

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2025/0318
Valid 01/07/2025

5 TOWN HEAD
ALTON

PROPOSED NEW FRONT PORCH, A TWO STOREY EXTENSION TO THE REAR OF THE PROPERTY REPLACING AN EXISTING SINGLE STOREY FLAT ROOF EXTENSION AND A NEW GARAGE

(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)

MAIN ISSUES

- Heritage and Design
- Amenity
- Highway Safety

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The site comprises a terraced render and tile dwelling and its associated curtilage, situated in the Alton ward. The site is within the Alton Development Boundary, where development is encouraged. Also, the site is within the Churnet Valley Masterplan Boundary, where rural regeneration of an appropriate nature is encouraged. The site is within the Alton Conservation Area and the Alton Article 4 area. The site is surrounded by neighbouring dwellings comprising a section of Town Head. No. 4A Town Head is located to the West of the site and No. 6 Town Head is situated to the East. The Alton 31 Public Right of Way runs adjacent to the Southern curtilage of the site. The Town Head highway runs adjacent to the site to the North and the Headland Way highway runs along the Southern curtilage.

It is noted that a number of properties within the street scene have been extended and altered; however the established character of the street has been retained.

PROPOSAL

The proposed development consists of a new front porch, a two storey extension to the rear of the property replacing an existing single storey flat roof extension and a new garage. The proposed two storey rear and single storey front extensions would have gable style roofs and the proposed garage would have a simple pitched roof, to complement that of the host dwelling.

The proposed two storey rear extension would have a depth of approximately 2.90 metres and a width of 5.38 metres measured externally. The maximum height of the

proposed rear extension would be approximately 6.66 metres and the maximum eaves height would be 3.98 metres. The proposed porch on the principal elevation of the dwelling would have a depth of approximately 1.35 metres and a width of 2.02 metres. It would have a maximum height of approximately 2.95 metres and an eaves height of 2.05 metres. The proposed garage would have a length of approximately 7.34 metres and a width of 4.95 metres. It would have a maximum height of approximately 4.26 metres and an eaves height of 2.35 metres.

The proposed extensions would be constructed from materials which would harmonise with the host dwelling, including painted render, Staffordshire Blue plain tiles and white UPVC. The proposed garage would be constructed from timber boarding and blockwork, Staffordshire Blue plain 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
SS11 Churnet Valley Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
DC2 The Historic Environment

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph(s) 1 – 14
Section(s) 4 – Decision making, 12 – Achieving well designed places, 16 -
Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide SPD

Part 5 – Alterations, Extensions and Conversions

Staffordshire Moorlands Space About Dwellings SPD

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

N/A

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 08/08/2025

Neighbour consultation period ends: 07/08/2025
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

No public comments have been received.

Town / Parish Comments

Alton Parish Council have no objections to the proposed development.

Conservation Officer

We have undertaken a desk-based assessment of the proposal, including a review of the submitted Design, Access and Heritage Statement and decided that no technical advice is required from Conservation. If you believe specialist conservation advice is required, please contact the SMDC Conservation Team.

The development site is within the Alton Conservation area (which is a designated heritage asset). When considering the impact of a proposed development upon a Conservation Area, the application should be determined in accordance with the duties in s.72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. In addition, great weight should be given the heritage asset's conservation, as stipulated in para 212 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) and the application determined in accordance with Section 16 of the NPPF and policy EQ7 of the local development framework.

Peak and Northern Footpaths Society

We note that the Public Right of Way Alton 31 is close to the proposed site.

The use of any PROWs, and the safety of users must not be affected by the development, nor during the work taking place.

This comment is made on behalf of Peak and Northern Footpaths Society, a registered charity which exists to protect and improve public rights of way for use by walkers.

Nothing in this response should be taken to imply the Society's support for the development.

Ramblers Association

P.R.O.W Alton 31 runs at the back of the property where the proposed development will take place. This must not affect the use of this path at all times.

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 Alton. 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 Alton, 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 are heritage, design, amenity and highway safety.

Heritage and Design

As regards to the Conservation Area, Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990 places a statutory duty on the LPA in assessing planning applications in respect to any land or buildings in a Conservation Area to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. In reaching its decision the LPA has to demonstrate that the Section 72 Duty has been applied and discharged. Section 72 (and Footnote 6 of para.11 of the NPPF) creates a strong presumption in favour of the preservation of Conservation Areas and their setting.

Policy DC2 states that the Council will safeguard and where possible, enhance the historic environment by resisting development which would harm or be detrimental to the special character and historic heritage of the District's towns and villages and those interests of acknowledged importance; promoting development which sustains, respects or enhances buildings and features which contribute to the character or heritage of an area; and preventing the loss of buildings and features which make a positive contribution to the character or heritage of an area through appropriate reuse and sensitive development.

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 and outbuildings should harmonise with the parent building. Extensions and outbuildings should respect the dominance of the original building and be subordinate to it in terms of its size and massing.

The Conservation Area designation does not prevent domestic developments, but the proposals require careful consideration of their potential impact upon the historic environment. The proposed works consist of a new front porch, a two storey extension to the rear of the property replacing an existing single storey flat roof extension and a new garage. The dwelling is a two storey, terraced property which is not a Listed dwelling and is not a designated heritage asset. The site abuts the Town Head and Headland Way highways, meaning that it is very visible in the context of the streetscape.

The Conservation Officer of the Council does not object to the proposed development. It is not considered that the proposal would amount to any harm to the surrounding historic environment. The proposed development is considered to respect and to a degree, enhance the building through design improvements, contributing to the character of the conservation area.

For a development to be considered appropriate in terms of its size and massing, the Council would expect to see extensions subordinate to the dominance of the original building. The proposed two storey rear extension has a width which covers the over half of the rear elevation of the original dwelling. This being said, the extension would remain to be set inwards from the side elevations of the host dwelling, therefore the extended area would be considered to have a subordinate relationship with the parent dwelling in this sense, in line with the Design Guide SPD. Whilst the two storey rear extension would not be set down from the maximum height of the host dwelling, both adjoining neighbouring dwellings have two storey rear extensions which are not set down from the height of the host dwellings. Therefore, the height of the proposed extension aligning with the ridge height of the dwelling is considered acceptable in this instance.

Notably, both adjoining neighbouring dwellings at No. 4A Town Head and No. 6 Town Head have extremely similar designed two storey rear extensions. Both of these rear extensions have widths covering the majority of the rear elevation of the dwellings and have a double gable. The question has been put forward to the agent

regarding why the applicants chose not to mirror the two storey rear extensions at both direct neighbouring dwellings. The agent responded with the following:

“There are several issues that prevent the design of the proposed extension from mirroring the neighbouring double gable extensions: The width of the proposed extension is determined by the footprint of the existing ground floor structure and a centralised valley would not allow the height required for a single doorway through to the extension at first floor level, also, a centralised valley would not allow the subdivision of the first floor space in the manner required with the necessary height for a shower.”

Whilst the Council consider that a two storey rear extension which would mirror the two storey rear extensions at the adjoining neighbouring properties is the ideal option, it is considered that the reasoning provided for not being able to accommodate this is reasonable. Furthermore, if the width of the proposed two storey rear extension were to be wider as is the case with the extensions at both neighbouring dwellings, the existing landing window would be lost. Additionally, if the width of the rear extension were to be increased, the chimney which comprises an original feature of the dwelling would be compromised. Whilst the proposed two storey rear extension is of a reduced width when compared to the two storey rear extensions at No. 4A and No. 6, its reduced width allows for the existing rear landing window and chimney to be retained. The loss of the chimney would be considered to negatively impact the character of the host dwelling and surrounding conservation area, therefore the Council would prefer to see it retained. Therefore, in these circumstances, the Council are willing to accept the design of the proposed extension on balance, despite it not reflecting the neighbouring dwellings.

The proposed new porch would be a replacement of an existing porch, however it would be moved from the East of the principal elevation to the centre of the principal elevation. Other porches to the front of dwellings along the row of terraces are located on the Western section of the principal elevations. Thus, the change in the location of the porch from the East of the principal elevation to the centre would better follow the rhythm of the porches along the stretch, being considered an improvement to the design of the dwelling as the existing porch appears an anomaly. The proposed porch would have a simple gable style roof to compliment the character of the host dwelling, as well as the porches on a number of the surrounding dwellings. The porch would not be a dominant addition amongst the street scene and is characterful of the row of dwellings in its context.

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. Painted render, Staffordshire Blue plain tiles and white UPVC would be used in the construction of the proposed extensions. 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 simple silhouette of the proposed garage with a simple pitched roof complements the host dwellinghouse, thus it is considered appropriate in this aspect of its design. The maximum and eaves heights of the garage would clearly be lower than the parent dwelling, indicating that it would be subordinate to the parent

dwellinghouse in this sense, regardless of it being on a higher ground level than the host dwelling. Thus, it would be considered appropriate development in accordance with the Council's Design SPD. Notably, the proposed garage would be built adjacent to outbuildings located within the rear curtilage of both adjoining neighbouring dwellings, thus the garage would follow an established pattern of development.

I note that although the outbuilding would be of a substantial footprint, any size footprint of an outbuilding is permissible under Class E of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 as amended. This is provided that the total area of ground covered by buildings (other than the original dwellinghouse) would not exceed 50% of the total area of the curtilage. Therefore, the outbuilding would not compete with the proportions of the host dwelling, as it is clearly read as an outbuilding for the ancillary use of the host dwelling. Thus, it would be considered appropriate development in accordance with the Council's Design SPD.

Materials used in the construction of the proposed garage outbuilding would not all match those used in the construction of the existing dwelling, as well as from surrounding dwellings in the area. Timber boarding and blockwork, Staffordshire Blue plain tiles and white UPVC would be used in the construction of the proposed garage. I note that under Class E of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 as amended, there are no regulations which set out that materials used in the construction of outbuildings need to be of a similar appearance to the host dwellinghouse. Although the timber boarding and blockwork exterior would not compliment the materials on the host dwelling, it would have the appearance of a wooden shed which can be found in many rear gardens, including on the outbuildings at the adjoining neighbouring dwellings. Therefore, the materials which would be used are considered acceptable.

The proposal, by virtue of its size, scale and siting maintains the character of the existing dwelling and wider conservation area. The proposal would therefore accord with the provisions of local plan policies DC1, DC2 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 No. 4A Town Head to the West and No. 6 Town Head is situated to the East.

The proposed two storey rear extension would run alongside existing two storey rear extensions on the neighbouring dwellinghouses at No. 4A Town Head and No. 6

Town Head. Therefore, it is evident that there would be no breach of the 45 degree rule from the corner of the proposed extension to the closest rear neighbouring fenestration on either side of the site. Thus, it is clear that the light amenity of No. 4A and No. 6 Town Head would not be detrimentally impacted by the proposed two storey rear extension.

As the new porch would be moved to the centre of the principal elevation of the host dwelling, it would be further from the principal elevation of No. 6 Town Head than the existing porch. As the proposed porch would be moved to the centre of the principal elevation of the dwelling and it would be small in size, it is clear that no detrimental shadowing impact would occur over No. 4A or No. 6 as a result of its addition.

The proposed garage would be located at the back of the rear curtilage of the dwelling, aligning with the garages / outbuildings at both neighbouring dwellings at No. 4A and No. 6. Due to the approximately 17.70 metre plus distance between the proposed garage and the neighbouring dwellings at No. 4A and No. 6, it is clear that no shadowing or overbearing impact would be caused over any habitable windows of these neighbours.

There would be no windows on any of the side elevations of the two storey rear extension which would face towards the neighbours at No. 4A or No. 6, therefore no resulting privacy amenity impact would occur. There would be one small window on both side elevations of the porch which would face towards No. 4A and No. 6. This being said, these windows would only look towards the front curtilages of No. 4A and No. 6, rather than directly towards any habitable windows of the neighbours. There would be no glazing on the proposed garage outbuilding and therefore, no overlooking impact would arise as a consequence.

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 and garage would not increase the number of bedrooms of the dwelling. Thus, it is clear that the correct number of parking spaces will remain in place for the number of people inhabiting the dwellinghouse. Furthermore, the available parking for the dwelling would not be compromised, in compliance with Policy T1.

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

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 and no overall impact on the highway, it is deemed acceptable under planning policy. The scheme would not harm the character and appearance of the conservation area and would continue to sustain the importance of the heritage asset. Although the proposed two storey rear extension does not mirror the double gable extension at both neighbouring properties, it is considered acceptable. On balance, the reasoning regarding why the applicants are unable to accommodate a double gable wider extension is considered valid. Therefore, the proposed development is recommended for approval, subject to compliance with all conditions.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE

Case Officer: Hannah Varley

Recommendation Date: 21/08/2025

X 

Signed by: Jane Colley Signature

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council