

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2025/0405
Valid 08/09/2025

486 ASH BANK ROAD
WERRINGTON

**ALTERATIONS TO REAR
BALCONY AND OPENINGS TO
REAR ELEVATION FROM
APPROVED LAYOUTS -
SMD/2022/0346
RETROSPECTIVE**

(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)

MAIN ISSUES

- Green Belt
- Design
- Neighbour living conditions
- Character and appearance

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

Detached early to mid 20th C bungalow on generous plot sloping down from the road rear of the broad highway verge. Parking to the front. Open countryside to the rear. A public footpath right of way runs along the west side of the property from the road then veers away west. A further linked cross-field public right of way runs generally east – west across field land some 40m to 50m away below the property.

PROPOSAL

Development which has taken place following the SMD/2022/0346 consent granted 7th Sept 2022 is at variance from the approved plans. Retrospective consent is sought for the scheme in its implemented form. The main differences are found to be two-fold and consent is sought for (i) apex windows at first floor in each of two gabled rear projections in place of more conventional square form windows and (ii) formation of a balcony in place of a built terrace structure. There is also insertion of a glazed multi door opening at basement level underneath at the rear of the balcony.

The balcony it should be noted projects 4.0m; it is set away from the boundary with the east neighbour at 488 but extends sideways beyond the west elevation as far as the property boundary on that side. The balcony has a glazed balustrade to height 1.0m along the rear elevation. On the east side elevation the glazed balustrade has a height of c.1.8m and uses a semi reflective glass to obscure the degree of through visibility. The balcony has a timber slatted end panel to c.1.8m on the west side elevation. The balcony is supported on a series of steel support stanchions.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Local Plan (adopted 9th September 2020)

SS1 Development Principles
SS2 Settlement Hierarchy
SS10 Other Rural Areas Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
DC3 Landscape and Settlement Setting
NE1 Biodiversity and Geological Resources
NE2 Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework (Dec 2024)

Paragraph(s) 1 – 14;
Section(s) 4 – Decision making; 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities; 12 – Achieving well designed places; 13 – Protecting Green Belt Land; 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Adopted Supplementary Planning Documents/Guidance (SPD/G):

- Space About Dwellings SPG
- Design Principles SPG
- Design Guide SPD adopted 21st February 2018

Local Plan Supporting Evidence Documents:

- Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment (2008)

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/2021/0641 – Rear extension with modification to roof and removal of chimneys/front porch – refused and dismissed on appeal

SMD/2022/0346 – Rear extension with modification to roof and removal of chimneys/front porch – approved

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 23.10.2025
Neighbour consultation period ends: 08.10.2025
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

From the occupier of 488 Ash Bank: “Object[s] to the proposed designs due to privacy issues, the balcony currently there already breaches our privacy”.

Town / Parish Comments

Werrington Parish Council – no comments received

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

Acceptance of the principle of this development is largely confirmed by the grant of consent under SMD/2022/0346 which took into account the Green Belt location and Policy SS10 for the rural areas. Whilst the implemented scheme deviates from the approved plans these matters can be seen to be primarily ones of design that in terms of scale and amount do not conflict with the overall principle.

The main issues are design, appearance and implications for the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers in particular of 488 Ash Bank.

Design

Figures 1 to 3 below compare the current (retrospective) proposal (fig.1); the scheme approved under SMD/2022/0346 (fig.2); and the refused scheme (also dismissed at appeal) under SMD/2021/0641 (fig.3). In each case both the rear elevation and the east side elevation are shown. (Size comparisons approximate.)



Fig.1



Fig.2



Fig.3



The approved scheme in fig.2 was accepted on the basis of having sufficiently addressed the refusal reasons and the Inspector's reasons for dismissal of the fig. 3 scheme. The issues had included increased ridge height, half-hipped roof ends, excessive glazing and the effective appearance of a three storey house. The Council's case officer for the 2022 approval (fig.2) quoted the following from the Inspector in the dismissed appeal (fig.3).

At the rear, the resultant dwelling would have the appearance of a three-storey house. The existing character of the host property would be completely lost. It is understandable that the appellant wishes to make the most of the countryside views to the rear of the property, however the two storey extensions and extent of glazing results in a modern looking elevation would be at odds with the simple character of the mid twentieth century bungalow. The proposal, due to its scale and massing, cannot be described as subservient to the existing property.

In recommending approval of the 2022 scheme the Council's case officer noted:

There is no doubt that the extensions would have an impact upon the appearance of the existing dwelling, especially to the rear where the main hipped roof of the dwelling would be replaced with gables and projecting extensions. When viewed from the rear and side, the extensions are not subordinate, but are simple in their appearance and have been dramatically reduced from the previous application's proposal which included raising the whole roof height and a basement storey, and excessive first floor glazing.

Despite the changes to the back of the house, the front is modernised but more or less retains its original character, and this is the most important aspect of the property as it will be seen from the public domain. The street of dwellings (of which the application site forms a part) vary in terms of their designs, sizes, materials, and age. The application form states that the dwelling (once extended) will be finished with brick and roof tiles to match existing, the proposed materials are considered acceptable and will not raise any visual impact objections. Whilst some of the extensions are large, they are now acceptable in their design and will not result in any adverse visual or street scene impact. It is considered that the alterations will sit comfortably within their mixed appearance surroundings.

The developer's reversion to apex glazing in the rear projecting gables and re-insertion of basement glazing is on the face of it a somewhat brazen denial of two aspects that were negotiated and agreed in order to achieve the approved scheme. However, it can be accepted that the apex glazing is not on the scale of the initial refused scheme and in fact relates reasonably well with the modern glazing at rear ground floor. The basement glazing seen in situ also has reduced prominence and is somewhat obscured due to being overhung by the projecting balcony – a balcony that did not feature at any point in the 2022 proposal plans and their approval.

The applicant however maintains that a projecting rear terrace was featured in the approved scheme and that the balcony has taken its place. He also states that the terrace would have run along the full length of the extended rear elevation and would have projected alongside the boundary with no.488 for a distance of 4m beyond the approved projection of the extension. This terrace has not been constructed and the

balcony is some 6.5m away from the garden boundary with no.488. Nevertheless the terrace was part of the approved scheme and can be seen in profile in the fig.2 side elevation drawing (above).

The balcony needs to be considered in terms of its design appearance and in terms of any implications for neighbour living conditions. As a contemporary structure attached to a contemporary re-make of the rear elevation the balcony in design appearance terms does not seem unduly out of place. At 4.0m it is arguably over-large in its projection and it would have seemed less overwhelming had it not extended beyond the west elevation line of the main dwelling. It can be noted though that there is limited public visibility with the main views being from the public footpath some 50m away to the south / south east. At this distance the structure is likely to merge with the general variety visible in the rear elevations of the adjacent row of detached properties taken together. Both the immediate neighbour at 488 and the next at 490 reveal a variety of glazing and terraces.

There are also some brief side views from the public footpath to the west side of the property. The visual impacts are perhaps also ameliorated due to the overall pitch of the property which is set into rising ground to the north. The balcony could have seemed dramatically more prominent and unsuited if it were seen against an open space / open sky backdrop of level or falling ground.

Despite some reservations as discussed, it is judged on balance that the design appearance can be found acceptable.

Amenity

The privacy concerns of the neighbour at 488 are perhaps understandable. The balcony represents a significantly elevated vantage point with open sideways or 'oblique' views from the front of the balcony over the lower half of the back garden to no.488. The garden is however large and one result of the extension to 486 is that no.488 is well set back and there is significant secluded space along the immediate rear of the neighbour's dwelling. The balcony itself does not run up against the boundary with 488 but is set in by some 6m away from the boundary (as previously noted). The incorporation of reflective or mirror glass to a height of c.1.8m on the side edge of the balcony does also further preclude visibility from the balcony towards no 488. For all these reasons, whilst there is perhaps likely to be a sense or perception of overlooking or intrusion there is judged on balance not to be an unacceptable level of impact on the living conditions for occupiers at 488.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

In consideration of all of the above the application is recommended for approval. A condition should be attached to require retention of the mirror glass to the east end balustrade of the balcony.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : **Approve**

Case Officer: Arne Swithenbank

Recommendation Date: 03.11.2025

X 

Signed by: Jane Curley

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council