

Rob Duncan
Planning
Consultancy



PLANNING STATEMENT

**STONE HOUSE
MACCLESFIELD ROAD, LEEK**

NOVEMBER 2025

Site Address:

Stone House, Macclesfield Road, Leek, Staffordshire, ST13 8SF

Applicant:

T A & H Lancaster

Proposal:

Erection of single storey rear extension

Planning Statement:

Date Issued: 11th November 2025

Job Reference: RDP/2025/091

Report Prepared By:

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Rob Duncan Planning Consultancy Ltd. has been instructed by T A & H Lancaster to seek planning permission for the erection of a single storey rear extension at Stone House, Macclesfield Road, Leek.
- 1.2 This application proposes to infill an existing gap between the rear ground floor bathroom and the attached store beyond, as well as replacing the existing flat roofed link extension / toilet that currently connects the dwelling to the utility room and store. The extension will also project off the existing kitchen, resulting in the creation of an 'L' shaped open plan kitchen / dining / family room.
- 1.3 The extension will have a gross internal floor area of 22.0 square metres and represent a net increase of 15.2 square metres over and above the floor area of the dwelling as it currently exists. The extension will have a pitched roof to match that of the adjacent store / utility room / covered terrace, and is to be constructed from natural stone with a Staffordshire Blue tiled roof atop to match the palette of materials of the existing dwelling.
- 1.4 The application follows on from the recent grant of planning permission for the erection of single storey extensions and the provision of a pitched roof to the existing garage building to create a residential annex. The approved accommodation of the annex is to comprise of an open plan living / kitchen room, two bedrooms, and a bathroom (LPA Reference: SMD/2024/0069).
- 1.5 A lawful development certificate has also recently been granted confirming that the erection of a single storey rear extension and single storey side extension to the dwelling would amount to Permitted Development (LPA Reference: SMD/2025/0163). The lawful development certificate represents a fall-back position in the assessment of the application.

2 Site & Surroundings

- 2.1 The application site is located within the North Staffordshire Green Belt and comprises a detached two storey dwellinghouse located within a substantial curtilage that is enclosed along its northern, western and southern boundaries by mature vegetation. The property has been extended to the rear by way of a flat roofed triple garage and flat roofed link between an original outbuilding and the main dwellinghouse.
- 2.2 The dwelling stands isolated in relation to its neighbours, the closest being Daisy Bank and Daisy Bank Cottage to the north of the site, and Woodlands Farm to the west. Further residential development is located to the east, on the opposite side of the Macclesfield Road.
- 2.3 Vehicular access to the site is taken direct off the Macclesfield Road, and is shared with Woodlands Farm. To the front of the property lies a large area of hardstanding that is capable of accommodating parking for 3+ cars. The hardstanding also extends around the western flank of the dwelling providing access to the existing garage.
- 2.4 The site is not located within a Conservation Area, nor are there any statutorily listed buildings nearby.

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.

SMD/2024/0069 – Stone House, Macclesfield Road, Leek

- 4.3 The above application granted consent for the erection of single storey extensions and the provision of a pitched roof to the existing garage building to provide a residential annex. The conclusions of the Local Authority in their assessment of that application have been taken into consideration in the preparation of this application.

SMD/2025/0163 – Stone House, Macclesfield Road, Leek

- 4.4 The above application granted a lawful development certificate relating to the proposed erection of a single storey rear extension and single storey side extension to the existing dwelling. The lawful development certificate represents a material fall-back position in the assessment of this application and is referenced within the Planning Assessment.

5 Planning Assessment

Green Belt

- 5.1 The application site is located within the rural area and is designated as part of the North Staffordshire Green Belt. Policy SS10 of the Local Plan makes provision for the extension of existing dwellings within the rural area, provided that 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.
- 5.2 The policy goes on to confirm that the Council will assess schemes cumulatively having regard to the original dwelling in cases where cumulative change has occurred. Policy SS10 also states that strict control will continue to be exercised over inappropriate development, allowing only for exceptions as defined by government policy.
- 5.3 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”

- 5.4 The term disproportionate is not defined within either the National Planning Policy Framework, nor within the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan. The aforementioned provisions of policy SS10 nevertheless provide some clarification on the matter, confirming that extensions must be appropriate in scale and design and not have a detrimental impact on the existing dwelling and the character of the rural area.

- 5.5 The proposed extension is small-scale in nature and consolidated to the rear of the dwelling. It will entail the removal of the poor quality flat roofed extension that currently exists, and as a result of its scale and design will not have a detrimental impact on the existing dwelling or the character of the area. To this end we submit that the proposal will not amount to a disproportionate addition to the property, and thus constitutes an appropriate form of development within the Green Belt.
- 5.6 Notwithstanding the above, and without prejudice to the applicant's case, it is acknowledged that in assessing the recently approved application for extensions to the existing garage to provide a residential annex (SMD/2024/0069) the Local Authority calculated that the proposals, including previous additions, represented an increase in size of some 49.2%.
- 5.7 The resultant conclusion of the Local Authority was that because the total enlargement of the original buildings would not exceed more than half the volume of the original buildings, the proposal would not result in a disproportionate enlargement of the original building. In turn the proposal was found to constitute an appropriate form of development within the Green Belt.
- 5.8 This latest proposal will see the volume of the dwelling increased beyond the 50% threshold that the Local Authority had concluded would amount to an appropriate form of development in the Green Belt, and consequently it is acknowledged that the Local Authority may conclude that the proposal amounts to an inappropriate form of development.
- 5.9 Paragraph 153 of the National Planning Policy Framework confirms that:

"When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any

*harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness⁵⁵
Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations"*

- 5.10 It is submitted that in this particular case, a clear case of very special circumstances exists to justify approval of the proposed development.
- 5.11 The applicant's objective is to increase the size of the existing kitchen to make it a more useable, family friendly space. That has been their focus from the outset, as is reflected in the originally refused scheme for extensions to the property which incorporated an extension of not dissimilar size to the one now proposed (SMD/2022/0181 refers).
- 5.12 The application site benefits from the grant of a lawful development certificate which serves to confirm that the erection of a single storey rear extension and a single storey side extension would amount to permitted development pursuant to the provisions of Schedule 2, Part 1, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (As Amended). That lawful development certificate constitutes a material fallback position in the assessment of this application.
- 5.13 The judgment of *Mansell v Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council [2017]* serves to confirm the legal considerations for determining the materiality of a fallback position as a planning judgement. It confirms that a prospect only needs to be a possibility, rather than probable or likely, in order to constitute

a fallback position. The weight attributable to that fallback is then one for the decision maker.

- 5.14 In this case the applicant wishes to increase the size of the kitchen to create a more family friendly, usable space. Those aspirations are reflected by the submitted plans, and by the plans that formed part of the lawful development certificate application.
- 5.15 Whilst the appellant prefers the design of the extension that will arise as a consequence of the submitted proposal, it nevertheless remains the case that if consent for this proposal were to be refused, there is a strong and likely prospect that the permitted development extensions approved under the lawful development certificate would be implemented in order to meet the applicant's aspirations and requirements.
- 5.16 The appellant has already gone to the time, effort and expense of securing the lawful development certificate for these works, and consequently we submit that this established fallback position carries **substantial weight** in favour of planning permission being granted.
- 5.17 The fall-back position would result extensions to the dwelling that will total some 36.9 square metres. The proposed extension by contrast will have a much lesser floor area of 15.2 square metres (net over and above that which already exists). The comparison of footprints shows a similar lesser impact, with the fallback position occupying a footprint of 44.8 square metres, and the proposed extension having a footprint of 24.5 square metres.
- 5.18 The proposed extension will furthermore be less visually intrusive and cause less harm to the openness of the Green Belt than the fallback alternative, since the works to extend the dwelling will be consolidated at the rear of the property and infill the gap between the dwelling and the original outbuilding.

By contrast, the fallback position would see the dwelling extended both to the rear and to the side, resulting in a greater degree of encroachment.

- 5.19 As a consequence, we submit that the appeal proposal will result in a significantly lesser degree of harm to the Green Belt than that which has already been granted consent by the Local Authority. Such benefits are considered to carry **substantial weight** in favour of approval being granted and amount to very special circumstances to justify approval of the proposed development in Green Belt terms.

Design & Appearance

- 5.20 The proposed extension will be consolidated at the rear of the property and will take the opportunity to remove the existing flat roofed link extension in favour of a new pitched roofed extension that will be orientated so that its long axis reflects that of the existing outbuilding and the main dwellinghouse.
- 5.21 The existing link extension has a flat roof and contributes little to the character and appearance of the property. Its replacement with a more traditional form of development will represent an enhancement to the building compared to its current appearance.
- 5.22 The scale of the extension will be subservient to both the main two storey form of the dwellinghouse, as well as the height of the original outbuilding to which it will be attached. The extension is furthermore to be constructed using a complementary palette of materials.
- 5.23 The site is relatively secluded in views from the Macclesfield Road, owing to the sunken position of the highway, the presence of mature boundary vegetation and the distance of the dwelling from the highway (80+ metres). The extension will not have any appreciable visual impact from the public

domain, with any glimpses of the extension been seen in the context of the main dwellinghouse and the outbuilding / garage adjacent.

- 5.24 The design and layout of the development is consequently held to meet the requirements of policies SS1, and DC1 of the Local Plan and guidance contained within the Design Guide SPD.

Residential Amenity

- 5.25 There are no immediate neighbouring properties that will be affected by the proposed development, and no conflict with the Local Authority's Space About Dwellings standards will arise. No harm to neighbouring residential amenity will therefore ensue as a consequence of the development. The proposed development is consequently held to meet the requirements of policy DC1 of the Local Plan in this regard.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 The proposed extension is considered to constitute an appropriate form of development within the Green Belt, as it will not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original dwelling and it will be appropriate in scale and design and not have a detrimental impact on the existing dwelling and the character of the rural area.
- 6.2 The above notwithstanding. If the Local Authority were to conclude otherwise, and find that the proposal amounts to an inappropriate form of development within the Green Belt, it is submitted that a clear case of very special circumstances exists to clearly outweigh the totality of harm arising from the development.
- 6.3 The design and layout of the development will be subservient to the host dwelling and not materially harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The submitted proposal is also acceptable in respect of its impact on neighbouring residential occupiers.
- 6.4 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.