

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2026/0116
Valid 11/03/2026

THE COTTAGE HILL TOP
BROWN EDGE

ERECTION OF REPLACEMENT
OUTBUILDING TO FORM
RESIDENTIAL ANNEX

(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)

MAIN ISSUES

- Principle of development
- Design and visual impact
- Trees
- Highways/parking
- Coal (low-risk area)
- Ecology

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

A detached dwelling sited within generously sized grounds and benefitting from a large, detached outbuilding, external amenity space, and spacious off-road parking area. The dwelling has previously been extended and sits at the northern end of the plot with its principal elevation facing towards the south. The detached garage sits at the rear edge of a block paved parking area, close to the eastern boundary and with its wide gable facing towards the highway. Boundaries are marked by fencing, drystone walls and hedgerow. The dwelling sits at a lower land level than the outbuilding and parking area. The surrounding area comprises mainly open land and sporadically located dwellings.

For the purposes of planning policy consideration, the application site is located within the Green Belt. The site is not within any Conservation Area and there are no listed buildings / structures or protected trees which need to be considered.

PROPOSAL

The demolition of an existing, detached outbuilding and its replacement with a detached, residential annex. The annex would be of dormer bungalow design with two single garages and a storeroom at ground floor level, a staircase would lead to the upper floor. At first floor level there would be an open plan lounge/kitchen/dining area and one bedroom with ensuite. The roof would be covered with plain grey tiles, within which there would be skylights to the front, and two pitched roof dormers to the rear. The elevation drawings confirm the window frames would be black/brown upvc frames, the dormers cheeks would be finished with a grey/black composite cladding and the main building walls would be rendered in an off white/cream colour to match that of the dwellinghouse. There does not appear to be any materials details for the garage doors however the plans appear to show they would be an up-and-over design.

The Planning Statement confirms that 'the annex is to be occupied by the applicants' daughter and will share the domestic curtilage of the existing dwelling, along with its parking area and means of access off Hill Top. The annex would remain in the same ownership as The Cottage and will also share its electricity and water connections with the main dwelling, as well as its postal address.'

Officer's expressed concerns about the original proposal and the applicant decided to submit amended plans. For the purposes of clarity, the plans being considered are PP01 Rev C, PP02 Rev C and PP03 Rev C.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan

SS1	Development Principles
SS2	Settlement Hierarchy
SS10	Other Rural Areas Area Strategy
DC1	Design Considerations
DC3	Landscape and Settlement Setting
H1	New Housing Development
NE1	Biodiversity and Geological Resources
NE2	Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows
T1	Development and Sustainable Transport
Appendix 2	Parking Guidance

Supplementary Planning Guidance

1. Design Principles for Development in the Staffordshire Moorlands

Supplementary Planning Document

Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide

National Planning Policy Framework

Including sections;

- | | |
|----|--|
| 2 | Achieving sustainable development |
| 6 | Building a strong, competitive economy |
| 9 | Promoting sustainable transport |
| 12 | Achieving well-designed places |
| 13 | Protecting Green Belt land. |
| 15 | Conserving and enhancing the natural environment |

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

82/11543/OLDDC	First floor extension to form bedroom and store. Approved.
04/01280/FUL	Single storey front extension. Approved.
08/00915/FUL	First floor rear extension. Refused.
SMD/2016/0296	Proposed demolition of existing conservatory and car port and erection of single storey front and two storey side extensions. Approved.
SMD/2017/0030	Alterations and extensions to dwelling and replacement outbuilding. Refused and allowed at appeal.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice. Expired.

Neighbour consultation period. Expired.

Public Comments

No representations received during the statutory consultation period.

Brown Edge Parish Council

No representations received.

Staffordshire Wildlife Trust

The bat survey is fine and appropriate. In addition to our discussion, where possible trees should be retained, enhanced or planted as part of the development to provide habitat for birds. Suggest conditions should the application be successful plus an advisory that if bats are found, all work should cease and a licensed bat ecologist contacted for advice.

Trees (SMDC)

First response

Due to the presence of trees within/adjacent to the site it is necessary for the applicant to provide an Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement to support their application. An Arboricultural Impact Assessment should be submitted to demonstrate how the proposed development will affect existing trees and identify if any tree removal is required to facilitate the development. For retained trees at the site, an Arboricultural Method Statement should also be provided to detail the measures and working methods required to protect and preserve retained trees on site. Without these it is not possible to adequately assess the impact of the proposal on existing trees or determine whether appropriate mitigation against the harm of trees on site can be secured. Given the presence of on site, an Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Arboricultural Method Statement in accordance with BS:5837:2012 - trees in relation to design, demolition and construction, an should be submitted to support the application. Additionally, the proposed site layout indicates the removal of trees to facilitate demolition and construction activities. It is recommended that appropriate replanting is identified and incorporated within the scheme, with details of species, size, and planting locations to be provided.

Second response

I think this will be ok and should avoid damage to the trees during the construction, and also promote a more sustainable relationship going forward between the development and the trees. Condition recommended in the event of an approval.

Environmental Health

No objections subject to conditions.

Severn Trent Water

No objections subject to conditions.

Staffordshire County Council Highways

Recommendation Summary: Conditional

Site Visit Conducted on: 13-Apr-2026

Personal Injury Collisions

Current records show that there were not any Personal Injury Collisions on Brown Edge within 43 metres either side of the property accesses for the previous three years.

Background

Brown Edge is an unclassified road with a speed limit of 30 mph. Brown Edge has no footways on either side of the carriageway. The road is unlit.

Description of Proposal

Erection of replacement outbuilding to form residential annex.

Comment on Information submitted

This is a replacement of the existing garage and store with hobby room on the first level. The proposal is for an annex for family use and will comprise of 2 no. bedrooms Proposed Ground & First Floor Plans (as shown on drawing no. P401-202 PP01). However, the Planning Statement states this will be 1 no. bedroom plus a home office on the first floor. There will be a loss of car parking in terms of loss of the double garages. However, there is sufficient space within the site curtilage to accommodate parking.

Recommendations

I have no objection subject to the following being secured via conditions development:

1. At no time will the proposed annex be rented or sold without prior written permission of the local planning authority.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development and Design and Visual Impact

The application site is located within the Green Belt and as such the provisions of NPPF section 13 apply. Paragraph number 154 sets out the instances where there are exceptions to inappropriate development, paragraph 155 relates to Grey Belt land. Paragraph 153 is clear in that substantial weight should be given to any Green Belt harm and that inappropriate development should only be approved except in very special circumstances. Local Plan policy SS10 allows for the conversion or replacement of an existing rural building in accordance with policy H1. H1 confirms that 'when development is located in the Green Belt, national Green Belt policy will apply.'

The exceptions within paragraph 154 includes that of section (d), 'the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces.' The current building, although an outbuilding, is domestic and it is proposed to be replaced with domestic living accommodation. However, the scheme is considered to be contrary to 154(d) as it is concluded that the new building is materially larger than the one it is to replace. Since submission of the application, the annex building has been redesigned to reduce its size. However the plans clearly show that the new building will be taller by approximately 63cm at the ridge. It is not just the raising of the ridge which is different from the building already in situ, it is the addition of dormer windows, roof lights and domestic front door.

The new building would have a differently orientated roof ridge at approximately 63cm higher than the existing. However, currently the building has its gable facing towards the highway, the proposed annex would have the ridge running in a roughly north-south alignment, resulting in a visually more substantial building facing towards the highway and thus be a building with greater visual impact from both the front and rear. The agent has confirmed via email that the new building would have a volume increase of 22% over and above the structure already in situ. Therefore it is materially larger and conflicts with the paragraph 154(d) provision.

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council's Design Guide SPD outlines the Council's expectations in respect of design and states that outbuildings need to be designed and built in sympathy with the properties they serve. For a development to be considered appropriate in terms of its size and massing, the Council would expect to see outbuildings subordinate to the dominance of the original building. The Design Principles SPD states that a "garage should be modest in size and height to reflect its purpose as an ancillary, domestic building". It also says that "the garage should relate well to the main dwelling in terms of its siting. The siting should allow the garage to appear subordinate to the dwelling."

The combination of footprint, height and overall design results in the structure not reading as an ancillary outbuilding, it has more of an impact, not only in terms of its size and design, but also due to its intended residential use. The building would have a distinctly 'dwelling' type of appearance rather than that of a subordinate domestic outbuilding. Whilst the existing structure is large, it does have a 'subordinate' appearance to it. It clearly reads as an outbuilding. Whilst described as an annex, this is a building with all facilities for independent living. The scheme also includes integral parking space,

this is not referred to within the application description and it is unclear whether the parking spaces are intended for use by the occupant(s) of the annex, the main dwelling, or both.

The application also advances the argument that the proposed development could accord with NPPF paragraph 154(g) 'limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land (including a material change of use to residential or mixed use including residential), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.' Whilst the site may comprise previously developed land, it has already been concluded that matters such as the building's proposed form / appearance / size/ design and visual impact, raise concerns. The agent has confirmed the proposed building is larger than that currently in situ, and therefore by default there is Green Belt openness harm which is not overcome by any very special circumstances. There does not have to be any encroachment beyond the site for a proposal to impact upon openness, openness is freedom from development.

It is concluded that the proposal does not comply with any of the exceptions at paragraph number 154 (NPPF), nor does it meet the tests of paragraph number 155 in the event that the site was found to be grey belt land.

Trees

There was initial concern about the impact of the proposal upon nearby trees. The applicant subsequently submitted amended plans with additional tree related information including root protection areas and protective fencing location. The Councils Arboriculture Officer has reviewed the plans and raises no objections to them. A condition is requested in the event of the application being approved.

Highways/parking

The County Highways officer's comments related to the initial submission where a larger annex was proposed, which included 2 bedrooms and no integral parking space. The Highways officer noted there would be a loss of car parking as a result of the loss of the garage, but concluded that there is still sufficient space within the site curtilage to accommodate parking, and no objections were raised.

The revised scheme sees one bedroom being proposed as well as integral parking for two vehicles, this is a much-reduced scheme in terms of pressure for parking spaces within the application site and as such the same conclusion is drawn, that there is sufficient space within the curtilage to accommodate parking. The Highways officer did recommend a condition to tie the building to the main dwelling to prevent it being let or sold separately

Coal (low-risk area)

The application site is within a low-risk coal development area. Latest advice contained on the Gov.uk website is that 'If you are submitting a planning application in a Development Low Risk Area then there is no statutory requirement to submit a CMRA to the Local Planning Authority' however 'the proposed development still lies within a coal mining area and could contain unrecorded hazards.' The advice is that if any coal mining feature is encountered it must be immediately reported to the Coal Authority.

Ecology

No issues in terms of ecology. The Bat Survey (Absolute Ecology), has been reviewed by Staffordshire Wildlife Trust. No objections have been forthcoming, rather a number of conditions are recommended in the event of the application being approved.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The development is unacceptable both in principle and in terms of design. By virtue of its scale, bulk and height over the demolished building, the development would amount to being materially larger than the building it will replace. The development is therefore considered to be inappropriate development in the Green Belt which by definition is harmful to the Green Belt. Furthermore, the proposal would be harmful to the openness of the Green Belt by virtue of its height, scale and design. No very special circumstances exist to outweigh this harm. The proposal conflicts with the NPPF and Policy SS10 which only allows for domestic outbuildings in the Open Countryside and Green Belt where they comply with national Green Belt policy.

The development is not considered acceptable in terms of scale and as a result there is further conflict with SS10 which states that in the Open Countryside the Council will only allow 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.

In terms of design, the development conflicts with the Councils Design Guide SPD which states that outbuildings need to be designed and built in sympathy with the properties they serve and the Design Principles in the Staffordshire Moorlands SPD which states "the garage should be modest in size and height to reflect its purpose as an ancillary domestic building".

As a result of the above there is also conflict with Policy DC1 and Policy DC3 of the Local Plan and, Paragraph 139 of the NPPF which states that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes.

For these reasons, the application is recommended for refusal.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : Refuse.

Case Officer: Lisa Jackson

Recommendation Date: 30.07.2026.

X 

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council