

**STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE**

15th August 2024

Application No:	SMD/2023/0310 (Planning Application) SMD/2023/0311 (Listed Building Consent Application)	
Location	Farm House, Booths Hall Farm, Belmont Road, Ipstones	
Proposal	Proposed single storey rear extension	
Applicant	Mr and Mrs Rowbottom	
Agent	Robert Berry	
Parish/ward	Ipstones / Ipstones	Date registered 7 th August 2023
If you have a question about this report please contact: Arne Swithenbank tel: 01538 395578 or e-mail arne.swithenbank@staffs Moorlands.gov.uk		

REFERRAL

The applications are a Full Householder (SMD/2023/0310) and Listed Building Consent (SMD/2023/0311) and are referred to Committee at the request of Cllr Malyon to consider the effects on the heritage significance of the Listed Building noting that the development would be formed from original stone.

The applications were considered by the Planning Applications Committee at its meeting on the 28th March 2024 when it was resolved “That the applications be deferred to enable further discussions by the applicant with officers around the design of the proposed extension.” A meeting took place on the 3rd June and amended plans have been received. The revisions are described at 3.3 in the report below and under the Design section.

1. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION

Refuse

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The farm house at Booths Hall Farm is a Grade II Listed Building and stands as part of a loose knit cluster of mainly modern farm buildings which are not Listed along with a neighbour, ‘Orchard View’ which is also modern and not Listed. The location is some 750m south along a track from Belmont Road. Nearby to the south east is Booths Farm with several Listed Buildings. A series of public footpaths converge through the farm to the front of the dwelling.
- 2.2 The farm house is an imposing structure rising to three floors in its central part with east and west facing gables windowed to each floor. In the Listing statement the west gable over the back garden is described as

retaining mullions to attic and first floor (a 5-light window) and has a blocked owl hole to apex. It was first Listed 2nd May 1953 with amendment 15th December 1986. Unfortunately the mullions referred to in the Listing for the west gable are no longer present. There are two storey wings to both the north and west sides. Intriguingly the west-facing rear elevation of the north wing is an entirely plain stone wall without openings. It presents a striking feature in contrast to the projecting gable which is well windowed and somewhat elaborate.

- 2.3 Historic England List Description: Farmhouse. C17 with late C19 alterations and additions. Coursed dressed and squared stone of ashlar quality to front gable; tiled roof; verge parapets with pitched copings; twin-shafted side stack to left side of centre range and end stacks. Cruciform plan of C17 cross-wing flanked by C19 additions. Central 2-storey and attic gabled projection on chamfered plinth, gable slightly overhanging face of wall; single range of labelled windows in C17 chamfered reveals formerly with chamfered mullions now C19 casements. Set-back lower wings to right and left are of one bay. Entrance to south end. West gable retains mullions to attic and first floor (a 5-light window) and has a blocked owl hole to apex.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The applications propose a single storey rear extension within the back garden to the dwelling. In a short Heritage Statement accompanying the applications the agent says: "The extension will be constructed of coursed natural stonework to match the existing, set below a pitched tiled roof of reclaimed Staffordshire Blue clay roofing tiles. The extension will also incorporate stone quoins with matching stone heads, cills and door and window surrounds. The proposal will add 17.28sqm to the overall floor area of the property which currently stands at approx. 140sqm".
- 3.2 As first considered the application proposed removal of a 4.3m length of the ground floor rear wall of the Listed Building to create a full height through-opening at ground floor level between the existing living / dining room and the proposed extension. The dual-pitched roof would be aligned at right angles to this wing of the existing building and would present a gable facing into the garden, a pair of French doors positioned centrally flanked to either side by a window and with a window to each side elevation.
- 3.3 In amended plans the same scheme has been re-submitted but differs by reducing the width of the through-opening of the original building wall from 4.3m to 2.3m. The drawing has also been amended to make clear that the intention is to use coursed stone work in full to all sides.

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 None relating to the dwelling specifically.

5. PLANNING POLICIES RELEVANT TO THE DECISION

5.1 Local Plan (adopted 9th September 2020)

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

National Planning Policy Framework December 2023

Paragraph(s) 1 – 14;

Section(s) 4 – Decision making; 8 Promoting healthy and safe communities; 11 – Making effective use of land; 12 – Achieving well designed and beautiful places; 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

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

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

Local Plan Supporting Evidence Documents:

- Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment (2008)

6. CONSULTATIONS CARRIED OUT

Public

6.1 The last consultation expiry date was 21st September 2023 (site notice). A total of two neighbouring dwellings were notified directly by letter. No representations have been received.

Ipstones Parish Council

6.2 Recommend approval.

Public Rights of Way user organisations

- 6.3 Peak and Northern Footpaths Society and the Ramblers Association both note the presence nearby of public footpaths 6, 7 and 8 (Ipstones) and comment that these must remain open both during and after completion of any work.

SMDC Heritage Conservation Officer

- 6.4 The Conservation Officer attended the meeting with the applicants and their agent but it was not possible to overcome the in-principle heritage objection and her recommendation remains one of refusal. No benefit is identified to outweigh the harm. This is an impressive and well survived stockily built house dated circa 1663. The historic OS Map dated 1888 shows the footprint then as still seen in its present form today, un-changed.
- 6.5 The footprint of the house is balanced, functionally seeing a core with two wings. The legible character of this type of 17thC rural house remains. The relationship between this and Booths Hall farmhouse a short way to the south-east also remains; this is seen in the material palette, traditional architectural scales and massing, and footprint of the wider estate and setting. The latter is designated a Grade II Listed farmhouse with two Grade II Listed barns.
- 6.6 The project appears to create an alien feature against the traditional architecture of the house. This blind elevation adjacent to the gable is often a conscious architectural choice. In the 17thC, at vernacular farmsteads – rear gardens and or porch type buildings were not a feature and there is no precedent. It also sets this type of architecture apart from for example later Villas and Country Houses that would see extensive and regular fenestration. Blind elevations in the past similarly alleviated the looking out upon functional working barns, livestock and other farm functions from the residence.
- 6.7 The proposal shows extensive and irreversible loss of historic fabric due to the required access into the proposed structure from the north wing ground floor. I do not see this as sensitive to the status of the listed building or an enhancement. I cannot see how this project harmonises with the listed building. The plans demonstrate the new structure to compete unsuccessfully with the footprint of the listed building and extend substantially beyond the gable to the west.
- 6.8 Setting has not been considered as part of the project [in the submissions]. Due to the generic design and proposed abrupt pastiche of materials I believe there will be harm imposed. I also see the modest and traditional rural character of the vicinity will be harmed. Unfortunately it appears no appropriate assessment has been undertaken across the wider site and setting, as such I do not believe the project has been well considered. I do not agree that it will not be prominent, nor have no impact and result in no loss of fabric. The latter is unrealistic.

7. POLICY AND MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS / PLANNING BALANCE

Principle of Development and Main Issues

- 7.1 In its general approach, in accordance with policy SS1, the Council expects the development and use of land to contribute positively to the social, economic and environmental improvement of the Staffordshire Moorlands. When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF. This means that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Local Plan shall be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 7.2 As a Listed Building there is no in-principle planning support. In this case whilst the main planning consideration will be the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the building, the assessment of harm or otherwise to the heritage significance must go further. The determination of a Listed building consent is not simply a planning application under a different name. A proposal which may be minor in ordinary planning terms may not be minor in Listed Building terms. The assessment is not a matter simply of weighing the design, appearance or scale. Details which might ordinarily be considered sufficient for basic planning assessment will not necessarily carry the day where the building is also Listed.
- 7.3 The relevant starting point is Policy DC2 and the Council's stated position is that: "The Council will conserve and where possible enhance heritage assets, including their setting in a manner appropriate to their significance". Protection is to be given as set out in the NPPF. This must start by establishing the 'historic significance' of the building and its setting and applicants are required to submit a heritage assessment. This should be expected to review the contribution the building makes to any evidence for understanding the past; the preserved history; aesthetic quality and any 'communal' or social value that may be associated with the building. The applicant's statement makes little attempt to address any of these specifically but seeks to rely on size, form and position and a suggestion that the part of the building being extended is less important as it dates to a later period than the earlier parts of the building. There is no discussion about the loss of 'fabric' as a result of creating the full height 2.3m wide opening in the wall and the consequences of this loss on the history, aesthetic or evidential value of the building in its current preserved state.
- 7.4 Under section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, there is a statutory duty placed on the decision maker, in this case the Local Planning Authority and specifically in this instance this Committee, to consider:
- (a) the impact of the proposal on the special architectural and historic interest of the Listed Building affected, and its setting and
 - (b) to "have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses".

- 7.5 In order to meet its statutory duty in considering whether to grant or refuse an application the committee must in other words give particular attention to the desirability of preserving the building, its setting and those features which make it special. The purpose of Listing and the consent process is both to 'protect' historic buildings that have special interest and also at the same time allow changes to them within the limits of that special interest. The NPPF requires applicants to submit a description of the significance of the heritage asset affected, including consideration of its setting. The LPA must place 'great weight' on the importance of conserving a heritage asset. Changes to a Listed Building that would result in 'some' harm should be avoided or, if that is not possible, the impact minimised. The NPPF provides for permission to be granted in cases where there is found to be some harm but only where there would be a public benefit to outweigh the harm.
- 7.6 It is important to note that the Historic England listing description is not to be regarded as a comprehensive or definitive record of the special interest or significance of the building (this is not its purpose) and any omission from the list description of a feature or reference to the interior must not be taken that it is not of interest. Once Listed it is the whole building, inside and out, which is subject to the Listing protection. It is then open to an applicant and the decision maker to establish if a particular element is significant or not in heritage terms and whether a particular proposal should be regarded as harmful or not to the heritage significance of the building.
- 7.7 In this case the main effects of the proposal are to remove a section of original building fabric and to erect a modern form structure across the opening. The ability to appreciate the large blank un-windowed elevation would be lost thus failing to preserve a very distinctive element of the building. This would represent a loss in historic, aesthetic and evidential terms. There would also be an effect on the setting of the building in terms of how it would be seen to stand on the land in relationship to its surroundings. The extension would add a new structure into that setting. The extension would disrupt the historic ground plan by building against the grain at right angles to the main current building alignment. Again this would bring harm in historic, aesthetic and evidential terms.

Design – impact on character, appearance and heritage significance

- 7.8 In design form – at least in terms of shape and dimensions – this is essentially a typical modern garden-room extension commonly repeated on suburban dwellings. In line with normal dwelling extensions the materials are proposed to match the original building – in this case stone. Unfortunately due to the strong mismatch of the basic and rather 'generic' structural form with the historic form of the original building the adoption of matching materials is not enough to achieve a successful merger of the two. The 'host' building in this case is not a normal standard suburban dwelling. It is a vernacular farm house and Grade II Listed for being of 'special interest'. With its proposed 'French' doors and deep proportioned windows that are essentially modern and a squat roof pitch of c.35 degrees in contrast to the 45 degree pitch of the principal rear gable it is seen

alongside, the proposal structure takes on an obviously un-related and ultimately somewhat mundane form. Despite its mundanity, its size and proportions seem to compete with the originally elaborate three storied main rear gable and consequently detract from it.

- 7.9 In addition to impacts of appearance the proposal would result in a quite substantial loss of original building fabric with the removal of the 2.3m wide section of rear wall. There are no original openings in this large section. This in itself is a significant pointer to the past.
- 7.10 The Conservation Officer describes the proposal as 'alien'; that the opening up of the large blank wall would result in 'extensive and irreversible loss' of historic fabric and that the scheme does not 'harmonise' with the existing built form.
- 7.11 The Conservation Officer also points out that the significance of the setting and the proposal's impact on setting has not been adequately considered. It is not sufficient or even strictly relevant to assert that simply by being at the back of the building the extension becomes acceptable. Nor is the wing of the building proposed to be extended necessarily of lesser value due to its later date. Much more relevant is to consider how the broad high un-windowed wall tells its own story.

Amenity

- 7.12 Chiefly a planning rather than heritage matter there are no issues identified. An unrelated bungalow dwelling stands some 40m to the west, well outside minimum separation distances and also to some extent screened by intervening boundary planting. Ample garden space for the host dwelling would remain.

Other Matters

- 7.13 The public rights of way which pass to the front (east) and north sides of the property are unlikely to be affected.

8. CONCLUSION AND PLANNING BALANCE

- 8.1 Owing to its design form, scale and position in relation to the Grade II Listed 'host' building the proposed building extension is found to be at harmful odds with the extant historic structure and its setting; would cause irreversible loss of historic fabric; and would result in overall harm to the surviving historic significance of the farmhouse in terms of historic, aesthetic and evidential value. In the terms of the NPPF this should be judged 'less than substantial' but none-the-less 'great weight' should be given to conserving the Listed Building and its setting (NPPF 205). A clear and convincing justification for the harm to the building and its setting has not been provided. The applicant has however now found it possible to reduce the large wall opening to a degree but

the loss of building fabric remains significant. It is more than would be needed to form a simple doorway for example. The benefits of the scheme would be entirely private to the applicant and their family in terms of enlarging and improving their living space. As no public benefit can be identified to weigh in support of the development (NPPF 208) the scheme must be recommended for refusal in order to comply with Policy DC2 and the NPPF.

9. RECOMMENDATION

A. Refuse Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent for the following reason(s):

1. Owing to its design form, scale and position in relation to the Grade II Listed 'host' building the proposed building extension is found to be at harmful odds with the extant historic structure and its setting; would cause irreversible loss of historic fabric; and would result in overall harm to the surviving historic significance of the farmhouse in terms of historic, aesthetic and evidential value. In the terms of the NPPF this is judged 'less than substantial' harm but none-the-less 'great weight' should be given to conserving the Listed Building and its setting (NPPF 205). A clear and convincing justification for the harm to the building including loss of original building fabric to create a wide opening and the impact of the extension on the building setting has not been provided in the application. As no public benefit can be identified to weigh in support of the development (NPPF 208) the scheme is contrary to Policies SS10; DC1 and DC2 and to the NPPF.

Informative

1. This recommendation is made following careful consideration of all the issues raised through the application process and thorough discussion with the applicants. In accordance with Paragraph 38 of the NPPF the Case Officer has sought solutions where possible to secure a development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.

B In the event of any changes being needed to the wording of the Committee's decision (such as to delete, vary or add conditions/informatives/planning obligations or reasons for approval/refusal) prior to the decision being issued, the Head of Development Services has delegated authority to do so in consultation with the Chairman of the Planning Applications Committee, provided that the changes do not exceed the substantive nature of the Committee's decision

10. APPENDICES TO THE REPORT

10.1 The link below to the Council's website is where the detail of this application can be viewed.

SMD/2023/0310 (Planning Application)

<http://publicaccess.staffs Moorlands.gov.uk/portal/servlets/ApplicationSearchServlet?PKID=171464>

SMD/2023/0311 (LBC Application)

<http://publicaccess.staffs Moorlands.gov.uk/portal/servlets/ApplicationSearchServlet?PKID=171465>

10.2 – location plan

