DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2020/0025 **Valid 15/01/2020**	**WHITE CHIMNEYS DEVILS LANE** **LONGSDON**	**ERECTION OF TWO STOREY REAR EXTENSION, ALTERATION TO EXISTING OPENINGS, AND ERECTION OF CANOPY TO FRONT ELEVATION** **(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)**

MAIN ISSUES
Impact on the Green Belt

DESCRIPTION OF SITE
The existing farmhouse is located within the countryside surrounded by farmland. The farmland is made up of similarly sized and shaped field parcels subdivided by traditional hedgerow and wire fencing interspersed with a number of mature trees.

The dwelling's orientated so that its side elevation fronts the country lane, but set back from the highway it is accessed via 40 metres of unmade track. It is flanked by a row of single storey farm sheds that are located between its side elevation and the road. On approach, along Devils Lane from the northwest, the rear elevation of White Chimneys can be seen from some distance and has relative prominence in the landscape.

White Chimneys itself is a stone farm cottage of simple form. A review of historic maps suggests that the cottage dates from the 1800s. It has previously been enlarged with a gabled two storey rear addition that extends from the rear elevation.

At the end of the access track, just 20 metres from White Chimneys is another stone farmstead – together the two dwellings and their associated farm sheds appear as a grouping and are recorded as historic farmstead. There are other scattered cottages and farmsteads that surround.

PROPOSAL
The proposal is to enlarge the property with a two storey addition to the rear. An existing two storey gable extension would be replaced. The proposed addition would be built adjacent to the rear elevation of the original dwelling with a form and roofline that mirrors that of the original, attached to it with a valley gutter. The rear elevation of the original dwelling would be entirely concealed.

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 Area (SS10 emerging Local Plan)
DC1 Design Considerations
DC2 Historic Environment
DC3 Landscape Character
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

On 27th February, the Inspector issued his post hearing advice. Key recommendations in the letter include:

- The proposed safeguarded land at Gillow Health, Biddulph should be removed. Neither should the site be allocated for housing as requested by the landowners as the case for exceptional circumstances has not ben met. The land will remain Green Belt as per the Local Plan Submission Version agreed by the Council in June 2018
- No further housing allocations in Biddulph are required
- No further amendments to the housing trajectory are required aside from pushing back the predicted commencement of the Wharf Road, Biddulph site (excluding BDNEW) until 2022/23.
- Monitoring of housing supply will determine if a full or partial Local Plan review is required within 5 years
- Land at Ox Pasture (Cheddleton) and Dorset Drive (Biddulph) should revert back to the Local Green Space designations as per the Local Plan Submission Version as agreed by the Council in June 2018.
- Other modifications were considered during the recent hearings sessions are necessary to make the plan sound, including; updating neighbourhood area housing requirements (Policy SS4) to reflect the latest monitoring data, updating the employment land area for the Tunstall Road allocation to reflect the masterplan and other adjustments to the wording of Policy SS4 and Policy DC2.

No further representations will be sought by the Inspector. As such, the Local Plan policies as proposed to be modified in September 2019 along with the Inspector recommended revisions (February 2020) provide a strong indication of the final policies likely to be adopted in the Local Plan. The Inspector's final report is expected within 2 months and will reflect the post hearing advice. The Council will be able to consider the adoption of the Local Plan at this point. As such, the plan is at a very advanced stage of preparation with some of the key outstanding objections now having been resolved following the February 2020 hearing sessions.

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.

Given the above, the majority of policies (as modified) can be given substantial weight. However, policies that are subject to the February hearing sessions can only be given moderate weight as they are subject to outstanding objections and scrutiny.

Equivelant polices relevant to this proposal:

SS10 Other Rural Area
DC1 Design
DC2 Historic Environment
DC3 Landscape Character

National Planning Policy Framework

Section(s) 2 Achieving sustainable development; 4 Decision Making; 12 Achieivng well designed places; 13 Protecting Green Belt; 15 Protecting historic environment; protecting natural environment.

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS
Unable to identify record of planning history, but it is clear from mapping records and an inspection of the materials used, that the dwelling has been extended and a range of farm sheds constructed post 1960. The enlargement of the dwelling that has already been made can, by reason of design and materials be readily identified as being a new addition to the original.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity
Site Notice expiry date: 10th Feb 2020
Neighbour consultation period ends: 10th Feb 2020
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments
None

Town / Parish Comments
Longsdon Parish Council: No Objection

Staffordshire County Council Highways
No Objection

OFFICER COMMENTS

Impact on the Green Belt

The dwelling is in the Green Belt where building development is inappropriate, and harmful by definition, unless it is provided for by one of the exceptions included in the closed list at paragraph 145 of the NPPF.

One of those exceptions that might be appropriate to the proposed development is at para. 145 point (c) which provides for the extension of a building that does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original.

The original dwelling, identified as the two storey linear form of the stone cottage, has a footprint of around 55sq metres (measured from aerial photograph). Post 1960, not clear exactly when, the cottage was extended with a two storey gable extension to the rear to create an L shape layout. That extension added around 30% to the original footprint. However, this proposal would replace or build over the existing extension with a new building that would mirror the form of the original dwelling with a parallel roof line adjoining the original with a valley gutter. This proposal would add around 60% to the original footprint and at least that to its volume because the extension is two storey, mirrors the form of the original and, in addition, would have a central roof section running at right angles and connecting the two first floor areas. As a mirroring two storey structure the addition would potentially appear to be much more than a 60% increase, with a doubling effect.

The extension would disproportionately add to the size of the original dwelling and therefore the development would be inappropriate and harmful to the Green Belt. Substantial weight must be attributed to that harm and planning permission should not be granted unless there are other considerations amounting to very special circumstances that would clearly outweigh that harm.

The applicant points to an alternative extension proposal that he says would be permitted development, he has submitted a larger homes notification, engaged with that process, and would indeed now be free to demolish the existing two storey extension and build, in its place, a flat roof addition to the rear that would extend 8metres and add 60sq metres, over a 100% addition to the footprint of the original. The suggestion is that the alternative development would have greater impact on Green Belt and be more harmful to the character and appearance of the dwelling, the area and the heritage value of the farmstead.

If planning permission were refused for the proposed development there is some likelihood of the applicant carrying out the alternative permitted scheme. However, this is perhaps less than probable given that he would need to demolish the existing two storey gable and loose that first floor bedroom space, gaining only ground floor space. In any event whilst the footprint would be considerably greater it would maintain a low single ground floor profile and would not have the bulk and mass at first floor level and so it would not be harmful in those respects. In terms of its impact on character and appearance of the dwelling and the area, the low profile of the alternative scheme would currently sit behind a row of farm outbuildings that run parallel to the road and it would not conceal any of the dwellings original elevation at first floor, which of course would be revealed with the demolition of the existing extension.

In conclusion, any additional harm that the alternative/fall back scheme might impose would not be so significant, over and above the harm that would result from the application proposal, that it should amount to a consideration that clearly outweighs the harm that would occur to the Green Belt if planning permission were granted.

Design and impact on character and appearance
With a revised plan the applicant has improved the design of the proposal, making the external facing materials a matching stone rather than painted render and removing some awkward glazing features from side gables.

There is a certain historical precedent for the design and form of the addition in the way in which it would relate to the original dwelling and the farmstead. To that extent it would not appear as an unusual or out of character dwelling within the rural area.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE
The development would be inappropriate and harmful to the Green Belt. The proposition of a fall back position involving alternative development is not a consideration that clearly outweighs that harm.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : REFUSE

Case Officer: Ben Hurst
Recommendation Date: 3rd April 2020

X B.J. Haywood

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council