

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2021/0131
Valid 23/06/2021

CRONEY BANK FARM
BAGNALL ROAD
BAGNALL

**BARN CONVERSION TO BE
LINKED WITH AND FORM
PART OF THE MAIN
DWELLING HOUSE.**

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

Whether not the proposal amounts to inappropriate development in the Green Belt
The impact on the character and appearance of the area
The impact on residential amenity.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The site lies in the countryside to the south of Bagnall and is in the Green Belt. It comprises a rectangular grouping of farm buildings including an L-shaped traditional stone farmhouse in the north-east corner and stone barns and outbuildings across a yard to the west. It is reached via a long farm track on the north side of Bagnall Road, a C-classified country lane. The buildings are surrounded by open land.

PROPOSAL

This is a full planning application for the conversion and extension of the single-storey traditional stone barn on the north-west side of the yard which would provide a new kitchen, store and utility room for the farmhouse which is also proposed to be extended under a separate householder planning application involving a two-storey side extension which would adjoin the barn and integrate the internal layout with the new kitchen inside the barn. This is not shown on the drawings which make it appear to be separate to the farmhouse extension but is shown in the separate householder extension application. The barn currently has an old brick extension on the south-west side gable and adjoining brick animal pen, both of which would be demolished and replaced with an extension on the exact same footprint as the previous extension and pen, continuing the gable sided form of the barn, including continuing the roof ridge along to the new gable. This would be finished with "stone and brick webber render" and the new windows would be grey powder coated aluminium. All new openings would be re-used for the proposed new windows and external doors and there would be no new openings.

The original plans showed the proposed farmhouse extensions and the amended plans remove these drawings as these are the subject of a separate planning application.

The application includes a Structural Survey Report and a Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment of the Buildings (dated June 2021). Later on in the process, a further Bat Survey Report was submitted (dated December 2021)

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Staffs Moorlands Local Plan (adopted September 2020)

SS10 Other Rural Areas Strategy
DC1 – Design Considerations
NE1 - Biodiversity

NPPF (Revised July 2021)

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

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/2021/0128: Concurrent application for the extensions to the farmhouse.
Pending.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 16/7/21.
Neighbour consultation period ends: 16/7/21.
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

None.

Town / Parish Comments

No objection.

Local Highways Authority

No objection subject to conditions.

Environmental Health

No objection subject to standard conditions for barn conversions

Severn Trent Water

No objection.

Staffs Wildlife Trust

Initially raised a holding objection due to the absence of Bat Activity Surveys required as the barn was considered to have high bat potential. Details of drainage and measures to protect Great Crested Newts and amphibians was also requested due to the presence of a nearby pond.

On receipt of the revised bat report, no objection raised but repeated the request for details of the drainage scheme.

OFFICER COMMENTS

The site is in the Green Belt and Policy SS10, the strategy for the countryside, requires strict control over inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Paras 149 and 150 of the NPPF list the forms of development that are deemed exceptionally to not be inappropriate and therefore by definition, not harmful to the openness of the Green Belt. The change of use of buildings where they are substantial and permanent, is listed. The building is made of stone and the Structural Survey report confirms that it is generally physically stable and suitable for the conversion into habitable accommodation and therefore it's change of use is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt. The enlargement of buildings is also listed but providing that this would not amount to a disproportionate enlargement in relation to the original building i.e. as it stood when first built before any previous enlargements. The enlargement in this case is the replacement of a previous extension and brick pen with an extension of the same footprint but higher, resulting in a slight increase in overall volume but this does not amount to a disproportionate enlargement on what is already there and therefore the extension to assist the conversion of the building would also not be inappropriate and therefore the proposal would not result in harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

Policy SS10 allows residential conversions where the building is physically and architecturally worthy and has a form in keeping with the area. I consider the traditional animal barn form and appearance would accord with this requirement and therefore the principle of the conversion and extension into ancillary accommodation for an enlarged farmhouse would be acceptable.

The building would maintain its form and appearance. The external windows and doors would re-use existing openings and the general design of the new windows and doors is acceptable. Although the window materials are given in the application form, it is important that the frame materials should be the same as the farmhouse extension and therefore a planning condition will be added requiring this. The barn extension form is acceptable, appearing as the elongation of the barn, acceptable in this exact location. It is unclear what materials are to be used for the extension despite stating stone and "brick webber render" as the drawings appear to show brick entirely and it is not clear where the stone and render areas would be located. However, a condition can be added requiring further details of the materials to be submitted and approved.

The residential amenities of the area would not be harmed as there are no other nearby neighbouring dwellings close to the site.

With regard to the ecological value of the site, although the barn has high potential for use as a bat roost due to its form and rural farm location, activity and other surveys of the building did not reveal any bats present but did find bird nests. I consider that a condition should be added requiring the bat and bird protection measures to be carried out in accordance with the report and also another condition requiring bat and bird boxes to be installed to achieve an enhancement in the ecological value of the site as encouraged in Policy NE1 and the NPPF. Staffs Wildlife Trust also requested details of protection measures for newts and other amphibians due to the pond near the farmhouse and also details of drainage. I consider these can be submitted and approved by way of a planning condition.

The local highways authority and Environmental Health section have recommended conditions. However, these have not been recommended for the separate application to extend the dwelling and as the conversion is only adding additional ancillary floorspace to this and is not an application for an additional unit of accommodation i.e. a second dwelling, which would lead to greater environmental and highways impacts, it is not considered necessary to apply those conditions.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The amended proposal would not amount to inappropriate development in the Green Belt and would not harm the visual or residential amenities of the area or the environment in general with the safeguard of conditions. The proposal would therefore comply with the Council's Local Plan (adopted September 2020) and is line with the government planning guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : APPROVE

Case Officer: Chris Johnston

Recommendation Date: 13.7.22

X 

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council