

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2025/0326
Valid 08/07/2025

WOODHOUSE FARM HILL
TOP
BROWN EDGE

**CONVERSION OF EXISTING
COAL STORE BUILDING TO
C3 USE , CONVERSION OF
EXISTING BARN TO C3 USE
AND ALTERATIONS TO
DWELLING**

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

- Impact on Green Belt
- Local Plan Approach to Rural Development
- Impact on Character and Appearance of the Area
- Impact on Biodiversity and Ecology

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

A 19th century historic farmstead on a linear layout (recorded in County survey). The small farmhouse cottage has a small single storey farm/pig outrigger attached to the south, and a long shippon adjoining to the north. All stone built, with brick sections providing historic repair, alteration and modest enlargement – pre 20th century.

The site is in the Green Belt within an agricultural, farmland setting. It is in an ancient slope and valley farmland landscape type, set below the road, to the west of, a ridge of gritstone upland. From the road the linear farmstead is set down at a lower land level behind a roadside drystone wall and a small coppice of trees. The well-established access track takes a sharp Dshape or hairpin as it drops around the trees down to the farm stead.

The rear of the dwelling and its adjoining shippon, back onto open field and their does not historically appear to have been any garden or boundary enclosure provided at the rear.

From the roadside to the northwest, the full length of the farmstead is apparent, traditional and historic moorland's farm buildings that make strong and intrinsic contribution to the character and quality of the rural area.

PROPOSAL

Essentially a householder proposal. For clarification, the change of use to the adjoining shippon would provide additional living accommodation to be provided with the existing dwelling (not to be provide a second dwelling on the site).

Alterations to the single storey farm store outrigger would increase its height and create a first floor, providing additional living accommodation across two storeys.

Revised plans have been submitted, on request of the planning officer, that show: the two storey outrigger reduced ridge roof plain height to maintain a subordinate relationship and visual break in the roof plan adjacent to the original dwelling; the omission of a balcony and Juliet balcony from the rear elevation.

An additional site plan revision has been submitted that proposes the line of boundary enclosure to the rear and around to the south. The plan proposes livestock fencing and native hedgerow planting. A landscaping plan also proposes additional tree and hedgerow planting around the site.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Local Plan (adopted 9th September 2020)

SS1 Development Principles
SS2 Settlement Hierarchy
SS10 Other Rural Areas Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
DC2 The Historic Environment
DC3 Landscape and Settlement Setting
NE1 Biodiversity and Geological Resources
NE2 Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

Design Principles for Development in the Staffordshire Moorlands (SPG) Space
About Dwellings (SPG) Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide 2018 (SPD)
Landscape Character Assessment

National Planning Policy Framework

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/2025/0126 Agricultural building. WITHDRAWN.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 8th August 2025
Neighbour consultation period ends: 8th August 2025
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

None

Town / Parish Comments

Brown Edge PC: No Objection

Staffs Wildlife Trust

No response within consultation period

Severn Trent

No response within consultation period

OFFICER COMMENTS

Impact on Green Belt

The site is in the Green Belt where development is inappropriate and, by definition, harmful unless it is provided for by one of the exceptions that appear on the closed lists at Chapter 13 of the NPPF. Any harm to the Green Belt should be attributed 'substantial weight' and planning permission shall not be granted unless there are other considerations, amounting to 'very special circumstances', that clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt and any other harm resulting from the proposal.

The NPPF includes two exceptions that are relevant here, the alteration or extension of a building providing it does not result in a disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building; and, the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction and that the development preserves openness and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt.

In this case, the proposed addition would be limited to the introduction of a first floor above the piggery/farm store, there would be no increase to building footprint and, across the building range, only very minor volume increase. The proposed extension would not result in disproportionate size increase.

The application proposes the change of use, reuse, or conversion of a small piggery/farm store and the adjoining shippon. Both building elements are of substantial stone and brick construction dating from the 19th century. The majority of works would be internal and there would be no increase to building footprint. The development would make use of established farm and residential curtilage. In these regards, the development would preserve openness and not conflict with any of the purposes of including land in the Green Belt.

The proposed development would be provided for by the two identified exceptions that appear at Chapter 13 and would not, therefore, be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. There would be no harm to the Green Belt.

Approach to countryside development in the 'other rural areas'

In the 'other rural' areas of countryside, outside of the Local Plan defined settlements, Local Plan area policy SS10 applies. Policy SS10 is generally restrictive in its support for housing development, making provision in only exceptional circumstances. Two such provisions, to meet local housing requirements and specific needs, are: allowing the conversion or replacement of an existing rural building in accordance with Policy H 1; and allowing extensions or additional domestic outbuildings to existing dwellings provided they are appropriate in scale and design and do not have a detrimental impact on the existing dwelling and the character of the rural area. Local Plan policy H1 supports conversion where the building is suitable and worthy in physical, architectural and character terms for conversion.

There would not be conflict with the policy provisions above and the development would be provided for by the two exceptions. The building's that would be converted have value by virtue of their age and character, they are suitable and worthy of conversion.

The conversions would provide additional living accommodation for the existing dwellinghouse to which they adjoin, providing appropriate arrangement within the established unit and best available means of extending the floorspace available to the modest dwelling.

As discussed below the proposed extension would be of appropriate scale and design and not have a detrimental effect on the character of the rural area.

Design and Impact on Character and Appearance

The proposed building enlargement would add a first floor above the single storey piggery that adjoins the side of the dwellinghouse. The revised plan has dropped the ridge line and set the roof plain back so that this building form remains subordinate to the side of the original dwellinghouse and there is a visual break in the roof line to retain definition between the dwelling and the, former, farm store.

Revised plans have omitted the introduction of a balcony and Juliet rail at first floor from the rear elevation. Such features would have introduced visual clutter that would not have been in keeping with the age and character of the farm buildings.

The conversion works to the attached shippon would employ sensitive treatment and alteration – largely making use of existing openings and form.

Throughout the development the plans detail the use of matching facing stone and brick and clay roof tiles and flush fitting wood effect casements in a light grey colour.

The curtilage would be defined at the rear, providing separation from the open field and an appropriate sense of enclosure and containment, with livestock fencing and native hedgerow planting.

The development would not adversely affect the character of the host buildings or the character and appearance of the area. In these regards, there would be no conflict with Local Plan policies SS10, H1, DC1, DC2, or DC3, the Design Guide for the area, or the terms of the NPPF.

Ecology and Biodiversity

The development is exempt from BNG legislation, not by reason of de minimis impact, but because the development provides householder development that would be occupied by the existing homeowner.

Despite this, the application includes a proposed planting plan that details relatively extensive supplementary planting within surrounding land in the applicant's ownership

and hedgerow boundary treatment to enclose a dedicated curtilage arrangement to the dwellinghouse. Additional planting will, overall, enhance biodiversity.

An ecologists bat and bird roost survey has been provided with the application that includes report following a nocturnal activity survey. The report does not find bat presence within the building but foraging activity in the area. It concludes that a bat license would not be required but recommends mitigation for loss of potential habitat by providing bat and bird boxes within the development.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

Acceptable form of householder development that would involve the sensitive and appropriate conversion of adjoining farm buildings. There would be no harm to the Green Belt or conflict with the rural development policies of the SMDC Local Plan. The application proposes boundary treatment and planting that would give the development sense of place and enclosure within the landscape and enhance biodiversity. No conflict with the policies listed above.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : APPROVE

Case Officer: Ben Hurst

Recommendation Date: 06/11/2025

X *B.S. Haywood*

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council