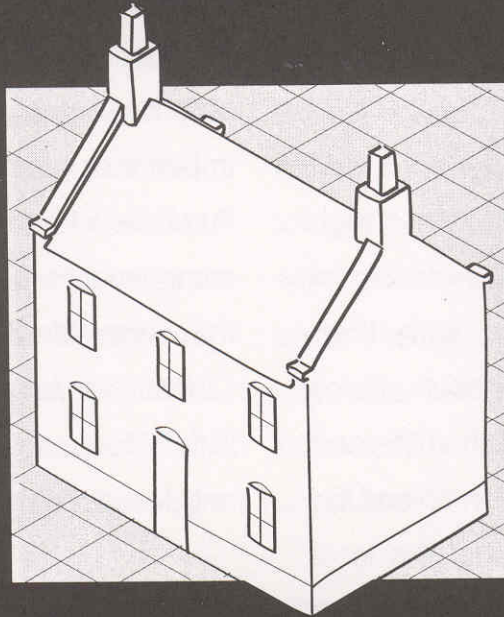


DESIGN *principles* for development in the
Staffordshire Moorlands

Introduction



STAFFORDSHIRE
moorlands
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Planning and Estates Department

This document has been prepared to illustrate basic design principles applicable to development primarily within the rural areas of the Staffordshire Moorlands. It is aimed at property owners and their agents, architects, builders and developers who are encouraged to take into account these principles in preparing development proposals.

The Staffordshire Moorlands is an area of high quality landscape, characterised by traditional buildings which harmonise with their environment and with their neighbours. These buildings display a unique local character and great diversity, influenced by both man and the landscape. There is concern that this local distinctiveness is under threat from standard suburban designs which are incongruous in the countryside.

Government planning policy requires that local planning authorities consider design in the determination of planning applications and encourage good design through their Local Plans. Following the publication of John Gummer's "Quality in Town and Country" initiative in 1994, there has been increased emphasis on design and recognition of its importance in planning. The Government's Rural White Paper published in 1995 makes a commitment to greater emphasis on design in the countryside. More recently The Countryside Commission launched its publication, "Design in the Countryside" which promotes design not only focusing on buildings but also places.

The Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (Deposit Edition, 1994) sets out the policies by which planning applications are determined, in accordance with Government planning policy

and the Staffordshire Structure Plan. Policy B12 requires a good quality of design throughout the District. Policies N5 and N6 require especially high standards of design in the Special Landscape Area. Policy N8 seeks to protect the visual amenities of land conspicuous from the Peak National Park. Policies B5 and B8 require that proposals respect the character and setting of Listed Buildings. Policy B10 requires that development preserves or enhances the appearance or character of Conservation Areas and Policy H12 concerns the design of extensions and ancillary buildings. This document aims to show how the quality of design required by these policies can be achieved.

The emphasis is on encouraging good practice rather than trying to control the detailed design of buildings or stifling experiment, originality

or initiative. It is based on the premise that new development should always have regard to its surroundings so that it is appropriate and blends with the scale, proportions, materials and character of the buildings of the area.

A well designed building, extension or alteration will not only look more attractive but will often enhance the value of a property, will result in lower maintenance costs and in the long term will more than pay for any additional short term costs. Energy conservation and sustainability are also benefits of good design and accessibility and security must also be considered.

Whilst the document refers to the rural area generally, it should be noted that in the more sensitive locations, for example in the Special Landscape Area, land conspicuous from the

Peak National Park, Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and their settings, the principles will be applied with particular rigour.

Following a period of public consultation and a resolution of the Council, this document has been adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance. A more comprehensive version of

the guidance is available from the Planning and Estates Department.

Applicants are encouraged to make early contact with the Planning Department to discuss proposals. In return the Department ultimately looks to applicants to submit plans which take into account these principles.



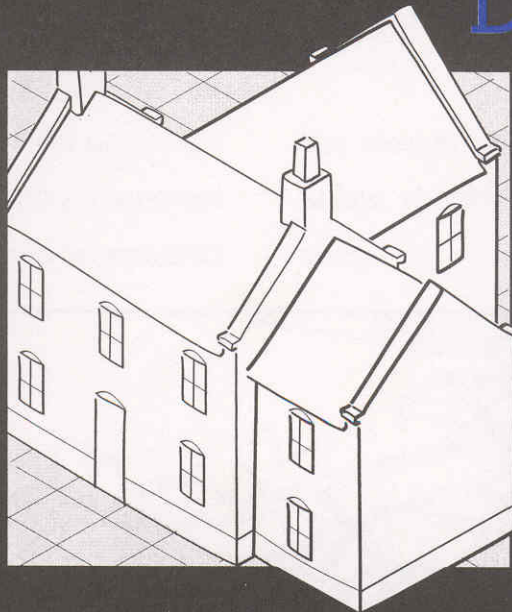
STAFFORDSHIRE
moorlands
DISTRICT COUNCIL

M. SUTCLIFFE BSc. (Econ) Dip. T.P., F.R.G.S., M.R.T.P.I.,
CHIEF PLANNING AND ESTATES OFFICER
STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL
MOORLANDS HOUSE, STOCKWELL STREET, LEEK,
STAFFORDSHIRE. ST13 6HQ.
TELEPHONE (01538) 399181.

DESIGN *principles* for development in the
Staffordshire Moorlands

New Dwellings

and extensions to
Dwellings



STAFFORDSHIRE
moorlands
DISTRICT COUNCIL

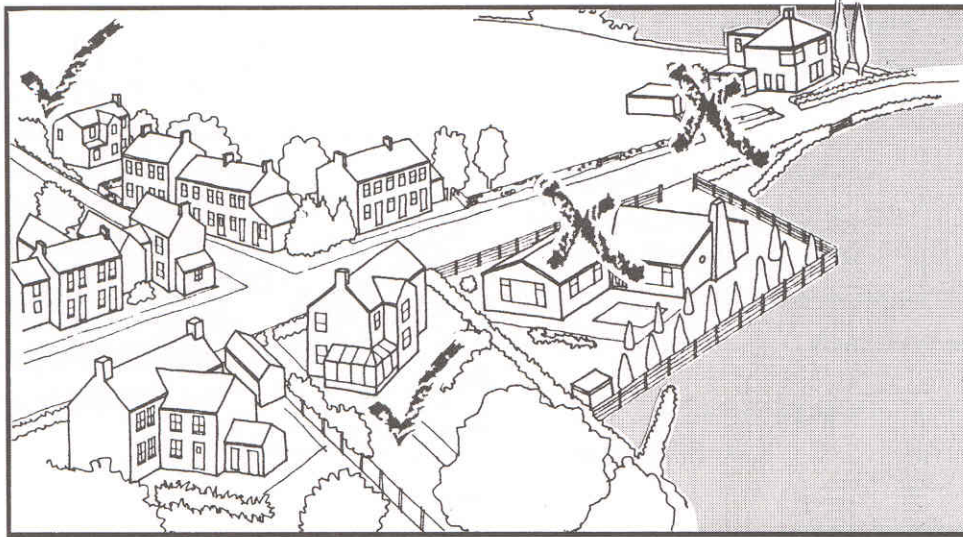
Planning and Estates Department

1. Siting and relationship

This is the most important consideration in assessing a proposed dwelling or extension in the open countryside. All proposed dwellings and extensions will be assessed in the context of their surroundings so that the development is both appropriate and respects the scale, proportions and character of the area. The fact that a single house on a particular site would be unobtrusive is not by itself a good argument for allowing the dwelling. It could be repeated

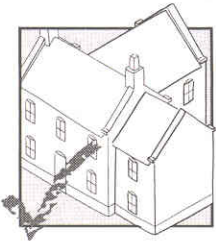
too often and progressively change the character and appearance of the landscape. When siting a new extension, the most important principle is to avoid dominating the main frontage and the extension should be subordinate to this and to the building as a whole.

The design principles illustrated and listed below should be adopted when considering siting:-



New Dwellings

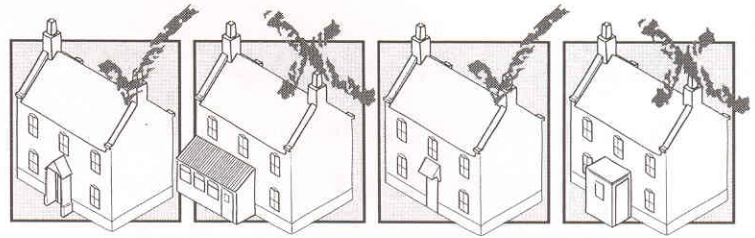
1. New dwellings should form part of a group of buildings rather than stand in isolation and should enhance the appearance of the group..
2. New dwellings should relate to existing buildings in terms of scale and proportion, massing and materials and should derive their inspiration from local tradition.
3. Skyline sites should be avoided.
4. Siting should relate to landform - for example, on sloping sites new buildings should be cut into the slope, in order to reduce visual impact.



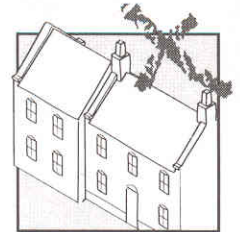
5. Make use of existing landscape features to enhance the design.

Extensions

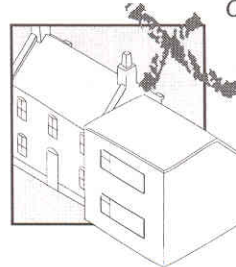
1. Extensions should be subordinate to the existing building so that the original building dominates.



2. The size and shape of the extension should respect the height and proportions of the existing house to ensure the new addition fits neatly with the old. This is also true of porches.
3. In order to achieve this secondary appearance, the ridge height of the extension should be lower than the existing, certainly no higher.



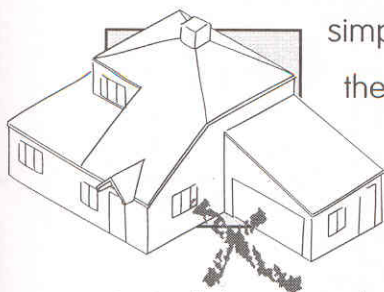
4. The most appropriate way in which to tie in a side extension is to set it back slightly from the front elevation in order to avoid unsightly bonding of old and new brick on the same plane. Generally speaking it will not be acceptable to extend in front of, or along the building line, unless design benefits accrue and neighbours are not disadvantaged.



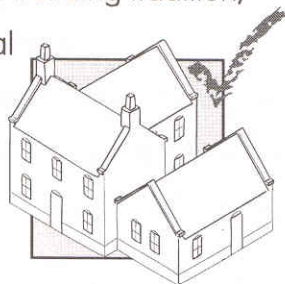
5. *Extensions should integrate with the original building by the use of similar detail and materials.*

2. Roof design

Traditional dwellings in the Moorlands have a simple dominant roofline over the main elevation with the roof spanning the shorter side. Gabled roofs predominate and typically have a pitch of between 30-40 degrees.



Flat roofs are generally unacceptable in the Staffordshire Moorlands district because they do not form part of the local building tradition, nor do they suit the local climate. Similarly, a hipped roof is not part of the building tradition in the district.

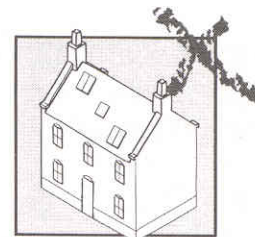


The following design principles should be addressed:-

1. *The roof form should be simple with a dominant roof line and, where appropriate to the locality or the building, emphasised by gables.*
2. *The roof should span the shorter side where practicable.*
3. *Flat roofs should be avoided.*
4. *On a new dwelling, the roof pitch and materials should match those of the locality; on an extension, the roof pitch and materials should match those of the original building.*

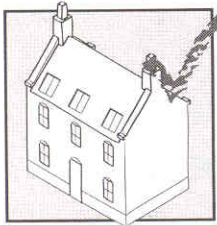
Roof lights

The unmistakably modern appearance of roof lights (and also solar panels) can be harmonised by careful attention to detail.



1. *Roof lights should have a square or vertical emphasis.*

2. Roof lights should be sited clear of the apex, verges and eaves.

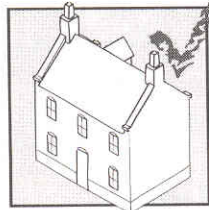


3. The number of roof lights should be kept to an absolute minimum.

4. Roof lights should normally be sited on well hidden or reverse slopes.

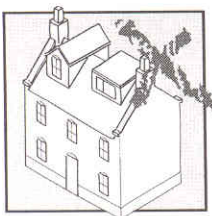
5. Roof lights should not protrude above the surrounding profile of the roof.

6. Where several are used in a single roof plane, they should always align vertically or horizontally.



Dormer windows

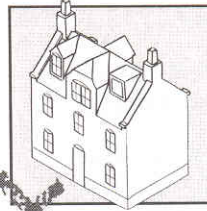
Where dormer windows are appropriate, the following design principles should be adhered to.



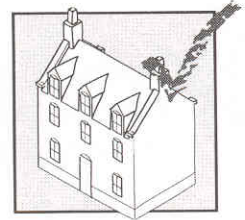
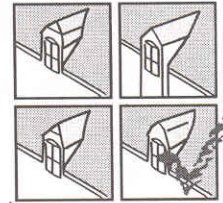
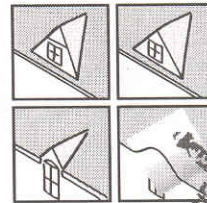
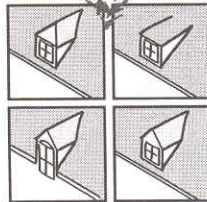
1. Dormers should be as small as possible and sited discreetly.

2. Dormers should be closely related to the scale and positioning of the existing windows and to each other.

3. Dormers should be closely related to the traditional pattern, i.e. aligned in columns to maintain solidity of the elevation.



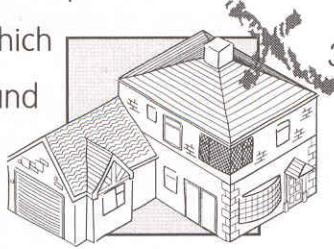
4. Dormers should be checked, and can intersect the line of the eaves.



3. Elevations

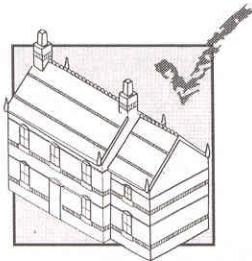
Traditional elevations in the rural area of Staffordshire Moorlands tend to be simple with an uncomplicated arrangement of small window and door openings which are limited in number giving a strong solid to void relationship. A common design failing is to 'over-window' an elevation which visually weakens the structure.

The shape and division of the window is also important. Generally speaking, small top hung opening lights will not be acceptable. They are not a traditional feature of the Moorlands and should be avoided. The overall emphasis should be on vertical proportions which is in keeping with the style and tradition of the district.



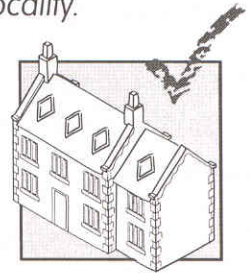
The sub-division of windows into separate panes is appropriate where it is in keeping with the style of the dwelling. Each pane should have roughly the same proportion as the completed window- traditionally a vertical rectangle. The following design principles should be embodied:-

1. *The design of the extension should follow the style of the existing building. In considering extensions, the window and door sizes, proportions and designs*



should be from the 'same family' as those of the original dwelling.

2. *Window openings should be relatively small or sub-divided and limited in number to retain the solid to void relationship, i.e. the wall dominates.*
3. *Windows should be positioned away from corners.*
4. *Where appropriate, window pattern should be aligned in columns and storeys rather than randomly placed.*
5. *The emphasis should be on vertical proportions which is in keeping with the style and tradition of the locality.*
6. *The window frame should be recessed by a minimum of 50mm to avoid a flat appearance to the elevation and emphasise the solidity of the walls.*

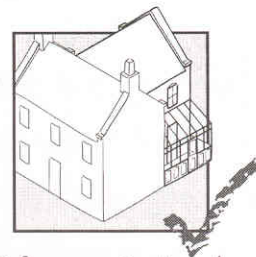


7. *Bow windows should be avoided, so too should large picture windows, top hung lights and leaded lights.*

8. Traditional surround to doors and windows should be incorporated, for example stone cills and lintels or shallow brick relieving arches where appropriate.

9. In the Special Landscape Area, Conservation Areas and listed buildings, window frames should be timber; uPVC are not normally acceptable.

5. A small plinth wall at the base is preferable to the glazing extending from floor to apex.



6. In sensitive locations uPVC frames instead of timber and polycarbonate sheeting instead of glass will not normally be acceptable.

4. Conservatories

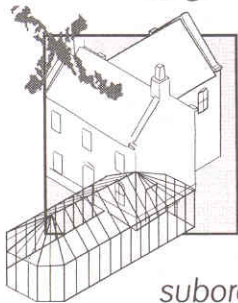
1. Should be carefully sited, for example, within the angle of a building and always to the rear or side; a separate structure may be appropriate.



2. Conservatories should be single storey and ground based.

3. The design of the conservatory should complement the main house in terms of style.

4. The conservatory should be subordinate to the main house so that this remains dominant.

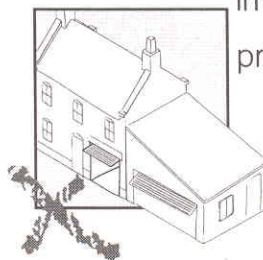


5. Garages and outbuildings

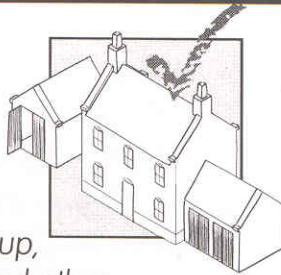
Generally speaking, within the rural areas, a separate outbuilding is preferable to an attached or integral garage. Where it is attached, the garage door is often the largest opening in the front elevation and can appear prominent and unbalanced (further guidance on external work is given in Section 3 "Conversions").

In designing garages, the following principles should be addressed:-

1. The garage should relate well to the main dwelling in



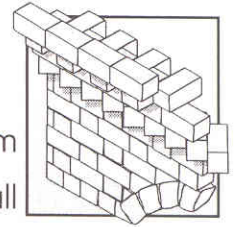
terms of its siting. The siting should allow the garage to appear subordinate to the dwelling, forming a group, for example by walls and other linkage. An isolated position is not normally appropriate.



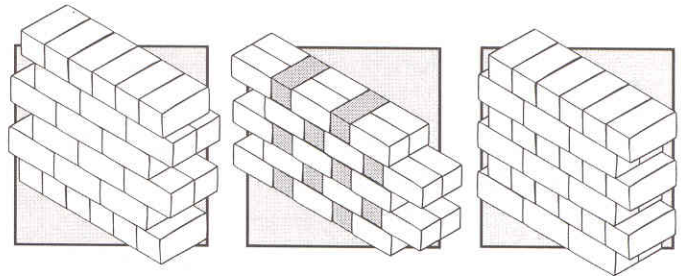
2. The garage should be modest in size and height to reflect its purpose as an ancillary, domestic building.
3. The roof pitch and materials should match the main dwelling.
4. If possible a double garage should have two single width openings with a central pier rather than one large opening.
5. Vertically ribbed garage doors should be used wherever possible, particularly on double width doors.
6. Side hung timber doors are preferable to the modern up and over metal type and consideration should be given to their use wherever possible.

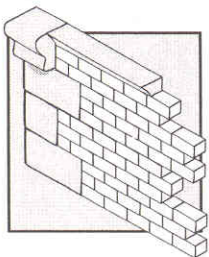
6. Materials

When considering extensions, the aim should be to match the existing wall and roof materials and where these are no longer available to obtain a sample which is as near a match as possible.



In new buildings, the choice of materials should be appropriate to the locality and sensitive to local tradition. Within the upland areas this will usually mean the use of stone and in the lowland areas, brick with either natural clay tiles or natural slates. The combination of brick and stone is an attractive local tradition. Look out for local bonding patterns and traditions.

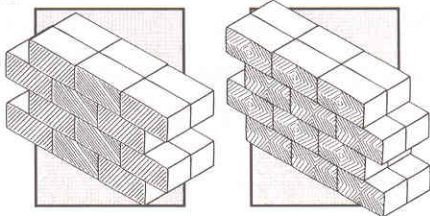




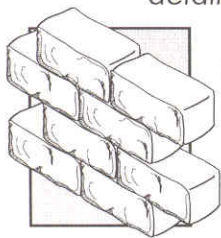
Throughout the rural area, the use of natural materials will be encouraged. These may be new or reclaimed. For example clay tiles as opposed to concrete tiles, natural stone as opposed to reconstituted stone.

Walling Materials

1. Bricks should be red in colour.

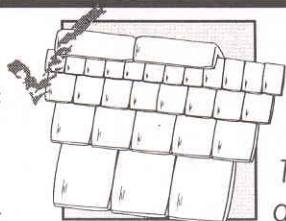
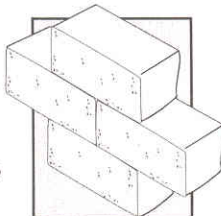


2. Bricks for decorative detail can contrast with the main brickwork for example in the plinth or eaves details.



3. Stone should be natural and should match that of the locality. Look out for different local finishes to the stone face.

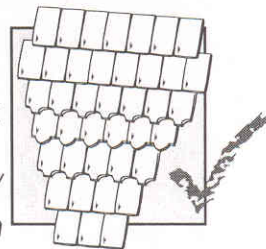
4. Pointing and coursing must be appropriate to both the material and the locality. See the Council's 'Pointing Your Jointing' leaflet for further advice.



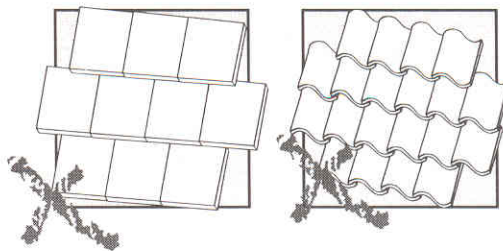
Roofing Materials

1. Stone slates should be natural and should match that of the locality; diminishing courses are usually the most appropriate means of laying such slates.

2. Slates should be natural and blue or grey in colour.

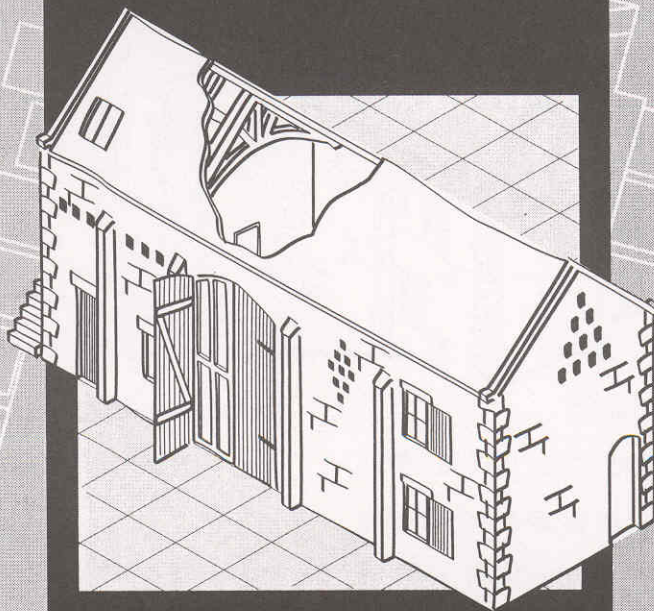


3. Tiles should be plain blue / black in colour and small in size rather than large, red interlocking or 'pan' tiles. Simple decorative courses or patterns may be appropriate where these exist elsewhere in the locality.



DESIGN *principles* for development in the
Staffordshire Moorlands

Conversions

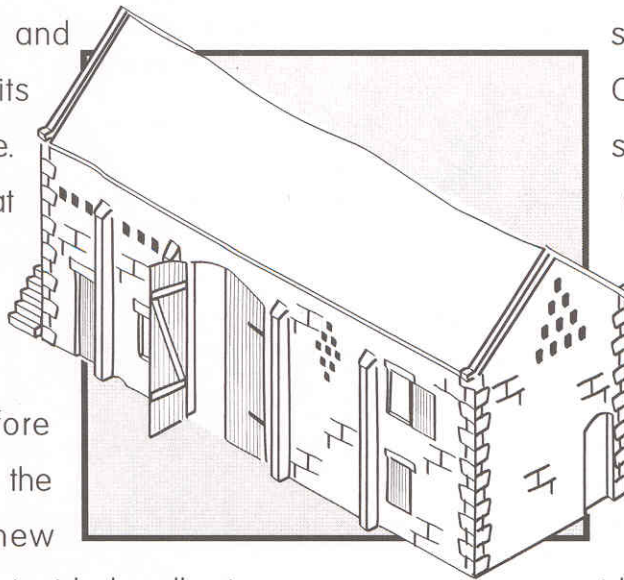


STAFFORDSHIRE
moorlands
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Planning and Estates Department

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



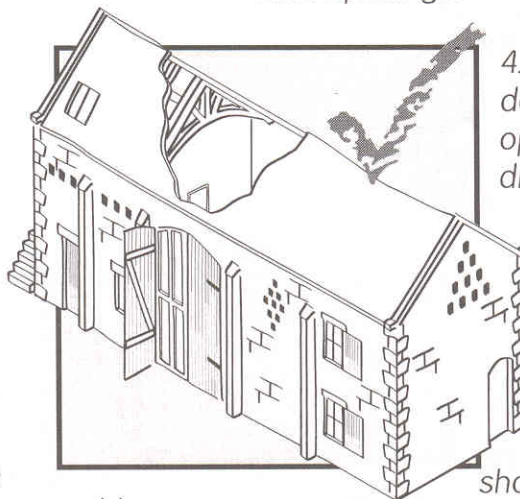
contribution to the landscape. The historic character of a building is a valuable asset and should be maximised. Conversion schemes should therefore seek to retain as much of the original character as possible (this should be observed and recorded prior to any work). Schemes for residential conversion 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.



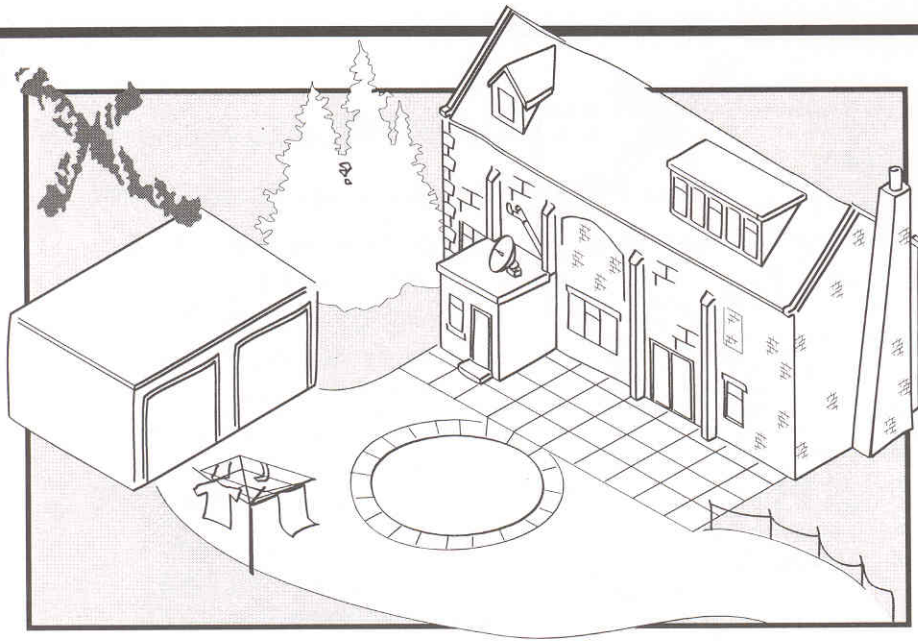
Externally

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



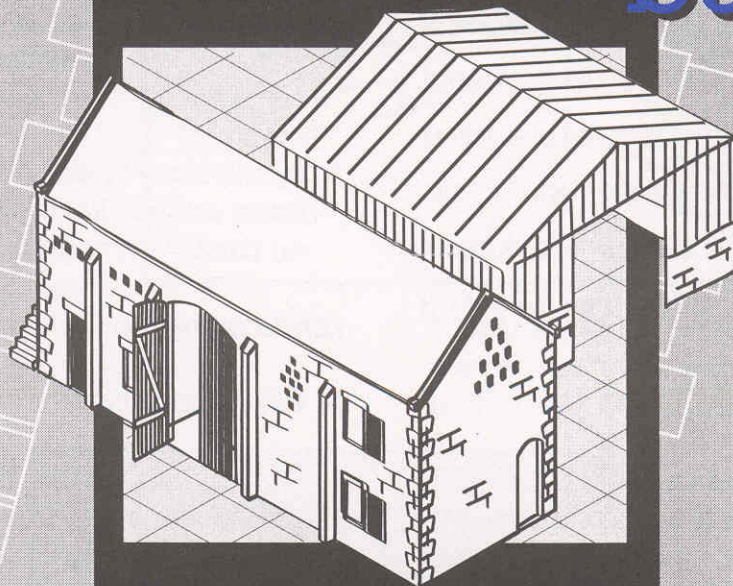
walling in the local tradition or a hedge of indigenous species; screen fencing will be discouraged.

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.

DESIGN *principles* for development in the
Staffordshire Moorlands

Agricultural buildings



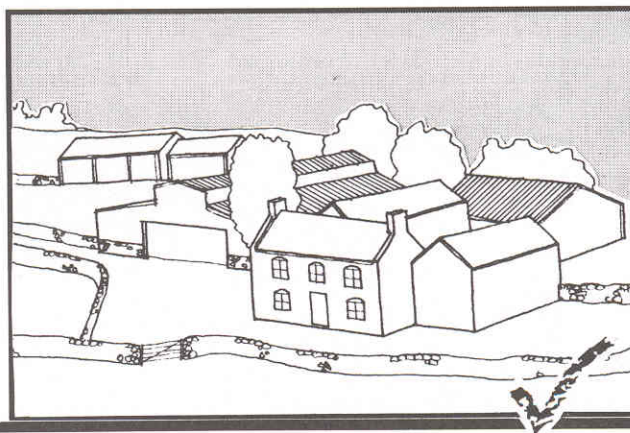
STAFFORDSHIRE
moorlands
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Planning and Estates Department

New agricultural buildings tend to be large in scale and can often dominate traditional buildings and the landscape. In designing a new agricultural building, the aim should be to blend the new building into the landscape as far as possible, taking account of the contours of the land, views from roads and footpaths and existing woodland. The building should take account of the siting and detail of existing buildings. By appropriate siting, design, details and materials, the aim should be to reduce its apparent scale. Consider the following principles:-

Siting

1. *Avoid a skyline setting; set into the slope, stepping ridge and floor levels down the slope if necessary.*
2. *Consider end views or three quarter views so*



that a bland side elevation is the least visible.

3. *Align the building to form a group with existing buildings, unless a detached setting would have less impact on the setting of traditional buildings or the landscape.*
4. *The principal view of the farmhouse should not be blocked. Important views within or around settlements will also be considered.*
5. *Locate close to woodland if possible and retain existing trees (providing that there is no conflict with no.3).*

Landscaping

6. *Where appropriate new planting may be used for softening, in groups of indigenous species only.*
7. *Retain existing hedges and walls; consider erecting new boundaries in the local tradition.*

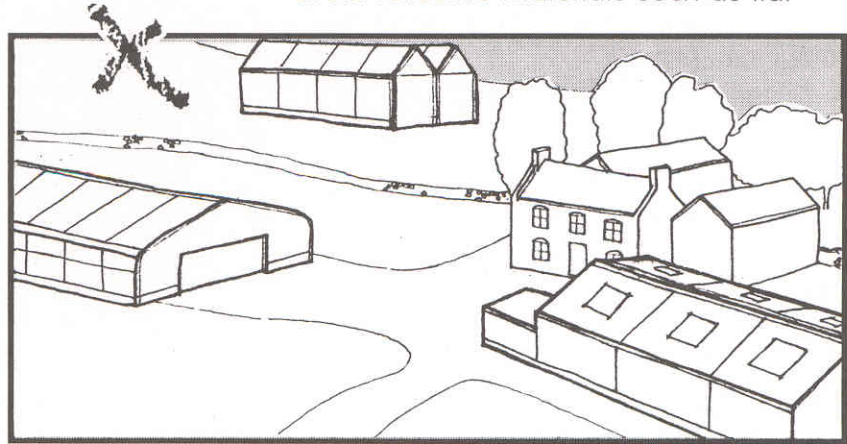
8. Avoid unnecessary new accesses or parking areas; where essential, use natural materials, especially in the Special Landscape Area, listed building and conservation area settings.

the most appropriate, for example, base walls in natural stone to match that of the locality and side cladding in vertically boarded timber (Yorkshire boarding); avoid reflective materials such as flat

Form

9. In listed building and conservation area settings, traditional building forms are the most appropriate.

10. Avoid flat roofs and detached monopitch roofs; consider varying roof pitches, an overhanging roof or a break in the ridge or pitch.



sheet roofing. Consider the use of ribbed sheets which add texture and strength and reduce 'glare'.

Detail and materials

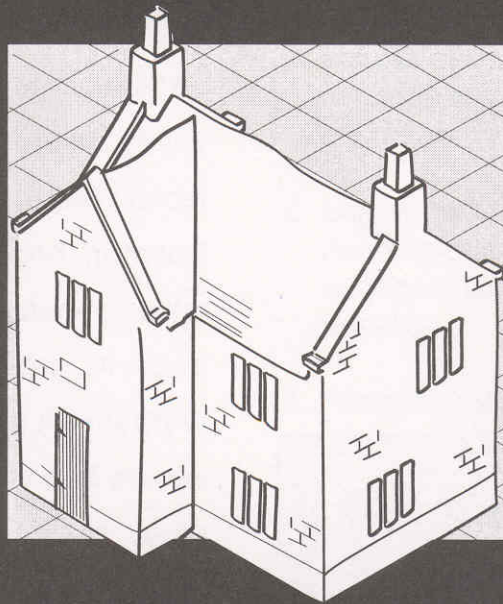
11. Doors and windows should follow a pattern in siting, size and type; avoid dormers; in listed building and conservation area settings, timber is preferable.

13. Use a darker colour for the roof, with rainwater goods to match; in listed building and conservation area settings, materials should be traditional to match those of the locality.

12. Use contrasting materials for the roof, side cladding and walls; natural materials are

DESIGN *principles* for development in the
Staffordshire Moorlands

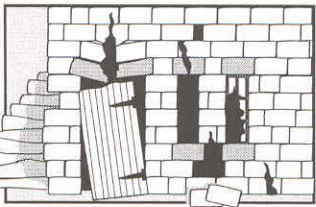
Repairs and alterations to Historic Buildings



STAFFORDSHIRE
moorlands
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Planning and Estates Department

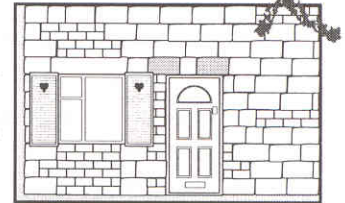
Regular maintenance of buildings of all ages can help to prevent decay and more costly repairs. There will be, however, occasions when repairs are needed to restrain further decay or when alterations are required to accommodate modern living standards. Repairs and alterations can be damaging to the building unless carried out carefully. The aim should be to preserve the character and fabric of the building. With a historic building it is important to understand its structure and historical development which may help provide clues for sympathetic repairs or alterations. Of equal



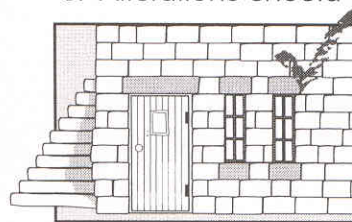
importance is the quality of workmanship and owners are advised to seek specialist advice from

experienced tradespersons and professionals. **The advice below is not exhaustive** and owners of individual buildings, especially listed

buildings, are urged to contact the Council for further, free advice, for example on grants for repairs to historic fabric and on the need for consent. The following general principles apply:-



1. Repairs and alterations should be minimal and carried out only where necessary.
2. Existing materials should be re-used or new matching or reclaimed materials and traditional techniques employed wherever possible.
3. Alterations should be reversible wherever possible.



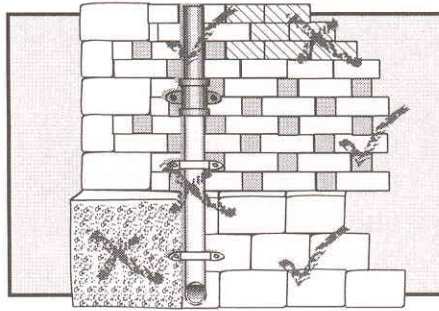
4. The historical development of the building should remain evident. For particular areas of work consider the following principles:-

Roofs

1. Repairs should match the existing materials, pattern and coursing, using non-corrosive nails.
2. Repair or reinstatement of unusual roofing materials such as thatch should be based on specialist advice and skills appropriate to the Moorlands.

Walls

1. Repairs should match the quality, texture, colour and pattern of the existing wall, including its mortar colour, jointing etc.
2. Avoid rendering over existing brick or stone work; where essential use a lime based render.
3. Remove render which may be damaging the fabric underneath.



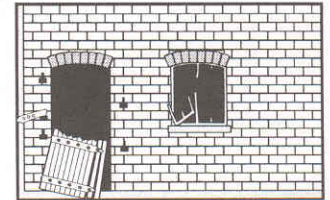
4. Avoid stripping off plaster or render to reveal surfaces which were never intended to be exposed.
5. Avoid painting over previously unpainted surfaces.
6. Seek specialist advice prior to cleaning.

Pointing

1. Should allow the brick or stone work to stand out rather than the mortar jointing. (See SMDC's leaflet 'Pointing Your Jointing' for detailed advice on appropriate methods).

Doors

1. Replacements should match the original in material, detail and finish; strong paint colours are most appropriate.
2. New openings should respect the proportions, recess and details, including surround, of existing.
3. Retain unused doorways, including door furniture.

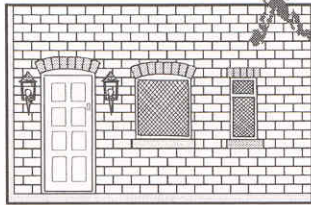


Windows

1. Avoid replacement unless beyond repair or of inappropriate design; overhaul by a competent joiner together with other improvements (such as weather-stripping, draught-proofing, double glazing in existing frames or secondary glazing in a removable, inner frame) may be more economical.
2. Replacement windows should be of a design, scale, proportions and recess appropriate to the age of the building.
3. Timber should be used for replacement windows in a traditional building; plastic windows are not appropriate.

4. A white or off-white paint finish is normally the most appropriate rather than staining. However, a dark stain may be appropriate for barn conversions.

5. New openings should respect the proportions and detail of the existing, including cills and lintels.



Historic features

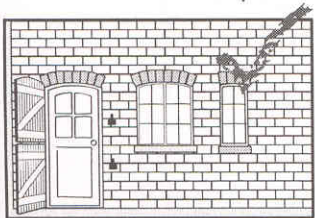
1. These should be retained and accurately restored where they add to the character of the building, for example, decorative plasterwork, wrought or cast ironwork, ridge tiles, chimneys, old glass.

Fixtures

1. Meter boxes, burglar alarms, satellite dishes, etc. should be sited in unobtrusive positions only.
2. Fixings should be made into mortar joints wherever possible.

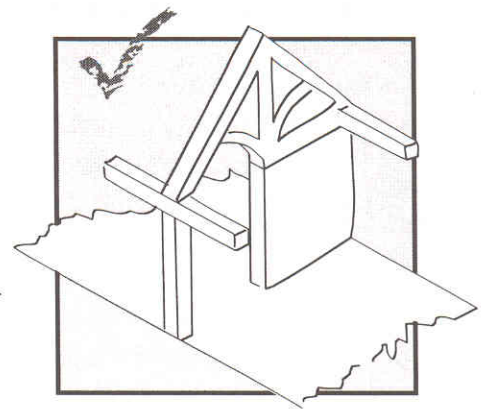
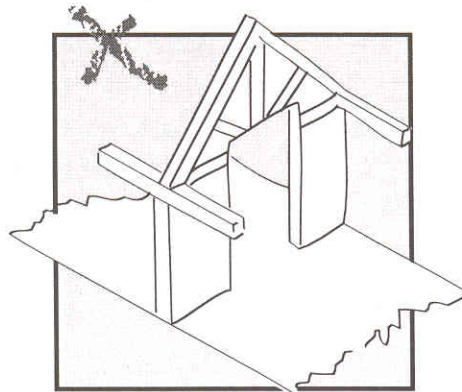
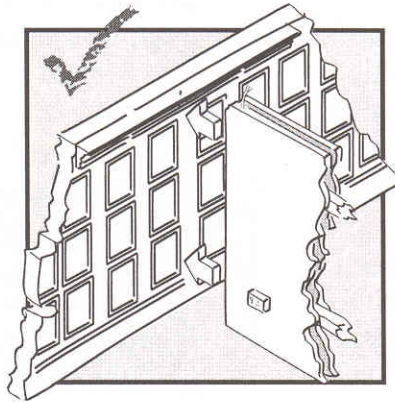
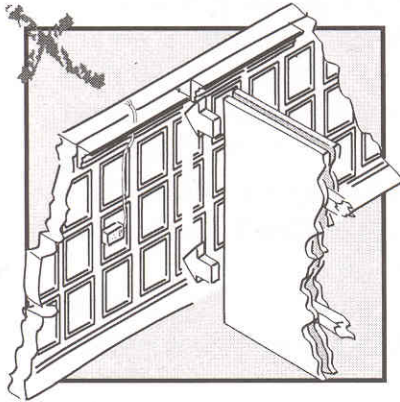
Services

1. Re-wiring, plumbing work, etc. should avoid the destruction of the historic fabric or features such as cutting chases into stonework or mouldings.
2. Rainwater goods should be replaced to match the original where possible and painted in unobtrusive colours.



Interiors

1. Avoid the removal of features such as staircases, panelling, mouldings or important internal spaces.



2. New partition walls or false floors or ceilings should be removable and should avoid damaging the fabric of the building.