

Application No: 21/4108M
Location: LONGSHOTT FARM, PEPPER STREET, SNELSON, SK11 9BG
Proposal: Addition of 2 bedroom modular lodge.
Applicant: Johnson
Expiry Date: 09-Sep-2022

Summary

The proposed development description is '*Addition of 2 bedroom modular lodge*'.

The proposals would see the erection of a two-bedroom lodge of C3 use class within the Green Belt, not within an infill village. Whilst proposed on a temporary basis to facilitate extensions and alterations to Longshott Farm dwelling located to the east within land in the same ownership, the proposals do not comply with exceptional forms of development within a Green Belt location and as No Very Special Circumstances are presented it is considered that the proposals are contrary to Green Belt policies, the principle of development is therefore not accepted.

No issues are raised as to the design, siting and scale of the development with regards to relevant design, heritage, amenity, pollution, water management, highways safety and parking.

It is therefore recommended that the application is refused approval.

Summary Recommendation

Refuse approval

REASON FOR REPORT

This application has been called-in to Committee by Councillor Asquith for the following reasons.

"The development is in the Green Belt without any exceptional circumstances."

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

The site is located within the Green Belt. The site is presently an undeveloped field. There is a line of trees/hedgerows to both Pepper Street which screens the site from public view rather effectively and the eastern boundary of the site shared with a neighbour. Elsewhere within the site edged blue is the associated dwelling at Longshott Farm, which is a detached, two storey

farmhouse located to the rear of Snelson Methodist Church off Pepper Street. The farmhouse is whitewashed with black detailing and slate roof and white framed fenestration. There is also a two-storey detached barn on site finished in the same architectural style.

DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

The proposed development description is '*Addition of 2-bedroom modular lodge*'. The proposed lodge will be detached and single storey and will have 2no. bedrooms, shower room and open plan kitchen/diner/lounge. It is proposed that the lodge will be erected on a temporary basis, indicated within submission documents for a period of 1-2 years, for use by the applicant and their family to live in whilst renovation work to the dwelling at Longshott Farm is undertaken. It is stated that once the renovation work has been undertaken and the lodge is redundant it will be removed from the site and the land returned to its former state. It is proposed that an extended area of hardstanding around the lodge will be erected into the field leading on from the existing driveway. It is proposed that the lodge will be positioned on concrete block footings with the hardstanding proposed extending underneath that. The building is proposed in black timber cladding to external walls with single ply membrane roof. There are 2no. proposed parking spaces and a bin storage area. It is proposed that the site surface water will be handled by soakaway and that foul drainage will be handled by a feed into the existing septic tank highlighted on drawings to the east of the site, which is said to feed into existing land drains to the south of the site.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

22/1165M – Certificate of proposed lawfulness for a single storey side extension and a two-storey rear extension – positive certificate – 28th June 2022

21/4094M – Proposed outbuilding – approved with conditions – 3rd March 2022

21/4107M - Conversion of disused barn within curtilage to create a three-bedroom dwelling – awaiting determination

21/4100M - Proposed two storey rear extension and single storey side extension, with refurbishment of existing outbuilding, roof to be raised. – withdrawn – 25th August 2022

RELEVANT POLICIES/LEGISLATION

Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (CELPS)

MP1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

PG2 Settlement Boundaries

PG3 Green Belt

PG7 Spatial Distribution of Development

SD1 Sustainable Development in Cheshire East

SD2 Sustainable Development Principles

SE1 Design

SE2 Efficient Use of Land

SE4 The Landscape

SE5 Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland

SE7 The Historic Environment

SE12 Pollution, Land Contamination and Land Instability
SE13 Flood Risk and Water Management
CO1 Sustainable Travel and Transport
Appendix C – Parking Standards

Site Allocations and Development Policies Document (SADPD)

PG9 Settlement Boundaries
PG10 Infill Villages
GEN 1 Design principles
ENV5 Landscaping
ENV15 New development and existing uses
ENV16 Surface water management and flood risk
HER1 Heritage assets
HER7 Non-designated heritage assets
HOU12 Amenity
HOU13 Residential standards
INF3 Highways safety and access
INF9 Utilities

Other material considerations:

National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF)
National Planning Practice Guidance
Cheshire East Borough Design Guide 2017

CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)

LLFA – object to the proposals as it is located in a high-risk area for surface water flooding as such to overcome the objection a Flood Risk Assessment is required to be submitted and demonstrate the proposals are not at risk of flooding.

Snelson Parish Council – object to the development as it is contrary to national and local Green Belt policies which do not permit the development of isolated dwellings as an intrusion into the openness of the Green Belt. Creating a dwelling would also create the need for other development such as access etc. which would harm the character of the small field pattern of this locality.

REPRESENTATIONS

1no.letter was received from a resident of Pepper St making an observation as follows:

- Providing the development is temporary in nature and removed after a specific period no issue with the proposals.

1no. letter was received from a resident of Pepper St objecting to the proposals as follows: the lodge is too elaborate giving the impression of a more permanent fixture yet situated in an area which is frequently flooded in undisturbed countryside encroaching into Green Belt.

OFFICER APPRAISAL

Green Belt

The site falls within the Green Belt. The most applicable policies and guidance to consider are PG3 of the CELPS, PG9 and PG10 of the SADPD and paragraphs 137, 138 and 147 – 150 of the NPPF.

Paragraph 137 of the NPPF states *'The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belt are their openness and their permanence.'* Paragraph 138 of the NPPF states *'Green Belt serves five purposes:*

- A) To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;*
- B) To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;*
- C) To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;*
- D) To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and*
- E) To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.'*

Policy PG3 of the CELPS states *'Green Belt is a designation for land around large built-up areas, which aims to keep land permanently open or largely undeveloped.'*

- 1. The purposes of the Green Belt are to:*

iii. safeguard the countryside from encroachment.'

- 2. Within the Green Belt, planning permission will not be granted for inappropriate development, except in very special circumstances, in accordance with national policy.'*

This policy is largely reflective of paragraphs 147-150 of the NPPF, though paragraph 149 states *'a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt'*. A number of exceptions to these are listed in national and local planning policy. In addition paragraph 148 of the NPPF highlights that *'when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very Special Circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations'*.

Neither local nor national policy provides distinction or additional exception or further allowances to new development in the Green Belt that are proposed on a temporary rather than on a permanent use basis. To this end it is sensible to conclude that development proposed on a temporary basis, such as this, should be considered in the same fashion for compliance against relevant Green Belt policies. One of the exceptions to new buildings given is for limited infilling in villages. Further to the recent adoption of the SADPD it is clear that this site is not within any of the infill villages as highlighted in PG10 of the SADPD. None of the other exceptions to inappropriate development apply in this case. To this end it would appear that the proposals do not present an exceptional form of development otherwise allowed for new development in the Green Belt.

The proposals include the stationing of a cabin of C3 dwellinghouse use and the erection of associated additional hardstanding into the field ie. Green field/ undeveloped land, both of which are also considered to represent the incursion of urban form into the Green Belt and ultimately the encroachment of built form into the countryside contrary to paragraphs 137 and 138 of the NPPF. The proposals are considered to have a harmful effect on the spatial and

visual openness of the Green Belt albeit noting their relatively small-scale nature, as it would place new development where there presently is none in an open, rural area. No case for Very Special Circumstances has been advanced, and therefore the proposals represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

The principle of the development is therefore not acceptable, and the proposals are considered to be contrary to the local and national Green Belt policies as highlighted.

Design, Character and Heritage

Policy SE1 of the CELPS advises that the proposal should achieve a high standard of design and: wherever possible, enhance the built environment. It should also respect the pattern, character and form of the surroundings. Policy SD2 of the CELPS states that development should contribute positively to an area's character and identity, creating or reinforcing local distinctiveness in terms of; height, scale, form and grouping, choice of materials, external design features, massing of development, green infrastructure and relationship to neighbouring properties and street scene. These policies are supported by the Cheshire East Design Guide SPD.

Policy GEN1 of the SADPD states development proposals should reflect the local character and design.

Policy SE7 of the CELPS refers to the Historic Environment. The objective of Policy SE7 is to ensure all new development avoids harm to heritage assets and makes a positive contribution to the character of Cheshire East's historic and built environment, including the setting of the assets and where appropriate, the wider historic environment. HER1 and HER7 of the SADPD provide further requirements in terms of protecting, preserving and enhancing designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings.

The site is located immediately next to Longshott Farm dwelling and a related barn/outbuilding finished in the same style as the dwelling. For the applications for the extensions/alterations to the farmhouse and the conversion of a barn to a dwelling (the latter undetermined) following the provision of Heritage Statement it is considered due to their almost untouched form and their inclusion on Tithe mapping, appearing to be 19th century in age (1820-1840's construction) that these structures comprise non-designated heritage assets due to their close relationship as an old agricultural farmstead/holding. The barn and another outbuilding are considered to hold group value with the dwelling being the significant form in the wider site edged blue. The submitted Heritage Statement concludes that due to the small-scale nature, design of the black timber clad structure now proposed and its temporary nature it results in no permanent impacts on the non-designated heritage assets. It is considered that the lodge would read as a small-scale addition to the wider site with fleeting views (season dependent) from the highway due to existing (retained) vegetation screening and the materials proposed would mirror those used within the wider site. It is considered there would not be a significantly harmful effect on the setting of the non-designated heritage assets. It is considered that from a design, character and heritage perspective that the proposals would be in compliance with the relevant policies subject to the use of conditions to secure temporary nature and materials as per application.

Living Conditions

CELPS Policy SE1 states that development should ensure an appropriate level of privacy for new and existing residential properties. Policy HOU12 of the SADPD states development proposals must not cause unacceptable harm to the amenities of adjoining or nearby

occupiers of residential properties, sensitive users or future occupiers of the proposed development due to:

1. loss of privacy;
2. loss of sunlight and daylight;
3. the overbearing and dominating effect of new buildings;
4. environmental disturbance or pollution; or
5. traffic generation, access and parking.

Policy HOU13 of the SADPD provides minimum separation distances. Policy SE1 of the CELPS states that development should ensure an appropriate level of privacy for new and existing residential properties.

Given the distancing to the existing dwelling, neighbouring properties and that of the Methodist church in conjunction with the orientation and single storey form of the proposals themselves, it is not considered there would be detrimental impacts on residential amenity as a result of the development. The development is considered to be in compliance with policies and guidance covering residential amenity.

Flood Risk

During the course of the application the LLFA objected to the proposals believing that the development was to be located within an existing area known for high surface water flooding potential. Upon reviewing a screenshot of the area accompanying their comments, it is clear that the site is located outside of areas highlighted for higher surface water flooding and the site is actually within a low surface water flood area.

Methods of surface water drainage are stated as soakaway and foul water is to be directed to an existing septic tank. The proposals are not supported by a detailed drainage strategy and given that it would feed into surveyed existing systems close to an area with known flood issues, it is considered that subject to the use of conditions to secure appropriate drainage strategies on a prior to commencement basis that the proposals may be in compliance with listed policies covering pollution control, water management and flood risk.

Highway Safety and Parking

The proposals would present a scheme that would be in compliance with the number and dimensional requirements for on-site vehicular parking with sufficient parking to serve the rest of the site. It is considered there would be no meaningful negative impacts on the immediate highways network as a result of the proposals, given the small scale of the proposed development. No significant highway safety issues are therefore raised.

CONCLUSION

The proposal is considered to represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt, which reduces openness and conflicts with the purposes of the Green Belt through encroachment into the countryside. Permanent and temporary uses are not distinguished in the exceptions to inappropriate development in the Green Belt, in national or local planning policy. No Very Special Circumstances have been advanced that outweigh the identified harm to the Green Belt. The development is therefore not considered to represent sustainable development and

is contrary to policies MP1 and PG3 of the CELPS, and PG10 of the SADPD and paragraphs 137, 138, 147 – 150 of the NPPF. The application is therefore recommended for refusal.

In the event of any changes being needed to the wording of the Committee's decision (such as to delete, vary or add Conditions and/or Informatives or reasons for approval prior to the decision being issued, the Head of Planning has delegated authority to do so in consultation with the Chairman of the Northern Planning Committee, provided that the changes do not exceed the substantive nature of the Committee's decision.

