

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2021/0408
Valid 23/06/2021

IVY HOUSE FARM
TOMPKIN ROAD
STANLEY

DEMOLITION OF EXISTING
AGRICULTURAL
OUTBUILDING AND
ERECTION OF 1NO.
DETACHED DWELLING

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

- Whether the proposal comprises an exception to inappropriate development in the Green Belt.
- Impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, including the countryside and the Conservation Area.
- Impact on neighbouring amenity.
- Impact on highway safety.
- Impact on protected species.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site comprises a detached, single storey agricultural building that is constructed of concrete blocks to the walls with a tiled pitched roof. The building is of no architectural merit. The existing building is located to the rear of the dwellinghouse known as Ivy House Farm, within the former farm yard of the property. A large L-shaped stable/agricultural building is located to the south, an open-fronted agricultural building is located to the west, whilst residential properties are located to the west, north and east.

The northern part of the application site comprising the detached building is located within the village of Stanley and within the Stanley Conservation Area. Stanley is defined as a 'smaller village' by the Local Plan (2020). The southern part of the site, comprising part of the existing farm yard, is located within the North Staffordshire Green Belt and the Open Countryside.

PROPOSAL

Full planning permission is sought for the demolition of the existing single storey detached outbuilding and the erection of a replacement dwellinghouse.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (Adopted Sept 2020)

SS1 Development Principles
1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
SS2 Settlement Hierarchy
SS9 Smaller Villages Area Strategy
SS10 Other Rural Areas Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
DC2 The Historic Environment
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport
NE1 Biodiversity & Geological Resources
H1 New Housing Development

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph(s) 1 - 14

Section(s) 4, 12, 13, 15, 16

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/2020/0518 Conversion and alteration of former agricultural building to form a single dwellinghouse
Approved 23/11/2020

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 03/08/2021
Neighbour consultation period ends: 20/07/2021
Press Advert: 04/08/2021

Public Comments: None

Town / Parish Comments: None

Conservation Officer: I have no objection to this proposal subject to conditions relating to materials, joinery, boundaries etc. The existing structure is of no heritage value.

Severn Trent Water: No objection to the proposals and do not require a drainage condition to be applied.

Staffs Wildlife Trust: No objection subject to conditions.

AES Waste: No issues regarding waste collections. Note: Present bins near highway or lane end on collection days.

Environmental Health: No objection subject to conditions.

SCC Highways: Requested a revised drawing showing 2no. off-street parking spaces to be provided within the site edged red.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021) promotes a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. For decision takers this means (c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or (d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are more important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission, unless: i) the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or ii) any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.

Paragraph 8 of the NPPF (2021) identifies three dimensions to sustainable development as being economic, social and environmental. In accordance with policies SS1 and 1a of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan, the Council will expect all new development to make a positive contribution towards the sustainability of communities and to protecting, and where possible, enhancing the environment. When considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF (2021).

The northern part of the site is located within the 'smaller village' of Stanley, whilst the southern part of the site is located in the Open Countryside and the North Staffordshire Green Belt.

Policy SS9 of the Local Plan (2020) deals with developments within the 'smaller villages'. Part (2) of the policy deals with meeting community, social or economic need with one of the aims being to enable '*limited new housing development, including small infill schemes in accordance with Policy H1*'.

Policy SS10 of the Local Plan (2020) is applicable to the part of the site that falls within the Open Countryside and North Staffordshire Green Belt. Policy SS10 states that these rural areas will provide only for development that has an essential need to be located in the countryside, supports the rural diversification and sustainability of the rural areas, promotes sustainable tourism or enhances the countryside. Part (1) of policy SS10 seeks to meet housing requirements and specific needs by restricting new build housing development in the countryside to that which has an essential need to be located in the countryside in accordance with Policy H1.

Part (4) of policy H1 of the Local Plan (2020) states that outside of the development boundaries, limited infill residential development of an appropriate scale and

character for the Spatial Strategy will be supported, provided that the development is well related to the existing pattern of development of a smaller village and will not create or extend ribbon development or lead to sporadic pattern of development; and the development will not lead to a prominent intrusion into the countryside or have a significant adverse impact on the character and appearance of the countryside.

The application site is surrounded by dwellinghouses to the north, east and west whilst the farmyard and stables associated with Ivy House Farm are located to the south. The application site will therefore comprise an infill development within a smaller village. It will not create or extend ribbon development, nor will it lead to a sporadic pattern of development; a prominent intrusion into the countryside; or have a significant adverse impact on the character or appearance of the countryside. The principle of the development is therefore considered acceptable as it will comply with policies H1, SS9 and SS10 of the Local Plan (2020).

Green Belt

The southern portion of the application site is located within the North Staffordshire Green Belt whereby policy SS10 of the Local Plan (2020) and chapter 13 of the NPPF (2021) are applicable. Part (6) of policy SS10 states that strict control will continue to be exercised over inappropriate development within the Green Belt, allowing only for exceptions as defined by Government policy.

The southern part of the application site currently comprises a hard surfaced yard associated with the existing equestrian/agricultural use. It is proposed to utilise some of this yard as a garden for the proposed dwellinghouse and 2no. spaces will be provided for the parking of vehicles.

Paragraph 150 of the NPPF (2021) outlines certain other forms of development that are not inappropriate in the Green Belt, provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. One such exception applicable to this application is: (e) material changes of use of land.

The proposed change of use from agricultural/equestrian yard to a garden associated with a dwellinghouse will likely involve the removal of a large expanse of the existing hardstanding and the laying of soft landscaping. The yard area is currently used for the storage of various items (as can be seen on aerial photographs) and the proposed change of use will result in the removal of these items. Whilst part of the hardstanding will be used for the parking of 2no. vehicles and the garden will result in the erection/positioning of associated garden paraphernalia, this is considered to have less of an impact on openness than the existing use as a yard. The proposed development will comply with the 5 purposes on the Green Belt as outlined at paragraph 138 of the NPPF (2021) and it will not result in encroachment into the countryside.

It is recommended that conditions are attached requiring the submission and implementation of a landscaping scheme; details of boundary treatments to ensure they do not affect openness; and the removal of permitted development rights for the erection of extensions, outbuildings and areas of hardstanding as these have the ability to adversely affect the openness of the Green Belt. Subject to the inclusion of

such conditions, the proposed development is considered to comply with one of the exceptions to inappropriate development in the Green Belt and it will therefore comply with policy SS10 of the Local Plan (2020) and chapter 13 of the NPPF (2021).

Design

Policy DC1 refers to design and seeks to secure development of a high quality which is designed to add value to the area and to respect the site and its surroundings. New development should promote a positive sense of place and identity through its scale, density, layout, siting, landscaping, character and appearance.

Paragraph 130 of the NPPF (2021) requires the design of a development to add to the overall quality of an area, by being sympathetic to local character and by being visually attractive as a result of good architecture. The Council's Design Guide SPD outlines the Council's expectations in respect of design.

The existing building was most likely constructed in the 1950/60s and comprises a single storey pitched roof former milking parlour, associated with Ivy House Farm. The building is rectangular in shape and constructed of breeze block walls and a tiled roof. The majority of the building comprises one large open space and is currently used for storage purposes. The building measures 15.6m x 6m, with an eaves height of 2.4 metres and a ridge height of 4.4 metres.

Planning permission was granted in 2020 for the conversion of the building into a 2-bedroom dwellinghouse. A requirement of the permission was that the external walls of the building were covered in stone slips in order to improve the appearance of the building. The 2020 permission is currently extant.

It is proposed to demolish the existing building and erect a replacement 1.5-storey dwellinghouse. The dwellinghouse will be rectangular in shape and will be sited in the same position as the building to be demolished. The replacement building will measure 15m x 6m (slightly shorter than the existing building) and will have an eaves height of 3.6 metres and a ridge height of 6.1 metres (an increase of 1.2m and 1.7m respectively). The proposed building will comprise a 3-bedroom dwellinghouse with the first floor contained within the roof space. To the western side of the building there will be a single storey lean-to.

The existing building is not considered to be of any architectural merit as it comprises a basic utilitarian building. By contrast, the proposed dwellinghouse will be constructed of stone and will re-use the existing roof tiles. The windows and doors will be hardwood timber and will have stone surrounds. There will also be a stone corbelled eaves detail and the rooflights will be conservation-style. The building will have the character of a traditional barn which will reflect its siting within an existing farm yard.

The proposed dwellinghouse will be located within the Stanley Conservation Area. Policy DC2 of the Local Plan seeks to safeguard, and where possible, enhance the historic environment, resisting development which would harm or be detrimental to the special character and historic heritage of the District's towns and villages.

Paragraph 199 of the NPPF (2021) states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Paragraph 200 of the NPPF (2021) states any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.

The existing building is located to the rear of the farmhouse associated with Ivy House Farm and therefore only a small section of the building can be glimpsed through the access from Tompkin Road. A PRoW is located to the southeast of the application site, which comes within approximately 100 metres of the building. The proposed replacement building will have a higher eaves and ridge height and therefore is likely to be more visible from public vantage points than the existing building. However, these views will still be limited due to the building's siting behind existing buildings that front the surrounding roads and the PRoW is a substantial distance from the application site. The building will be viewed as part of the built-up development of the village and the appearance of the proposed building will be more attractive than the building it will replace. It is for these reasons that the proposed development is not considered to harm the significance of the Conservation Area or the wider surroundings. The Conservation Officer has requested conditions in respect of materials, joinery details and boundary treatments and it is also considered that conditions in respect of the rooflights and materials of the windows and doors are included.

As no harm has been identified to the Conservation Area, it is not necessary to weigh the development against the public benefits of the proposal. The development is therefore considered to comply with policy DC2 of the Local Plan (2020) and chapter 16 of the NPPF (2021) in respect of heritage assets and policy DC1 of the Local Plan (2020), the Design Guide SPD and the NPPF (2021) in respect of design.

Amenity

Policy DC1 and paragraph 130(f) of the NPPF (2021) seek to secure development that protects amenity, including residential amenity, in terms of satisfactory daylight, sunlight, outlook, privacy and soft landscaping.

The proposed building will be 1.5-storeys in height and will have a higher eaves and ridge height than the existing building. The building will be located in almost the same position as the existing building and therefore it will be sited immediately to the south of the farmhouse associated with Ivy House Farm.

The building will be sited approximately 15 metres from Ivy House Farm and will be separated by a yard that is used for the parking of vehicles associated with Ivy House Farm and the adjacent converted Mission Church. The openings within the elevation facing towards Ivy House Farm will either comprise secondary windows to a living room and a kitchen or non-habitable windows to a WC and wet room. The

first floor rooms will be served by small scale conservation rooflights to a third bedroom, landing and bathroom; which are not principle windows as defined by the Space About Dwellings SPG. A rear elevation to a flank wall (as would be the case in this instance, given none of the windows in the northern elevation are principle windows) is required to have a minimum separation distance of 14 metres. The proposed development will exceed this distance by one metre and therefore it will not have a detrimental effect on the amenity of this property. However, given the orientation of the building, it is considered that permitted development rights are remove for extensions and roof alterations to ensure that sufficient space is maintained between the two properties to maintain an acceptable level of amenity.

The private amenity space and the parking associated with the proposed conversion will be located to the south of the existing building and will exceed the 65 sq. m. as required by the Space About Dwellings SPG. The siting of the private amenity space to the south of the building will ensure that this does not pose an impact on neighbouring amenity. Whilst vehicles will utilise the access adjacent to Ivy House Farm farmhouse, this is not considered to have a detrimental effect on the amenity of this property due to the access already being used by vehicles serving Ivy House Farm, the Mission Church conversion and the farm buildings to the south.

The land immediately to the west of the building is defined as the private amenity space associated with the Mission Church when permission was granted to convert the building in 2016. 2no. conservation-style rooflights will be positioned within the single storey lean-to. This is an improvement on the previously approved conversion scheme as a secondary window to a bedroom was proposed in the same elevation and was required to be obscure glazed by condition. The perception of overlooking from within the private amenity space associated with the converted Mission Church will therefore be improved by this application.

The ground floor window in the eastern side elevation of the proposed dwellinghouse will face towards the neighbouring property, 'Tudor House'. This window will comprise a secondary window to a kitchen. A driveway serving the farm buildings to the south of the application site separates the building from the shared boundary. The window is within the ground floor of the building and therefore will be highly obscured by the existing boundary treatment. This window is therefore not considered to have a detrimental effect on neighbouring amenity.

The private amenity space associated with the dwellinghouse will be to the south of the existing building, adjacent to the yard associated with Ivy House Farm, with the existing agricultural/equestrian buildings beyond and to the west. Whilst this may result in some conflict between the different uses, Environmental Health has not raised an objection to the proposed development; the garden area can be landscaped with appropriate boundary treatments to minimise any conflict; and ultimately the occupier(s) of the building will be aware of the situation before deciding to live there.

In terms of the Nationally Described Space Standards, the proposed dwellinghouse will exceed the minimum size requirements for a two-storey, 3-bedroom, 6 person dwellinghouse by 46 sq. m. (148 sq. m. rather than 102 sq. m.) The scale of the

proposed development is therefore considered acceptable for the number of occupants and it will not have a detrimental effect on the amenity of future occupiers.

For the reasons outlined above, the proposed development is considered to comply with policy DC1 of the Local Plan (2020) and the NPPF (2021) in respect of amenity.

Highway Safety

Policies DC1 and T1 seek to achieve a level of parking and an access that is appropriate to the development it serves.

The dwellinghouse will utilise the existing farm access to the east of the farmhouse that fronts onto Tompkin Road. The dwellinghouse is to have 3no. bedrooms and therefore 2no. off-street parking spaces are required to serve the property. The revised Block Plan indicates the provision of 2no. parking spaces to the south of the existing building. Subject to a condition requiring the parking and turning areas to be in-situ prior to the occupation of the dwellinghouse, as per the previous approval for the conversion of the existing building to a dwellinghouse, the proposed development will not have a detrimental effect on highway safety and it will comply with policies DC1 and T1 of the Local Plan (2020) and the NPPF (2021).

Ecology

Policy NE1 outlines that the biodiversity of the District will be conserved and enhancement by positive management and the strict control of development by (1) protecting and enhancing habitats and species of principal importance for conservation; (2) ensuring development produces a net gain in biodiversity and; (3) any unavoidable impacts are mitigated.

A 'Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment and Bird Survey' was submitted with the planning application. It concluded that there was no evidence of bats using the building; there was evidence of birds nesting in the soffits at the southeastern corner of the building; and there is a roosting opportunity under the ridge tiles of the property, but there was no evidence of a bat roost. The report considers that the development can be undertaken without disturbance to the protected species and nesting birds and without the need for a Bat Licence.

The report recommends that a method of working is put in place with contractors to ensure that in the event of bats being found, they will not be injured; that demolition is undertaken outside of the bird nesting season; that a net gain in biodiversity can be achieved by the installation of a brick built bat box and a sparrow terrace, as well as the removal of some of the hardstanding in order to create a garden for the dwellinghouse. Subject to a condition requiring the development to be undertaken in strict accordance with the recommendations contained in the 'Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment and Bird Survey', it is considered that the development will comply with policy NE1 of the Local Plan (2020) and chapter 15 of the NPPF (2021).

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

For the reasons outlined above, the proposed development is considered to accord with the relevant policies contained in the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (2020) and the NPPF (2021). As such the application is recommended for approval.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE subject to Conditions

Case Officer: Ailsa Berry

Recommendation Date: 25/08/2021

X *B.J. Haywood*

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council