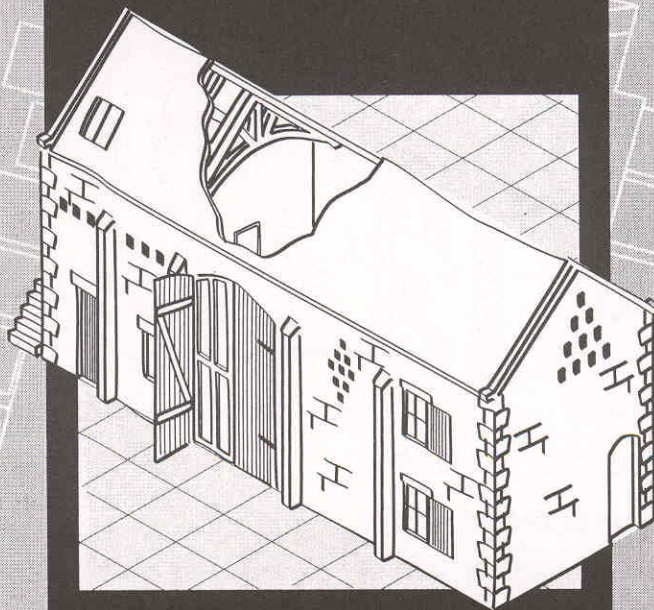


**DESIGN** *principles* for development in the  
Staffordshire Moorlands

# Conversions



STAFFORDSHIRE  
*moorlands*  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

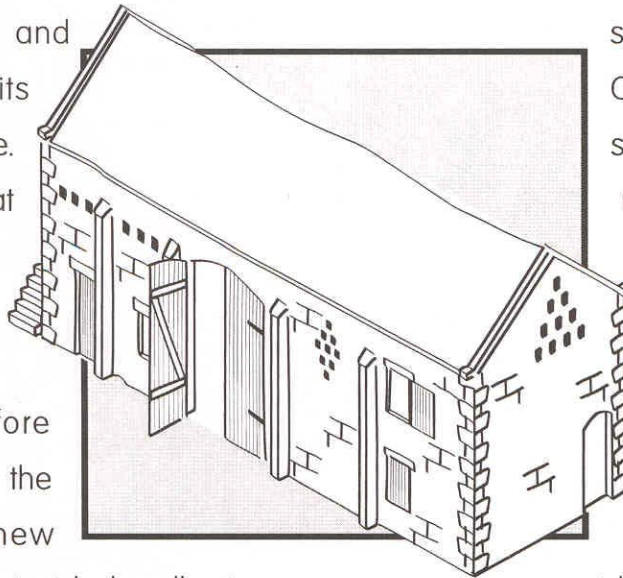
ACHIEVING • EXCELLENCE

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Many of the traditional rural buildings in the Staffordshire Moorlands form an accepted part of the landscape and indeed contribute to its character and appearance. The Council is keen that such buildings are retained. The Council's policy for the re-use of rural buildings therefore makes an exception to the policy against new development in the countryside by allowing conversions which meet certain criteria.

Changing the use of a rural building can result in changes which destroy its simple, rugged, agricultural character. This would be contrary to the principle of the Council's policy which seeks to retain rural buildings because of their



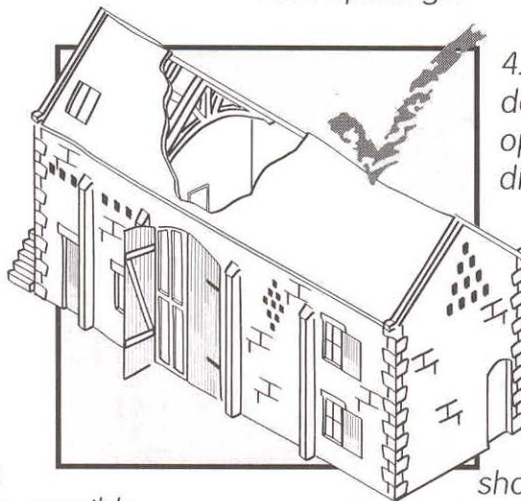
contribution to the landscape. The historic character of a building is a valuable asset and should be maximised. Conversion schemes should therefore seek to retain as much of the original character as possible (this should be observed and recorded prior to any work). Schemes for residential conversion should avoid a 'domestic' appearance both inside and out and future occupants should be willing to accept an unconventional house. Furthermore, permitted development rights for domestic extensions and outbuildings to conversions may be withdrawn to protect the character and setting of buildings from ill considered alteration after conversion is finished.

Where applicable, details of the items listed below should be incorporated into the initial overall design and submitted with the application.

Consider the following principles:-

### The building

1. Avoid alterations to the roof; keep rooflights to a minimum and site on reverse slopes; dormer windows are generally inappropriate; chimney flues should also be sited on reverse slopes below the roofline (where possible a ventilated ridge is preferable); chimney stacks are generally inappropriate.
2. The roof structure of listed buildings should be retained and exposed internally; this is also preferred in the case of unlisted buildings; avoid cutting through trusses. Existing internal spaces should be retained where possible, especially full height spaces.



3. Maximise the use of existing and blocked door and window openings; an open plan layout will allow daylight to larger areas of floorspace without the need for new openings.

4. The provision of new door and window openings will be discouraged. Where essential these should relate closely to the position, size and appearance of existing openings.

5. Existing features should be retained, for example, ventilation slots, external shutters, stone steps, gabled dovecotes; avoid straightening irregular building or rooflines unless essential for the structural condition of the building.

6. Conversions should be within the shell of the existing building. Extensions will be discouraged; where essential, extensions should be small and unobtrusive, for example a simple lean-to on a secondary

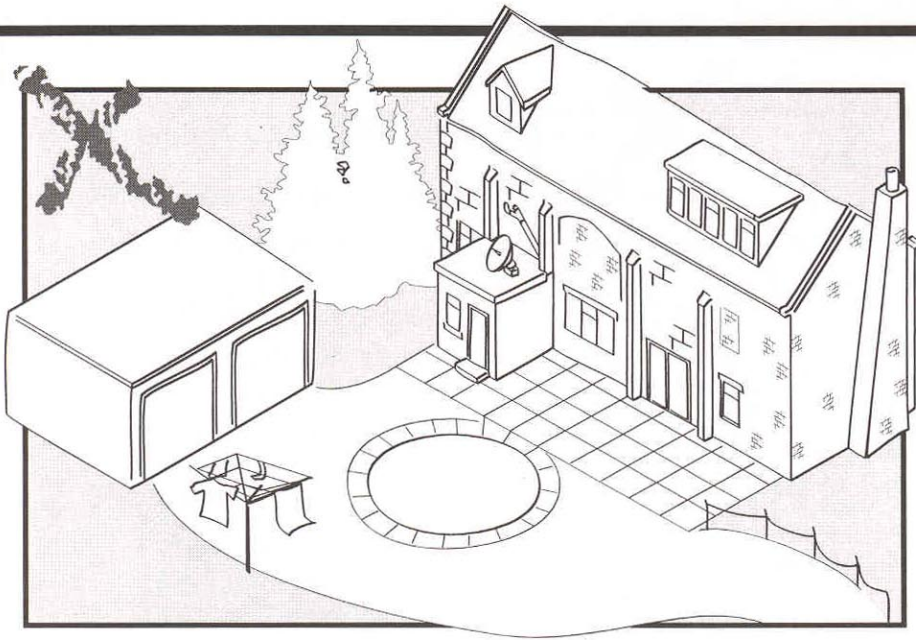
elevation which reflects the proportions of the main building.

7. Porches are inappropriate in conversions; an internal lobby may be an acceptable alternative.
8. New materials should match the original; windows should be of timber with either a stained finish or painted in a muted colour; joinery details should be carefully repaired or matched
9. On listed buildings, rainwater goods should be of timber, cast iron or dark painted aluminium on simple iron brackets / stone corbels; on unlisted buildings rainwater goods should be finished in an unobtrusive colour.



### Externally

10. If required, garaging should be provided within existing buildings such as cart sheds where possible. Where this is not possible, new garaging should form a group with existing buildings, should be subordinate to and should reflect the form and detail of those buildings. (For further details see 'Garages and Outbuildings' under 'New Dwellings and Extensions' section).
11. The use of surrounding land is very important to the character of the building; avoid incongruous, suburban-style lawns and garden sheds.
12. Essential external domestic features such as washing lines should be discreetly located.
13. Traditional walls and outbuildings should be retained; new boundaries may be of



walling in the local tradition or a hedge of indigenous species; screen fencing will be discouraged.

14. Surfacing for paths, patios and drives should be of natural materials such as stone setts or cobbles, gravel or blue clay pavements.

15. Electricity and telephone cables should be laid underground; external waste pipes, fuel tanks, metre boxes, telecommunications or security equipment should be unobtrusively sited or screened.