

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2026/0148
Valid 30/03/2026

LANE END FARM
CONGLETON ROAD
MOW COP

**CONTEMPORARY LINK TO
EXTENSION TO ENLARGE
EXISTING KITCHEN AND LINK
MAIN HOUSE TO ANNEXE
BUILDING**

(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)

MAIN ISSUES

- Impact on Green Belt
- Impact on Character and Appearance

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

Lane End Farm is in the Green Belt off Mow Lane, toward the Congleton Road ridgeline below Mow Cop and above and to the west of Gillow Heath and Biddulph. Mow Lane is a narrow rural lane, which from the edge of Biddulph valley winds up toward the high ground of Mow Cop. Mow Lane provides access to scattered farms and cottages that are set within agricultural land.

Recorded on the County survey as a surviving 19th Century 'historic farmstead'. The dwelling and the adjacent annexe form a loose courtyard plan. The buildings have steep full pitch roofs and random course gritstone elevations. Some of the elevations have been rendered, presumably in attempt to assimilate and blend later extension and alteration.

The farmstead is positioned in extensive open grounds that is surrounded by tree and hedge line enclosure. Views of the property are available from the roadside through gaps in the trees.

Biddulph Town Public footpath 12 connects the ridge line of Congleton Road to the west and Akesmore Lane to the edge of Biddulph to the east. The footpath passes the southern edge of the applicant's grounds and provides views across open land toward the southern elevations of the farmstead.

The building's southern elevations present traditional form and vernacular architecture that contributes to the character and appearance of the rural area; the separation and historic arrangement of the farmhouse and adjacent farm shed is clearly apparent. The buildings step down the falling hillside with a series of gable presentations set against the backdrop of mature tree line.



PROPOSAL

The proposal is to build a linking single storey extension between the southern end of the farmhouse and the detached annexe, provided as a conversion and alteration of farmstead buildings.

The extension would extend from the southern elevation by 4m and span the width of the dwelling's end gables. A linking corridor would extend across to the west and connect to the annexe to run along the southern edge of the building extending from its southern elevation by 2m.

The linking extension would open to and extend the existing kitchen space at the farmhouse with an open plan arrangement that would provide views through expanses of glazed elevation. The structure would be supported by steel work beneath a sloping canopy roof.

Centrally there would be a monolithic, heavysset stone Chimney and a 'Spine Wall' to intersect the 1.8m level change that must be overcome by the Link Extension.

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

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

Biddulph Neighbourhood Plan

DES1 Design Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SM94-0025 [detail unavailable]

SM94-0285 Extension and Renovation of uninhabited dwelling (revised) APPROVED

SM94-598 [detail unavailable]

SM94-0865 Extension and Renovation of uninhabited dwelling (revised)
APPROVED.

SM94-1121 [detail unavailable]

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 25/05/2026

Neighbour consultation period ends: 25/05/2026

Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

None

Town / Parish Comments

Biddulph Town Council: No response within consultation period

OFFICER COMMENTS

Impact on Green Belt

The site is within the Green Belt where development is inappropriate and, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt unless it is provided for by one of the exceptions that appear on the closed lists at Chapter 13 of the NPPF. Substantial weight is attributed to any harm to the Green Belt and planning permission should not be granted unless there are other considerations, amounting to very special circumstances, that clearly outweighs the harm to the Green Belt and any other harms that would result from the development.

The list of exceptions includes: the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

Original building is simply defined in the NPPF as 'a building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after 1 July 1948, as it was built originally'.

The application makes the case that the existing footprint of the farmhouse and annexe should be taken as the 'original building' for the purposes of the NPPF. It is said that a web search did not reveal any planning history and that the arrangement of footprint has not changed from that which is evident on pre 1948 historic maps.

That position, however, overlooks the planning history from the early 1990s, understandable as it is not available online and records are revealed from scanned images of the old plotting sheets. Planning permissions were granted, with multiple

revisions, in 1994 for extensions and renovations to the farmhouse which at that time was described as uninhabited and redundant. The decision notices are available and, incidentally, subject to condition that restricts permitted development rights. Unfortunately, the plans associated with the approvals are not readily available, however, the history records are suggestive of a significant scheme of works. The available aerial photograph from 1999 suggests, from the apparent condition of surrounding ground, that a project of building work had been recently completed or that ground/landscaping works were being carried out.

The scanned plotting sheet also assists by providing the 1955 edition of the ordnance survey map for the area (revised Dec 1953)

With greater detail than that which is shown on earlier maps, the map provides a timely snapshot of the footprint post, and not long after, 1948.

alterations, it is difficult to calculate volume and footprint increase and arrive at a percentage value for that size increase.

The NPPF exception does not require volume, or footprint increases to be precisely calculated (although of course they can assist by providing an evidence base for analysis) and it does not define or set a limit on what might be considered a disproportionate addition.

Particularly from the south, the proposed addition extending 4m from the compact and concise elevation of the gable end would sprawl across the width of the building line with substantial structure that would be discordant with the size and arrangement of the existing building form, and appear as a disproportionate addition to the original/existing building.

The form, footprint and mass would extend extensively to the south away from the main form of what is most readable as being the original dwelling increasing impact and occupation of undeveloped land within the plot.

It is clear that, in this case, size increase would also result from the joining together of the two separate building forms, to make one sprawling conglomerate building mass. That alteration would add to each building disproportionately over and above their original size.

The development would be inappropriate in the Green Belt, it would not be provided for by the exception discussed above. There would be substantial harm to both the spatial and visual aspects of Green Belt openness, and conflict with a purpose of including land in the Green Belt through countryside encroachment.

There are no considerations apparent that would clearly outweigh that harm to the Green Belt and the other harms that would result from the development.

Design and Impact on Character and Appearance of the Area

Local Plan Policy DC1 requires 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 incorporate creativity, detailing and materials appropriate to the character of the area; and, 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.

Local Plan policy DC3 states that development which leads to a prominent intrusion into the countryside should be resisted.

The proposed development would affect mainly the southern elevations of the building line which are clearly visible and apparent across open grounds from the public footpath to the south.

The dwelling and the adjacent annexe form a loose courtyard plan, the quality and survival of historic arrangement and its contribution to the character and appearance of the area and landscape quality rely on the physical separation and distinction between the farmhouse and the adjacent farm building annexe.

The building elevations present to the south with steep tiled full pitch roofs and an arrangement of random course gritstone and rendered elevations. The building's southern elevations present traditional form and vernacular architecture that contributes to the character and appearance of the rural area; the separation and historic arrangement of the farmhouse and adjacent farm shed is clearly apparent. The buildings step down the falling hillside with a series of gable presentations set against the backdrop of mature tree line. The buildings have a comfortable and assimilated position and presence in the landscape.

The proposed development would join the separate buildings, close the gap and spacing between the buildings and largely conceal their original elevations and arrangements with a discordant form of development, in terms of design and use of materials, that would neither relate well to the form and character of the original dwelling or its situation in the landscape.

The development would present as an unusual form and design of development that would appear as an oddity in this isolated position in the landscape. The proposed addition would awkwardly span the fall in levels of the hillside. The arrangement and proposed use of stone for the corridor elevation and the monolith chimney would not match the gritstone of the original building or the vernacular of the area.

The elevational presentation to the south would be that of a disjointed and awkward arrangement of mismatched shapes and building forms that lack coherency.

Overall, the development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area and would appear as a prominent intrusion in the landscape. The proposed development would not comply with the Council's Design Guide SPD and the Design Principles SPG. There would be conflict with policies SS10, DC1, DC2 and DC3 of the SMDC Local Plan; DES1 of the Biddulph Neighbourhood Plan; and the terms of the NPPF.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The proposal is for inappropriate development in the Green Belt that would be harmful to the Green Belt by definition. There would also be harm to the Green Belt by adverse impact on openness and countryside encroachment. None of the Green Belt exceptions listed at Chapter 13 of the NPPF would apply, specifically the proposed building alterations and extension would result in a disproportionate size increase over and above that of the original building and result in one large sprawling conglomerate mass of building form. Substantial weight is attached to this harm there are no considerations that amount to very special circumstances and clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt and the other harms that would result from the development. The proposal conflicts with Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan policy SS10 and the terms of the NPPF.

There would also be harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling's prominent and exposed southern elevations, the surviving arrangement of the historic farmstead plan, and the buildings arrangement and situation in the landscape. The development would poorly relate to the traditional and vernacular architecture of the existing buildings, and dominate, the existing building form and make a prominent and unusual intrusion in the countryside that would be apparent from the public vantage of Biddulph footpath no. 12. In turn, the development would be detrimental to the building's contribution to the quality of the landscape and harmful to the character and appearance of the area. In these regards, the proposal conflicts with Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan policies SS10, DC1, DC2 and DC3; policy DES1 of the Biddulph Neighbourhood Plan; and the Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide SPD 2018 and Design Principles SPG, and the terms of the NPPF.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : REFUSE

Case Officer: Ben Hurst

Recommendation Date:

X 

Signed by: Jane Curley

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council