

PLANNING STATEMENT

**HICKHAM FARM
DOG LANE, IPSTONES**

JANUARY 2025

Site Address:

Hickham Farm, Dog Lane, Ipstones, Staffordshire, ST10 2LR

Applicant:

Mr. D. Burton

Proposal:

Conversion of agricultural shippon to provide residential annex
(part-retrospective)

Planning Statement:

Date Issued: 7th January 2025

Job Reference: RDP/2025/002

Report Prepared By:

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Rob Duncan Planning Consultancy Ltd. has been instructed by Mr. D. Burton to seek part-retrospective planning consent for the alteration and change of use of part of an existing agricultural shippon at Hickham Farm, Dog Lane, Ipstones to provide a residential annex.
- 1.2 The annex will encompass a kitchen at ground floor level, with stairs leading up to an ensuite bedroom at first floor level. The only external alteration to the building works is the insertion of a new rooflight into the rear roofslope which provides light to the stairwell.
- 1.3 The annex is to be occupied by the applicant, with his son and family residing in the attached farmhouse. The annex will share the same domestic curtilage and parking areas as the existing dwelling, and will remain in the same ownership. The annex will also share all of its service connections and postal address with the main dwelling.
- 1.4 Vehicular access to the site is taken off Dog Lane to the south of the site, with no alterations being proposed.

2 Site & Surroundings

- 2.1 The application site is located within the rural area and comprises a detached two storey farmhouse with attached, elongated, agricultural shippon. The building is constructed from coursed stone with a Staffordshire Blue tiled roof atop.
- 2.2 The dwelling lies towards the western end of the farmyard, with the agricultural shippon and attached agricultural buildings extending eastwards from it. Further agricultural buildings are located to the southwest and east.
- 2.3 Vehicular access to the site is taken via an existing track that feeds off Dog Lane to the south of the site. A large area of hardstanding lies to the south of the buildings provided parking and manouvering space.
- 2.4 Open fields surround the site on all sides, with the nearest neighbouring properties lying 155 metres to the south (Crumwithies Farm) and 175 metres to the east (Greenhills Farm).
- 2.5 The site does not comprise, nor lie within close proximity of a listed building, nor does it lie within a Conservation Area.

3 Planning Policy

3.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the Development Plan taking into consideration any relevant material considerations. The Development Plan for this area comprises the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (2020) of which the following policies are of relevance to the determination of the application:

3.2 Policy SS1 of the Local Plan relates to 'Development Principles' and states that the Council will expect the development and use of land to contribute positively to the social, economic and environmental improvement of the Staffordshire Moorlands in terms of delivering, in partnership with other agencies and services:

- a mix of types and tenures of quality, affordable homes, including starter homes, to meet the needs and aspirations of the existing and future communities.
- quality local services, including provision for education, healthcare, leisure, community, cultural and tourist facilities in response to anticipated population change and visitor numbers.
- easy access to jobs, shops and transport services by all sections of the community.
- increased economic prosperity and opportunities for employment and greater local capacity with an educated, skilled and flexible workforce.

- a healthy, safe, attractive, active, well-designed and well-maintained environment.
- development which maintains the locally distinctive character of the Staffordshire Moorlands, its individual towns and villages and their settings.
- development that is undertaken in a way that protects and enhances the natural and historic environment of the District and its surrounding areas, including the Peak District National Park, both now and for future generations.
- support development which secures high quality, sustainable environments, efficient and effective use of resources and contributes effectively to tackling climate change and reduced carbon emissions.

3.3 Policy SS10 of the Local Plan relates to the 'Other Rural Areas Strategy' and states that these areas will provide only for development which 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. The policy confirms that the Council will meet housing requirements by allowing the conversion or replacement of an existing rural building in accordance with policy H1.

3.4 Policy H1 of the Local Plan relates to 'New Housing Development' and states that all development will be assessed according to the extent to which it provides for high quality, sustainable housing and to which it meets identified housing needs, having regard to the location of the development, the characteristics of the site and the economics of provision. It goes on to state that all new dwellings should aim to provide flexible accommodation which is

capable of future adaptation by seeking to achieve adequate internal space for the intended number of occupants in accordance with the Nationally Described Space standard and delivered to meet accessibility standards set out in the Optional Requirement M4(2) of Part M of the Building Regulations.

3.5 Policy H1 also states that in the rural areas, only the following forms of housing development will be permitted:

- a) Affordable housing which cannot be met elsewhere, in accordance with Policy H3.
- b) A new dwelling that meets an essential local need, such as accommodation for an agricultural, forestry or other rural enterprise worker, where the need for such accommodation has been satisfactorily demonstrated and that need cannot be met elsewhere.
- c) Proposals for replacement dwellings, provided they do not have a significantly greater detrimental impact on the existing character of the rural area than the original dwelling or result in the loss of a building which is intrinsic to the character of the area.
- d) The conversion of rural buildings for residential use where the building is suitable and worthy in physical, architectural and character terms for conversion; or where such development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets.
- e) Proposals to redevelop previously developed land provided it is not of high environmental value.
- f) The subdivision of an existing residential dwelling provided it is not in an isolated location.

3.6 Policy DC1 of the Local Plan relates to 'Design Considerations' and states that all development shall be well designed and reinforce local distinctiveness by positively contributing to and complementing the special character and heritage of the area in line with the Council's Design Guide SPD. In particular, new development should:

1. be of a high quality and add value to the local area, incorporating creativity, detailing and materials appropriate to the character of the area.
2. be designed to respect the site and its surroundings and promote a positive sense of place and identity through its scale, height, density, layout, siting, landscaping, character and appearance.
3. create, where appropriate, attractive, active, functional, accessible and safe public and private environments which incorporate public spaces, green infrastructure including making provision for networks of multi-functional new and existing green space (both public and private), landscaping, public art, 'designing out crime' initiatives and the principles of Active Design.
4. incorporate sustainable construction techniques and design concepts for buildings and their layouts to reduce the impact of the development.
5. protect the amenity of the area, including creation of healthy active environments and residential amenity, in terms of satisfactory daylight, overbearing development, sunlight, outlook, privacy, soft landscaping as well as noise, odour and light pollution.
6. promote the maintenance, enhancement, restoration and re-creation of biodiversity and geological heritage, where appropriate.

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7. provide for safe and satisfactory access and make a contribution to meeting the parking requirement arising from necessary car use.
 8. require new developments to be well integrated for car, pedestrian and cycle use as well as other sustainable transport links.
 9. ensure that existing drainage, waste water and sewerage infrastructure capacity is available, and where necessary enhanced, to enable the development to proceed.
 10. ensure, where appropriate, equality of access and use for all sections of the community.
 11. be served by high speed broadband (>30mbps) unless it can be demonstrated through consultation with Next Generation Access Network providers that this would not be possible, practical or economically viable. In all circumstances during construction of the site sufficient and suitable ducting should be provided within the site and to the property to facilitate ease of installation at a future date.
- 3.7 Policy T1 of the Local Plan relates to 'Development and Sustainable Transport' and states that the Council will promote and support development which reduces reliance on the private car for travel journeys, reduces the need to travel generally and accommodates residual development traffic in line with the Integrated Transport Strategy. This will be achieved by:
1. Ensuring that all new development is located where the highway network can satisfactorily accommodate traffic generated by the development or can be improved as part of the development.
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2. Ensuring that major development is located in areas that are accessible by sustainable travel modes or can be made accessible as part of the proposal.
3. Considering appropriate parking provision on a case by case basis with recourse to the parking guidance set out in Appendix 2.
4. Where appropriate all new development shall facilitate walking and cycling within neighbourhoods and town centres, and link with or extend identified walking or cycling routes. In addition applicants should also consider how their schemes can enhance the existing path network in line with the Staffordshire County Council Rights of Way Improvement Plan and also give consideration to the protection of non-definitive public footpath routes in addition to definitive routes.

4 Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework seeks to secure the delivery of sustainable development and sets out policies, *inter-alia*, in respect of securing the sustainable reuse of buildings, securing high quality design and ensuring highway safety. The content of the NPPF has been taken into consideration in the preparation of this application.

SMDC Design Guide SPD

- 4.2 The adopted Design Guide SPD provides advice aimed at securing the delivery of high-quality built development within the District, and provides specific guidance in respect of conversion schemes. The content of the NPPF has been taken into consideration in the preparation of this application.

5 Planning Assessment

Principle of Development

- 5.1 Policies SS10 and H1 of the Local Plan provide support for the conversion of existing buildings to residential use, provided that the building is worthy in physical, architectural and character terms for conversion. The works to convert part of the agricultural shippon to an annex were commenced in November 2022, and principally involve only internal works to the building, along with the insertion of a new rooflight into the north facing (rear) roofslope.
- 5.2 The building shows no signs of structural deflection or deterioration and along with the farmhouse appears to be in a good structural condition. It can consequently be concluded that the building is worthy in physical terms for conversion.
- 5.3 The building is also worthy in architectural and character terms for conversion, comprising as it does a traditional form of vernacular development that is characteristic of the Moorlands and wider north Staffordshire area. The proposal is therefore consistent with the requirements of policies SS10 and H1 of the Local Plan in this regard.

Ancillary Relationship To Dwelling

- 5.4 The proposed annex will have a wholly ancillary relationship to the existing dwellinghouse on the site. The accommodation to be provided amounts to just a kitchen and an ensuite bedroom and thus does not provide sufficient facilities to support independent day-to-day living.
- 5.5 Even if the Local Authority were to conclude differently on this point, case law in the form of *Uttlesford DC v SSE & White [1992] JPL 171* serves to confirm

that even if an annex provides full facilities for independent day-to-day living, it would not necessarily become a separate planning unit from the main dwelling; it would be a matter of fact and degree in each case.

- 5.6 The annex in this case is to be occupied by the applicant, with his son and family living in the main farmhouse, and therefore on hand to provide care and assistance to the applicant whenever needed. The close proximity of the farmhouse will also allow for the applicant to take meals with the rest of his family.
- 5.7 The annex will not be provided with its own area of amenity space, rather it will share the amenity space of the existing dwelling, as well as its parking area. It will also share its postal address, utilities and service connections, with no subdivision of the site being proposed. The annex will also remain in the same ownership as the host dwelling, and be subservient to it in terms of its overall floorspace.
- 5.8 The imposition of a suitably worded planning condition can be imposed to restrict the occupancy of the annex so that it remains ancillary to the host dwelling and in doing so the development will accord with the provisions of policies SS10 or H1 of the Local Plan.

Design and Layout

- 5.9 The adopted Design Guide SPD states that:

“The guiding principle behind the design of any conversion should be that the character of the original building and its setting should be respected and retained. This means that that in most cases the barn, mill or chapel should afterwards look like a converted barn, mill or chapel, and not like a new house or a new block of

flats. When converting traditional buildings, new uses should not normally require the construction of extensions or ancillary buildings. However, if alterations are necessary and approached carefully, it may be possible to bring about a new understanding of historic buildings by making a clear distinction between what is old and what is new”.

- 5.10 The submitted proposal embraces the above philosophy and adopts a highly sensitive approach to the conversion and alteration of the building, taking the opportunity to make beneficial reuse of the existing window and door openings on the front and rear elevations, with the only alteration proposed to the building being the insertion of a new rooflight on the north facing (rear) roofslope.
- 5.11 By adopting this sensitive approach to the design of the annex, the agrarian character of the existing shippon will be preserved. The proposed development is consequently held to meet the requirements of policies SS1, DC1 and H1 of the Local Plan in this regard.

Residential Amenity

- 5.12 There are no immediate neighbouring residential occupiers in close proximity of this site, with the dwelling sitting in an isolated position surrounded by open fields. Consequently the conversion of the shippon will not derive any conflict with the Local Authority’s Space About Dwellings Standards nor will any harm to residential amenity be caused. The proposed development is consequently held to meet the requirements of policies SS1 and DC1 of the Local Plan in this regard.

Highway Safety

- 5.13 No alterations are proposed to the existing site access off Dog Lane and the proposal will not materially intensify its use compared to the existing situation. The farmhouse benefits from a large area of hardstanding adjacent to it, upon which there is space to accommodate the parking of at least three vehicles. As a consequence the requirements of the adopted Car Parking Standards will continue to be met. The proposed development is therefore held to meet the requirements of policy T1 of the Local Plan in this regard.

6 Conclusion

6.1 The submitted proposal constitutes a sustainable form of development having regard to the following conclusions:

- The proposal entails the change of use of an existing shippon that is worthy in physical, architectural and character terms for conversion.
- The design and layout of the development will safeguard the agrarian character of the building and not give rise to any harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
- The proposed development will not give rise to harm to the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.
- The proposed development will give rise to any highway safety impacts.

6.2 The proposed development is consequently held to meet the requirements of policies SS1, SS10, H1, DC1 and T1 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (2020), the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework, and guidance contained within the Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide SPD.