DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2019/0688	**OVERTON FARM FOLE**	**RETENTION OF TRIPLE**
Valid 11/11/2019	**LANE**	**GARAGE**
	OVERTON	
	HOLLINGTON	**(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)**

MAIN ISSUES
Impact on the character and appearance of the area

DESCRIPTION OF SITE
The application site is located within the area, and forms part of a wider cluster of buildings associated with Overton Farm. Overton Farm lies to the north of Fole Lane, and occupies a modestly elevated position within the surrounding landscape. The site benefits from a variety of natural screening, particularly to the south, which serves to filter views of the existing complex of buildings, including numerous mature and semi-mature trees, and indigenous hedgerows. The garage the subject of this application is located immediately northwest of the two-storey farmhouse, west of an existing brick and tile outbuilding, and south/southwest of the main complex of agricultural buildings. The site was previously occupied by a mono-pitched outbuilding, which was originally used as garaging, and thereafter kennels.

PROPOSAL
The garage occupies a footprint of 107 square metres and stands to a maximum ridge height of 6.8 metres. The building is open-fronted, and provides under-cover parking for three vehicles. An internal staircase provides access to a storage area above. The garage has been constructed to a high standard, utilising bricks and tiles that are complimentary to the palette of materials of the adjacent farmhouse, with oak breams and uprights giving the building a quality external finish.

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
DC1 Design Considerations
DC3 Landscape character and appearance
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 is ongoing in order to determine whether the Local Plan is sound and legally compliant. Hearing sessions were conducted in October 2018 and the Inspector issued his initial post-hearing advice in January 2019 which set out some actions for the Council and a range of modifications that would be necessary to make the plan sound. The full schedule of modifications was agreed by the Council and the subject of public consultation between 18th September 2019 and 31st October 2019. The schedule consisted of modifications that the Inspector has deemed necessary to make the Local Plan sound. Following the consultation, the Inspector concluded that further hearing sessions were necessary to consider; proposals for safeguarded land at Gillow Heath in Biddulph, housing land supply, Local Green Spaces in Cheddleton (Ox Pasture), Biddulph (Dorset Drive and implications for the emerging neighbourhood plan) and Blythe Bridge. They will be held on 4th and 5th February. The Inspector will outline the timetable for next steps in the process at the close of the hearings.

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 considered below:

- The stage of preparation – the Local Plan is now at an advanced stage of preparation as the main modifications have been subject to consultation
- The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies this varies depending on the policy in question – the Inspector wishes to explore outstanding objections on a limited number of issues at the February hearing sessions further before drawing conclusions.
- The degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to this Framework – policies have been modified to address soundness issues identified by the Inspector to date. It is the Council's view that the policies (as modified) are consistent with national policy. The Inspector has yet to draw final conclusions, particularly on the matters subject to further hearing sessions.

National Planning Policy Framework
Section(s) 2 Achieving sustainable development; 4 Decision Making; 12 Achieving Well Designed Places; 15 Conserving the natural environment.

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS
07/01616/FUL Use of kennels as holiday let. WITHDRAWN

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity
Site Notice expiry date: 6th Jan 2020

Neighbour consultation period ends: 3rd December 2019
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments
None

Town / Parish Comments
Checkley Parish Council: No Comment

Severn Trent Water: The proposal has minimal impact on the public sewerage system therefore no objections to the proposals and do not require a drainage condition to be applied.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development
The site is in the countryside, between Hollington and Checkley, where 'other rural area' policy SS6c applies. The strategy here is to provide only for development which meets an essential local need, supports rural diversification or enhances the countryside. This could include the provision of a building for the garaging of a resident's vehicles and, specifically, the replacement of a rural building provided, when considered against that need, it would not disproportionately harm the character and appearance of the rural area. There is no provision for a new building when the need is less than essential or it does not support rural diversification. The determination essentially arrives at a balancing exercise between the need or benefit to the rural economy and the developments impact on the character and appearance of the area. The emerging policy in the submission version of the Local Plan does not introduce any fundamental or material change to that approach.

Impact on character and appearance of the area
It is clear from aerial photographs, a photograph provided by the applicant, and his own account, that a large rather functional looking brick garage building with a flat or mono pitch roof was demolished before the triple car garage was built in its place. Unlike the previous building, the new garage has been constructed to a high standard, utilising bricks, stone and tiles that are complimentary to the palette of materials of the adjacent farmhouse, with oak beams and uprights giving the building a traditional quality external finish. The building is more 'attractive' in its own right than the previous building but it also has a complimentary relationship with the adjacent farm house and provides a sense of enclosure and arrangement to the residential part of the farmstead. The building does not appear unduly exposed or prominent within the landscape and has an obvious sense of space, the character and appearance of the locality and wider rural landscape, therefore, has not been adversely affected and as discussed, there are merits that weigh in favour of the development.

Other considerations
In respect of the strategy for the area the applicant's need is a matter that weighs in the balance of considerations. There is no other garaging provision relatable to the dwelling's curtilage, and it is a reasonable requirement. However, while it would not

be unusual for the occupants of a large dwelling such as this to have between them three cars this garage might be considered rather generous. While the need for this building might be considered somewhat less than 'essential' it is a matter that weights in favour of the development.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE
The provision of facility to meet the applicant's needs; its quality design, use of materials and relationship with the farmhouse, are all matters that weigh in favour of the development and are not 'outweighed' by any adverse impacts.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION :
APPROVE

Case Officer: Ben Hurst
Recommendation Date: 10.01.2020

X

Signed by: JaneC

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council