

Consultation Response from: Planning Policy Group		
Address: Mytholmbridge Farm 36 Luke Lane Thongsbridge		
Proposal: Partial demolition of dwelling and erection of extensions		
Date Responded: 27th January 2022	Responding Officer: Amanda Potter	Responding Ref:

This proposal is for the partial demolition of a dwelling, erection of two storey side extension and rear extension, porch, link extension, detached garage and external alterations.

The existing site consists of a traditional farmhouse of stone construction, a traditional stone built attached barn of 1.5 storey construction which now forms part of the dwelling, and a detached stable. The farmhouse has an existing single storey lean-to at the rear which is partly dug into the field and has a catslide roof that falls almost to the ground. At the rear there is currently no separation between the house and the field. This type of dwelling/agricultural arrangement contiguous with the field is a vernacular feature of this type of building with all access and circulation space confined to the front.

Together the house with its lean-to, the barn and the stable constitute the original building for the purposes of the definition in the Local Plan glossary.

The farmhouse has already been extended by the additional of a substantial conservatory/garden room on the front elevation. There is a wooden lean-to shed attached to the stable. Neither of these elements are considered to form part of the original building and both are proposed to remain unchanged.

The proposal is to demolish the barn and replace it with a wholly new two storey building attached to the house. This is the element described as 'two storey side extension'. Also proposed is the demolition of the rear lean-to and its replacement with a two-storey rear extension. There is also proposed to be a timber and glass link extension to join the stable to the house. The final proposed addition is a new detached garage.

Paragraph 149 of NPPF states that the extension or alteration of a building may not constitute inappropriate development in the green belt provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. This is supported by Local Plan policy LP57 which states that such proposals will normally be acceptable provided that the original building remains the dominant element both in terms of size and overall appearance. The cumulative impact of previous extensions will be taken into account.

It is necessary therefore to consider whether the cumulative impact of the existing and proposed extensions would result in disproportionate additions such that the original building is no longer the dominant element, as well as considering whether the proposal as a whole respects the character of its setting. The extensions would comprise the new 2 storey element to the rear (replacing the subservient single storey lean-to), the new two-storey element to the side (with porch) replacing a subservient traditionally constructed former barn, the timber and glass link connecting to the stable, the new detached garage, as well as the existing large conservatory/garden room and wooden shed/lean-to.

In terms of NPPF 149 and LP57, the key consideration for this proposal is whether the original building would remain the dominant element. The proposal is to demolish, in their entirety, both the rear lean-to and the attached barn. Both these structures constitute part of the original building. Once they have been demolished the original structure will consist solely of the farmhouse (and the stable). This means that both two-storey extensions should be considered relative to the farmhouse alone.

The building as currently standing, even with the addition of the conservatory/garden room, appears as a traditionally constructed farmhouse with subservient structures comprising the former barn and the rear lean-to. The replacement of these two subservient parts of the building with newly constructed two storey elements, even accounting for the use of reclaimed stone and the dropping of the roofline below

that of the farmhouse, totally changes the character of the building such that the original house is no longer dominant. This is especially evident on the rear elevation where the new building wholly eradicates the original character of the farmhouse. This is contrary to LP57 criteria a).

Local Plan policy LP24 'design' states that extensions should be subservient to the original building, should be in-keeping with the existing building and should respect and enhance the character of the townscape, heritage assets and the landscape. The loss of the traditional farmhouse and barn grouping may also be considered contrary to LP24 criteria a) as while not listed this building represents an example of a traditional vernacular farmhouse that has retained its relationship to its subservient barn and to the agricultural land around it. Supporting this is the council's adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance 'House Extensions and Alterations' which states that proposals should not introduce the use of unsympathetic domestic or urban features such as porches and dormer windows and any proposal considered to introduce urban character into a green belt setting will not be supported. Detached garages are not normally associated with this traditional house/barn layout and would introduce another urban/domestic feature that would erode the character of this site.

This so far has considered the extensions relative to the farmhouse. If it could be argued that the demolition of the lean to and the barn constitute part of the works necessary to create an extension to the current building, then the new elements would be considered relative to the whole of the structure now standing. For the same reasons given above in terms of the relationship of the house with the subservient elements, and the relationship of the building with its setting, the proposal would still be considered contrary to LP57 and LP24.

There may also be an argument that the two new elements (the side and rear extensions) could be considered replacement buildings as they are replacing the former barn and the lean-to. If that were the case then they would be considered against NPPF paragraph 149 criteria d) and LP57 criteria b). These state that the new building must be in the same use and not be materially larger than the building it is replacing. As the barn has been used as part of the dwelling house for some time the new building would be in the same use, but by replacing a 1.5 storey building with a two-storey building with a larger footprint, or replacing a single storey element with a two storey element, with the whole altering the relationship from house with subservient structures to simply a large house, replacement buildings would be considered to be materially larger than the buildings being replaced and therefore contrary to NPPF and to LP57 criteria b).

While the treatment of land around the building is not shown on the submitted drawings the installation of a door into the rear extension would suggest that circulation space is proposed to be created to the rear. As this is currently agricultural land this would constitute a change of use which would need separate consideration and may be inappropriate both in terms of NPPF paragraph 150 and LP57 criteria c) which states that the proposal should not result in a greater impact on openness in terms of the treatment of outdoor areas including hard standings, curtilages and enclosures and means of access.

In summary, considered solely against the farmhouse as the original building, considered against the structure as a whole or considered as replacement buildings, the scheme in its entirety, taking into account existing and proposed extensions and the introduction of features that would erode the traditional character of the site, this proposal is considered contrary to green belt policy and design policy and guidance and is not supported.

