

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2021/0212
Valid 06/05/2021

OLD ENGINE FARM
PERKINS LANE
DILHORNE

**EXTENSION, ALTERATION
AND CONVERSION OF
FORMER AGRICULTURAL
BUILDING TO PROVIDE
ADDITIONAL
ACCOMMODATION TO
DWELLINGHOUSE**

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

- Whether or not the proposal amounts to inappropriate development in the Green Belt
- The principle of the development
- The impact on the character and appearance of the area
- The impact on residential amenity
- The impact on highway safety
- The impact on the ecological value of the site
- The impact on ground stability

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The site lies within the open countryside a short distance to the north-east of Dilhorne village. It comprises part of a farm reached down the end of a long farm track connected to Godleybarn Lane, a country lane to the north. There is a farmhouse, two brick farm buildings across a yard from the farmhouse and behind the brick buildings to the north, two modern open sided farm storage buildings. There is a wind turbine a short distance to the west of the farm buildings which are otherwise surrounded by open land and fields. The site is in the Green Belt and within a High Risk Coal Mining Area.

PROPOSAL

This is a full planning application for the conversion of a brick farm building into an annex connected to an adjacent barn which has an approval to be converted into a 5-bed dwelling (under Part 3 Class Q of the GPDO). The proposed annex would be connected to the adjacent proposed barn dwelling via single-storey glass link structure which would act as a covered passage/hallway between the annex and the main dwelling. There is a corrugated sheet roof over part of the building which would be replaced with a tiled roof. Part of the building no longer has a roof but does retain some of the walls and a tiled roof would be placed over the front half of this part of the building with the remaining part used as an outdoor "courtyard" providing private outdoor amenity space for the proposed dwelling. The annex would comprise three

bedrooms, a living room, study and bathroom. The works would re-use the existing window and door openings for new doors and windows although some of the window openings would be enlarged to create new floor to ceiling windows. The application includes a Structural Survey Report, an Ecological Report, a Noise Report, a Coal Mining Risk Assessment Report, Flood Risk Assessment Report and a Design and Access Statement.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Local Plan (Adopted September 2020)

SS10 Other Rural Areas Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
NE1 Biodiversity

National Planning Policy Framework – Revised July 2021

Sections 12 (Design), 13 (Green Belts) and 15 (Natural Environment)

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/2011/1163: Conversion of barn into dwelling. Approved. Not implemented.

SMD/2012/0823: One wind turbine with a height of 18.3 metres to the hub.
Approved and built.

DET/2014/0040: Conversion of barn into dwelling under Part 3 Class Q of the GPDO. Approved. Not implemented.

DET/2020/0061: Conversion of barn into dwelling under Part 3 Class Q of the GPDO. Approved. Not implemented.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 16.6.21
Neighbour consultation period ends: 16.6.21
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

None.

Town / Parish Comments

None.

Local Highways Authority

No objection.

Environmental Health Section

No objection subject to standard conditions.

Staffs Wildlife Trust

No objection subject to conditions to secure recommendations in Bat and Bird Presence Absence Survey November 2020 by Evolution Ecology, replacement nesting features for nesting birds and sustainable drainage.

Conservation Officer

No comments given as the building has no historic or heritage interest.

Coal Authority

No objection subject to a condition.

Severn Trent Water

No objection.

Waste Collection Services

No issues

SCC Flood Team

No objection.

SCC Footpaths

The application documents don't recognise the existence of Public Footpath No. 4 Dilhorne Parish which runs through the farm, north and west of the proposed development site. The attention of the applicant should be drawn to the existence of the path and to the requirement that any planning permission given does not construe the right to divert, extinguish or obstruct any part of the public path. However, it does not appear from the provided documents that the footpath will be directly affected by the development.

Peak and Northern Footpaths Society

Use of the PROW, and the safety of users should not be affected by the development, nor during the work taking place.

Ramblers

There is a path close to the site and care should be taken when in use.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Policy SS10, the strategy for the countryside, requires strict control over inappropriate development in the Green Belt. The NPPF in paras 149 and 150 sets out the forms of development which are not deemed to be inappropriate and therefore not deemed to be harmful to the openness of the Green Belt. This includes the re-use of existing buildings where they are permanent and substantial. The building is a solid brick farm storage building with walls intact and part of it covered by a roof. However, the part proposed to be converted into a living room and courtyard is far more derelict with sections of wall missing and no roof. The Structural Survey Report considers that part covered with a roof to be fairly stable and could be converted without major modification or rebuilding. I consider that this part of the building counts as being permanent and substantial and that the conversion of this part would not amount to inappropriate development.

However, the other part is not considered to be permanent and substantial. Whilst this would normally deem the re-use of this part as being inappropriate development in the Green Belt, the NPPF also allows the enlargement of buildings providing this would not amount to a disproportionate enlargement in relation to the original building, which I would deem to be the more stable part of the building covered by a roof. The proposed living room could be provided as an extension which is not disproportionate in relation to the size of the original building. In fact, even including the proposed new glass link structure as part of the overall "enlargement of the building", this would result in a 45% increase in the floorspace of the existing, more stable part of the building. I do not consider this to be a disproportionate increase and also in terms of the overall height, scale and form of the "extensions", which do not exceed the height, width or length of the stable part of the building and would appear subservient to the stable part of the building, the overall extensions cumulatively would not be disproportionate in general to the stable part of the building as it stands. Therefore, I do not consider the overall proposal to amount to inappropriate development in the Green Belt and therefore would not harm its openness.

I consider the overall principle of the development to also be acceptable, under Policy SS10 and the NPPF. The policy also allows the conversion of rural buildings but where they are physically and architecturally appropriate for conversion. As argued previously, most of the building is physically acceptable. The building, however, does not have any significant architectural merit and no heritage value but it is not out of keeping with the rural surroundings. It has traditional brick materials and a pitched roof form and does not harm the character and appearance of the area. It is worth noting that planning permission was granted in 2011 for the conversion of the building into a separate dwelling. It is likely the building was in much better condition back in 2011 but it would still have had to pass the test of being architecturally acceptable for a conversion scheme (under previous Local Plans at the time). This new scheme is also more sustainable than the unimplemented 2011 scheme as despite the site being in a remote location, the new

scheme is for an annex to a neighbouring proposed barn conversion dwelling and not a separate dwelling and therefore there would be no significant increase in vehicle movements as would be expected from a separate residential property. Although the proposed annex is very large for an annex, with three bedrooms and living room and about the same size as a small dwelling, the principle of this particular use as a conversion scheme is not unacceptable and a condition can be added to prevent use as a separate unit of accommodation at a later stage although, as previously states, a proposal to convert the building into an actual separate dwelling was not deemed unacceptable in 2011 and the policies in place at the time were more restrictive towards the residential conversion of rural buildings (as commercial/business changes of use were prioritised).

I consider the appearance of the building would be improved by this scheme. The corrugated sheet roofing would be replaced by a tiled roof which is more in keeping with the character of the rural locality. The current openings would be re-used and the design of window enlargements and inclusion of new glass link structure would not harm the appearance of the building or the neighbouring building and give a more modern twist to the buildings. The glass link structure would also appear completely subservient to both buildings and would respect and not dominate either building.

There would be no impact on the residential amenities of the area as the only nearby dwelling is the current farmhouse which is a sufficient distance away to not experience any loss of privacy. Conditions were attached to the neighbouring barn conversion to protect the proposed residents from noise arising from the use of the area for farming and also from a nearby wind turbine. However, an annex is proposed under this application and the building is further away from the current farm buildings and the wind turbine. The Environmental Health Section do not object to the proposal and recommend standard conditions only for converted farm buildings.

There would be no additional highways impacts as an annex is proposed and not a separate dwelling. The quality of the access is adequate and there is ample car parking on the adjacent yard area.

There would be no impact on the ecological value of the site, the Ecology Report revealed the buildings were not used as bat roosts and were unsuitable for this although there was use of the buildings for nesting birds. It was not considered necessary to impose any conditions requiring mitigation measures on the approval for the neighbouring barn conversion and therefore there is no requirement therefore for such restrictions for this new conversion scheme.

A Flood Risk Assessment Report was submitted but this is a conversion scheme with small extension and the site is in any case not within a Flood Plain. With regard to possible localised flooding, SCC Flood Team raise no objection to the proposal.

As the only newbuild part of the scheme is a glass link structure, there is no concern regarding the impact on land stability (affected by historical coal mining in the area) and the Coal Authority raised no objection subject to a further condition requiring further investigative groundwork.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The proposal would not amount to inappropriate development in the Green Belt and is acceptable in principle. There would be no harm to the visual or residential amenities of the area and no impacts on highway safety, the ecological value of the site or ground stability. The proposal therefore complies with the Local Plan and the government planning guidance contained in the NPPF.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : APPROVE

Case Officer: Chris Johnston

Recommendation Date: 22.7.21

X *B.S. Haywood*

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council