
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 January 2026

by **Samuel Watson BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20 February 2026

Appeal Ref: 6001442

5 Elliot Drive, Werrington ST9 0HD

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Karl Savage against the decision of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council.
 - The application Ref is SMD/2025/0290.
 - The development proposed is single storey extensions to front and rear, garage conversion, with alterations to roofs to side and over existing garage structure.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on:
 - The character and appearance of the surrounding area; and,
 - The living conditions of the occupiers at the host dwelling.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. Elliot Drive is a small cul-de-sac containing five dwellings at the end of a narrow lane within a predominantly residential area. The appeal site is the first dwelling reached along the lane and sits at a tight bend which leads into a more visually open area where the remaining dwellings are sited. The host dwelling sits perpendicular to the road with a garden to the front and rear of the site. The dwelling has previously been extended, and it now sits up against the edge of the carriageway.
4. By extending the host dwelling across the existing driveway the proposal would enclose the outside of the bend along Elliot Drive. This would further visually tighten the bend which is already narrow. The height of the extension would further exacerbate this by forming a somewhat imposing feature at the corner. In views down Elliot Drive towards the site the proposal would be a prominent element that would ultimately dominate the character of the lane and change it to be more akin to a private driveway. This is especially so given the positioning of two doorways close to the edge of the carriageway, serving the dining room and store.
5. I noted examples of flat rooves within the surrounding area and they are not uncommon on domestic properties more generally. However, those nearby were smaller examples, serving porches or other modest projections. Rooves in the

area are more typically of a traditional dual-pitched form. The proposed flat roof would be significantly larger than those elsewhere within the area, serving a relatively sprawling extension, and would be readily visible in public views. Consequently the roof, which would also extend up to the edge of the carriageway, would be a prominent and incongruous feature.

6. However, the street scene is not so uniform in design and detailing that the inclusion of large windows and French doors, or timber cladding, would erode the area's character. The proposed roof lanterns are also not in themselves detrimental to the character of the area. Moreover, the proposed parking would provide only a modest area amongst the existing soft landscaped and I find it would be similar to the other driveways on Elliot Drive. Given this and its small size, the parking area would not be a dominating feature within, and detrimental to, the street scene.
7. I recognise that the constraints of the site mean that a more typical extension would not likely be viable. However, this does not preclude me from finding harm as I have done above. I also note that the proposal shares some similarities with a flat-roof garage, while these are not uncommon within residential areas, the proposal would, for the reasons above, still be harmful.
8. The siting, scale and form of the rear extension would unacceptably affect the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The proposal therefore conflicts with Policy DC1 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (the LP). This, amongst other matters, require proposals to be of a high quality design that respects the site and surroundings, and reinforce local distinctiveness. The proposal also conflicts with the Design Guide Supplementary Design Document and the New Dwellings and Extensions to Dwellings Design Principles, particularly with regards to scale and rooves. It also conflicts with Paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) that seeks for proposals to be sympathetic to the local character and built environment and maintain a strong sense of place.

Living Conditions

9. As noted above the host dwelling has a garden to the front and rear. The rear garden is a private space surrounded by a mixture of boundary treatments and a detached garage. A driveway separates the garden from the road. The front garden is a similarly sized space that has largely been planted out and is readily overlooked from Elliot Drive.
10. I understand the host dwelling is a three-bedroom property. The Council's Space About Dwellings Supplementary Planning Guidance (the SPG) sets out that properties of this size are required to provide a private garden with an area of 65 square metres. The Council sets out that the garden currently meets this requirement and that the resultant garden space would be 50 square metres. Although the appellant accepts that the garden area would be reduced, they do not identify what the resulting area would be. Irrespective of the exact area of private garden space retained following the proposal, it is clear from the plans that the garden would be reduced in width.
11. Given the proposal relates to a house suitable for a family, it is likely that children would be present and, therefore, that the typical needs for a garden would include a space to sit out, hang out washing and for children to play. During my site visit it

was clear that the existing garden space could accommodate all of these needs at once.

12. The resultant garden would also be useable for these purposes, and it is likely that parents could sit out with space for children to play. However, the nature of play available to children would be limited by the size of the garden and it is unlikely that more active play, such as sports and other games, would be possible in this space. The quality of the garden's use and its contribution to the living conditions of occupiers would, therefore, be eroded.
13. The appellant has raised that the appeal site is a short distance from a large public green space, Wetley Common Park. I understand that this is a significant area but, I have not been provided with substantive evidence that it would be useable by occupiers as a play space for children. Moreover, given its separation from the site it would allow for spontaneous play and would likely require direct supervision from parents. Its effectiveness as a replacement for an appropriate garden is therefore more limited.
14. The front garden, as described above, is not a private space and so would not contribute to the private garden area required by the SPG. It has not therefore been determinative in my considerations.
15. Although the SPG is of some age this does not mean that its guidance is necessarily out of date. The existing garden is relatively modest, and it has not been substantiated that such a garden is too large for modern needs. Although the SPG may only provide guidance, this is in support of the Council's local policies and is a material consideration.
16. Notwithstanding the above, I am content that the proposal would maintain a suitable level of access to the garden through the dwelling as well as from the front of the property along a side access. Although the internal route through the property maybe somewhat circuitous this is not to such an extent as to harm the living conditions of occupiers.
17. The proposal would unacceptably erode living conditions at the appeal site by not providing a suitably sized garden to meet the typical needs of existing and future occupiers. The proposal therefore conflicts with LP Policy DC1 which in part requires proposals to create functional private environments and protect the amenity of the area with particular regard to healthy active environments and residential amenity. The proposal also does not follow the guidance on private garden spaces provided within the SPG. The proposal also conflicts with the Framework, including Paragraph 135 which seeks to create places that promote health and well-being with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

Other Matters

18. While there may have been no objections from statutory consultees, this does not preclude me from finding harm. Likewise, the lack of harm to highway safety, is not a benefit in itself and so does not weigh in favour of the proposal.
19. The appellant has suggested that the proposed roof and materials could be altered in order to overcome the Council's objections. However, no amended plans have been provided and notwithstanding this, the planning appeal process is not the

place to evolve a scheme. I have, therefore, considered the proposal as it was submitted to, and considered by, the Council.

Conclusion

20. The proposal would harm the living conditions of the occupiers at the appeal site and would harm the character and appearance of the area. It would therefore conflict with the development plan taken as a whole. There are no material considerations that indicate the decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, for the reasons given, I conclude that the appeal is dismissed.

Samuel Watson

INSPECTOR