

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2026/0043
Valid 29/01/2026

WILLOW HOUSE LEEK
ROAD
LONGSDON

ALTERATIONS AND
EXTENSION

(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)

MAIN ISSUES

- Impact on the Green Belt
- Impact on Character and Appearance
- Impact on amenity

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

Double fronted brick-built dwelling, mid-20th Century. The dwelling fronts Leek Road in the 'smaller village' of Longsdon. It occupies a Green Belt location.

The dwelling is on a wide plot between neighbouring dwellings. A wide run of single storey garage structures extends from the side elevation of the dwelling. The garages have a flat roof with a small, tiled dummy pitch to the front edge of the roof.

The rear of the property backs on to large grounds and open countryside with tree line and woodland landscape beyond.

PROPOSAL

To extend the dwelling with a first-floor addition to extend from the dwellings side wall across, and above, the full width of the existing single storey garages. The first-floor extension would have a full pitch roof and provide wide dormer windows to front and rear roof planes.

To extend 4m from the rear of the garages with a single storey addition that would provide wide bi fold doors to a family room and a first-floor roof terrace on its flat roof. The roof terrace to be enclosed by architectural glass balustrade.

To add a full pitch tiled roof to the existing two storey flat roof addition that extends from the rear.

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

National Planning Policy Framework

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

87-0934 Change of use of garage to living accommodation. WITHDRAWN
(considered to be permitted development)

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 26/03/2026

Neighbour consultation period ends: 26/03/2026

Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

None

Town / Parish Comments

Longsdon PC: No response within consultation period

Staffordshire County Council Highways

Acceptance.

The current 3-bedroom property will see an increase in the floor plan to 4 bedrooms. Staffordshire Moorlands Parking Standards state: Detached/Semi-detached property of 4 or more bedrooms will require 3 spaces (2.4 x 4.8m each space) for residents and visitors. Parking is not shown on the submitted plans however it was noted at the site visit there is sufficient space on the driveway/hardstanding and garages to accommodate parking and turning for 4+ vehicles. The proposal is considered not have a detrimental impact on the adopted highway. I have no objection (application number SMD/2026/0043)

OFFICER COMMENTS

Impact on the Green Belt

The site is in the Green Belt where development is inappropriate and, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt unless one of the exceptions that appear on the closed lists at Chapter 13 of the NPPF apply. Where there is harm to the Green Belt planning permission should not be granted unless there are other considerations, amounting to very special circumstances, that clearly outweigh the harm the Green Belt and any other harms that would result from the development.

One of the exceptions does make provision for the alteration or extension of a building provided they do not result in a disproportionate size increase over and above the size of the original building. 'Original building' means the building as it existed in 1948 or if it was built after that date, as it was originally intended.

The full planning history of the property is not readily available. There is evidence on the historic maps of 19th century buildings occupying the site. The existing dwelling, however, is clearly, not of 19th Century origin and appears to have been provided as a replacement, most likely post war/mid 20th Century.

The applicant's agent submits that the whole of the existing dwelling should be taken as the original dwelling. However, the position is not supported with any evidence.

The part of the dwelling that appears most obviously to be its 'original' core consists of a double fronted, two storey brick-built property with a full pitch roof. The elements consisting of a two-storey flat roof projection at the rear (breaching the eaves of the main roof at rear), a lean-to outrigger to the side elevation (faced with faux stone cladding), and a single storey lean to across the front elevation that links the dwelling to an adjacent double garage, are of a design, appearance and present facing materials that are not wholly consistent with what is obviously the original core of the dwelling. These elements, therefore, appear to have been added as later extensions and on site they read as such.

Broken down footprints and floor areas calculated at:

Footprint

- The obvious and undisputed 'original' footprint of the dwelling is 46 sqm
- The existing rear extension and leanto side outrigger add a further 59 sqm
- The adjoining garages and the lean to run across the front elevation add a further 48 sqm

That means that, on an assessment where identified elements are taken as existing extensions to the original dwelling, the footprint of the original dwelling has already been extended by 132%.

The proposal would add a further 32 sqm to footprint with a single storey extension to the rear of the adjoining garage, in total, it would result in a 202% increase to footprint.

First Floor

- The obvious and undisputed 'original' first floor area of the dwelling is 46 sqm
- The existing rear element adds a further 32 sqm
- The proposal would add a further 36 sqm with a side extension above the garage.

That means that, on an assessment where identified elements are taken as existing extensions to the original dwelling, the first-floor area of the original dwelling has already been extended by 70%.

The proposal would add a further 36 sqm to first floor area with the side extension, in total, it would result in a 140% increase to first floor area.

On an alternative analysis, where the whole of the existing dwelling is taken as original, the proposed first floor side extension would still, in any event, have a doubling effect to the width of the dwelling's two storey elevation. The first-floor addition would add obvious size and mass at first floor height that, from the front, in particular, would result in disproportionate size increase over and above the original dwelling. Moreover, the first-floor addition would block out and obstruct visual penetration, and a sense of openness, across the site, above the single storey structures to the landscape beyond. In these regards there would be harm to the spatial and visual aspects of openness that is currently afforded by the low-profile single storey height of the garage structures.

Overall, the proposed development would, in any event, result in a disproportionate size increase over and above that of the original building. It is not provided for by the exception and would be inappropriate in the Green Belt. It would be harmful to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness. There would be harm to both the spatial and visual aspects of openness.

Design and Impact on Character and Appearance

In the other rural areas of countryside, outside of the defined settlements, Local Plan area strategy SS10 applies. The policy makes provision for local housing needs by, inter alia, allowing extensions 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. In the smaller village of Longsdon Local Plan policy SS9 generally requires new development to reflect and enhance the village's special character.

SMDC Local Plan Policy DC1 requires all development to be well designed and reinforce local distinctiveness by positively contributing to and complementing the special character of the area in line with the Council's Design Guide SPD.

In particular, new development should be of a high quality and add value to the local area, incorporating creativity, detailing and materials appropriate to the character of the area; and, 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.

The Council's design SPD requires that:

All extensions should harmonise with the parent building. An extension should respect the dominance of the original building and be subordinate to it in terms of its size and massing. Setting back the new section from the building line and keeping the eaves and ridge lower than the parent building will help.

The existing dwelling occupies a wide plot, set back from the roadside behind driveway. Visually, from roadside frontage, there is some separation between the application dwelling and its adjacent neighbour at 'Nearacre' to the northeast – Nearacre, as a bungalow, has low profile and there is a line of trees and bushes on the boundary that provide a visual break. To the southwest there is some distance between the side of the applicant's dwelling and the adjacent, late 19th century, red brick Hawthorne Cottage. The grade II* listed St Chad's Church, on the opposite side of the road, is set well behind roadside within extensive grounds, largely concealed by

mature tree line. The church does not contribute directly or immediately to the character and appearance of locality in respect of the roadside dwellings experienced or viewed from the road.

All of this means that the applicant's dwelling has its own separate and unique presentation within a row of wide plot frontages and varied dwelling types. Despite some apparent extension and alteration to the rear and side elevations, the property appears, fundamentally, as a two storey, double fronted mid-20th Century red brick dwelling. From the southwest side elevation, a wide run of single storey garaging (partly converted to living accommodation) extends from the two-storey side wall and gable. While this run of single storey structure somewhat stretches and distorts the dwelling's footprint and proportions, it is all single storey, low profile, and very much subordinate in form and relationship to the stature of the original two storey dwelling. From the front, there are views above and beyond the single storey structure toward treeline and woodland landscape which contribute to the character and appearance of the area and the experience of the environment.

The proposed first floor addition to extend from the dwelling's side wall, above the run of garaging, would proportionately make for a very wide and unusual two storey elevation. Within that, the double fronted proportions of the dwelling's existing two storey elevation, would become lost and the proposed addition would have a doubling effect on the overall width of the dwelling.

The proposed side extension would not be set back or stepped behind the front of the existing elevation and would carry through flush with the brick line. The proposal would step the height of the extensions ridge line to a lower level below that of the main dwelling. However, the width and proportions of the proposed side addition are such that neither the lower roof line or a step back or recess in the elevation would assist to achieve a sufficient degree of subordinacy or respect for the dominance of the original dwelling. Overall, the development would still make for, proportionately, an unusually wide elevation.

That sense of visual penetration and view toward distant treeline and woodland landscape, with the introduction of form and massing at first floor, would be blocked out with detriment to the character and appearance of the area and the environment experienced from the roadside.

In these regards, the proposal conflicts with SMDC Local Plan policies SS9, SS10, and DC1; the SMDC Design SPG and SPD, and the terms of the NPPF.

The proposed single storey rear extension would not be apparent from public vantage, nor would it be prominent or intrusive within the landscape. This element of the proposal would not adversely affect the presentation of the existing dwelling or the character and appearance of the area. The inclusion of a pitched roof above the existing flat roof two storey rear addition and the lowering of the eaves to match that of the existing dwelling would visually improve the appearance when viewed from the rear.

Amenity

Local Plan policy DC1 requires development to protect the amenity of the area, including creation of healthy active environments and residential amenity, in terms of satisfactory daylight, visual impact, sunlight, outlook, privacy, soft landscaping, as well as noise, odour and light pollution.

The property sits within large grounds and a substantial plot. The nearest adjacent neighbours are a significant distance from the parts of the dwelling that would be extended. None of the proposed extensions would be positioned in front of, or flanking, any of the neighbour's outlook. The proposed roof terrace would look out onto extensive grounds positioned within a wide plot – the side of the terrace to the northeast would be flanked by the existing two storey extension and this would obstruct views of the neighbour's property. The shared boundary to the southwest is lined with high hedge and trees that screen the adjacent 'mixed use' property that provides the neighbour's dwelling and a large commercial joinery workshop. The proposed terrace would not give vantage or overlook residential amenity space to the southwest.

Therefore, no amenity issues are raised. There would be no conflict with policy DC1 of the Local Plan or the terms of the NPPF in these regards.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The proposal is for inappropriate development in the Green Belt that would be harmful to the Green Belt by definition. The development would not be provided for by the exceptions at Chapter 13 of the NPPF, specifically because the proposed extensions would result in a disproportionate size increase over and above the size of the original building. There would be notable harm to the Green Belt by adverse impact on the spatial and visual aspects of openness. Substantial weight is attached to that harm. There is no evidence to demonstrate that other considerations, amounting to 'very special circumstances', clearly outweigh that harm and the other harms that would result from the development. In these regards, the proposal conflicts with SMDC Local Plan policy SS10 and the terms of the NPPF.

There would also be harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and that of the area through development that would poorly relate to the existing host dwelling. The proposed side extension would fail to respect the dominance of the original building and, with the introduction of significant width of first floor mass, it would result in an unusually wide two storey elevation and building form that would appear disproportionate, prominent, and at odds with the pattern of development that presents to the roadside. The development, above the low profile of the existing structure, would also obstruct and block out distant views of treeline and woodland landscape beyond that contribute to the character and appearance of the area and the experience of the environment. In these regards, the proposal conflicts with SMDC Local Plan policies SS9, SS10, and DC1; the SMDC Design SPG and SPD, and the terms of the NPPF.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION :

Refuse

Case Officer: Ben Hurst

Recommendation Date: 26/03/2026

X 

Signed by: Jane Colley Signature

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council