

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2026/0061
Valid 10/02/2026

WOODLANDS FARM
MACCLESFIELD ROAD
LEEK

PROPOSED SINGLE STOREY
REAR EXTENSION

(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)

MAIN ISSUES

- Impact on the Green Belt
- Impact on Character and Appearance of the Area

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

Woodlands Farm is a dwellinghouse in a remote and isolated location in the Green Belt to the north of Leek. The dwelling is at the western end of a private lane that provides access with Macclesfield Road to the east that is shared with The Stone House. The Stone House is closer to the road, 170m further to the east.

Woodlands Farm is set within a small coppice of trees that appears in rolling farmland between the town of Leek to the south and Rudyard Lake to the north.

The planning history for this dwelling does not appear to be readily available, however its footprint is not apparent on historic maps that predate 1960, but by the 1970 edition of the map, the board L shape footprint of the dwelling appears. This means that the dwelling must have been built in the 1960s and the architecture, character and appearance of the dwelling might be considered consistent with that period.

The dwelling has a very broad L shaped footprint. The main part of the dwelling is a two-storey red brick dwelling with a full pitch tiled roof that presents a double fronted elevation with a central porch to the northwest. At the rear to, the southeast, a large broad outrigger runs off from the main form of the two-storey dwelling with a cat slide roof that extends a further 8m to the rear. This outrigger element is faced with painted render and timber cladding and has a box dormer at first floor height.

The plot is open to the southwest where footpath Leek Town 3 crosses farmland and passes within 20m of the plot.

PROPOSAL

This is a repeat application to extend the dwelling following the refusal of planning application SMD/2025/0459. That application proposed to extend the dwelling by infilling the corner alcove adjacent to the outrigger and adding a further flat roof addition would extend another 6m to the southeast. The extensions would have presented wide panels of glazing to the southwest, southeast, and northeast. Internally, the development would have provided a new family and dining room opened up to existing kitchen space, and, at the rear, a 10m indoor swimming pool.

Planning permission was refused because the development would have disproportionately increased the size of the original dwelling and, therefore, been inappropriate in the Green Belt; and been harmful to the character and appearance of the area.

This revised application is for reduced development. The application proposal is to fill in the alcove corner adjacent to the outrigger and continue the plain of the cat slide roof across the full width of the dwelling to square out the dwelling's footprint. The proposal to add a further 6m of extension across the width of the southeast elevation has been omitted from the proposal. The extent of proposed glazing has been considerably reduced, limited to bifold doors to southwest and southeast elevations. The southwest elevation of the extension would be stepped in and recessed against the gable end of the two storey dwelling.

Internally, the proposal to provide indoor swimming pool has been omitted and indoor space would provide open family and dining room.

Not referred to initially in the description of development on the application form (now rectified) , but detailed in the proposed plans, the scheme shows the provision of a larger replacement porch (1.5m by 3.9m) with a full pitch tiled roof and glazing panels either side of a central door and into the height of the front apex; and, another 1 metre of depth added to the existing bedroom dormers that extend from the rear roof slope.

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

National Planning Policy Framework

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/2025/0459 Proposed extensions. REFUSED.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 24th March 2026
Neighbour consultation period ends: 24th March 2026
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

None

Town / Parish Comments

Leek Town: No response within consultation (no response to previous application)

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.

It is not entirely clear whether the building as it exists today is the 'original building' or whether it was added to after first completion. The catslide outrigger appears as though it could be a later addition or extension because its design and appearance are not wholly consistent with the brick built two storey element that has a full pitch roof.

Where the proposed additions under the previous scheme would have increased the existing footprint by around 100% and added substantial volume and mass, making for a massive building form, with this revised scheme the extent of proposed addition has been reduced. The proposed addition to fill the alcove and square out the footprint would add just 26% to the existing footprint.

However, if part of that existing building is already made up of some extension, which seems likely, then that size increase, above that of the 'original' dwelling, would be considerably greater.

That being said, during interim discussions between applications, it was conceded that the dwelling could be further extended without planning permission under permitted development allowances. In particular, and most obviously, an addition that fills the corner alcove, extending from the rear elevation by up to 4m (or up to 8m if the larger extension, prior approval process were engaged) could be carried out. The applicant explored the possibility, therefore, of introducing a flat roof, box shape, into this space.

In response, they were advised that rather than pursue that option, it would, overall, be better if the proposed extension ran in across the rear elevation and continued the plain and form of the existing outrigger's catslide roof. Improving on the detail, the applicant has stepped the side/southwest elevation of the proposed extension in from the end gable of the dwelling and reduced the extent of glazing.

Therefore, on an analysis that accepts the existing dwelling as 'original', the proposed addition, at just 26% footprint increase, would not result in disproportionate size increase. However, on alternative analyses, that identifies the catslide outrigger as existing extension, the dwelling could be further extended, considerably, in a manner that might not, in design terms, result in a 'pleasing' form of development.

On the former analysis, the proposed development would be provided for by the exception at Chapter 13 of the NPPF and would not be inappropriate development. On the latter analysis, available permitted development rights provide a 'fall back' position that, on balance, overall favours a grant of planning permission for the development proposed with this application and serves as a consideration or circumstance that weighs against any Green Belt harm.

The proposed replacement porch and the further depth on the bedroom dormers, would add marginal inconsequential footprint and mass to the building form (some 3sqm to footprint of the porch and 4 cubic metres to roof volume).

To prevent further size increase and impacts on Green Belt, a permission should be granted on a condition that prohibits further development/extension and has the effect of removing permitted development rights.

Design and Impact on Character and Appearance of the Area

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.

The existing dwelling is of relatively unusual architecture and appearance given its remote rural location which is normally associated with more traditional building forms that have historic connection with farming. The building in this case appears to have been built in the 1960s and its character and appearance reflect that. While the dwelling sits within a band of trees to the east that provide screening, the dwelling and plot is exposed, across livestock fencing and sparse bushes and hedgerow, to the west and the public footpath (Leek town 3) that is just 20m from the plot boundary.

Nevertheless, the existing dwelling does have a certain coherent arrangement of building form and architecture. The main two storey brick form of, what is most readable as, the original dwelling has conventional presentation to the front, while the catslide outrigger reduces to subordinate form at the rear.

The replacement porch would be marginally larger than the existing flat roof porch that it would replace, and would introduce a full pitch roof and a contemporary arrangement of glazing. To the front of the 1960s elevation, the porch would not be at odds with or discordant with the design and presentation of the dwelling.

The small extension to the front of the bedroom dormers would overall, tuck in and be absorbed by the range and slope of the catslide roof.

The proposed addition would run in and continue the form and alignment of the existing outrigger, rather than taking a flat roof 'boxy' approach. In those regards it would relate well to the form and design of the existing dwelling.

In terms of design, there are notable improvements with the revised proposal over the previous scheme, these include:

- Considerable reduction in the scope of the proposed extension, specifically the omission of flat roof additions that would extend a further 6m from rear of outrigger
- Stepping in of extensions side wall to provide visual break against the two storey gable end of the two storey dwelling, this to match the step in of the side wall on the otherside of the property
- Reduction in the extent of glazing proposed for the exposed side wall, high level apex glazing omitted.

The development would result in a coherent building form that would not make a prominent intrusion in the countryside, and would not be harmful to the character and appearance of the rural area.

In these regards there would be resolved conflict with Local Plan policies SS10, DC1 and DC3 and the terms of the Council's design guide SPG and SPD.

Amenity

The property sits within a large curtilage and the nearest neighbour (Stone House) is a significant distance away. Therefore no amenity issues are raised.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The repeat and revised proposal to extend the dwelling has addressed concerns and objections relative to Green Belt impacts. There has also been improvements to the design of the proposed development so that it would not harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and that of the area. The proposal would not conflict with SMDC Local Plan policies SS10, DC1, and DC3; the SMDC Design SPG and SPD, or the terms of the NPPF.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : APPROVE

Case Officer: Ben Hurst

Recommendation Date: 07/04/2026

X *J Curley*

Signed by: Jane Curley

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council