

## New Garage Block at Greenacres, Cloudside, Congleton

### Planning, Design and Access Statement



The building, which comprises two garage bays and store rooms, was constructed in 20014-15. At the time of construction the applicant believed that the development was within the domestic curtilage of the property and was therefore permitted development under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995. He has since been notified by the Council that the land is not within the domestic curtilage and he is therefore seeking retrospective planning permission for the development. The land on which the block has been built comprises a paddock which is immediately adjacent to, but higher than, the existing yard and stable block. It has been used principally for recreational equine purposes over the last ten years or so with occasional agricultural use. The site is within the Green Belt.

The applicant, on purchasing the property in 2014, had a need for garaging for his vehicles and ancillary storage. A number of options were considered including the erection of a new detached building to the north of the house in the vicinity of the existing drive. The final choice of site was made on the basis that the block would be far less conspicuous at the rear of the house and less obtrusive than a roadside building open to public view.

The paddock was separated from the existing yard by a 1500 high retaining wall with the paddock rising up behind it. This has given the applicant the opportunity of building the garaging into the bank and extending the paddock grass over the roof. This has resulted in the front facade only being visible and this reads as an extension, albeit higher, of the original retaining wall which it steps down to at each side. The design of the front facade is very simple, the horizontal parapet reflecting, in both line and detailing (half-round stone copers), the top of the original retaining walls. The two car port openings, being negative elements, further reduce the impact of the structure. The external facing material is local pink sandstone to match the existing buildings.

Policies in both the Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework consider new buildings within the Green Belt to be inappropriate unless very special circumstances exist. We are of the opinion that any harm to the Green Belt is outweighed by the benefits that the current siting of the building bring, being predominantly underground, compared to the alternative sitings available to us. The building is only visible from the rear yard of the house which, to a large extent, shields the front facade from public view. The building is not visible from any other direction. The current building has, therefore, only minimal impact on the openness of the Green Belt and less impact than any other equivalent building constructed under permitted development rights would have. This represents a very special circumstance.

The garage block has been sited at the most convenient point for level access into the house.

The forecourt (yard) has been extended in front of the garage block to assist vehicle manoeuvring and the existing dog kennels and oil tank have been relocated to this area.

