

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2021/0314
Valid 25/11/2021

GRATTON HALL FARM
GRATTON HALL LANE
GRATTON

REMOVAL OF EXISTING
AGRICULTURAL BUILDING
AND ERECTION OF NEW
AGRICULTURAL BUILDING
FOR STORAGE

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

- Design and scale
- Heritage
- Landscape

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

Existing typical late 20th C portal frame style sheet clad farm building. The farm house 40m to the north is Grade II Listed. Generally sparsely populated open rural countryside. The overall location is notable in the landscape for being on a knoll. The landscape is recorded as being of 'high' quality (ranked at level four on a five point scale where five is highest) on the basis of the Staffordshire county-wide landscape assessment which places it in the 'Ancient Slopes and Valley Farmlands' landscape character type.

PROPOSAL

Application made valid at 25th November 2021. A building of 690m² is replaced with one of c.440m². Typical ridge height of the existing building is c.7m. Ridge height in the proposal building is 5.3m with eaves at c.3.5m.

At first submitted without a heritage statement, this was submitted (18th March 2022) in response to LPA request.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Local Plan (adopted 9th September 2020)

SS1 Development Principles
SS2 Settlement Hierarchy
SS10 Other Rural Areas Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
DC2 The Historic Environment
DC3 Landscape and Settlement Setting
NE1 Biodiversity and Geological Resources
NE2 Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework February 2019

Paragraph(s) 1 – 14;

Section(s) 4 – Decision making; 6 – Building a strong and competitive economy; 8 Promoting healthy and safe communities; 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.

Adopted Supplementary Planning Documents/Guidance (SPD/G):

- Space About Dwellings SPG
- Design Principles SPG
- Design Guide SPD adopted 21st February 2018

Local Plan Supporting Evidence Documents:

- Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment (2008)

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

None

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 17.03.2022

Neighbour consultation period ends: 17.12.2021

Press Advert: 01.01.2022

Public Comments

None

Town / Parish Comments

Horton Parish Council – Does not object.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

In the Green Belt agricultural buildings are not inappropriate development and therefore there is no objection in principle based on policy SS10 and NPPF 149 (a) buildings for agriculture and forestry.

Design

It is likely the existing building (to be removed) has evolved through a series of extensions and additions over time giving it a somewhat ad hoc and spreading overall form with multiple eaves heights and two roof ridges and gables to the east

and west. The proposal building by contrast has a single cohesive form with a single roof ridge line. The building comprises five open-fronted bays facing west. The north gable towards the older farm buildings and the long east elevation are proposed in brick – colour and type not specified.

The roof and the potentially more prominent south facing gable are proposed in 'pre-coloured steel' – colour not specified.

It would be important to control the external materials and colour finish by condition. The brick needs to match the brick of the older farm buildings to the north and the roof and south wall sheet cladding would need to be in either dark green or dark grey.

With the more cohesive single form, open-fronted to the road (west) and the reduced plan area and slightly reduced heights, the overall visual impact and appearance in the landscape can be assessed as no greater than that of the existing building and in fact may be seen as a slight reduction in impact.

Heritage

The applicant submits that the Listed Farm House and some immediate outbuildings that are curtilage listed need to be considered. The LPA would consider there to be strong case that a further farm building (file photos 0438 and 0439) should also be regarded as curtilage Listed. This stands to the west of the farm house and north west of the proposal. This building is, in part, closer to the application building than those identified in the heritage statement but the LPA would regard the relationship as being similar.

The heritage statement notes: "The buildings to be demolished do not enhance the setting of the heritage asset". It goes on, "Whilst they are separated from the heritage asset by a yard, some views of the heritage asset are impacted by the presence of these buildings, albeit, these views are not from areas of the public domain". The statement submits that: "The proposed building is to be simpler in form and is to be located 10 metres further away from the heritage asset[s]. The elevation which will be seen, when viewed in the context of the heritage asset, will be constructed of brick, of a colour and texture which reflects the brickwork of the heritage asset". The statement concludes: "It follows that, in terms of the impact of the proposal on the heritage asset[s], the proposal will be beneficial. As there is no harmful impact which will arise as a result of this proposal, no offsetting benefit need be demonstrated".

The existing building presents a near 30m elevation to the south east visible in file photos 0482 and 0483 (zoomed-in) with ridge c.5.7. In the proposal building this is reduced to c.17m in width and a ridge of c.5.3m.

In view of the considerations here and under design (above) it can be concluded that the implications for the setting of the Grade II Listed farm house and curtilage Listed buildings are overall neutral. There is also some basis to the conclusion in the submitted heritage statement that the proposal is beneficial, and therefore an enhancement to the setting of the listed buildings, in comparison. It can be accepted

therefore that there is no requirement to identify any public benefit to balance against any harm to the setting as would otherwise be required via policy DC2 and NPPF 202.

Amenity

The nearest neighbour is Corner Croft across the road about 60m to the west; also Daisy Bank c.100m to the south west. Due to existing trees and hedgerows along the road these dwellings are well concealed from the development site. There should not be any greater impact on the living conditions for these dwellings than from the existing development.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

As a scheme which introduces no greater impacts than the existing development which is being replaced and which in fact may reasonably be judged an improvement and with no harm to heritage or neighbour amenity the scheme is recommended for approval. As the building and the one it replaces are agricultural and are permitted in the Green Belt only on that basis, a condition should be attached for removal of the building should the agricultural use cease unless further planning consent is obtained. Include materials conditions.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : **Approve subject to conditions**

Case Officer: Arne Swithenbank

Recommendation Date: 11th April 2022

X 

Signed by: Jane Colley Signature

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council