

20251128 – NDAD – Planning Statement

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Planning Statement – The Nodding Donkey Artisan Distillery

Retrospective Application for Mixed Use (Residential + Small-Batch Distillery) and Single-Storey Side Extension

Overview

This application seeks retrospective planning permission for the retention of the existing single-storey side extension and for the mixed use of the dwelling as a residential property with a small-batch craft distillery. The extension was constructed on previously unused garden ground between November 2024 and July 2025 and has been adapted to support a low-volume, hand-operated gin business carried out solely by the two directors.

Nature of Operations

The distillery operates on a small scale and does not include industrial distillation or any large equipment besides a 250-litre Kothe still, which functions as a sealed electric water bath. All production steps, including rectifying neutral grain spirit, bottling, labelling, and packing, are carried out manually. The extension has a separate, fully certified three-phase electrical supply but no gas, flues, combustion plant, or external ventilation systems. Ventilation is provided by domestic-grade wall vents and a dehumidifier. All work is conducted indoors, with no public access, visitors, or on-site retail activity. Sales are conducted exclusively online.

Traffic and Deliveries

Traffic associated with the business is similar to neighbouring residential properties. Deliveries arrive as small courier parcels containing botanicals, closures and labels, along with infrequent bottle deliveries every two to four months. Spirit deliveries follow the same cycle. Outbound orders are collected by regular household courier services such as Royal Mail and Parcelforce or hand-delivered to their offices. There are no heavy vehicles, no freight schedules and no commercial traffic patterns. Vehicle size, frequency and noise remain consistent with normal home deliveries.

Amenity and Environmental Impact

The operations produce no odour, noise, vibration or emissions that could affect neighbours. Waste is minimal and consists only of recyclable packaging and small amounts of spent botanicals, all managed through the council's household waste system. There are no changes to landscaping, boundary treatments, drainage, garden layout or external lighting.

Built Form and Appearance

The extension maintains the appearance and character of the host property. It is built with matching brickwork and mortar, and a flat roof aligned with the existing garage roof. A former side window was removed, and the opening was closed, using identical materials. No new windows have been added. The extension is single-storey, sits below 2.5 metres internally,

and does not alter the street scene. Internal changes are confined to the extension, and the main dwelling remains unchanged.

Site Use and Scale

The business occupies less than three per cent of the 583 m² plot and does not affect parking arrangements, neighbour amenity or the residential character of the property. The use remains firmly small-scale and low-impact.

Compliance and Professional Standards

The distillery is operated solely by the two directors, who both hold personal alcohol licences and qualifications in HACCP, TACCP, VACCP, IOSH Managing Safely, Fire Risk Assessment and Food Hygiene. The business is registered with HMRC, holds a Premises Licence for off-sales, and has submitted its Food Business Registration, which will be assessed after this process. An AWRS application will follow once planning permission is granted.

Timeline and Intent

The extension was completed on 22 July 2025 following electrical certification. Although licensed, production has not commenced pending approval by the planning department. The applicants engaged with Planning Enforcement as soon as correspondence was received and have prepared this application in full accordance with the council's guidance and within the requested timeframe. The intention is to ensure full compliance and transparency.

Conclusion

This proposal regularises a quiet, low-impact, hand-crafted activity that sits comfortably within a residential setting. The business does not harm neighbouring amenities and does not change the character of the area.