

PLANNING STATEMENT

**LOWER OVERTON FARM
CONGLETON**

NOVEMBER 2021

Site Address:

Lower Overton Farm, Overton Road, Congleton, CW12 3QW

Applicant:

Mr. M. Hill & Ms. S. Hodge

Proposal:

Erection of single storey side extension and replacement front porch extension

Planning Statement:

Date Issued: 8th November 2021

Job Reference: RDP/2021/111

Report Prepared By:

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Rob Duncan Planning Consultancy Ltd. has been instructed by Mr. M. Hill and Ms. S. Hodge to seek full planning permission for the erection of a single storey side extension, and the erection of a replacement porch extension to the existing farmhouse at Lower Overton Farm, Overton Road, Nr. Congleton.
- 1.2 The proposed single storey side extension will extend off the north western elevation of the existing dwelling. The extension will be flat roofed in nature, and of a contemporary design, and will provide an enlarged kitchen / dining / living area. The extension will occupy a footprint of 26.25 square metres and will stand to a height of 2.8 metres.
- 1.3 The proposed replacement porch will occupy an enlarged footprint of 15.75 square metres (an increase of 3.25 metres over the existing) and will have a contemporary, flat roofed design reflecting that of the proposed side / rear extension.

2 Site & Surroundings

- 2.1 The application site is located within the North Staffordshire Green Belt and comprises an imposing two storey farmhouse constructed from coursed stone with a Staffordshire Blue tiled roof. The farmhouse has a rear wing that projects in a northeasterly direction which formerly comprised of an attached shippon, but which was converted to residential use back in the early 1970s. The building has a traditional symmetrical front elevation, with twin chimneys located at either end of its gabled roof.
- 2.2 The farmhouse is located to the southwest of an existing two storey former agricultural building that is also constructed from coursed stone with a Staffordshire Blue tiled roof. An area of domestic curtilage extends to the north, northeast, west and southwest of the farmhouse, with a courtyard on the eastern / southeastern side of the building providing parking and turning facilities.
- 2.3 The site occupies an elevated position in relation to the surrounding road network, and benefits from a good degree of natural screening from the Overton Road owing to boundary vegetation. The site is more visible from the Tunstall Road to the northwest where views of the side elevations of the farmhouse and the adjacent agricultural barn are available.
- 2.4 To the southeast of the farmhouse lies a detached former agricultural building that is in the process of being converted to residential use under the provisions of application SMD/2017/0628, and which is the subject of a current application for the installation of solar panels to its roof. That building is in separate ownership.

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 this area comprises the recently adopted Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (2020) of which the following policies are considered to be of relevance:

3.2 Policy SS1 of the Local Plan relates to 'Development Principles' and states that the Council will expect the development and use of land to contribute positively to the social, economic and environmental improvement of the Staffordshire Moorlands in terms of delivering, in partnership with other agencies and services:

- *a mix of types and tenures of quality, affordable homes, including starter homes, to meet the needs and aspirations of the existing and future communities*
- *quality local services, including provision for education, healthcare, leisure, community, cultural and tourist facilities in response to anticipated population change and visitor numbers;*
- *easy access to jobs, shops and transport services by all sections of the community;*
- *increased economic prosperity and opportunities for employment and greater local capacity with an educated, skilled and flexible workforce;*

- *a healthy, safe, attractive, active, well-designed and well-maintained environment;*
- *development which maintains the locally distinctive character of the Staffordshire Moorlands, its individual towns and villages and their settings;*
- *development that is undertaken in a way that protects and enhances the natural and historic environment of the District and its surrounding areas, including the Peak District National Park, both now and for future generations.*
- *support development which secures high quality, sustainable environments, efficient and effective use of resources and contributes effectively to tackling climate change and reduced carbon emissions.*

3.3 Policy SS10 of the Local Plan relates to the 'Other Rural Areas Strategy' and states that these areas will provide only for development which has an essential need to be located in the countryside, 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 allow extensions or additional domestic outbuildings 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 Council will assess schemes having regard to the original dwelling, in cases where cumulative change has occurred. The policy also states that strict control will continue to be exercised over inappropriate development in the Green Belt, allowing only for exceptions as defined by Government policy.

3.4 Policy DC1 of the Local Plan relates to 'Design Considerations' and states that all development shall 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 Guide SPD. In particular, new development should:

1. *be of a high quality and add value to the local area, incorporating creativity, detailing and materials appropriate to the character of the area;*
2. *be designed to respect the site and its surroundings and promote a positive sense of place and identity through its scale, height, density, layout, siting, landscaping, character and appearance;*
3. *create, where appropriate, attractive, active, functional, accessible and safe public and private environments which incorporate public spaces, green infrastructure including making provision for networks of multi-functional new and existing green space (both public and private), landscaping, public art, 'designing out crime' initiatives and the principles of Active Design;*
4. *incorporate sustainable construction techniques and design concepts for buildings and their layouts to reduce the impact of the development;*
5. *protect the amenity of the area, including creation of healthy active environments and residential amenity, in terms of satisfactory daylight, overbearing development, sunlight, outlook, privacy, soft landscaping as well as noise, odour and light pollution;*
6. *promote the maintenance, enhancement, restoration and re-creation of biodiversity and geological heritage, where appropriate;*

7. *provide for safe and satisfactory access and make a contribution to meeting the parking requirement arising from necessary car use;*
8. *require new developments to be well integrated for car, pedestrian and cycle use as well as other sustainable transport links;*
9. *ensure that existing drainage, waste water and sewerage infrastructure capacity is available, and where necessary enhanced, to enable the development to proceed;*
10. *ensure, where appropriate, equality of access and use for all sections of the community;*
11. *be served by high speed broadband (>30mbps) unless it can be demonstrated through consultation with Next Generation Access Network providers that this would not be possible, practical or economically viable. In all circumstances during construction of the site sufficient and suitable ducting should be provided within the site and to the property to facilitate ease of installation at a future date.*

4 Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- 4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021) seeks to secure the delivery of sustainable development and sets out policies, *inter-alia*, in respect of safeguarding the Green Belt and securing high quality design. The content of the NPPF has been taken into consideration in the preparation of this application and is referenced within the Planning Assessment section below.

SMDC Design Guide SPD

- 4.2 The adopted Design Guide SPD provides advice aimed at securing the delivery of high-quality built development within the District. The content of the Design Guide SPD has been taken into consideration in the preparation of this application.

SMDC Design Principles for Development SPG

- 4.3 The adopted Design Principles for Development SPG was the forerunner to the Design Guide SPD and is still applied as supplementary guidance by the Local Authority. The content of this document has been taken into consideration in the preparation of this application.

SMDC Space About Dwellings SPG

- 4.4 The adopted Space About Dwellings SPG sets out minimum space standards that new development should seek to achieve in the interests of ensuring a satisfactory level of residential amenity. The content of this document has been taken into consideration in the preparation of this application.

5 Planning Assessment

Green Belt

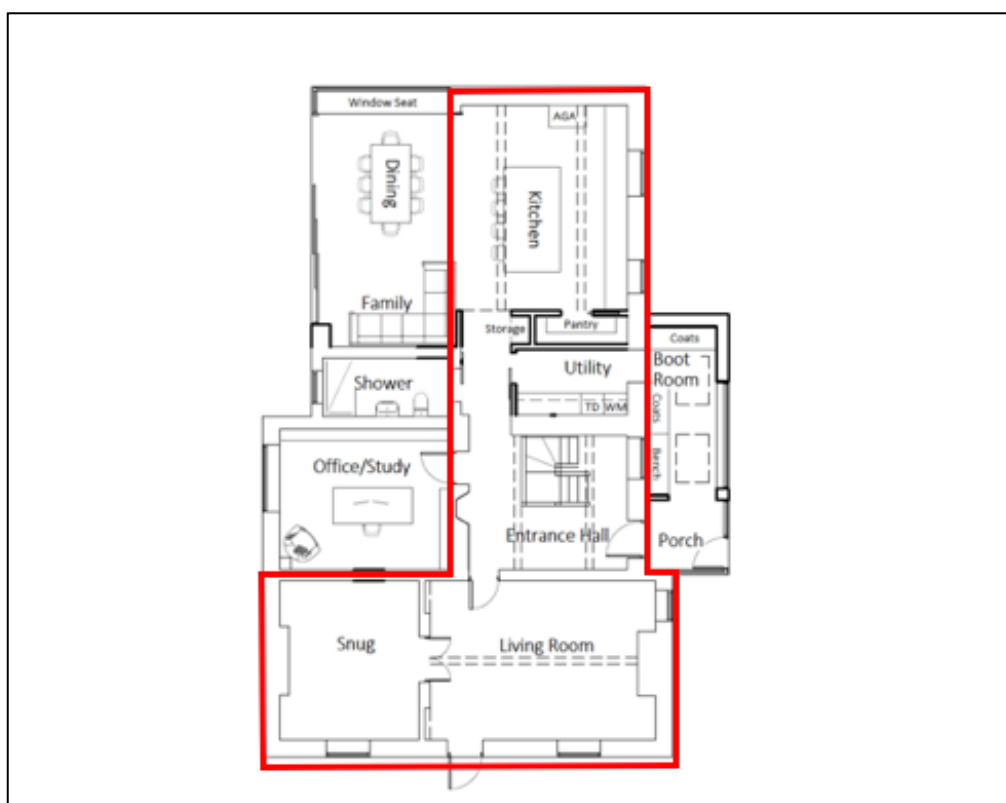
- 5.1 Policy SS10 of the Local Plan makes provision for the extension of existing dwellings within the rural areas, provided that they are appropriate in scale and design and do not have a detrimental impact on the existing dwelling and the character of the rural area. Policy SS10 nevertheless also confirms that strict control will continue to be exercised over inappropriate development, allowing only for exceptions as defined by government policy.
- 5.2 Paragraph 149 of the National Planning Policy Framework confirms that the erection of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate within the Green Belt unless it is for one of a limited number of exceptions. Those exceptions include:

“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”

- 5.3 A review of historic Ordnance Survey maps of the area reveals that the original dwelling comprised of the existing two storey farmhouse, along with an attached two storey shippon that extended in a northeasterly direction. Much of the dwelling as it exists today therefore constitutes the ‘original building’.
- 5.4 The shippon was remodelled and incorporated into the dwelling as living accommodation in the early 1970s but did not entail any increase in the size of the building. The same application did however propose a single storey extension to the rear of the farmhouse to provide a kitchen (now used as a dining room and labelled as such on the existing floor plan). Along with the boot room and porch, those have been the only previous additions to the

building, and they are evidently modest in nature. There have been no additions at first floor. The image in Figure 1 below demonstrates the extent of the 'original dwelling' in relation to the proposed ground floor plan for avoidance of doubt.

Figure 1 – Extent of Original Dwelling (Red)



- 5.5 The term disproportionate is not defined in either local or national planning policy, but extensions of 40% can be readily considered to amount to a proportionate addition within the Green Belt. The original building in this case has a gross internal floor area of approximately 200 square metres (ground and first floor inclusive). The previous additions to the property, along with the proposed single storey side extension and replacement porch extension represent a total increase in gross floor area of 60.6 square metres. The

cumulative extensions to the dwelling therefore represent an increase in size of approximately 30%.

- 5.6 Consequently, the proposed extensions will not constitute a disproportionate addition to the original building, and are appropriate in scale and design, and as such amount to an appropriate form of development within the Green Belt, in accordance with paragraph 149 of the NPPF and policy SS10 of the Local Plan.

Design and Layout

- 5.7 The proposed single storey side extension will project off the rear elevation of the former shippon which was converted into residential accommodation in the early 1970s. The elevation against which it will sit is finished in white render which contrasts with the stone elevations of the original two storey farmhouse. The flat roofed, contemporary style of the extension, and its contemporary palette of materials (dark timber cladding and dark grey aluminium windows) is not considered to be harmful to the character of the building, as it will reflect the latest phase in the history of the building and enable the evolution of the dwelling to be clearly understood. Its modest, single storey form will furthermore ensure that the extension assimilates positively with the existing building. In views from the Tunstall Road to the west, the proposed extension will be read wholly against the two storey rendered backdrop of the existing dwelling and will not appear as an incongruous feature within the surrounding area.
- 5.8 The proposed porch extension will replace an existing lean-to style structure that is of limited visual merit. The new extension will be modestly wider than the existing, but slightly shorter too. As with the side extension, the porch will be constructed from dark timber cladding with dark grey aluminium frames and will provide a clear contrast to the existing stone façades upon against

which the extension will sit. Owing to the distance of the site from the public highway, coupled with existing boundary vegetation, the porch extension will not have any notable impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, and having regard to these considerations, the proposal is concluded to meet the requirements of policies SS1 and DC1 of the Local Plan and guidance contained within the Design Guide SPD and Design Principles for Development SPG.

Residential Amenity

- 5.9 The nearest existing neighbouring residential occupier to this site (Overton Hall) lies approximately 40 metres to the south of the site but has no direct line of sight to either of the proposed extensions. No adverse harm to the amenity of the occupiers of that property will consequently ensue.
- 5.10 Consent has been granted nearby for the conversion of a former agricultural building to a dwelling (SMD/2017/0628 refers) which lies approximately 17 metres to the southwest of the proposed porch extension. That approved dwelling will have two windows in its northeastern elevation serving bedrooms 2 and 3, but will not be adversely affected by the proposed porch extension, which will comprise of a modest single storey structure that is only modestly larger than the one it will replace. The proposed porch furthermore does not comprise a principal room for the purposes of applying the Space about Dwellings Standards.
- 5.11 There are no immediate neighbours to the northwest of the site and consequently the proposed side / rear extension will not derive any adverse impact to neighbouring residential amenity. The proposed development is therefore in accordance with the provisions of policies SS1 and DC1 of the Local Plan and guidance contained within the Space About Dwellings SPG.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 The proposed extensions to the existing dwelling constitute a proportionate addition to the original building that are appropriate in scale and design and as a consequence amount to an appropriate form of development within the Green Belt. The scale, massing and design of the extensions are furthermore in keeping with the character and appearance of the existing building and will not result in any adverse impact to the character and appearance of the surrounding area, or to the amenity of neighbouring residential occupiers.
- 6.2 The proposed development is therefore in accordance with policies SS1, SS10 and DC1 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (2020), the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework, and guidance contained within the Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide SPD, Design Principles for Development SPG and Space About Dwellings SPG.