

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2021/0187
Valid 14/04/2021

GLENWOOD HOUSE FARM
BELMONT ROAD
IPSTONES

**CONVERSION OF PART OF
ANCILLARY OUTBUILDINGS
TO ANCILLARY RESIDENTIAL
ACCOMMODATION**

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

- The principle of the proposal
- The impact on the character and appearance of the rural area.
- The impact on residential amenity
- The impact on highway safety

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The site is in the countryside (but not within the Green Belt) about a mile to the south-west of the large village of Ipstones. It comprises a stone dwelling, formerly a barn, which was converted and a large and long single-storey white rendered outbuilding with pitched and tiled roof which sits perpendicular to the barn dwelling to the north of it. This site is reached via a very long farm track connected to Belmont Road (which leads to the village) to the north. The access track goes past another traditional barn conversion and a stone farmhouse (Glenwood House) and all the buildings appear to have once been part of the same farm estate although the location plan shows large parts of this former estate still within the same ownership as the barn dwelling site (but with the other dwellings and their curtilages excluded). The other buildings lie to the north of the site. Open fields lie to the south, west and east. Also within the site is garden land and a tennis court to the west (rear) of the outbuilding and a large parking area in front of the outbuilding (to the east of it and also in front of the barn dwelling to the north).

The outbuilding appears to be used as a workshop or office in the southern half and for domestic storage uses in the northern half, closest to the barn dwelling.

PROPOSAL

This is a full application for the change of use of the northern half of the outbuilding into a family annex with two bedrooms, bathroom and living room with kitchen area. There would be no extensions involved. This part of the outbuilding already has external doors and windows of domestic appearance and the only external alterations would involve the insertion of windows into the external doors to allow more light into the new rooms. These doors would appear to still be used to access the annex. A Design and Access Statement accompanies the application and explains that as the family occupying the barn is growing, there is a need for more accommodation as part of an annex arrangement to serve three generations of the

same family. There is no intention for it to be a separate dwelling and therefore no need for a separate garden or parking area to be created and the dwelling and grounds would remain “shared”.

Amended application forms were submitted in late June 2021 with a Certificate B signed and confirmation given that the owners of the access track to the site (relatives of the applicant) have been served notice of the application.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Local Plan (Adopted September 2020)

SS10 – Other Rural Areas Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework

Section 12 (Design).

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

01/00023: Conversion of stone barn into dwelling on site. Approved.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 9.6.21
Neighbour consultation period ends: 9.6.21
Notice given under Certificate B ends: 12.7.21.
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

Letters of objection have been received from five nearby properties and the points raised are as follows:

- The proposal would affect the supply of water to the site and surrounding properties which are served by spring water.
- Increase in traffic including emergency and utility vehicles on the access track which is poorly maintained.
- A shared septic tank serving a number of properties including the site would be affected.
- Previous barn conversions were allowed so that the family (who own the site) could stay and maintain the surrounding land and wetland habitats but this has not been undertaken.
- A 2002 approval was not complied with as agricultural land was changed to residential land without planning permission
- The change of use of building was the subject of enforcement action in 2004

- The track diversion was carried out without planning permission because it was deemed to be agricultural but now the use is changing to residential
- A public right of way has been obstructed
- The building is not in keeping with the surrounding area comprising historical sandstone buildings
- Possible harm to bats that may use the building due to the change of use from storage to residential

No letters were received in response to the serving of notice of the application to the owners of the access drive on 21.6.21.

Town / Parish Comments

No objection.

Local Highways Authority

No objection.

SMDC Waste Collection Service

No issues

OFFICER COMMENTS

Policy SS10, the strategy for the countryside, allows the conversion of appropriate rural buildings into other uses. The building is solid and permanent and architecturally, although not as historic as the stone barns in the area, has a design which is not out of keeping with the traditional rural character of the area in terms of its pitched roof side gable form, rendered finish and tiled roof. The current fenestration is also quite traditional and harmonises with the building and is not out of keeping with the fenestration of the surrounding stone buildings. The building is suitable and appropriate for a re-use or conversion and the external alterations are minimal, even using existing external doors for access and windows put into them to allow in more light rather than create new openings.

This is not an application for a new dwelling or separate unit of accommodation, as the letters of objection seem to imply. An annex is proposed to be used only by family members belonging to the barn dwelling on site. It is already being used for domestic purposes in connection with the barn dwelling (as storage) and it relates well to the existing dwelling as it is placed close to the existing house and both buildings face a shared yard used for car parking. The garden for the barn dwelling happens to be closer to the proposed annex than the current dwelling and would remain as one shared space. Due to the size and location of the proposed annex and its relationship to the house, the re-use of this part of the outbuilding as a completely separate dwelling would appear to not be practical but a condition can be added to prevent its use as anything other than a family annex.

I therefore consider the principle of the proposal is acceptable and complies with Policy SS10 and as it would be a family annex in association with a growing family

and not a separate unit of accommodation, the proposal would not place any significant strain on the surrounding environment or utilities or infrastructure.

With regard to the appearance of the area, the external changes are minimal and would not harm the appearance of the building or detract from the stone barn dwelling.

With regard to the impact on residential amenity, the main windows would face the west and east and would not face the farmhouse to the north-west of the building. There would be two small windows on the north-facing side gable elevation but these would not overlook into any primary windows of Glenwood House farmhouse which also appear to face east and west. As the outbuilding is single-storey there would be no harmful level of overlooking of other properties.

With regard to highway safety, the proposed annex for an existing growing family on site would not lead to a significant increase in traffic or vehicle movements and there is ample parking provision on the existing parking yard.

With regard to the points raised in the letters of objection, as previously stated in this report, the proposal is for an annex for the existing family occupying the site and there is therefore no evidence this would lead to any additional strain on resources such as the shared water supply or foul drainage/shared septic tank. However, these matters are not material planning considerations but civil or legal matters that would need to be resolved direct with the applicant. Likewise, the maintenance of the shared access track is also a legal or civil matter. The use of the building as a family annex is not going to lead to any significant increase in emergency or delivery vehicles visiting the site, compared to a new separate dwelling so the current level of access for these vehicles is unaffected by the proposal. There are also no conditions attached to previous barn conversions in the area for the applicants, requiring them to maintain surrounding areas of land and wetlands and this is in any case an unrelated issue to the current proposal for an annex and which is a matter which is unaffected by the proposal.

Although it is claimed the building was erected unlawfully, as it has been present for at least four years it is now lawful and the change of use of it under a new planning application is not unacceptable in principle. Aerial photo's from 2005 and 2011 show the building in situ.

Although the track diversion was to be used for agricultural purposes, the change of use of the building does not render this new track as being harmful to the area and it also leads onto a current separate farm.

The issue regarding the obstruction of a Public Right of Way is a separate legal matter unrelated to the proposal as part of this planning application.

Although it is common for bats to start using buildings, the building is modern and the actual internal works required, including any works needed to the roof (if any), do not require planning permission. However, an informative can be added advising the applicant to use a bat ecologist to carry out an inspection during the conversion phase.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The proposal for extended family accommodation via the conversion of part of a nearby outbuilding within the property is acceptable in principle in this rural location and would not harm the visual or residential amenities of this rural area or have any significant impact on the environment and amenities of the area in general. The proposal would therefore comply with the Local Plan and is in line with the government planning guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), updated in February 2019.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : APPROVE

Case Officer: Chris Johnston

Recommendation Date: 16.7.21

X 

Signed by: Jane Colley Signature

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council