Rob Duncan
Planning
Consultancy

PLANNING STATEMENT

OLD STAR FARM
COTTON

JANUARY 2020

Site Address:
Old Star Farm, Beelow Lane, Cotton, Staffordshire, ST10 3BL

Applicant:
Mr. S. Watkins

Proposal:
Removal of Conservatory and erection of single storey extension with balcony above

Planning Statement:
Date Issued: 13th January 2020
Job Reference: RDP/2020/005

Report Prepared By:
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1 Introduction

1.1 Rob Duncan Planning Consultancy Ltd. has been instructed by Mr. S. Watkins to seek full planning permission for the erection of a single storey extension with balcony above at Old Star Farm, Beelow Lane, Cotton.

1.2 The proposed extension will project off the western elevation of the existing dwelling, and occupy the general position of an existing UPVC conservatory which is to be demolished as part of the proposal. Its footprint will extend to 16.4m^2. The proposed extension will have a flat roof with balcony atop that is to be enclosed by glazed screens and balustrading. The balcony will be accessed via new full height openings inserted in place of two existing dormer windows serving the existing first floor bedroom.

2 Site & Surroundings

2.1 The application site lies within the rural area and comprises a detached two-storey dwelling with adjacent detached double garage. The garage is located to the north of the dwelling, beyond which continues the garden of the property, leading up to its boundary with a row of mature trees that enclose the northern boundary of the site. An agricultural building is located beyond the eastern boundary of the site, to the northeast of the existing dwelling. Agricultural land extends to the west of the site, with a large nissan hut style building located to the northwest of the dwelling, immediately adjacent to the existing garden. A hedgerow encloses the southern boundary of the site beyond which runs a vehicular access track serving Star Green Farm (55m to southwest) and which is also a public footpath (Farley 33). Vehicular access to the site is taken via an existing driveway feeding off Beelow Lane some 77m to the east of the dwelling.

3 Planning Policy

3.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires proposals to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan taking into consideration any material considerations relevant to the determination of the application. The Development Plan for the area comprises the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy DPD (2014) of which the following policies are considered to be of relevance:

Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy

3.2 Policy SS6c of the Core Strategy relates to the 'Other Rural Areas Area Strategy' and states that these areas will provide only for development which meets an essential local need, supports the rural diversification and sustainability of the rural areas, promotes sustainable tourism or enhances the countryside. The policy goes on to state that the Council will meet essential local needs by (amongst others):

- *Allowing the conversion, extension or replacement of an existing rural building in accordance with policies R1 and R2*

3.3 Policy R2 of the Core Strategy relates to 'Rural Housing' and states that only the following forms of housing development will be permitted in the rural areas outside the settlement and infill boundaries of the towns and villages:

- *Affordable Housing;*

- *A new dwelling that meets an essential local need, such as accommodation for an agricultural, forestry or other rural enterprise worker, where the need for such accommodation has been satisfactorily demonstrated and that need cannot be met elsewhere;*

- *Proposals for replacement dwellings, provided they do not have a significantly greater detrimental impact on the existing character of the rural area than the original dwelling or result in the loss of a building which is intrinsic to the character of the area;*

- *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 conversion of non-residential rural buildings where the building is suitable and worthy in physical, architectural and character terms for conversion and it can be demonstrated that agricultural or commercial use is not viable or suitable.*

3.4 Policy DC1 of the Core Strategy relates to 'Design Considerations' and states that all development should be well designed and reinforce local distinctiveness by positively contributing to and complementing the special character and heritage of the area in line with the Council's Design SPD. It goes on to state that new development should (amongst others):

- *be of a high quality and add value to the local area, incorporating creativity, detailing and materials appropriate to the character of the area;*

- *protect the amenity of the area, including residential amenity, in terms of satisfactory daylight, sunlight, outlook, privacy and soft landscaping;*

4 Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework sets out policies, *inter-alia*, in respect of securing high quality design, and has been taken into consideration in the preparation of this application.

Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide SPD (2018)

4.2 This document identifies the overarching principles in securing high quality design and sets out various criteria against which applications will be assessed. The content of the SPD has been taken into consideration in the preparation of this application.

5 Planning Assessment

Principle of Development

5.1 Policies SS6c and R2 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy allow for the erection of extensions to existing dwellings within the rural areas, provided that 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.

5.2 A review of historic Ordnance Survey mapping and previous planning applications on the site shows that the original dwelling encompassed a broadly T-shaped property, which along with the existing conservatory has been extended off its northern and easterly elevations. This application seeks to remove the existing conservatory and replace it with a single storey garden room extension, with balcony above.

5.3 The proposed extension is modestly larger in footprint than the existing conservatory (16.4m^2 compared to 11.4m^2), but is nevertheless wholly subservient to the host dwelling, set back from both its western and northern elevations so that it tucks neatly into the corner. The extension also sits below the eaves line of the existing dwelling, further reinforcing its subservience.

5.4 In doing so the development does not derive any adverse harm to the character of the existing dwelling, or that of the surrounding area. The proposed development is therefore considered to be acceptable in principle and accords with the provisions of policies SS6c and R2 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy.

Design & Layout

5.5 The proposed development encompasses the removal of an existing UPVC conservatory that projects off the western elevation of the dwelling. The Local Authority's adopted Design Guide SPD states that conservatories can be out-of-keeping with cottages or houses where simplicity of form is an important characteristic, noting that UPVC is also unlikely to be a suitable material. The submitted application will see the removal of the existing UPVC conservatory in favour of a simple single storey extension constructed from facing brickwork to match the existing dwelling, with balcony above. The proposal accords with the objectives of the Design Guide SPD in this regard.

5.6 The footprint of the extension will be recessed behind the main western elevation of the original dwellinghouse, and behind the northern elevation of the part of the dwelling off which it will extend. The main roof of the extension will also sit comfortably below the eaves line of the host dwelling. Glazed screening is proposed atop, to enclose the balcony, and will not

appear unduly alien given that the proposal is replacing a glazed conservatory.

5.7 The dominance of the main two-storey form of the dwelling will be preserved in views from the adjacent public footpath, and the extension will be read wholly against the backdrop of the existing two-storey scale of the property. There is already a glazed structure in this general location, and the proposed development will therefore not appear out-of-keeping or intrusive to the character and appearance of the area. The proposed development is therefore considered to accord with the provisions of policy DC1 of the Core Strategy and the adopted Design Guide SPD.

Residential Amenity

5.8 The nearest residential property to the proposed extension is the farmhouse of Star Green Farm, located some 55 metres to the southwest of the site on the opposite side of the existing access track that runs along the southern boundary of the site. The proposed extension and balcony has been designed to sit behind the main two-storey form of the existing dwelling such that it precludes direct overlooking in the direction of this neighbouring property. Any views from the balcony in the general direction of the neighbouring property will furthermore be sufficiently distant from the neighbouring property to avoid any demonstrable adverse harm to the amenity they currently enjoy. It is therefore submitted that the proposed extension meets the relevant provisions of policy DC1 of the Core Strategy in this regard.

6 Conclusion

6.1 It is considered that the proposed extension will be subservient in scale and design to the host dwelling, and will not appear out-of-keeping or harmful to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The proposal will furthermore not derive any material adverse impact to the amenity of neighbouring residential occupiers.

6.2 The proposed development is therefore considered to accord with the provisions of policies SS6c, R2 and DC1 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy and guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework and Design Guide SPD. The Local Authority is therefore respectfully requested to grant planning permission for the proposed development.