

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2025/0016
Valid 09/01/2025

HICKHAM FARM DOG LANE
IPSTONES EDGE
IPSTONES

CHANGE OF USE OF
AGRICULTURAL SHIPPON TO
PROVIDE RESIDENTIAL
ANNEX (PART-
RETROSPECTIVE)

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

The principle of the proposal
The impact on the character and appearance of the area.
The impact on residential amenities.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site is in the countryside about a mile to the north-east of Ipstones village on a ridge known as Ipstones Edge. It comprises a traditional stone farmhouse on the north side of Dog Lane and which is accessed from it via a farm access track. The farmhouse is at the end of a row of attached farm buildings including, next to it to the east, a traditional stone shippon (part of it is within the "Application Site", then further to the east, modern portal framed farm buildings. The part of the shippon within the application site, which directly adjoins to the farmhouse, is almost completely converted into habitable accommodation comprising a kitchen on the ground floor and a bedroom with ensuite above. A staircase has recently been installed to access the bedroom. The rooms are not integrated with the farmhouse and there is a separate entrance door to the farmhouse. It appears a new door and new windows have been inserted into the existing openings.

PROPOSAL

This is a full planning application for the conversion of part of the shippon into a residential annex to the farmhouse. Although this is described as a "part-retrospective" application, the conversion works appear to be almost complete but not yet occupied. It is intended to be occupied by the applicant, with his son and family occupying the farmhouse. The only new opening is a small rooflight in the rear (north-facing) roof-slope to light a stairwell. All existing openings are re-used as windows and the entrance door. A Planning Statement accompanies the planning application. A full application is required for the change of use of agricultural buildings into residential uses such as annexes. The current works are therefore unauthorised and the application seeks retrospective planning permission which would authorise the works and change of use and regularise the breach.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Local Plan (Adopted Sep 2020)

SS10 Other Rural Areas Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
NE1 Biodiversity

National Planning Policy Framework (Feb 2025)

Sections 5 (Housing), 6 (Economy), 12 (Design) and 15 (Natural Environment).

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

None.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 25.2.25
Neighbour consultation period ends: 25.2.25.
Press Advert: 17.1.25 (Development Affecting a Public Right of Way).

Public Comments

None.

Town / Parish Comments

Support.

Ramblers and Peak & Northern Footpaths

This must not affect the public from using these paths.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Policy SS10, the strategy for the countryside allows the change of use/conversion of rural buildings into residential uses where they are physically, architecturally and in character terms, suitable. The building which is being partly converted into an annex is a typical stone and tile building very similar in form to the farmhouse it is attached to and is considered to be suitable in this respect. As the residential floorspace created is to be used as a small 1-bed annex to the farmhouse, occupied only by the applicant and adjoining the farmhouse occupied by family members, this would not lead to any significant changes in vehicle movements to and from the site and the proposal is therefore not environmentally unsustainable. I consider the principle of the change of use in this rural location to be acceptable.

With regard to the impact on the character and appearance of the area, the only external changes are the insertion of a small rear rooflight and this does not harm the appearance of the building. The windows and doors appear to be recently added but using the existing openings of the building are not inappropriate in terms of their design and appearance. There is no significant impact on the visual amenities of the area.

With regard to residential amenity, the nearest existing dwellings outside of the farm property are a considerable distance away and the annex use would not lead to any harmful levels of overlooking of other residential properties. In terms of living conditions, although the annex is very small, it would be occupied by just one person who would also be using the farmhouse occupied by his family and also the existing garden and parking areas. It is not intended to be a separate unit of accommodation or separate dwelling but merely an annex to the farmhouse with a bedroom, bathroom and kitchen to allow a degree of independent living from the family farmhouse and would not operate any differently to most conventional annex arrangements. The proposal would not harm residential amenity with the safeguard of a condition restricting its use as an annex and not a separate unit of accommodation, which it would clearly be unsuitable for given its limited floorspace and lack of own separate garden and parking area.

Finally, although bats, a protected species, do use such traditional farm buildings in rural locations, it is not known if the building had any bats present or had significant potential as a roost, as the conversion works are almost complete although no significant external or roof works form part of the conversion. The works can be completed without any further harm to bats. If such harms were evident, this would be covered under separate protected species legislation.

There is no requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain because the works, existing or proposed, would not lead to the loss of any potential habitat of over 25 sq.m.

The nearby public footpaths would not be affected by the proposal.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The proposal is acceptable in principle and would not lead to any harms to the visual or residential amenities or any other environmental harms. The proposal would comply with the Local Plan and NPPF and retrospective planning permission can be granted to authorise the works undertaken so far and allow the conversion to be completed and the building occupied as a residential annex.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : APPROVE

Case Officer: Chris Johnston
Recommendation Date: 6.3.25

X *J. Colley*

Signed by: Jane Colley Signature

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council