



**AGRICULTURAL COMMENTARY IN RELATION TO THE
VARIOUS ALTERNATIVE SITING OPTIONS PROPOSED BY
STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL
FOR
AN AGRICULTURAL WORKERS DWELLING
AT DEEPPDALE, BEAT LANE, RUSHTON SPENCER**

ON BEHALF OF

MR G W, MRS D & MR J W GOODWIN

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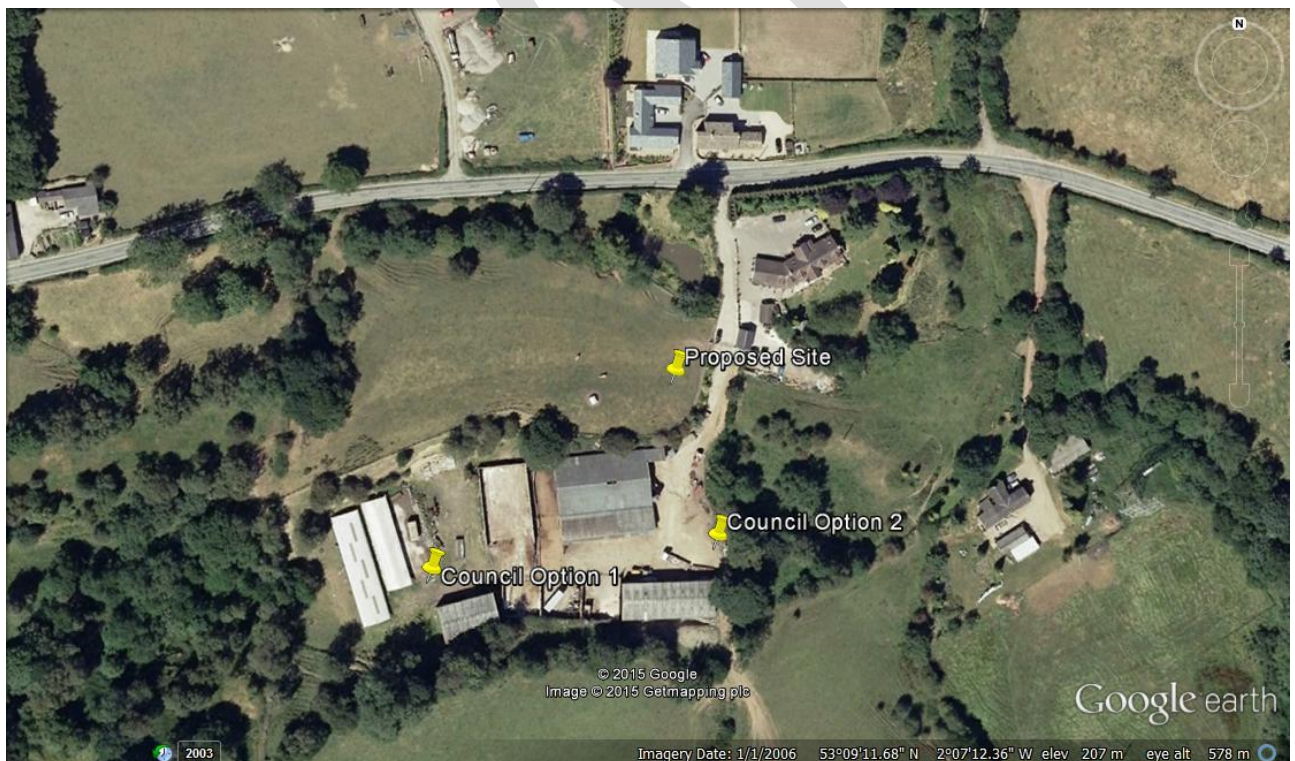
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- This document has been produced to provide specialist agricultural commentary in relation to the various siting options proposed by Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (SMDC).
- Practical considerations including the functional and operational requirements of the business have been taken into account along with relevant industry legislation in order to provide a reasoned conclusion on the appropriate siting for the dwelling.
- A site meeting was held with SMDC Officers and the Architect to provide Pre-Application comments in readiness for preparing a full Planning Application. The Council raised two alternative siting options which have been reviewed as part of this document.

2.0 SITING OPTIONS

- Below is a Google Earth extract showing the arrangement and layout of the farm buildings at Deepdale Farm. Marked on this extract are the two alternative sites proposed by the Officers marked Council Option 1 and Council Option 2.



- Officers explored whether through redevelopment that a dwelling could be sited within the existing yard or to demolish existing buildings to site the dwelling on the footprint.

- Whilst demolition and redevelopment may be appropriate for redundant farm buildings, in this case all of the buildings are in agricultural use either for the housing of livestock or storage of fodder, bedding or machinery.
- Therefore any redevelopment of these buildings will increase the need to accommodate replacement buildings and yard area outside of the current curtilage of the farm buildings and yard area.
- More importantly, there is also the matter of the potential to create operational problems and bio-security risks.

3.0 RELEVANT LEGISLATION

- Government Guidance Disease Prevention for Livestock Keepers and Farmers (Published 11th September 2012) has been reviewed to advise further on the siting of a property in relation to Livestock buildings.
- The guidance states that *“The key to good bio-security is reducing and controlling the movements of people and vehicles into areas where your farm animals are kept”* the guidance goes on to state that *“good hygiene and bio-security is essential to prevent the introduction of animal disease, protect the health of your animals and workers and reduce the risk of disease exposure to any members of the public”*.
- The matter of bio-security is important when considering the siting of a dwelling and how access could be achieved to the dwelling and what route the access would take. It is also important to consider that a residential property would generate non agricultural visitors (parcel deliveries, postman, guests etc) who would not be directly associated with the farm buildings.
- The Legislation goes on to state *“farm animal diseases are mainly spread through animals, people and machinery moving between and within farms, farm visitors through people and vehicles”*.
- Therefore when considering the siting of new farm dwellings, it is important to achieve bio-security control for livestock, buildings and open yards with the minimal intervention of people and vehicle movements through that area.
- Further other guidance named Controlling Disease in Farm Animals (Published 18th September 2012) goes on to state that *“during an outbreak, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) will impose restrictions on animal movement”* and goes on to state that *“on farm bio-security measures will include cleaning and disinfecting protective clothing and vehicles before and after contact with animals”*.

- Considering the above the guidance stresses the need to have control over areas where livestock are housed.

4.0 THE VIEW OF THE SITING OPTIONS

COUNCIL OPTION 1

- This site is located adjacent to the young stock housing and loose yard areas. In order to achieve a residential plot in this location it would require significant demolition and would require the young stock housing to be located in an alternative location.
- The access route is also problematic as it runs through the centre of the cattle yards, which would create significant bio-security and disease concerns having the property in this location.
- Ideally a separate residential and farm access is preferred and this is extremely difficult to achieve in this location as the site is central in the middle of a livestock housing and open yard area and any access route would require considerable groundworks of which the cost will be prohibitive.
- The site is also problematic and would create Health and Safety concerns having visitors arriving through the centre of a working farmyard with agricultural and HGV vehicles.
- Therefore this location has been discounted and is inappropriate for the various reasons stated above.

COUNCIL OPTION 2

- The siting of agricultural buildings and yard area has been limited due to the topography of the land. The second site is proposed in the yard area towards the eastern boundary.
- At present this area is used as a working farmyard for the storage of machinery, fodder and moving of livestock. In addition, the area provides the HGV turning point for deliveries of feed and fodder and for the collection and delivery of livestock.
- To the southeast, the site is also restricted by the access running up to the fields to the south and therefore this area needs to be kept clear as it is used on a regular basis for tractors and other agricultural machinery accessing the land.
- Therefore considering the constraints of the site and the bio-security, disease and Health and Safety risks, siting a residential property in this location is not acceptable.

5.0 PROPOSED SITE

- The proposed site has been selected as it can meet the functional requirement of being on site and within sight and sound of their livestock.
- The elevated position also allows the applicant to oversee the access to an element of control over visitors to the farm.
- The siting also allows for adequate disease and bio-security control whereby visitors to the farmhouse do not need to travel through a working farmyard and access to the residential farmhouse and main livestock buildings can be separated.
- Therefore, taking into account the relevant factors, the proposed site is considered the most suitable on their land holding.