

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2026/0279
Valid 11/06/2026

LAND OFF SHAY LANE
IPSTONES

**DEMOLITION OF EXISTING
SUMMERHOUSE AND
PROPOSED CONVERSION,
EXTENSION AND
ALTERATION OF AN EXISTING
BARN TO FORM 1NO. SELF-
BUILD DWELLINGHOUSE AND
ASSOCIATED WORKS**

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

The principle of the development in this rural location
The impact on the character and appearance of the area
The impact on residential amenity
The impact on highway safety
The impact on ground stability
The ecological value of the site

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The site lies about 100m to the east of the Development Boundary of Ipstones and hence is deemed to be within the countryside. The boundary also marks the boundary of a Conservation Area which covers much of the built-up part of the village and does not include the site. It comprises the back part of a large garden and paddock area belonging to a dwelling, Brook Cottage which lies to the north side of Shay Lane, a narrow dead-end country lane leading out of the village from Brookfields Road. The site is on the opposite side of the lane from the cottage, on the south side of the lane and further along towards the east. The site comprises a single-storey cream-rendered modern blockwork outbuilding, with an eaves height of about 4.0 to 4.5m and a low-pitched corrugated fibre-cement roof. There is a large sliding timber vehicular-type door and two smaller standard timber doors. It is placed against the eastern/rear edge of the site with the front elevation facing the paddock/garden to the west. There is a small timber summer house next to the north elevation of the building. There is a field access into the site in a gap within a north boundary hedgerow. The site is surrounded by open land. The site is in the Churnet Valley. The site is also within a High Risk former coal mining zone. There is a public footpath about 50m to the east of the site crossing the field to the rear of the building.

PROPOSAL

This is a full planning application for the conversion of the building into a 3-bed dwelling which would involve removing the summer house and adding a single-storey extension to the building in its place. An additional floor would be added to provide first-floor bedrooms which would be contained within a new steeper roof finished with Staffs Blue tiles. The walls would be clad with Hollington stone including stone heads, cill, quoins, kneelers and gable coping. The new extension would have more modern contemporary appearance with walls and a roof finished with black sinusoidal metal cladding. The large “cart opening” would be fully glazed and green timber sliding and folding doors would be installed. Three new “hopper” type windows would be placed on the rear elevation at ground floor level. A large ground to ridge window would be installed into the south-facing gable elevation. Two new front windows would be placed in the existing front openings. All frames would be green timber. Seven rooflights would be provided and also solar panels on the rear roof-slope and a separate ground-mounted solar array placed along the north boundary to the north of the extension. A stone gabion retaining wall would be placed in front of it.

Elsewhere around the site, the field access would be re-used and a driveway/parking area added with a gravel finish other than the bellmouth which would be cobblestones. A sandstone apron would be formed around the building including a patio area to the south. The boundaries would comprise a new drystone wall along the eastern and northern boundaries with the hedgerow retained. Post and rail timber fencing would be placed along the south and west boundaries. Drainage would comprise soakaways fed by water from an existing attenuation tank and a package treatment plant would be installed to deal with foul water/waste.

The dwelling would be a “self-build” to be occupied by the applicant. A Self-Build Proforma has been received, completed by the agent, which states the following:

The proposed scheme has been designed to meet the specific needs of the applicants and is to be constructed on their behalf for their subsequent occupancy in accordance with the provisions of the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015. From the outset, the owners have been fully involved in the design process, working collaboratively with CTD Architects to influence every aspect of the proposals, including the scale, form, layout, internal flow, accommodation and materiality. This close collaboration has resulted in a tailored dwelling that responds directly to the owners' specific needs and aspirations, thus creating a truly bespoke self-build home.

The application includes a Planning Statement, Structural Survey Report, Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) report and a Shay Lane Traffic Survey (May 2026) data document.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Staffs Moorlands Local Plan (adopted September 2020)

SS10 Other Rural Areas Area Strategy
H1 – New Housing
DC1 – Design Considerations

NE1 – The Natural Environment
SD1 – Sustainable use of resources
T1 – Sustainable transport

NPPF (Revised Dec 2024)

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

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/1979/1131: Calf pens and stables building. Approved.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 21/07/26.
Neighbour consultation period ends: 21/07/26
Press Advert: N/A.

Public Comments

One letter of support from a local resident has been received.

Town / Parish Comments

Support.

Local Highways Authority

No objection subject to conditions.

Environmental Health

No objection subject to standard conditions normally applied to barn conversions and an additional condition requiring a ground contamination survey to be undertaken due to the area being a High Risk former coal mining zone.

Staffordshire Wildlife Trust

No objection subject to conditions to secure mitigation and also enhancements to the ecological value of the site and biodiversity gain.

Tree Officer

No objection.

Coal Authority

No objection. The site is in a High Risk former coal mining zone. Our records indicate that the plotted position of an off-site mine shaft is located to the northwest of the application site, with its potential zone of influence extending partly into the site. Whilst an untreated or inadequately treated mine entry and its resultant zone of influence pose a significant risk not only to surface stability but also public safety, this feature is located away from the proposed development. We note that the application is proposing a conversion to a dwellinghouse and whilst a single-storey extension is proposed, this would appear to be small-scale that we assume does not require significant groundworks or foundations.

SCC Public Rights of Way

No objection in terms of impact of the development on a nearby public footpath.

Ramblers

P.R.O.W Ipstones 53 seems it is a little distance from the proposed development off shay Lane. This path must not be affected in any way.

Peak & Northern Footpaths

The use of any PROWs, and the safety of users must not be affected by the development, nor during the work taking place.

OFFICER COMMENTS

The site is in the countryside. Policies SS10 and H1 restricts new dwellings in the countryside in order to protect their open and rural character and appearance and also because rural locations are generally not environmentally sustainable for new house. The policies will only allow the conversion/re-use of existing rural buildings into dwellings where the buildings are physically, architecturally and in character terms suitable for a new residential use.

With regard to whether the building is physically suitable, the current building appears very solid and permanent as it is made of concrete blockwork. A Structurally Survey report has been submitted which concludes that the structure is suitable for a conversion to a residential dwelling and that identified defects are manageable through standard remedial works and do not compromise the viability of conversion. The report identified the defects as being in the roof and recommends some replacement of roof purlins. However, the proposal includes the complete replacement of the roof. Due to the intact blockwork elevations, not requiring any significant works, I do not consider the replacement of the roof would be deemed to amount to any significant rebuilding of the overall structure and would not contravene the aims of this part of the policy. I consider the building to be physically suitable for a residential conversion in this respect.

With regard to whether the building is architecturally suitable, although rural storage buildings in the countryside of the District are more typically of traditional stone or in the case of modern agricultural buildings, metal sheeted construction, rather than

painted blockwork, the overall shape and form of the building is not entirely out of keeping with the area where farm storage buildings are rectangular in shape and of a similar eaves height and with a low-pitched roof with side gables. I consider the building to be architecturally suitable for a residential conversion in this respect.

With regard to whether the building is in character terms suitable, it is fair to state the building has a rather modern and functional storage building appearance and materials and with very limited historical architectural merit. It is in character terms, not entirely suitable for a residential conversion in this respect.

Due to the lack of character of the building it is accepted that there is some degree of conflict with policies SS10 and H1 although not a substantial failure to comply with the policy. However, there are other factors with this proposal which should be afforded weight which would tip the balance in favour of approving the proposal in principle. Firstly, although as stated, the building lacks character, substantial improvements would be made to the appearance of the building simply by applying a new materials to the facing elevations and roof. The scheme involves cladding the current blockwork walls with local Hollington stone and the roof would be replaced with a higher pitched roof finished with Staffs Blue tiles. These alone would make the building more in keeping with the historical and rural qualities of the area. Furthermore, features such as the side quoins and gable parapets lead to further improvement. More modern and unique features have been included such as the black metal clad side extension and large green timber shutter doors over the large cart opening and patio doors. There are also rooflights added. However, these features do not dominate the building which largely reads as a traditional stone barn and the modern features are of a sufficient quality to compliment the building and not detract from its overall appearance.

The very large gable glazing with green frames is less in keeping with the building and would not normally be found to be acceptable within a barn conversion. It also raises concerns about resulting light pollution within the wider rural landscape. However, this would be very well screened from the public realm and the wider open countryside by the woodland existing a short distance to the south-west of the building and the trees along the south-east boundary of the site up to the building itself. The side gable is not visible from roads or public footpaths. There are also more traditional features added to re-enforce the traditional stone barn appearance in the form of three ground floor hopper windows on the south-east elevation facing the field where the public footpath crosses. The glazed gable feature would certainly not be acceptable on a traditional barn, which are characterised generally by blank gable elevations. However, in this case, whilst the stone cladding and quoins will give the building a more traditional appearance, it remains essentially a modern building. On balance this feature is found to be acceptable.

Overall, whilst the current building lacks character, the proposed conversion scheme succeeds in significantly improving its appearance and better respecting its rural and historical surroundings.

Further benefits include the contribution to the housing stock in an area of undersupply. The Council cannot demonstrate a five year housing land supply and the NPPF requires more “sustainable” new housing in such areas. Whilst the

addition of one single 3-bed dwelling would provide only a very marginal benefit, the site is in quite a sustainable location despite being in the countryside. The Development Boundary of a large village, Ipstones, is just 100m away along the country lane. It is easy and safe to walk to village services such as a general store, post office, a school, pub and a bus service along the lane, which is infrequently used by vehicles (as shown in the submitted traffic data doc) as it is a dead-end road and where vehicle speeds would be very low in any case. There is no objection from the local highways authority. Such services are a manageable walk away and the nearest town Cheadle, is not an onerous cycle ride away. There is access to essential services and public transport by means other than the private car and this is a material benefit.

Overall, with regards to whether the principle of the proposal is acceptable, although the proposed residential conversion involves a building which lacks character and therefore, policies H1 and SS10 are not fully complied with, the significant improvements to the character and appearance of the building along with the contribution to housing need and the moderately sustainable location of the site, there is a general compliance with the aims of the Local Plan and NPPF as a whole and the benefits would outweigh the limited harms identified and therefore, on balance it is considered the principle of the proposal is acceptable.

With regard to other material planning considerations, there would be no harm to residential amenity. There are no nearby residential properties that would be affected by this scheme. The floorspace to be provided would exceed the standard for a two-storey, 3-bed, 5 person dwelling as set out in the governments Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) and a garden of sufficient size would also be provided for the occupants. The living conditions and residential amenities for the future residents of the site would be acceptable in compliance with Policy DC1.

The proposed development would not harm the existing boundary trees.

There would be no detriment to highway safety. There is not a high level of visibility along the road from the access, but this is a quiet narrow lane with infrequent vehicle movements and low speeds. The access would in any case be improved. The scheme provides adequate car parking on site in line with the Council parking standards i.e. two parking spaces for a 3-bed dwelling and there is an adequate turning area and so parking on the lane would be avoided (which would in any case be difficult) and cars would not need to reverse out onto the lane. Policies DC1 and T1 of the Local Plan would be complied with in this respect.

Although the site is in a High Risk former coal mining zone, the development would not affect ground stability. The nearest mine entrance is a sufficient distance from the site and there would not be any significantly intrusive ground works being a conversion scheme with a small single-storey side extension. There is no objection from the Coal Authority. The proposal would comply with Policy SD1 in this respect.

Finally with regard to the ecological value of the site, Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is not required for the development as it is a Self Build scheme which falls under the BNG exemptions. A Self Build declaration has been received and states the applicants would be the occupants of the dwelling and have assisted in the design

for their requirements. A standard condition will be added requiring their first occupation of the building to ensure that it remains a "Self-Build" under the legal definition.

The scheme itself would not lead to any harms to protected species, as identified in the PEA. The building has negligible potential for bats and so no further bat surveys are required. Enhancements and biodiversity "gain", as required by Policy NE1, would be achieved via measures such as bat and bird boxes and new native planting and these would be delivered by way of planning conditions requiring the measures as recommended in the PEA.

The design of the scheme would include energy efficiency measures such as solar panels as shown in the drawings and ground source heat pumps are also intended.

The nearby Public Right of Way would not be affected by the development as this exists on neighbouring land within different ownership and is a sufficient distance away from the site.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The proposal is acceptable in principle despite some minor conflict with policies SS10 and H1 of the Local Plan. It would lead to an improvement in the appearance of a rural building and provide a dwelling in a fairly sustainable area despite the rural location. It would not harm the character and appearance of the area, residential amenity or the environment in general. It would not be detrimental to highway safety. The proposal does largely comply with the Local Plan and NPPF.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : APPROVE

Case Officer: Chris Johnston

Recommendation Date: 10.8.26

X 

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council