of new development will be directed, with the aim of ensuring that all development enhances the character and appearance of the settlement.

The proposed site is within the Development Boundary, thus the proposed works are acceptable in principle, subject to conformity with other relevant national and local planning policies. The main issues which need to be considered as part of the assessment of the proposed works include design, neighbour amenity and highway safety.

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.

The maximum height of the proposed single storey side extension would be set down from the maximum and eaves heights of the parent building, as well as follow the course of the original dwellinghouse. Thus it would be considered appropriate development in accordance with the Council's Design SPD, due to its subordinate

relationship with the parent dwelling. The extension would be substantially set back from the principal elevation of the dwelling, further reiterating its subordinate nature to the parent dwelling.

The proposed extension would be located on the side elevation of the dwelling abutting a completely open area of side curtilage – no boundary treatment is in place. Notably, the site has a tapering boundary adjacent to the public highway, being narrower at the front and wider towards the rear. Thus, the proposed side extension would extend closer towards the boundary at the front and would have an increased distance from the boundary towards the rear. When looking at the row of dwellings on Elmwood Drive to the South of the application site, there is a very definite building line which the proposed extension would disrupt, sitting unduly prominently and awkwardly in the street scene. Furthermore, it would intrude into an open area which contributes to the character of the area; the extension would leave very little space at the side. In fact, the Council question the accuracy of the Location Plan; when on site and looking at street view/aerial view, the side elevation of this property links almost in a straight line to the garage of No. 74 Elmwood Drive and the intervening trellis type walling.

Notably, there is a precedent for this type of development amongst the street scene, namely at the dwelling across the road at No. 76 Elmwood Drive. This dwelling has a two-storey side extension which breaches the building line of dwellings to the East on Limewood Close. Whilst breaches in building lines of dwellings are sometimes considered acceptable, the breach is not considered acceptable in this instance. Whilst some weight has been given to the two-storey extension at the house opposite, the Council draw a distinction between the two because even after that extension, there is still a substantial space between it and the highway.

As the extension would be positioned within an area of open side curtilage at the site, it would be very visible in the wider public domain. The proposed extension would have a shallow pitched roof. This would not be complementary of the roof pitch of the host dwelling, which is considerably steeper. Furthermore, the blank elevation which the extension presents in the street scene would create a prominent addition, harming the character of the existing area of open land. Thus, the design of the proposed extension would be considered unacceptable.

Materials used in the construction of the proposed extension would match those used in the construction of the existing dwelling, as well as from surrounding dwellings in the area. Although the surrounding street scene is comprised of a varied selection of house types, a prominent feature of the street scene is the brick used in the construction of the dwellinghouses. Fair faced brickwork, concrete tiles and white UPVC would be used in the construction of the proposed extension. Thus, the proposed materials would match the existing materials and harmonise with the surrounding street scene, not detracting from the character of the original street.

The proposal, by virtue of its size, scale and siting does not maintain the character of the existing dwelling and area. The proposal would therefore not accord with the provisions of local plan policy DC1 and section 12 of the NPPF in this regard.

Amenity

Paragraph 130 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 No. 4 Limewood Close (the adjoining semi-detached dwelling) to the East and No. 74 Elmwood Drive is located to the South. Assessment of amenity impact will therefore be required on the direct neighbouring dwellinghouses to the site.

The proposed single storey extension would be located on the Western side elevation. As the neighbouring dwellinghouse at No. 4 Limewood Close is positioned to the East of the site, the single storey extension would be tucked behind the host dwelling on the opposite side to the neighbour. Furthermore the distance between the proposed single storey extension and the neighbouring dwelling would eradicate any chance of overshadowing, due to a breach of the 45 degree rule not being possible.

Notably, there would be an approximately 11 metre distance between the rear elevation of the proposed extension and the principal elevation of No. 74 Elmwood Drive. This would be enough distance to mitigate any breach of the 45 degree rule from occurring on any principal windows of No. 74. Therefore, the light amenity of these neighbours would not be impacted by the proposed extension.

There would be no windows on the proposed extension which would face towards the neighbours at No. 4 Limewood Close, or the neighbours at No. 81, No. 83, No. 85 and No. 87 Elmwood Drive. Thus, no privacy amenity impact would occur for these neighbours in the form of overlooking. There would be fenestration on the rear elevation of the proposed extension which would face towards the neighbours at No. 74 Elmwood Drive, in the form of a window and a door. This being said, these windows would only face towards the front driveway of No. 74; the dwelling sits at an oblique angle from the windows. Therefore, no detrimental overlooking would occur on the neighbours at No. 74.

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 extension 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. Additionally, the spaces for off-street parking would not be compromised as a result of the proposed extension, in compliance with Policy T1.

Thus, the proposed extension would have no impact on highway safety, in accordance with Policy T1.

Other Matters

The Council have received a comment from one of the neighbours, in relation to concern about the issue of surface water drainage issues resulting from the proposed development. Their house is positioned to the rear of 2 Limewood Close and is built on a level two to three feet lower, therefore they have worked with previous residents of the site to contend with surface water drainage issues. The neighbours are concerned that if the proposed extension is to be built, they could experience an increase in drainage onto their property, especially during adverse weather conditions.

Standard Environmental Health advice confirms that *“An owner of land has a natural right to collect and discharge their surface water run-off from their land onto adjoining lower land. Owners of that lower land are obliged to deal with natural water arriving on their land and therefore responsible for the drainage of their own lands. Any disputes with neighbours will have to be dealt with by themselves as a civil matter.”*

Furthermore, although Building Control confirm that although any historic drainage and any associated problems would not come under Building Regulations, it is the responsibility of the applicants, in respect of their current proposals to demonstrate compliance with Approved Document H – Drainage and Waste Disposal as part of their building regulations approval. Therefore, drainage and any subsequent flooding concerns are not a reason to refuse this planning application as this matter is addressed by Building Regulations.

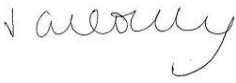
CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

In consideration of all of the above, the application is recommended for refusal. Due to the application having no adverse effect upon neighbour amenity and no overall impact on the highway, it is deemed acceptable under planning policy in this sense.

However, the design of the proposed extension is not considered acceptable. In the case of the application site, there is a very definite building line which the proposal would disrupt, sitting unduly prominently and awkwardly amongst the street scene. The extension would intrude into an open area of side curtilage which contributes to the character of the area; leaving very little space at the side. Furthermore, the shallow pitch roof and the blank elevation which the extension presents in the street scene are considered to have a negative design impact. Therefore, the proposed extension is recommended for refusal.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: REFUSE

Case Officer: Hannah Varley
Recommendation Date: 19/08/2025

X 

Signed by: Jane Curley

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council