

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2024/0204
Valid 09/05/2024

**CLOUD PARK FARM DIAL
LANE
CONGLETON**

**BUILD EXTENSIONS TO
FRONT AND REAR OF
PROPERTY.
REMOVE RENDER TO
EXTERIOR WALLS AND
RETURN TO ORIGINAL
STONE.
RE-CONFIGURE INTERNAL
ROOMS AND RENOVATE AS
REQUIRED.**

(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)

MAIN ISSUES

- Impact on the Green Belt
- Impact on the character and appearance of the host building and that of the area
- Impact on significance of non-designated heritage asset

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The site lies within the open countryside to the west of “The Cloud” and about two or three miles east of Congleton. The site consists of a 19th Century farmhouse with adjoining shippon which makes for a long linear building form. The historic farmstead appears on the County Council register of historic record and to this extent it should be considered a non-designated heritage asset.

The shippon appears to have long been converted to additional living accommodation to make one large dwelling. The building has an enclosed cottage garden to its front or west elevation with small brick outbuildings opposite. The whole building is of painted white sandstone. The adjoining shippon has been altered with the introduction of three flat roof dormer additions. The farmhouse and outbuildings are on the west side of Gosberryhall Lane, a narrow country lane which adjoins Dial Lane, the nearest main road, a short distance to the south. The rear or east elevation of the building is visible across open field from Dial Lane, glimpses of the elevation are apparent through tree and hedge foliage and it is set against a thick woodland edge to the west.

PROPOSAL

The white paint and render has already been stripped from the building to reveal the random course stone beneath.

The proposal is to truncate the adjoining shippon element of the dwelling by removing around 3m from the southern end.

The stone from that end of the building would be reused to build additions to the front and rear elevations of the dwelling. At the rear of the building a single storey lean to addition would run into the back of the shippon section of the dwelling with a cat slide arrangement and connection with the main roof above.

At the front of the building a two storey gable addition would project from the shippon side of the dwelling adjacent to the point at which the old cottage transitions and joins to the run of the shippon. The gable would provide an off set central front entrance with a doorway placed between two full height glazing panels. At first floor above the door, a full height glazing feature would extend up into the roof apex of the gable.

Alterations to window positioning would include the removal of spaced flat roof dormers with 3 smaller dormers with peaked roofs. Two of the dormers would be adjoining placed to the side of the central gable projection.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Local Plan Development Plan Document (Adopted 2020)

S01 Spatial Objectives

SS1 Development Principles

SS10 Other Rural Area

DC1 Design Considerations

DC3 Landscaper Character

T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

Cloud Farm dates from the 19th Century. It appears that the long linear building provides original double fronted cottage with a long linear shippon that has long been converted to additional living accommodation to provide one large dwelling. Any permission for this change or work is not readily apparent.

SMD/2022/0461 Conversion of single two storey dwelling into two storey dwellings.
Approved (not implemented)

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 4th July 2024

Neighbour consultation period ends: 4th July 2024

Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

One letter of objection has been received. The objection is made on the grounds that the extensions will have a detrimental effect on the openness of the greenbelt. It also appears that work is well underway in that all the render has already been removed from the buildings prior to the application being approved. There is also a caravan on site which also affects the openness of the greenbelt and has not being given prior approval.

Town / Parish Comments

Biddulph Town Council: No Objection. Express support.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Impact on the Green Belt

For the purposes of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan the site is within the 'Other Rural Area' and coincides with the Green Belt. Here Local Plan strategy SS10 applies which in the Green Belt essentially defers to the national policy in respect of considerations relative to Green Belt impacts.

Development in the Green Belt is inappropriate and harmful unless it is provided for by one of the exceptions listed at para 154 or 155 in the NPPF. One such exception is the extension of a building providing that the additions would not result in a disproportionate size increase over and above that of the original building.

In this case the original building is the established dwellinghouse that consists of the shippon and the old cottage, both elements built before 1947. Only very modest additions have so far been made to the dwelling – a bay window to the northern end/side of the building, a porch to the south end side elevation, dormer windows that sit in the eaves line of the shippon, and a lean to porch to the front. Those elements would be removed from the building and some 3m of two storey width would be removed from the northern end of the building. The footprint and volume of the two storey addition to the front and the single storey lean to at the rear would not be significant and would not disproportionately increase the size of the original dwelling, particularly when the size reductions made by reason of the other alterations are taken into account.

The development would be provided for by the exception that appears in the NPPF and in those respects it would not be inappropriate development that would be harmful to the Green Belt.

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. In particular, the policy requires the development to be of a high quality and add value to the local area, incorporating materials appropriate to the character of the area.

The SPD guidance says that in respect of alterations: *"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"*.

In respect of extensions the guidance says: *"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”... “New buildings should use facing materials that either match or complement those of the surroundings”.

And, in respect of conversions it says: *“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 existing building is sheltered and enclosed by belts of mature woodland trees. The dwelling is provided across the long linear form of a farm cottage and the adjoining shippon that has long since been converted to living accommodation. As is traditional to this type of 19th Century linear farmstead, the old cottage provides the smaller part while the more functional element of the adjoining farm building is proportionally wider/longer. Together they have simple uncomplicated form that has largely been unaltered, apart from some minor porch type additions. White paint and render has already been removed to reveal the random course stone beneath and this has restored some of the building’s original character.

From the garden at the front the building does still hold the semblance of original farmhouse and its adjoining shippon, despite some minor alteration. Three flat roof dormers have been introduced, although their simple square form perhaps lend themselves to a more functional character, overall they do not make for a particularly attractive or quality form of building.

The proposal to reduce the length or width of the property by removing 3m from the northern end of the shippon would be harmful to the character and form of the original building by disrupting and damaging its scale and proportions that originate from the arrangement of a long form shippon that adjoins the farm cottage.

The proposal to introduce a two storey gable projection on the front of the building would introduce an awkward and poorly positioned element that would disrupt and be harmful to the flat fronted, simple, linear form of the building. The gable projection would be positioned, off set from the centre, at the point of transition where the side of the cottage adjoins the shippon. This would make for a confused element to the building form that would conceal and detract from the visual break that is currently evident between cottage and shippon. Moreover, the addition would introduce architectural detailing in the form of full height glazing at first floor level that would not compliment the character of the original building and its approach to fenestration.

The flat roof dormers would be replaced with slim dormers with peaked roofs. A recently approved scheme to alter the building ensured that the introduction of such replacement dormers would be limited in number with spacing in between. With this proposal two of the dormers would be adjacent and adjoining, making for a cramped arrangement and spacing, particularly with the reduction in the width of the building.

Particularly in these regards, the development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the building and the contribution that it makes to that of the area. There

would be conflict with the policies SS10, DC1, DC and DC3 of the Local Plan and the SMDC design guide in these regards.

Impacts on the significance of the non-designated heritage asset

Cloud Park Farm, has its origins as a 19th century linear plan farmstead. It is listed as such on the County Council's historic environment record. To that extent the property is a non-designated heritage asset. The NPPF requires the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset to be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Despite some less than sensitive additions that include a bay window in an end elevation and dormer roof windows across the eaves of the converted shippon, the prevailing form of the linear farmstead remains largely unaltered respecting its 19th century origins as a farm cottage that adjoins the long form of a farm shippon. As a traditional, largely unaltered farmstead it contributes to the heritage and character of the historic environment, a relatively rare surviving example. The significance of the asset is that of historic farmstead on a linear layout. The proposed development would disrupt and break the linear form of the building, with poorly related development, this would result in a confused and awkward arrangement of building shape that would be considerably harmful to the significance of the heritage asset. In these regards the development would be contrary to policy DC2 of the SMDC Local Plan and the terms of the NPPF.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The proposal does not represent good design that would be respectful of the original dwelling's size, scale, linear form, character, proportions, and its relationship with the local landscape. The proposed additions would introduce shape, size, and mass that would be at odds with the original dwelling and overly dominant on exposed and prominent elevations. The harmful development would detract from the positive quality contribution that the dwelling currently makes to the character and appearance of a local landscape and the significance of a non-designated heritage asset. This would fail to reinforce local distinctiveness and be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. In these respects the development would be contrary to policies SS10, DC1, DC2 and DC3 of the Adopted Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan 2020, the Design Guide 2018 for the area, and the terms of the NPPF.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : REFUSE

Case Officer: Ben Hurst

Recommendation Date: 4th July 2024

X *J Curley*

Signed by: Jane Curley

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council