

Conservation Team Advice

Date: 6th May 2025
Application Ref: SMD/2025/0180
Site Address: 1 The Old Post Office, Brookfields Road, Ipstones
Proposal: External alterations and extension to existing dwelling

Heritage assets affected:		
Designated Heritage Asset(s):	☒	• Ipstones Conservation Area • House approx. 20m north of Village School – Grade II (listing ref: 1038070) • Twist Intake – Grade II (listing ref: 1374661)
Non-Designated Heritage Asset(s):	☐	

Conservation Advice

Summary of Significance

The proposal would be situated in Ipstones Conservation Area and the setting of several Listed Buildings.

Ipstones Conservation Area was designated for its medieval origins and layout, development as farming settlement, retention of predominantly 18th and 19th century buildings, overriding impression of vernacular construction with buildings typically constructed in stone or brick and tiled roofs. Buildings in the centre are tightly knit, often situated immediately along the highway. There are some more isolated agricultural buildings on the fringes of the settlement. Within the boundary there is an abundance of greenery and areas of large open space, both of which make a positive contribution to the rural character of the Conservation Area. The Old Post Office makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

The Old School House (Grade II) is a late-18th century house with mid-19th century alterations. The building is constructed in squared stone and tiled roof. The building has a symmetrical façade with mullioned windows, a central doorway and gablet. The significance of the building arises from its retention of historic fabric and plan form, illustrative vernacular construction and prominence in the streetscene due to its orientation.

Twist Intake (Grade II) is a late-18th century house constructed in red brick with stone surrounds and a tiled roof. The significance of the building arises from its retention of historic fabric, layout, Neo-Classical influence and symmetrical façade and prominence on a corner plot.

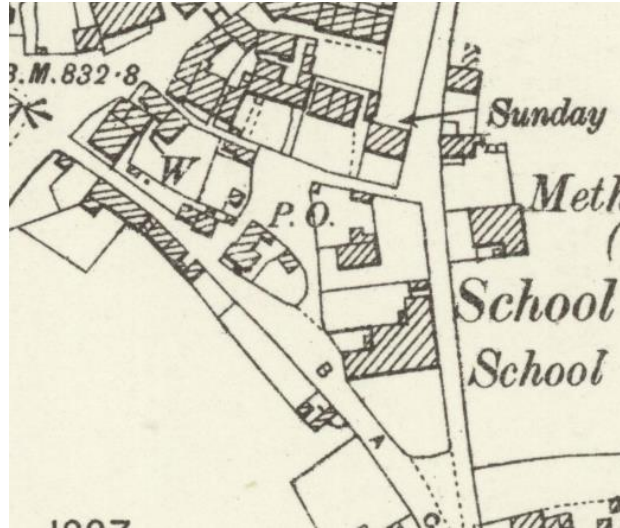


Fig. 1 c.1899 OS map [online] (National Library of Scotland)

Assessment and Impact

The proposal would involve the construction of a single-storey side extension, replacement porch, replacement bay window, replacement vehicular access gate and construction of dwarf wall and railings to the front elevation.

The dwelling currently has a U-shape plan form, with the rear outrigger slightly jutting out from the principal elevation of the building. The building is constructed in red brick walling and a blue-grey tiled roof. The front elevation consists of 2 bays, a central modern brick porch, two gablet/eaves windows to the first floor and a canted bay window on the left-hand side of the ground floor. Overall, the property is illustrative of the overriding vernacular and traditional character with some modest architectural detailing.

Side extension

The side extension would be single storey, with two distinctive parts. The front section would be a flat roof extension constructed in dark metal cladding with a sedum roof and rooflight. The rear portion would be pitched roof in form, finished in terracotta hung tiles.

Overall, the proposed form, design and palette of materials of the extension would be overtly modern. Its harsh industrial appearance would strongly contrast with the more modest vernacular appearance of the principal building and the overriding rural character and quaint charm of the Conservation Area. Due to the positioning of the site in a quite a prominent position in the village, the side extension would be highly visible

in the context of the Conservation Area and the adjacent Listed Building (notably in winter months with reduced vegetation). It would result in a distracting and visually harmful addition to the street as it would not respond to the local identity and character of Ipstones Conservation Area nor the wider setting of the Listed Building.

Alterations to the front elevation

The proposal seeks to replace the modern pitched roof brick porch with a flat roof timber porch, to reinstate a dwarf wall and fence to the front, install a vertically boarded sliding gate and replace the bay window.

The Heritage Statement provided includes photographic evidence of a timber porch (dated c.1900) which had dentillated cornice and stained-glass windows and a boundary with a stone plinth and timber fence. The detailing on the proposed elevations appears to carefully replicate this historic detailing. These works would result in a minor enhancement to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and setting of the Listed Buildings.

The historic photographs in the Heritage Statement also show a traditional timber bay window with cornicing and sliding sash windows. The existing is a modern replacement window tiled roof. The proposed elevations appear to try to replicate the surround and detailing of the original timber canted bay window. However, the proposed elevations (dwg no. AL13 Rev A) appear to indicate that the windows would be side hung rather than a traditional sliding sash window. This would look odd in this context as it would diminish the attempt of trying to authentically replicate and reinstate historic and original detailing.

The proposed timber boarded gate would not be particularly sympathetic to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, however it is noted a similar design is currently in situ so these works would likely have a negligible impact on the setting and significance of the designated heritage assets.

Summary

The existing porch and bay window, whilst not original, are not overtly harmful to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. They make a neutral contribution to the area's significance. Whilst the Heritage Statement mentions that the replacement of these features would be an enhancement, these enhancements would be very slight and with regard to the bay window they would not be authentically designed. In comparison, the side extensions would result in a high degree of harm, the impact of which would be greater than the other slight enhancements arising from the development.

Legislation and Policy

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The local planning authority should have a desirability of preserving the setting of the Listed Building (s.66) and preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the Conservation Area (s.72).

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024

In determining applications, local authorities should take account of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation, the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality, the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness (par.210).

Any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within the setting), should require clear and convincing justification (par.213).

Where a proposed development would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use (par.215).

Local Development Framework

Consideration should also be given to the following documents and local development framework policies:

- Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (Adopted 2020) – DC2 The Historic Environment
- Ipstones Conservation Area Appraisal (2007)

Conclusions and Recommendations

In summary, the proposal would have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and wider setting of the Listed Building. This would be contrary to s.66 and 72 of the Act. With reference to the planning policies, this would be 'less than substantial harm' to the designated heritage assets (par.215 of NPPF and policy DC2 of the local development framework). There does not appear to be clear and convincing justification for this level of harm (par.213 of NPPF) and, as set out in par.212 of NPPF, great weight should be given to the conservation of a designated heritage asset. We, therefore, object to the proposed extensions and possible inappropriate design of windows to the replacement bay window from a conservation perspective and recommend the application is refused on that basis.

Conservation Officer: