

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2025/0226
Valid 07/05/2025

BRACKENCROFT
SUTHERLAND ROAD
LONGSDON

REPLACEMENT DETACHED
GARAGE AND 1.5M INCREASE
IN DRIVEWAY WIDTH.

(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)

MAIN ISSUES

- Whether the proposal comprises an exception to inappropriate development in the Green Belt
- Design
- Amenity
- Highway Safety

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The proposed site comprises a detached render and tile dwellinghouse and its associated curtilage, situated in the Horton ward. Additionally, the proposed site is within an area of greenbelt, where development is more restricted. The site is enclosed by neighbouring dwellinghouses on the North and South. Woodleigh, Sutherland Road is situated to the North of the site and Crow's Nest, Sutherland Road is located to the South. The curtilage of the site adjoins an area of tree covered greenbelt land to the East. The Sutherland Road highway runs adjacent to the proposed site on the West.

It is noted that a number of properties within the area have been extended and altered. The street scene is comprised of a varied selection of house types and materials, demonstrating how there is no particular character.

PROPOSAL

The proposed development comprises the demolition of an existing single storey garage and the erection of a replacement detached garage, as well as the increase in the width of the driveway by 1.5 metres. The proposed replacement garage would have a flat roof. The garage would have a depth of approximately 6.07 metres and would have a width of 4.27 metres. It would have a maximum height of approximately 2.55 metres.

The replacement detached garage would be constructed from materials which would harmonise with the existing dwellinghouse, including render and flat rubberised roof membrane. Drystone walls would continue to comprise the boundary treatment to roadside and rendered block walls would be located on the driveway to match the

existing. Tarmac would remain as the hard surfaced area 6 metres from the highway and the remaining driveway area would continue to be a permeable material.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (Adopted 2020)

SS1 Development Principles
1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
SS2 Settlement Hierarchy
SS9 Smaller Villages Areas Strategy
SS10 Other Rural Areas Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph(s) 1 – 14
Section(s) 4 – Decision making, 12 – Achieving well designed places, 13 – Protecting Greenbelt Land

Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide SPD

Part 5 – Alterations, Extensions and Conversions

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

N/A

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 05/06/2025
Neighbour consultation period ends: 04/06/2025
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

A comment of support has been received from the neighbours at Woodleigh, as follows:

“We have no objections to these proposed improvements to Brakencroft.”

Town / Parish Comments

The following Planning application was discussed by Councillors at a meeting of the

Council held on Thursday last and it was agreed to forward no objections to-SMD/2025/0226 Replacement Detached Garage & 1.5 metre Increase in Driveway Width at Brackencroft, Sutherland Road, Longsdon.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) promotes a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. For decision takers this means (c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or (d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are more important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission, unless: i) the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or ii) Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.

Paragraph 8 of the NPPF identifies three dimensions to sustainable development as being economic, social and environmental.

In accordance with Policies SS1 and SS2 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan the Council expects all new development to make a positive contribution towards the sustainability of communities and to protect and where possible enhance the environment. A more limited focus on future growth is to be directed to smaller villages, including Longsdon, only allowing for development of an appropriate nature. When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

In compliance with Policy SS9, smaller village settlements should only settle for appropriate development which enhances community vitality or that meets a social or economic need of the settlement and its hinterland. The site lies within the smaller village of Longsdon, where all new development will have the aim of reflecting and enhancing the special character and heritage of the town.

The application site is located in the Open Countryside and Green Belt whereby Policy SS10 of the Local Plan (2020) is applicable. Policy SS10 states that these rural areas will provide only for development that 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.

Part (3) of policy SS10 seeks to protect the quality and character of the area and requires all development proposals to respect and respond sensitively to the distinctive qualities of the surrounding landscape.

The site is located within the Green Belt. Part (6) of Policy SS10 states that the

Council will “maintain the Green Belt within Staffordshire Moorlands. Strict control will continue to be exercised over inappropriate development within the Green Belt allowing only for exceptions as defined by Government policy.”

The proposal is for the erection of a replacement garage in the side curtilage of the host dwellinghouse. Paragraph 154 of the NPPF (2024) outlines that the construction of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate in the Green Belt unless it meets an exception. Paragraph 153 of the NPPF (2024) states that ‘inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances’. One such exception is (g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the green belt. Moreover criteria d) states that the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger is also an appropriate form of development.

The proposed garage outbuilding is considered to be a reasonable sized garage for the property. Due to the size of the property and its’ substantial curtilage plot, it would be acceptable to erect a modest sized single garage. The replacement garage would comprise the complete redevelopment of previously developed land and would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the greenbelt land. Moreover, as a replacement building it would not be materially larger, if anything with the loss of the existing pitched roof, changing to a flat roof with less height, it would have less prominence. According it is considered that the development would comply with both 154 d and g, and therefore amount to appropriate development tin the green belt.

It is now necessary to identify whether there is any other harm arising from the proposed development.

Design

Policy DC1 seeks to ensure that all development is well designed and of a high quality, contributing to local distinctiveness and harmonising with sense of place. The Council’s Design SPD outlines the Council’s expectations in respect of design and states that outbuildings should harmonise with the parent building. An outbuilding should respect the dominance of the original building and be subordinate to it in terms of its size and massing.

The proposed replacement garage would have a flat roof. Although flat roof extensions are generally discouraged in the adopted Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide SPD, it is considered that the garage would not form a prominent addition in the area and when viewed from the street scene. It would barely be visible from the public domain; it could only be viewed when directly looking down the driveway. The mature soft boundary landscaping would restrict any views of the proposed garage from any other angle of the wider public domain. On balance, although the proposed replacement garage would conflict with the Design Guide SPD in terms of its flat roof, its lack of visibility from the wider public domain would not result in a visually harmful addition to the street scene. It is therefore considered acceptable in this case.

The widening of the driveway by 1.5 metres would not create a detrimental visual impact on the street scene. To accommodate this, a small amount of low level stone walling and mature soft landscaping would be removed. This is not considered to have an adverse impact on the streetscape, especially considering that the rest of the boundary treatment will be retained.

Materials used in the construction of the proposed garage outbuilding would match those used in the construction of the existing dwelling, as well as from surrounding dwellings in the area. Render and flat rubberised roof membrane would be used in the construction of the proposed outbuilding. Thus, the proposed materials would match the existing materials and harmonise with the host dwelling, and surrounding street scene.

The proposal, by virtue of its size, scale and siting maintains the character of the existing dwelling and area. The proposal would therefore accord with the provisions of local plan policy DC1 and section 12 of the NPPF in this regard.

Amenity

Paragraph 135 f) of the NPPF seeks to secure a high standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants. Local Plan Policy DC1 requires development to achieve a satisfactory relationship to adjacent development and to not cause unacceptable effects by reason of visual intrusion, overlooking, shadowing, overbearing effect, noise, light pollution or other adverse impacts on local character and amenity.

The application site is bound by Woodleigh, Sutherland Road to the North and Crow's Nest, Sutherland Road is located to the South. Thus, it becomes important to assess whether the amenity of these neighbours would be compromised.

Notably, the proposed replacement detached garage outbuilding would be on a lower ground level to the neighbours at Woodleigh, as well as the host dwelling. It would be tucked within an excavated area of the natural slope of the landscape. Thus, no detrimental shadowing or overbearing impact could occur as a result of the replacement garage. Furthermore, the mature soft along the common boundary between the site and the neighbours at Woodleigh would completely prevent any potential shadowing.

The proposed replacement detached garage would be located within the Northern section of the curtilage at the site. As the neighbouring dwellinghouse at Crow's Nest is positioned to the South of the site, the replacement garage within the Northern side curtilage of the site will be tucked to the side of the host dwelling on the opposite side to the neighbour. Furthermore the distance between the proposed replacement garage and the neighbouring dwelling would eradicate any chance of overshadowing which could be caused as a consequence of the erection of the proposed garage.

There would be no windows on the North facing elevation of the garage which would

face the neighbours at Woodleigh, Sutherland Road, therefore no privacy amenity impact would occur for them. Furthermore, although there would be one window on the South elevation of the proposed garage outbuilding, it would only face the host dwellinghouse. Therefore, no adverse privacy impact would occur upon any of the neighbours.

Highway Safety

Paragraph 109 of the NPPF states that patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes and contribute to making high quality places. Policy T1 seeks to provide safe and sustainable access and ensure that development does not lead to an increase in on street parking.

The proposed garage outbuilding would not increase the number of bedrooms of the dwelling. Additionally, as the garage outbuilding would have the same footprint as the existing garage, the available off-road parking to the front of the dwelling would not be compromised, in compliance with Policy T1. No highway safety issues would arise from widening the site access.

Thus, the proposed garage and widening of the site access would have no impact on highway safety, in accordance with Policy T1.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

In consideration of all of the above, the application is recommended for approval. Due to the application having no adverse effect upon the openness of the greenbelt, neighbour or street scene amenity and no overall impact on the highway, it is deemed acceptable under planning policy. Therefore, the proposed development is recommended for approval, subject to compliance with all conditions.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE

Case Officer: Hannah Varley

Recommendation Date: 25/06/2025

X *J. Colley*

Signed by: Jane Colley Signature

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council