DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2019/0295	**HANDFIELD FARM**	**TWO STOREY REAR**
Valid 21/05/2019	**BLACKWOOD HOUSE LANE**	**EXTENSION**
	HORTON	**(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)**

MAIN ISSUES

- Green Belt
- Design
- Amenity
- Heritage – non designated

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

Detached semi isolated two storey farm house in stone with clay tile roof and linear single storey range converted into living accommodation. Previous recent single storey rear extension to part of single storey range (see 03/01043/FUL). Two storey farm house evidently historically altered and extended. One historic mullioned window in the rear elevation of obvious age and character including old frames and glazing. Otherwise generally modern windows in plastic but those to the front elevation of the two storey house are modelled on historic forms.

The house is set back some 50m from the public road which it faces though with some intervening outbuildings. A public footpath leaves the road just east of the access drive and heads north across the adjacent fields at c.25m from the east end of the farm house.

The house and attached linear single storey range occupy a plan layout that was already established by the 1877 OS map date. Due to the age and obvious historic character and qualities of the stone work the building can rightly be regarded as a non-designated heritage asset within the meaning of the NPPF.

PROPOSAL

Two storey twin projecting gabled outrigger in stone and clay tiles off the back of the two storey part of the original house. In response to LPA feedback the application has been amended several times from that first submitted to achieve both design changes and reduction in the scale of extensions proposed.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Core Strategy Development Plan Document (Adopted 2014)

S01 Spatial Objectives
SS1 Development Principles
SS1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

SS6c Other Rural Areas Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
DC2 The Historic Environment
DC3 Landscape and Settlement Setting
R1 Rural Diversification
R2 Rural Housing
NE1 Biodiversity
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

Local Plan Submission Version (February 2018)
SS1 Development Principles
SS1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
SS10 Other Rural Areas Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
DC2 The Historic Environment
DC3 Landscape and Settlement Setting
H1 New Housing Development
NE Biodiversity and Geological Resources
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

Local Plan process

The Council agreed to publish the Local Plan Submission Version for representations in February 2018. At this point, the Council agreed that the Local Plan was "sound". Formal representations were then invited from residents, businesses and other stakeholders to provide them with the opportunity to support or challenge the soundness or legal compliance of the Local Plan. This stage in the process followed three previous public consultations since 2015 which had informed the preparation of the Local Plan alongside a comprehensive evidence base.

In June 2018, the Council subsequently agreed to submit the Local Plan Submission Version to the Secretary of State for examination. An examination in public was held in November 2018 to determine whether the Local Plan is sound and legally compliant. Subject to the findings of the appointed inspector, the Local Plan is expected to be adopted later in 2019. At that point, it will supersede the adopted Core Strategy and become part of the statutory development plan for the District.

In this context, the Council's position on the weight to be given to the policies contained in the Local Plan Submission Version in terms of the three criteria set out in Paragraph 48 of the NPPF is as follows:

- The stage of preparation: the Local Plan is now at an advanced stage of preparation as the Council has submitted it to the SoS for examination;
- The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies: this varies depending on the policy in question. Where reference is made in this report to any emerging policies the level of outstanding objections to each policy will be noted and recommendation made as to the amount of weight to be given to the policies at this stage in the process;
- The degree of consistency of policies with the NPPF: given that the Council has submitted a Local Plan that it considers to be sound, all policies are deemed to be consistent with the NPPF.

National Planning Policy Framework July 2018
Paragraph(s) 1 – 14;
Section(s) 4 – Decision making; 11 – Making effective use of land; 12 – Achieving well designed places; 13 – Protecting Green Belt Land; 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS
03/01043/FUL – conversion and extension of attached single storey range approved on amended dwg. 001F – NB PD rights removed under condition 6.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity
Site Notice expiry date: 16th July 2019
Neighbour consultation period ends: 19th June 2019
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments
None

Town / Parish Comments
Horton Parish Council – support.

Severn Trent Water
Minimal impact on public sewer network therefore no objection and no requirement for drainage condition.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

General approach
In its general approach, in accordance with policies SS1 and SS1a, the Council expects the development and use of land to contribute positively to the social, economic and environmental improvement of the Staffordshire Moorlands. When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF. This means that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Core Strategy shall be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether: (a) any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning

Policy Framework taken as a whole; or (b) specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.

Subject to Green Belt requirements Policy SS6c provides for the conversion extension or replacement of an existing rural building in accordance with policies R1 and R2.

Green Belt Extensions

In the rural areas outside of the development boundaries Policy SS6c is that strict control will continue to be exercised over inappropriate development within the Green Belt allowing only for exceptions as defined by Government Policy.

The NPPF states at paragraph 144 that: "When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt."

The fundamental aim of the Green Belt is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. The Government identifies five purposes of the Green Belt:

- To prevent the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas;
- To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;
- To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic market towns and
- To assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Inappropriate development is by definition harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances (NPPF 143). 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations (NPPF 144).

NPPF paragraphs 145 and 146 set out specific exceptions by which certain forms of development can be considered as being not inappropriate in the Green Belt. One of these exceptions is at 145 (c): "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".

Examination of the historic maps confirms to the LPA that the original (pre July 1948) building can be taken to be the now extant building less the 2003 approved extension and the porch. This original building layout scales from plan as 126m2 with a first floor of c. 58m2. The recent porch and rear (2003) extension scale as c.12m2.

From the stated dimensions on the submitted revised drawing the proposal would be (4.5 x 4.5) + (4 x 4) = 20 + 16 = 36m2. Taken together with the area of previous extensions (12m2), the additions now proposed would result in a total of 48m2 or 38% over and above the size of the original building ground plan area. As the extension is two storey, when assessed in terms of total floor plan area (externally measured), the proposal would add 72m2 and together with the 2003 extension and porch a grand total of 84m2. With its first floor the original building has a grand total of c.184m2. The 84m2 of tat extensions therefore equates to a c.46% increase over the original building.

On the basis of the above figures it can be accepted that the proposed extension together with previous post 1948 additions would not result in disproportionate additions in Green Belt terms. The development is acceptable in principle.

Further key considerations are the design and its impact on the heritage character of the building.

Design / Heritage

The scheme has been discussed informally with the Council's Conservation Officer. There is some reservation about a twin outrigger as a simple L plan would be more consistent with a traditional farm house. A single storey form to the shorter outrigger with lean-to against the two storey part would have made a more ideal scheme but ultimately it is recognised that two storey outrigger pairs do occur and there is little scope for public view of this scheme. Several amendments have been offered in response to LPA feedback. Windows have been significantly altered to avoid overly large modern openings which would have been at odds with the farm house character. Stone lintels and mullions are proposed. The depth of projection has been reduced – in part to deal with Green Belt – but necessary also to be in better design proportion. The twin gables have been staggered so that one is recessed to the other. A recess from the easterly wall end of the two storey part of the property would normally have been a requirement but in this case the already extended ground floor has made this less of an imperative. The roof ridges are set down relative to that of the main house.

The scheme will build in front of a particularly old and characterful mullioned window. This is a loss though the applicants say they will be retaining this window in situ internally. Metal rainwater goods proposed.

Amenity

With no near neighbours there are no neighbour amenity conflicts. Adequate garden space well above the Council's minimum standards will remain.

The nearby public footpath is noted and the visual impacts of the first submitted scheme were a concern as being disproportionate and out of character and therefore harmful to the rural scene but with the amendments there are no longer these concerns.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE
In light of all of the above the proposal is found acceptable in Green Belt terms and in design including taking account of the acknowledged heritage qualities (non-designated). NPPF paragraph 197 expects effects of a scheme on significance of non-designated heritage assets to be taken into account and a balanced judgement to be reached. Ultimately, with the modifications to the applicants' original aspirations the remaining compromises which have been noted are considered acceptable in this case.

No other issues have been identified.

It is noted that PD rights were removed by the 2003 consent.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : approve

Case Officer: Arne Swithenbank
Recommendation Date: 26th September 2019

X B.J. Haywood

Signed by: Ben Haywood
On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council