

## DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

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**SMD/2023/0599**  
**Valid 30/11/2023**

**STONE BARN FARM**  
**SUTHERLAND ROAD**  
**LONGSDON**

**PROPOSED GARAGE TO**  
**SERVE DWELLING**  
**APPROVED UNDER**  
**PREVIOUS APPLICATION**

**(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)**

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### MAIN ISSUES

Impact on the Green Belt, character and Appearance of the area

### DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site lies within the North Staffordshire Green Belt and comprises a detached two storey farmhouse with a rectangular form that lies on the eastern side of Sutherland Road. The double fronted dwelling in its original form dates from the 19<sup>th</sup> Century it is constructed from coursed stone. At some point in its history a two storey red brick addition had been built to the side west facing elevation. To the east of the farmhouse lies a two storey former agricultural building constructed from coursed stone with a Staffordshire Blue tiled roof atop. An unsympathetic flat roofed extension projects off its western elevation. The existing farmhouse abuts up to the northern site boundary beyond which lies open fields. A post and rail fence encloses the southern site boundary. Sutherland Road encloses the western boundary of the site, beyond which lies a row of residential properties.

### PROPOSAL

The application proposes the provision of a detached random course stone garage to the side of the existing dwelling. The garage would be positioned between the end/side gable of the house and the road – double bay width with a full pitch roof with its ridge parallel to the front long side elevation of the garage. Two separate garage doors separated by a central pillar.

The originally submitted plan included additional circulation space around the parking spaces to include internal staircase to first floor loft space. Revised plans have been submitted that have reduced the size of the proposal – internal footprint is now the minimum necessary to provide two standard compliant internal spaces, the staircase has been removed and, of course, with the reduction in footprint dimensions the height and mass of the roof would also be reduced.

### Local Plan Development Plan Document (Adopted 2020)

S01 Spatial Objectives  
SS1 Development Principles  
SS10 Other Rural Area Strategy  
DC1 Design Considerations  
DC2 Historic Environment

DC3 Landscape Character  
NE1 Biodiversity  
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

SMDC Design Guide  
Landscape Character Appraisal

## **National Planning Policy Framework**

### **SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS**

SMD/2021/0843 Extension of dwelling and conversion of farm building. WITHDRAWN.

SMD/2022/0166 Refurbishment and alterations to existing farmhouse together with conversion of adjacent barn and link extension to form a single dwelling. APPROVED

SMD/2022/0421 Proposed replacement of existing brick extension to farmhouse with stone extension. APPROVED

SMD/2022/0573 Variation of condition 3 in relation to SMD/2022/0166. APPROVED

### **CONSULTATIONS**

#### **Publicity**

Site Notice expiry date: 30/01/2024

Neighbour consultation period ends: 30/01/2024

Press Advert: N/A

#### **Public Comments**

None

#### **Town / Parish Comments**

Longsdon PC: No Objection

#### **Staffordshire County Council Highways**

No objection subject to a condition requiring the access, which has been widened without consent, to be surfaced in a bound material 5m back from carriageway edge.

#### **Severn Trent**

Stat sewer records do not currently demonstrate any public sewers on the property.

There maybe unmapped assets on the property that enjoy the same protection as mapped assets.

### **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 might otherwise provide 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. 154 and 155 of the NPPF.

There is no specific exception for the provision of a garage or outbuilding to serve a dwelling, however, there is an exception to 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' (original building means, for the purposes of the NPPF, a building as it existed on 1st July 1948). In some circumstances, where there is a close physical association with the host building, a garage/outbuilding can be considered to be an extension of that building.

In this case, however, there is already an extant permission to significantly extend the dwelling (56% increase to the footprint and 33% increase to floor area) part of that permission has already been implemented with works to remove old sheds and to convert the barn. Further extension of the dwelling with the provision of an adjacent garage would result in yet more size increase to the extent that it would be increasingly disproportionate.

The development would not therefore, be provided for by the extension and alteration exception. The development therefore would be inappropriate and harmful to the Green Belt. Any harm to the Green Belt must be attributed substantial weight and planning permission should only be granted where other considerations clearly outweigh that harm.

The applicant has revised plans to reduce the size of the garage to the minimum necessary to garage two cars, albeit whilst retaining a full pitched roof to match that of the dwelling, a feature that is desirable in design terms. Normally, in a location within 2m of the boundary the applicant could build without planning permission a, less visually appealing, garage restricted to 2.5m.

However, in this case the grant of previous planning permissions have, by condition, effectively removed householder rights normally available under the terms of the GPDO. Essentially, it was considered that permitted size increase was maxed out against Green Belt consideration and there should be control over further development. The applicant cannot therefore rely on a 'fall back' position and point to other development that they might otherwise carry out under the GPDO that could be uglier or less desirable than that which is proposed in the application.

The applicant has already removed a range of pole sheds the from the site which were having some impact on openness and the totality of built form in the Green Belt. These sheds would ultimately be replaced by extensions already permitted under previous approvals, a matter that did not factor in calculations and was not given weight in the consideration of those previous applications, their significance essentially discounted because of their agricultural purpose and light functional structure.

However, on review it would seem reasonable, in terms of accepting further size increase to the dwelling, accept some degree of trade off for the loss of those sheds that should on balance provide for the garage provision and this further size increase

to the original dwelling. In those regards harm to the Green Belt, which would be limited, would be outweighed by that matter of consideration.

### **Design and Impact on the Character and appearance of the area**

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"*.

The addition to the dwelling's side elevation would be a detached subordinate outbuilding, there would be a readable gap between the two structures, minimising the width increase or elongation of the dwelling's rear elevation that is exposed across open field, hard up against the boundary to the north. The side addition would have a full pitched plain clay tiled roof that has the same pitch and orientation as the adjacent dwelling.

The garage would be constructed from random course stone to match the dwelling and sensitively break into the dry stone wall where, for a section, the rear of the garage would be inserted into and replace part of the wall - this would copy the boundary position and arrangement of the dwelling's existing rear elevation. The addition would maintain a strong stone elevation with traditional tiled full pitched roof and, particularly with the reduced size, be subordinate to and respectful of the dwelling and the farm stead buildings. The roadside end of the L shaped layout out of the farm stead would resolve sensitively with subordinate size and shape, the development would not disrupt, confuse or dominate the original or traditional layout and arrangement of the farm stead.

In all of these regards the revised proposal would comply with policy DC1 of the Local Plan and the design guide.

The site is in the countryside and an area of local landscape identified as having the qualities and characteristics of a 'Dissected sandstone cloughs and valleys' landscape type. Under the terms of local plan policy DC3 local landscape will be protected and, where possible, enhanced by resisting development which would lead to prominent intrusion into the countryside and supporting development which respects and enhances local landscape character. Located within the dwellings curtilage and with close proximity and arrangement to existing buildings the development would not result in a prominent intrusion into the countryside. One of the key characteristics of this landscape character type are stone buildings and walls. The revised proposal would respect the integrity and arrangement of the stone farmhouse and the adjacent stone farm building within the site. The development is compliant with the policy in these regards.

### **Impact on Highway**

The comments of the highway officer are noted, they have no objection. Stone Barn Farm is located on Sutherland Road (Road No. C0150) which is a C classified road and is subject to a 30-mph speed limit. There are no streetlights or footpaths along this section of Sutherland Road. The garage will be constructed within a section of the garden and therefore will not have a detrimental impact on the current parking arrangement. The highway authority recommend a condition requiring bound surface to access and drainage interceptor.

#### **CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE**

The development as revised would present harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness. However, the applicant has already removed a range of pole sheds the from the site which, despite their agricultural purpose and light functional structure, were having some impact on openness and the totality of built form in the Green Belt. These sheds would ultimately be replaced by permitted extensions, a matter that did not factor in calculations or given weight in the consideration of those previous applications. On review it would seem reasonable, in terms of accepting further size increase to the dwelling, accept some degree of trade off for the loss of those sheds that should on balance provide for the garage provision and that size increase. In those regards harm to the Green Belt which would be limited, would be outweighed by other matters.

The garage would be well designed and located to have appropriate visual relationship with the adjacent dwelling and the existing arrangement of the farmstead. There would not be conflict with Local Plan policies DC1 or DC3 or the Design Guide in these regards.

**OFFICER RECOMMENDATION :    APPROVE**

**Case Officer: Ben Hurst**

**Recommendation Date: 31/01/2024**

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Signed by: Ben Haywood

**On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council**