

Planning application ref 20/01019/FUL Pool Farm replacement dwelling, Smethcott

To Shropshire Council Planning Services

I understand that the existing house may not be in suitable condition or form for renovation and future use for the applicant, and we do not object in principle to the proposal to demolish and build a replacement house. Some change in the traditional rural character of the property is inevitable following this, but the design of the replacement house should aim to fit well in to the AONB.

Scale is one factor in this – the replacement house looks to be very large and this will make it have a greater impact in relation to the AONB. As a replacement dwelling it should be of equivalent size to the existing building and ensuring this is the case will help the house to blend in and minimise change to the surroundings.

Design of the house itself is another factor and while an approach incorporating contemporary elements of design is understandable, the choice of materials (e.g. brick of varied colour) can make a big difference to a sympathetic appearance.

Finally the design of features in the curtilage also makes a significant difference to the sit of a property in the landscape, and gateways, fencing etc should be low key rather than grand statement features.

The following policies from the AONB Management Plan support the comments above:

Policy P4 Housing and Design of Development (extracts)

ii) To create truly sustainable places for people to live, great care should be taken to ensure design is of the highest quality whilst at the same time seeking to enhance local distinctiveness. The design of all housing (market priced and affordable) should demonstrate sensitivity to the immediate surroundings and the special qualities of the AONB.

iv) Building style should reflect local tradition, and local materials should be used wherever possible. Designs should be of a high standard in keeping with the nationally designated landscape. In line with Core Strategy policy CS6, particular regard should be paid to village and town design statements and Conservation Area Appraisals and Design Guides. Innovative sustainable schemes are to be encouraged where they take account of the surrounding vernacular and the use of local materials as well as conserving the integrity of the surrounding landscape.

v) Roofing materials should be in keeping with those used in nearby buildings, with no bright coloured tiles or reflective surfaces. The use of photovoltaic tiles matching existing and surrounding roof colours should be encouraged in preference to solar panels. External lighting on new developments should be kept to a minimum and use down-lighting to reduce light pollution. Lighting should not highlight structures that would have an adverse visual impact on the surrounding landscape.