

**STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE**

9 September 2021

Application No:	SMD/2021/0436	
Location	The Barn, Ringe Hay Farm, Basford	
Proposal	Single-storey side extension	
Applicant	Mr D Marks	
Agent	Ken Wainman Associates Ltd	
Parish/ward	Cheddleton	Date registered: 5 th July 2021
If you have a question about this report please contact: Chris Johnston email: Christopher.johnston@staffsmoorlands.gov.uk		

REFERRAL

This application has been called to committee at the request of Councillor Worthington so that the decision made is consistent with other planning decisions at the site.

1. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

2.1 The application site is in the countryside about 1km to the north-east of Cheddleton and 1km to the north of Basford Green. It comprises one of two adjoining two-storey semi-detached dwellings within a converted traditional stone barn that forms part of Ringe Hay Farm, a complex of farm buildings reached by a long farm track connected to Basford Green Road, a country lane to the east. There are other converted dwellings and a farmhouse at Ringe Hay Farm which lie to the east across a yard. The land to the west is open fields which slope downwards towards Cheddleton. The dwelling and attached dwelling were formerly holiday lets but have become unrestricted dwellings following a planning permissions to remove the occupancy restriction in 2018. The site is not in the Green Belt or within any other particular land designations.

3. THE APPLICATION AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

3.1 This is a householder planning application for a single-storey side extension to provide an additional kitchen at the dwelling. It would have matching stone facing materials and a matching Staffs Blue tiled roof with side-facing gable, the rear roof slope of which would follow the roof slope of the existing rear lean-to section. The

front wall would be set back from the front wall of the dwelling. The internal dimensions of the kitchen would be 5.5 x 3.6 metres.

3.2 The application is accompanied by a Planning Statement which explains the background to the proposal and the reason for the new kitchen:

3.3 *"The applicant was involved in a road accident in 2011 which left him with permanent severe traumatic brain injury resulting in:*

- Poor balance and coordination.*
- Sensory deprivation (unable to feel temperatures or pain).*
- Weakness on the right side.*
- Double vision.*
- Impaired hearing loss.*
- Decrease in cognition (memory and processing/ reaction time).*
- Dysarthria (Speech and language difficulties)."*

3.4 *"I have submitted the neuroscience report (dated 2012) which verifies the above and more. The applicant renews his medical insurance annually and his condition remains essentially the same as in the 2012 report."*

3.5 *"At the moment the applicant can walk albeit uncoordinated, and not steadily, and with a wide gait which makes it difficult to move in tight spaces. His eyesight is poor and he finds it difficult to see things in dim-light; hence – in combination with his poor balance – the result is that he fails to see obstacles such as open cupboards and doors and dishwasher doors and he often falls over. He also walks into or touches hot surfaces and because he doesn't feel pain can seriously injure himself."*

3.6 *"Many things are required for stability/balance. Information is fed to your brain from your senses (his are significantly impaired - his left-hand side and his right hand do not function). Info from your ears (his left ear is not working properly) and information from your eyes (some double vision). Added to this is the quality of light. For example, he can't walk in the dark. It's not just as simple as turning a light on which is why he requires skylights etc. One of the additional reasons he keeps falling is his reaction time. He is simply not quick enough to prevent a fall and because of severe fatigue (he sleeps about 3 hours a night) fatigue impacts balance and coordination significantly. One of the reasons he moved to the house was to aid better sleep by reducing noise – everyday noise which for most people is just normal but for him (car doors banging, emptying recycling bins, lawnmowers, kids playing, car engines running, etc.) usually occurs at 7:30-9 am when people are getting ready for their day but he is going to bed as he has been awake since 3 am."*

3.7 *"The purpose of the application is to provide more space in the kitchen so that Mr Marks doesn't bump into things or others in the kitchen resulting in falls and burns. A larger/brighter kitchen is essential; it would provide him with space to move better and more natural light would enable him to see better. Overall, the proposed extension would be a significant benefit. Up until 2015, the applicant was in a wheelchair and it very possible as he gets older he may need to use it again. The larger kitchen would be wheelchair-friendly."*

3.8 The applicant's agent submitted further information via email in support of the application on 23rd August. This included a doctor's letter confirming that the applicant is substantially and permanently disabled and that he needs a bigger kitchen. The email also states that at the moment, the applicant finds it difficult to walk within the present confines of the kitchen. In the future the situation may become worse as it is likely that the applicant may need to use a wheelchair.

3.9 An email from the applicant was also attached and states the following:

Just a summary as to why this planning permission is a 'NEED' rather than a 'nice to have':

Problem

1/3 of the kitchen storage is unusable due to the hosting of furnace / water tank / heating and electricity systems

Traumatic brain injury has resulted in poor balance and coordination plus sensory deprivation (no sense of touch, temperature or pain on the left hand side of my body and right hand) Balance requires accurate information from your ears / eyes and sense's. This has resulted in numerous falls / burns (cooker / hob / scolds from boiling water)

A lack of natural light (daylight is provided by one small window). The current kitchen compounds this issue (it's more complicated than simply switching a light on).

Due to lack of space a large percentage of the kitchen is currently hosted in the outbuilding (washing machine / dryer / fridge / freezer etc) which will be problematic during autumn and winter months (wet / slippery surfaces and only being able to move slowly plus inability to walk and carry heavy objects simultaneously)

The building has no hall / storage for coats and shoes etc. Again not so much of a headache when it's dry outside but as we enter the second half of the year which is rainy and snowy/icy this becomes more challenging.

Solution

Repurpose existing kitchen as a laundry / boot room reducing the need to continuously visit the outbuilding (a major benefit when you have a walking issue) and enable me to sit down to put my shoes on as I can't stand on one leg and continue to host utilities equipment.

Create a new kitchen which is specifically designed with safety / layout to allow ease of access and increase independence and reduce falls by increasing the amount of light and clear paths. (There is already a Velux window present and the granary has three)

A new structure would prevent the need to move the heating/ electric system and minimise disruption as the existing kitchen is usable while the new one is being built

and retain the downstairs wet room which is imperative as the long term risk is that i may return to a wheelchair.

In summary a new extension resolves the storage space, layout and light issues in a more efficient and less obstructive manner and long term is the right thing to do.

3.10 Another email was received from the agent the same day which included a layout drawing of the ground floor of the dwelling although this was not to scale although gave the internal dimensions of the existing kitchen as 3.93 x 3.90 metres.

3.11 Details of the application scheme can be viewed at:

<http://publicaccess.staffs Moorlands.gov.uk/portal/servlets/ApplicationSearchServlet?PKID=150425>

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

SMD/2021/0321: Single-storey rear extension at “The Dairy” (the neighbouring attached dwelling). Refused on 30th July 2021.

SMD/2019/0033: Certificate of Lawfulness application for proposed dwellings (relating to “The Barn” and “The Dairy”). Approved.

SMD/2018/0374: Removal of conditions 8 and 9 relating to SMD/2005/0864 [05/00439/FUL] at Ringe Hay Farm. Approved. This removed the conditions which restricted the converted building to holiday let use only so that the building could be used as two unrestricted dwellings.

05/00439/FUL – Conversion of redundant agricultural building to 2 holiday cottages – Approved.

5. PLANNING POLICIES RELEVANT TO THE DECISION

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (Adopted Sept 2020)

5.1 The Development Plan comprises the Local Plan Development Document (adopted September 2020).

5.2 The following Local Plan policies are relevant to the application:

- SS1 Development Principles
- SS10 Other Rural Areas Area Strategy
- DC1 Design Considerations
- DC2 The Historic Environment
- DC3 Landscape and Settlement Setting
- H1 New Housing

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Revised (2019)

5.3 The following sections of the NPPF (2019) are particularly relevant to this application:

- 2: Achieving sustainable development
- 4: Decision making
- 12: Achieving well-designed places
- 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

5.4 Adopted Supplementary Planning Documents/Guidance (SPD/G):

- Space About Dwellings SPG
- Design Principles SPG
- Design Guide SPD adopted 21st February 2018

6. CONSULTATIONS

Neighbour letters	Expiry date for comments: 29/07/2021
Site Notice Posted	11/08/2021 (expiry date 01/09/2021)
Press Notice	N/A

Public response to consultation

6.1 No letters have been received. Any letters received will be reported at the Committee.

Parish Council

6.2 No objection.

Local Highways Authority (Staffordshire County Council)

6.3 No objection.

SMDC Conservation Officer

6.4 *“The barn was converted into two holiday cottages in 2005. The barn is a good example of a Moorland’s cow shed with hay store on the first floor, with cart store under a cat-slide roof at the rear. It is of simple form with openings reflecting the historic function of the building. The farmstead is identified in the Historic Environment Record as an isolated, dispersed farmstead with its outbuildings laid out along a routeway (referred to as a 'driftway' plan). The farmstead had been established by at least the early 19th century and appears to survive relatively unaltered. The Moorlands is recognised as having a significant collection of early farmsteads, dating to the 19th century, which are largely unaltered. I would regard this farmstead as being a non-designated heritage asset.*

Although now converted it remains a good example of its type. Its simple form and retention of original openings are an important part of its significance.

The application proposes the addition of a single storey extension on the gable end sitting in front of the cart entry. Two rooflights are proposed in the extension facing the garden elevation, and a further two rooflights in the main building to serve the dining room.

The application should be assessed against the Council's Design Guidance, specific guidance on Converting Rural Buildings, and the Staffordshire Moorlands Farmstead Assessment Framework. The conversion guidance states that 'Conversions should be within the shell of the building. Extensions will be discouraged; where essential they should be small and unobtrusive and reflect the proportions of the main building' (page 3.4). The guiding principle is that the character of the original building should be retained and conserved for the future, and the building should still look like a barn when converted – and not like a house. Any alterations should respect the buildings scale, proportions and special features should be retained and any alterations made within the constraints imposed by the building. If an extension is needed then the resultant change to the building's character is likely to be significant.

Firstly we have no floorplan to show the existing layout of the building to be able to assess the current arrangement and why there is a need for the extension. The principle of an extension is therefore contentious given the overriding policy guidance which aims to limit conversions to be within the existing shell of the building.

Secondly, the location of the extension, its appearance and proportion are harmful to form and character – its proportions are low and squat, it masks the distinctive cart entry, and it disrupts the simple form of the building. It has a very domestic appearance which harms agricultural character.

Rooflights are rarely found on barns and should be avoided where possible. The dining room already is served by a window.

If the principle of the extension is acceptable then this is the wrong location and design. Harmful to a non-designated heritage asset."

Severn Trent Water

6.5 No objection.

7. OFFICER COMMENT AND PLANNING BALANCE

7.1 The main issues relate to:

- The Impact on the character and appearance of a traditional rural building considered to be a non-designated heritage asset and therefore the impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

The principle of the development

7.2 The site is in the countryside and outside of the development boundaries defined in the Local Plan and which are drawn around the towns and larger villages of the District. Policy SS10 outlines the Local Plan strategy for the countryside and states that “these areas will provide only for development which has an essential need to be located in the countryside, supports the rural diversification and sustainability of the rural areas, promotes sustainable tourism or enhances the countryside.

7.3 Policy SS10 allows the conversion or replacement of an existing rural building in accordance with Policy H1 and also allows extensions or additional domestic outbuildings to existing dwellings in the countryside 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. It states that the Council will assess schemes having regard to the original dwelling, in cases where cumulative change has occurred.

7.4 Policy H1 allows The conversion of rural buildings for residential use where the building is suitable and worthy in physical, architectural and character terms for conversion; or where such development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets.

7.5 The conversion of the barn into two holiday cottages was approved in 2005 and determined against the policies of the Local Plan at the time, the Council’s 1998 Local Plan. Although this has been replaced, Policy B21 of the 1998 Local Plan allowed such conversions providing this would result in only limited re-building works necessary; without significant alteration, extension or re-building”. In the accompanying text to Policy B21 it was stated: “Residential planning permission will where necessary be subject to conditions which remove permitted development rights so that future alterations or extensions can be carefully controlled”. This also noted in detail how a conversion could lead to loss of character in the area and stated, “Whatever the proposed use it should retain the original character and appearance of the building and its setting”.

7.6 Although the above Local Plan has been superseded, the current Local Plan, adopted in September 2020 outlines very similar tests relating to the conversion and alteration of rural buildings where they are regarded worthy in physical, architectural and character terms, which applies to the Ringe Hay Farm barn building, also regarded as a non-designated heritage asset.

7.7 Policy DC2 states the following of relevance:

1. The Council will conserve and where possible enhance heritage assets, including their setting in a manner appropriate to their significance. This will take into account the desirability of maintaining and enhancing their significance and will ensure that development proposals contribute positively to the character of the built and historic environment.
2. Protection will be given to designated heritage assets and their settings and non-designated heritage assets as set out in the NPPF.

3. All applications likely to affect heritage assets will require the submission of a heritage statement, including a qualitative visual assessment where appropriate.

7.8 The NPPF defines a heritage asset as:

A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

7.9 Policy DC2 also seeks to protect non-designated heritage assets as well as listed buildings and Conservation Areas and in the government planning guidance in the NPPF, Paragraph 203 states:

The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

7.10 In the case of the application building it is recorded as being part of a historic farmstead in the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record. It therefore meets the definition of being a building “having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest” – in this case confirmed by specialist study and assessment through the Staffordshire Farmstead Survey (2009).

7.11 In addition to the above policies, the application would need to be assessed against the Council’s Design Guidance, specific guidance on Converting Rural Buildings, and the Staffordshire Moorlands Farmstead Assessment Framework. The conversion guidance states that ‘Conversions should be within the shell of the building. Extensions will be discouraged; where essential they should be small and unobtrusive and reflect the proportions of the main building’ (page 3.4). The guiding principle is that the character of the original building should be retained and conserved for the future, and the building should still look like a barn when converted and not like a house. Any alterations should respect the buildings scale, proportions and special features should be retained and any alterations made within the constraints imposed by the building. The LPA view is that this former farm building has been converted in accordance with the Council’s adopted design guidance and in particular the SPG current in 2005 and which remains current. Although the former farm building of which the application dwelling is a part is now two separate residences it is architecturally and in design terms effectively a single building. If an extension is needed then the resultant change to the building’s character is likely to be significant.

7.12 It is noted that the barn is a good example of a Moorland’s cow shed with hay store on the first floor, with cart store under a cat-slide roof at the rear. It is of simple form with openings reflecting the historic function of the building. The farmstead is identified in the Historic Environment Record as an isolated, dispersed farmstead with its outbuildings laid out along a routeway (referred to as a 'driftway' plan). The farmstead had been established by at least the early 19th century and appears to

survive relatively unaltered. The Moorlands is recognised as having a significant collection of early farmsteads, dating to the 19th century, which are largely unaltered. Although now converted it remains a good example of its type. Its simple form and retention of original openings are an important part of its significance.

7.13 With regard to the proposed extension, the proportions are considered to be low and squat. It would mask the distinctive cart entry and disrupts the simple form of the building. It would have a very domestic form and design, including the design of the windows and would also include rooflights which are rarely found on barns and should be avoided where possible. The proposed extension is therefore considered to be harmful to the historic character and appearance of the barn building.

7.14 The applicant puts forward special circumstances in support of the application. The Council therefore need to decide if these circumstances would outweigh the harm to the historic character and appearance of the building. The applicant requires the extension in order to provide a larger kitchen as the current kitchen, due to its size has become difficult for the applicant to use following a severe brain injury caused as a result of a car accident in 2011. The side effects include poor mobility and balance and also sensory deprivation amongst a number of other conditions which are described in more detail in the Planning Proposal section of this report above. The applicant explains that greater light provision is also needed in order for him to use the kitchen for its intended purpose. This is the reason for the inclusion of large windows and rooflights.

7.15 Whilst the Council sympathises with the applicant's situation and understands the need for a larger space that is also well lit by natural light, it is not clear from the application why a larger ground floor kitchen with sufficient light cannot be provided within the current ground floor of the building. Along with the existing kitchen the ground floor comprises a large living room, the applicant's bedroom, an inner hall, a wet room and dining room. A ground floor kitchen, bedroom and wet room are considered to be essential to the applicant due to his medical situation. However, an inner hall and dining room would not be considered essential (as there is already another reception room) and as those two rooms are adjoining, these could be converted into a larger kitchen space. Although no full scale drawings of the layout were submitted with the application, the agent later provided a not-to-scale layout plan. The Council has also inspected the scale layout drawings submitted with the 2005 conversion application. This is enough information to establish that the proposed new kitchen would be of a similar size to the existing dining room which is contained within the rear lean-to part of the house. Furthermore, the dining room also has rooflights and a set of standard floor to ceiling height French windows which would allow more light into this room than the current kitchen. The Council considers the dining room can be converted into a new kitchen of similar size and which can also be enlarged further to provide a kitchen of even greater size by removing internal walls to enlarge the kitchen into both the inner hall and the existing kitchen space.

7.16 Therefore from the basis of the information provided with the application, the Council is not convinced that a new extension is required in order to provide a larger kitchen when there are other practical options available via internal reconfiguration and/or conversion of existing rooms whilst not losing any of the other rooms

essentially needed by the applicant. For this reason, the Council does not consider that the special circumstances put forward would justify the harm to the character and appearance of the building by the particular scale and design of the extension scheme.

7.17 Furthermore, the application is considered to be further contrary to Policy DC2 and the NPPF in that no heritage assessment has been provided. Para. 194 of the NPPF states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

Planning Balance & Conclusions

7.18 The proposed extension would harm the character and appearance of the traditional stone barn dwelling considered to be a non-designated heritage asset. Furthermore, the justification of need for the extension is not considered to be sufficient enough to outweigh the level of harm to the building by extending it and is contrary to the Council's design guidance which resists the further extension of such building. A Heritage Statement also has not been submitted as required by the Local Plan and NPPF. In late July of this year, an application to add a single-storey rear extension to the adjoining barn dwelling was refused on the ground of the harm to the building's character and appearance and the absence of a Heritage Statement. Although each application should be judged on its own individual merits, the Council considers the level of impact to the overall building to be similarly harmful and therefore in this case, a consistent approach is needed and that this new application should also therefore be refused. It is contrary to policies DC1 and DC2 of the Local Plan as well as the Council's design guidance (as listed above in the Policy section of the report) and also Section 16 of the government planning guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

8. RECOMMENDATION

A That planning permission be REFUSED for the following reasons:

1. The proposed side extension, by virtue of its form and design including fenestration design, would be harmful to the historic character and appearance of this rural vernacular building and, as a building which contributes to the character and appearance and evidential understanding of a historic farmstead as identified by the Staffordshire Historic Farmstead Survey (2009) and recorded in the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record, the proposal is found harmful to a non-designated heritage asset as defined by the NPPF. The stated reasons for the development are not found to be justifiable given that the requirements of the applicant could be accommodated by other works that do not involve extensions to the building and therefore do not balance out the harm identified. The scheme is therefore found on balance contrary to policies SS10, H1, DC1 and DC2 of the adopted Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan 2020 and the government planning guidance contained

within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 203 and contrary to and not supported by the Council's adopted Supplementary Design Guidance and Design Document.

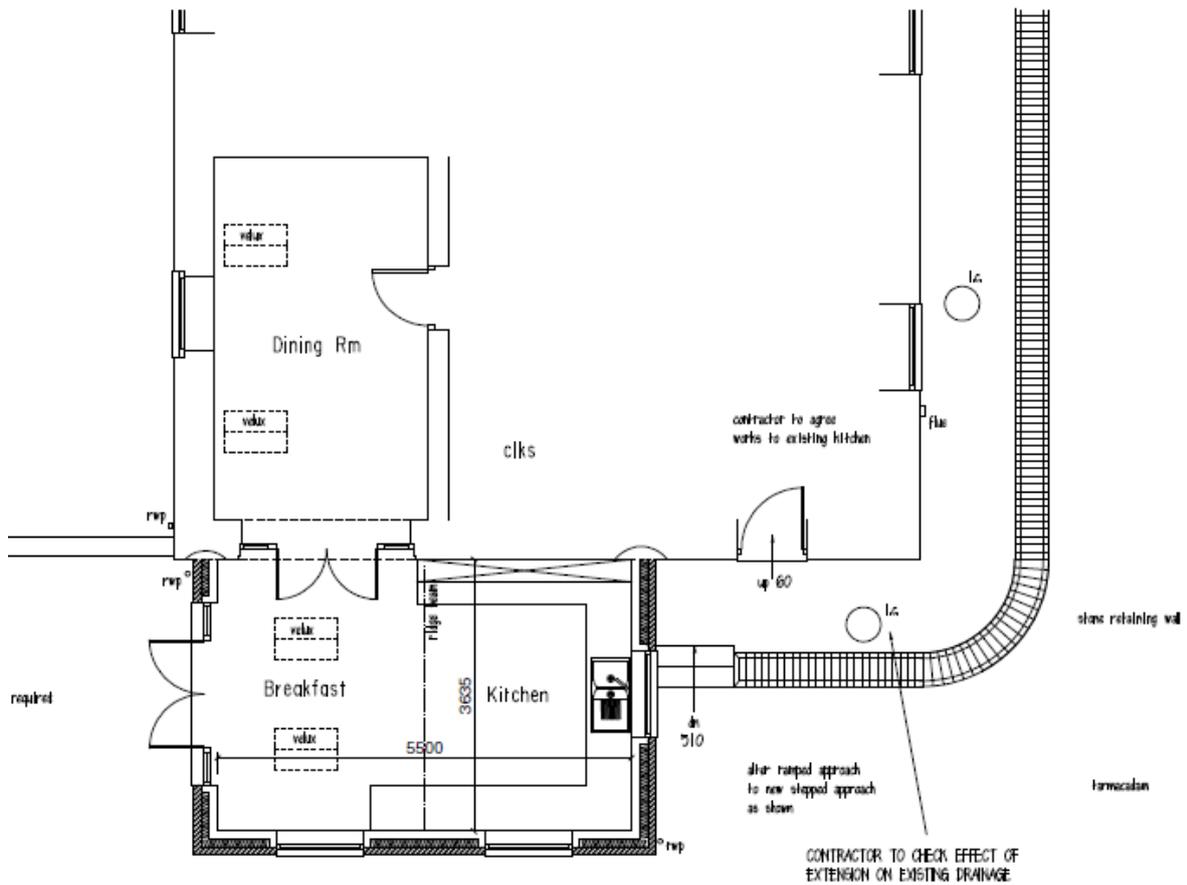
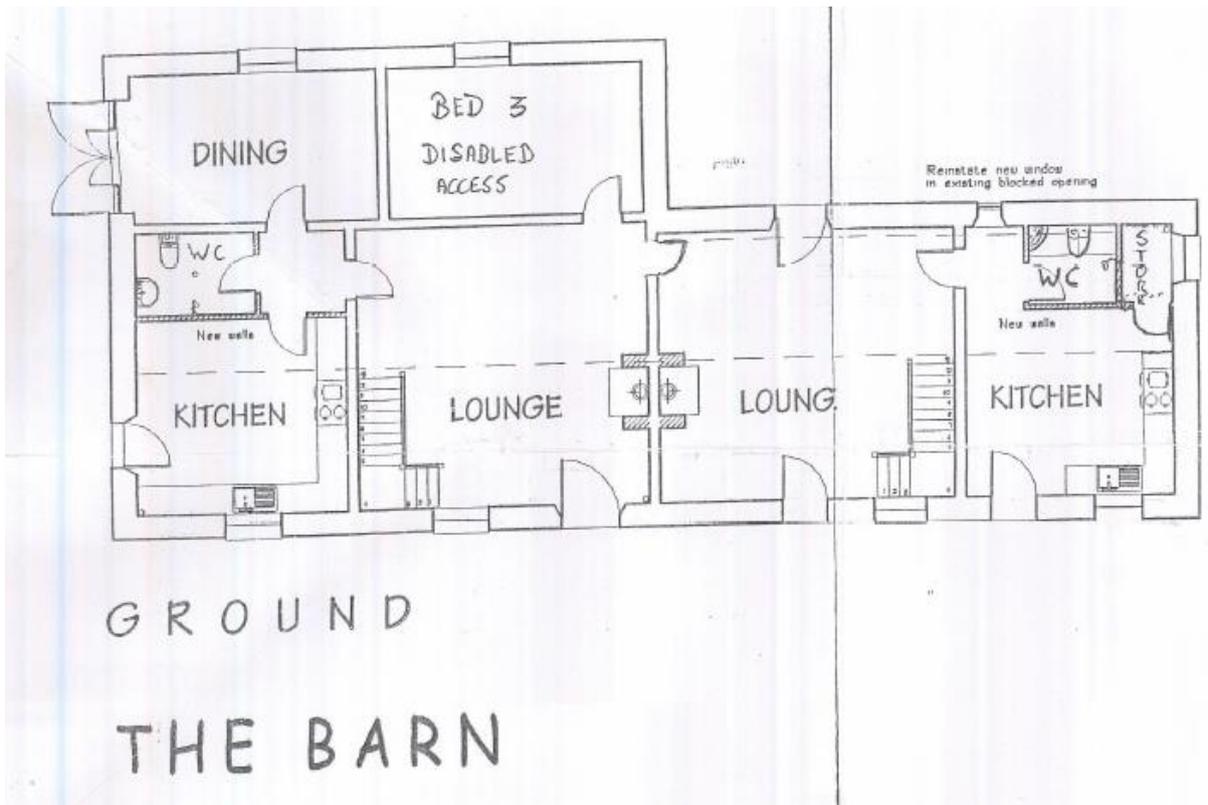
2. No heritage assessment has been provided with the application contrary to Policy DC2(3) of the adopted Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan 2020 and the NPPF paragraph 194.

3. The proposed design of the extension fails to conserve the character of the existing converted farm building and creates in its place a more obviously domestic residential dwelling which would also be harmfully prominent on the primary elevation of the building and would therefore also lead to a more intrusive appearance at odds with the wider setting of the historic farmstead and its surroundings, contrary to policies SS10, H1, DC1, DC2 and DC3 of the adopted Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan 2020 and contrary to the NPPF.

Informative

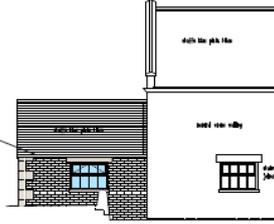
1. It is considered that the proposals are unsustainable and do not conform with the provisions of the NPPF. It is considered that the applicant is unable to overcome such concerns and thus no amendments to the application were requested.



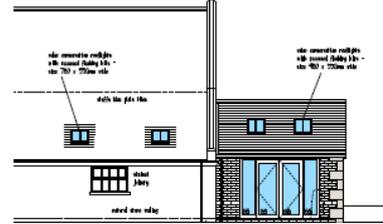




Side Elevation - Brick



Part Front Elevation to Drive



Part Rear Elevation to Garden