

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2025/0210
Valid 28/04/2025

19 CHURCH LANE
CHECKLEY

PROPOSED LOFT CONVERSION
(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)

MAIN ISSUES

- Principle of Development
- Design and visual impact
- Neighbour amenity
- Highways

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

19 Church Lane Checkley is a detached, two-storey dwelling with garage at lower ground floor level. Land levels rise towards the rear boundary, beyond which is the St. Mary's Close cul-de-sac (residential). There is off-road parking at the front of the house and a garden to the rear. Boundaries are marked mainly by hedgerows/planting.

For the purposes of planning policy consideration, the application site is located within the open countryside, although not within the Green Belt. The dwelling sits within the village of Checkley which is identified within policy SS9 of the adopted Local Plan as a 'Smaller Village.'

PROPOSAL

Permission is sought for a loft conversion to form two bedrooms, one with ensuite. The works would involve raising the roof ridge height, and the construction of a flat roof dormer within the rear elevation. The plans do not provide any information concerning building materials, but the application form states composite cladding, matching upvc windows and roof tiles.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan

SS1	Development Principles
SS2	Settlement Hierarchy
SS9	Smaller Villages Area strategy
DC1	Design Considerations
DC3	Landscape and Settlement Setting
T1	Development and Sustainable Transport
Appendix 2	Parking 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

Checkley Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan

National Planning Policy Framework

Including sections;

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

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

None.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice. Expired

Neighbour consultation period. Expired.

Public Comments

Two representations received which can be summarised as follows;

- Windows of this new loft extension will have a direct view into our kitchen.
- Existing first floor windows of the property already have a restricted view of our kitchen but feel that the new windows will have an unrestricted view.
- Windows from the extension would overlook neighbours rear garden.

Checkley Parish Council

Checkley Parish Council (CPC) are of the opinion that the proposal appears to be sound provided it is in keeping with neighbouring property and there are no local objections and it conforms with planning policies as defined in the Checkley Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan and the Staffordshire Moorlands District Council Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework. However the Application is lacking sufficient information to make a definitive decision and the Applicant should be requested to provide the following required information. A design and access statement detailing the design, choice of materials and general appearance and layout of the building

Staffordshire County Council Highways

Recommendation Summary: Acceptance

Site Visit Conducted on: 16-May-2025

Personal Injury Collisions;

Current records show that there were no Personal Injury Collisions on Old Lane/Church Lane within 43 metres of the property from 30/12/2019 to 29/12/2022.

Background;

The property is located on Old Lane (Road No. D1325), an unclassified road which runs through Checkley village. The section of road fronting the property is subject to a speed limit of 30 mph and has streetlighting, there are no footways. The property benefits from off highway parking. There is a driveway and what appears to be a garage although this is not shown on the floor plans.

Description of Proposal

Proposed loft conversion.

Comments on Information Submitted;

The proposal is for the conversion of the loft space to create 2 bedrooms with 1 being ensuite. The property currently has 3 bedrooms which will increase to 5. Staffordshire Moorlands Parking Standards state a property of 4 or more bedrooms should have parking for 3 vehicles (2.4m x 4.8m each space). The submitted plans do not show parking however the current driveway can accommodate parking for 3 vehicles and therefore meets with the Parking Standards. It is considered the proposal will not have a detrimental impact on the adopted highway. I have no objection to the proposal (application number SMD/2025/0210).

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

The application site is located within the settlement of Checkley. Checkley is identified within the adopted Local Plan as a Smaller Village (policy SS9). Within the Smaller villages, a range of developments can be supported in principle, including residential developments. It is concluded that there are no 'in principle' objections to the application.

Design and visual impact

The proposal involves raising the roof ridge by 83.8cm. For the loft conversion to be carried out the application also proposes the construction of a flat roof dormer within the rear elevation, allowing for the new roof space to provide two bedroom and an ensuite.

Local Plan policy DC1 is clear in that it requires all development to be well-designed, be of a high quality, add value to the local area, be designed to respect the site and its surroundings and promote a positive sense of place including (relating to this application), scale, height, siting, character and appearance.

Adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance gives more detailed expectations of design. Specifically relating to this proposal are requirements are that;

- Dormers should be as small as possible and discreetly sited.
- Extensions should be subordinate to the existing building.
- Secondary appearance – ridge height of the extension should be lower than the existing, certainly no higher.

There are design concerns. The roof ridge would be raised by approximately 80cm, this is not a secondary or subordinate addition and combined with the large, flat roof dormer, it would result in a development that has a top-heavy appearance. The dormer would mask the majority of the rear roof slope, be very close to the ridge and result in a bulky addition to what is currently well-proportioned dwelling. The application form states a composite cladding finish which, due to the size of the dormer, would result in a significant, visual alteration of the simple roof tile covering.

The proposed alterations would have significant wider visual impact beyond the application site. The raised ridge height is unlikely to have much visual impact when viewed from Church Lane itself due to the dwelling having a three-storey appearance at the front and it being positioned close to its neighbours. The concern is raised in respect of the visual impact that the proposal would have when viewed from the rear, within the St. Mary's Close cul-de-sac.

The image below shows the application property within the context of its neighbours and several of the St. Mary's Close properties. The dwelling the subject of this application is the building to the right of the twin gable property. The row of four dwellings all face towards Church Lane, whilst the bungalow is a St. Mary's Close property.

A copy of the proposed elevations plan is shown beneath the photograph. It is clear that the raised ridge would be out of character with the stepped rising of the neighbouring roof ridges. Comparison of the elevations and the photo image demonstrates that the upper sections of the new windows would be higher than the existing ridge. Together with the roof height increase and the large box dormer (with its composite cladding finish) the development would result in a significant and harmful visual intrusion

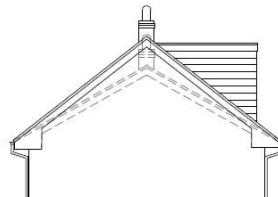
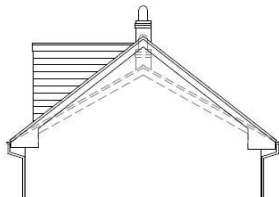
when viewed from St. Mary's Close, the properties within which have pitched / sloping / gable roof features.



FRONT ELEVATION 1:50



REAR ELEVATION 1:50



Neighbour amenity

Adopted Local Plan policy DC1 requires new developments to protect the amenity and residential amenity of an area. There are no neighbour amenity impact concerns other than those relating to number 6 St. Mary's Close which sits alongside the northern boundary of the application site. Number 6 St. Mary's Close has a principal kitchen window which faces directly towards the application site. It was noted during the officer site visit that there was already a degree of overlooking from the upper floor windows of the application property, however the construction of a dormer with its additional

windows, would make the overlooking relationship much worse, to the detriment of the occupants of number 6 St. Mary's Close. Site visit photos show the current overlooking arrangement, which would become much worse if the dormer was to be constructed.

Highways

The application property is a three-bedroom dwelling, the scheme proposes an additional two bedrooms. Adopted Local Plan parking standards require three off-road parking spaces for dwellings with four or more bedrooms. The property has a good-sized drive/parking area at the front of the house, in addition to an integral garage. The proposed development would not remove any existing parking provision. The County Highways officer's comments can be read in full within the 'Consultations' section of this report, of note is the fact that there are no highways objections.

Other Matters

Following on from the officer site visit, it was clear that there were concerns about the proposal and the architect was informed. The scheme has been discussed, and an amended plan was submitted for informal comments. Unfortunately, the amended plan could not be supported. The architect has confirmed via email that the applicants would be happy to accept a refusal.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

For the reasons outlined within the report, the application is recommended for refusal based on design, visual impact and harm upon neighbour amenity.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : Refuse.

Case Officer: Lisa Jackson

Recommendation Date: 19.09.2025.

X *B.S. Haywood*

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council