

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2021/0726
Valid 16/11/2021

LOWER OVERTON FARM
OVERTON ROAD
CONGLETON

ERECTION OF SINGLE
STOREY SIDE EXTENSION
AND REPLACEMENT PORCH

(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)

MAIN ISSUES

Impact on the Green Belt and the character and appearance of the area

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

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 building has a traditional symmetrical front elevation, with twin chimneys located at either end of its gabled roof. The farmhouse has a rear wing that extends in a north easterly direction from the rear elevation. The rear wing formerly comprised a farm shippon which was converted, with apparent alteration and rebuilding, to residential use back in the early 1970s.

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 / south eastern side of the building providing parking and turning facilities. Together the buildings form part of a 19th C historic farmstead listed on County record.

The site occupies an elevated position in relation to the surrounding road network, and is prominent from Overton Road which curves around the dwelling's front elevation, becoming Tunstall Road where it flanks its side elevation and passes its rear to the north west.

PROPOSAL

The proposal would enlarge the converted shippon, forming the dwelling's rear wing, with long single storey additions flanking the length of each of its side facing elevations. The additions would provide an enlarged kitchen / dining / living area on the north west side and a replacement porch on the south east side facing onto the enclosed yard. Originally proposed, the additions would have contemporary, flat roofed designs.

Later revisions introduced an alternative lean to, tiled roof design. To keep the width on the north west side, the lean to roof would be on the other side of, and attempt to conceal, a glazed flat roof section behind.

The forms specify the use of course stone, render and dark timber cladding as facing materials. It's not clear from the plans exactly how these materials would be applied and detailed. However, the side wall of the dwelling facing north west is faced with

render and the side wall facing south east is faced in coursed stone. The use of facing material could therefore appropriately match those of the existing building.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Local Plan Development Plan Document (Adopted 2020)

S01 Spatial Objectives
SS1 Development Principles
SS10 Other Rural Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
DC2 The Historic Environment
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

SMDC Design Guide

National Planning Policy Framework

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

2442/71 Alterations and Extension. Approved
SMD/2021/0725 Conversion to form residential annex. Approved.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 31st December 2021
Neighbour consultation period ends: 31st December 2021
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

None

Town / Parish Comments

Biddulph Town Council: Object, beyond original footprint and contravenes Green Belt policy.

OFFICER COMMENTS

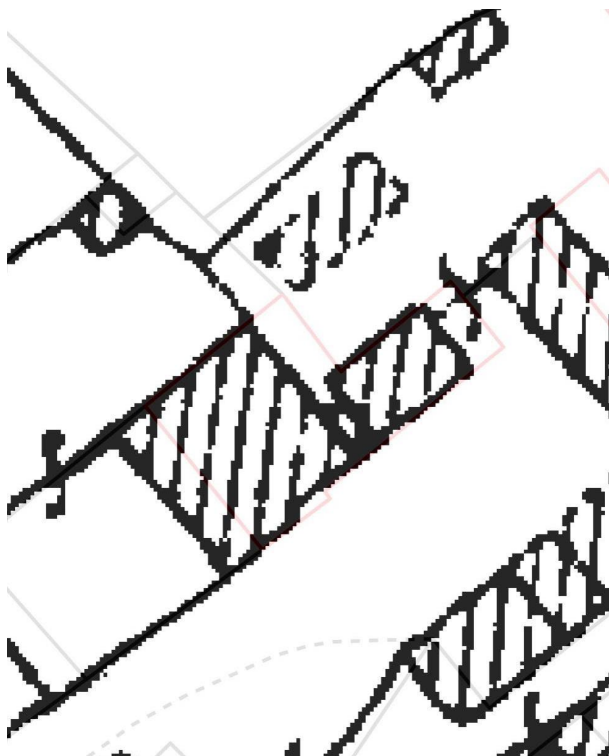
Impact on the Green Belt

Where an 'other rural' area coincides with the Green Belt, the Local Plan strategy SS10 effectively defers to the tests of the national policy set out in the NPPF. While the strategy essentially provides some support in specific circumstances to householder development to meet housing needs, there is nothing in the strategy that overrides the Green Belt policy in the NPPF.

The site is in the Green Belt where development is inappropriate and, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt, unless it is provided for by one of the exceptions that appear on the closed list at paras. 149 and 150 of the NPPF.

One of those exceptions is 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'. Original building means, for the purposes of the NPPF, a building as it existed on 1st July 1948.

Before alterations and extensions were carried out in the 1970s, there were two original buildings consisting of the double fronted farmhouse that dates from the 19th C and a two storey farm shippon. It is likely that in 1971 the two separate buildings were adjoining, however, there is some evidence, provided by 1925 historic map, to suggest that the shippon was originally a detached but closely associated farm building.



O.S. Map 1922-1925

If that were the case it is not clear when the buildings became adjoining and whether this was the result of, or pre dated, later alterations and conversion works. However, in any event, when the shippon was converted to provide rear wing living accommodation to become part of the dwellinghouse in the 1970s, both buildings became one single dwellinghouse. This was an alteration that resulted in an addition to the original dwellinghouse, making it much larger.

The ground floor footprint of the original dwelling house included an arrangement of outriggers at the rear and was in total about 100 sqm, identifiable on the historic 1925 OS map. The conversion of the rear shippon to create a north east wing (combining the two buildings into the one dwellinghouse), the addition of a long lean to porch at the side, and a boot room has added about **65 sq m** to the dwellings footprint (48sqm converted shippon and 17 sq m existing addition) – overall making the dwelling's original footprint 66% larger. The proposed extensions would add another **29 sq m** to footprint (26 sqm to the north west side elevation and another 3 sq m with the larger,

replacement porch). The dwellinghouse would be some 94% larger than it was before the alterations and extensions were carried out in the 1970s.

From Tunstall Road to the north west, the side elevation of the dwelling is apparent. The form and shape of the original dwelling (with outriggers) is distinctly identifiable as a grouping, with the rear wing conversion running off with simple, subordinate size and form, reflective of its origins as a farm shippon or outbuilding. The proposed additions to the side elevations of the rear wing, particularly apparent from the north west, would increase the mass, bulk and footprint of the rear wing increasing its apparent and observable size, disproportionately so, in comparison to that of the 'original dwelling'.



These further additions, as proposed, would indeed result in disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building that would be both apparent in calculation and observation. The proposed development would therefore be inappropriate in, and harmful to, the Green Belt.

The application does not present any other considerations that would clearly outweigh that harm.

Design and Impact on Character and Appearance

Policy DC1 of the Local Plan requires all development to 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.

The SPD guidance says that "Alterations need to be undertaken with care. Insensitive changes can easily spoil a building. The key to a sensitive approach is to take note of what is there already before preparing the design and to work with and not against the building's character (All extensions should harmonise with the parent building). An extension should respect the dominance of the original building and be subordinate to it in terms of its size and massing. Setting back the new section from the building line

and keeping the eaves and ridge lower than the parent building will help". Where conversions are concerned, such as that which was carried out to the farm shippon, the design guide says that "The guiding principle behind the design of any conversion should be that the character of the original building and its setting should be respected and retained. This means that in most cases the barn should afterwards look like a converted barn, and not like a new house. When converting traditional buildings, new uses should not normally require the construction of extensions or ancillary buildings"

The side elevation of the dwelling is elevated and prominent when viewed from the road to the north west. It makes a strong and relatively imposing contribution to local distinctiveness and the character and appearance of the area.

The form and shape of the original dwelling (with outriggers) is distinctly identifiable as a grouping, with the rear wing conversion running off with simple and subordinate shape, form and character, reflective of its origins as a farm shippon or outbuilding. Thus far, the conversion work and alteration to the shippon part of the dwelling has been relatively respectful of the building's character and it could be considered compliant with current design guidance. There is a clear distinction between the grouping and arrangement of the original dwelling and its outriggers and the simple form of the subordinate rear wing that runs off to the rear, with the former remaining dominant and, therefore, the original arrangement and relationship of the dwelling with the original historic farmstead remains unaltered.

The proposal however, would make additions that would introduce shape and architectural detailing that would not be respectful of the shippons simple form and would be in a very exposed, prominent and elevated location above the road to the north west. Specifically, the over windowing, introduced by wide bi fold full height doors and wide roof lights, and the long span of the addition across the full width of the shippons elevation would detract from the buildings original and existing character.

The proposals do not represent good design that would be respectful of the subordinate, simple form and character of the dwelling's rear wing, that is identifiable as a converted farm shippon. The proposed additions would introduce shape, form and architectural detailing that would detract from its origins as a functional farm building and a subservient element of the dwelling and, as a result, the rear wing would compete with and detract from the dominance of the original dwellinghouse and its relationship with the other buildings within the farmstead.

These observations are advanced to examine the way in which the dwelling appears within the locality and contributes to the character and appearance of the area, relative to its relationship to the environment and other adjacent buildings. It is not considered that the development would harm the significance of a non designated heritage asset, and as such there is no specific conflict found with policy DC2 of the Local Plan or the NPPF in those regards.

The proposals would fail to reinforce local distinctiveness and be harmful to the character and appearance of the area when viewed from the rear. In these respects the development would be contrary to policies SS10 and DC1 of the SMDC Local Plan 2020 and the Design Guide 2018 for the area.

Amenity

No adverse impacts on the living conditions of neighbours. The dwelling is a rural property occupying a relatively isolated position with significant distance and enclosure between the dwelling and the nearest neighbour.

Highway Safety

The development would not increase bedroom numbers or consume parking provision. There would be no reduction of highway safety.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

Inappropriate development that would be harmful, by definition, to the Green Belt. The development is not provided for by any of the exceptions listed at paragraphs 149 and 150 of the NPPF. There are no considerations apparent that would clearly outweigh that harm.

The proposal does not represent good design that would be compliant with the design guide or policy DC1 of the Local Plan. It would create development that is at odds with the original character of the dwelling and that of the neighbours. This would fail to reinforce local distinctiveness and be harmful to the character and appearance of the area.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : REFUSE

Case Officer: Ben Hurst

Recommendation Date: 24.06.22

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rachel Lymple', written in a cursive style.

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council