DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2017/0096 **Valid 16/02/2017**	**HIGHWINDS CHEADLE ROAD OAKAMOOR**	**PROPOSED ERECTION OF A GENERAL PURPOSE AGRICULTURAL BUILDING (RESUBMISSION OF SMD/2016/0261)** **(FULL - MINOR)**

MAIN ISSUES

- Justification for agricultural building at this location
- Impact on Oakamoor Conservation Area
- Impact on Landscape Character
- Design
- Amenity
- Highway Safety/Access

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site comprises an area of agricultural land outside the settlement boundary, immediately to the north of the B5417 Oakamoor Road. The site is set some 3 metres below the level of the road and is bordered by a thick hedgerow.

To the north east of the site sits a group of four semi detached two storey residential properties, the nearest of which is 'Highwinds' which sits within the same ownership boundary as the site. To the north and west of the site lies open agricultural land. The site benefits from an existing access with Oakamoor Road in the far south western corner of the site.

The Oakamoor Conservation Area boundary sits immediately to the south and east of the site. The boundary to the south runs parallel with the middle of Oakamoor Road whilst the boundary to the east incorporates the adjacent field which stands immediately to the west of 'Highwinds'.

The site was subject to a previous planning application for an agricultural building (Application Ref: SMD/2016/0261) which was withdrawn due to concerns from the case officer regarding the justification for the scale of building proposed and potential adverse harm which could have been caused to landscape character.

PROPOSAL

The application seeks consent for an agricultural building to support their agricultural holding (37 029 0053) of approximately 8.5 acres, which is situated in the north east corner of the field, close to the border with Oakamoor Road. The structure is

rectangular in shape with the long principle elevation running parallel with Oakamoor Road. The submitted elevation plan (Drawing No. 0610 AL(0)02) shows the proposed building as measuring 13.5m in length (front elevation), parallel with the public highway some 3.5m in from the site boundary. The building is shown to have an eaves height of 3.15m and an overall ridge height of 3.7m.

The building would be open on all four sides and be covered by a roof made from steel sheeting. The support guttering and downpipes would be constructed from Black UPVC. A drop snout canopy measuring 1m would overhang the roof.

The submitted Planning Statement states at paragraph 5.2 that the agricultural building will be used to store the following:

- Hay/fodder
- Topper
- Sprayer
- Trailer x 2
- Quad Bike
- Fencing Tools
- Other general tools and maintenance items

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004 requires proposals to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan taking into consideration any material considerations relevant to the determination of the application.

The local development plan for this site comprises the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy (adopted 26th March 2014) and any relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD's).

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in March 2012 sets out the Governments planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. As stated in paragraph 2 of the NPPF, the document is a material consideration which must be taken into account in planning decisions.

Core Strategy Development Plan Document (Adopted 2014)

S01 Spatial Objectives
SS1 Development Principles
SS1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
SS6 Rural Areas
SS6a Other Rural Areas Strategy
SS7 Churnet Valley Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
DC2 The Historic Environment
DC3 Landscape and Settlement Setting
R1 Rural Diversification
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework

Achieving Sustainable Development	Paragraphs 1-17
Requiring Good Design	Chapter 7
Conserving and enhancing the historic environment	Chapter 12

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/2016/0261 Proposed erection of general purpose agricultural building (Withdrawn 16th June 2016)

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 30th March 2017
Neighbour consultation period ends: 17th March 2017
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

No comments received

Town / Parish Comments

No comments received

Conservation Officer

No Objection

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

The site is an area of agricultural land outside of the development boundary and is therefore subject to policies SS6 and SS6c of the adopted core strategy. The site is not constrained by any restrictive NPPF policies listed at footnote 9 to paragraph 14 of the NPPF and as such the presumption in favour of sustainable development, set out in policy SS1a of the core strategy and paragraph 14 of the NPPF, is engaged.

Policy SS6 states that the rural areas comprise of Larger Villages, Smaller Villages and Other Rural Areas.

Policy SS6c refers to other rural areas which comprises the countryside (and green belt) outside of the development and infill boundaries of the towns and villages. The policy states that these areas will provide only for development which meets an essential local need, and supports the rural diversification and sustainability of the rural area.

The principle of the proposed development is considered to be acceptable, subject to there being an essential need for this type of agricultural building in this location, and that the proposal constitute will not result in adverse harm to any historic assets; landscape character; residential amenity; and highway safety.

Justification for the development in this location

Policy SS6a of the core strategy supports development in the countryside which meets an essential local need and supports the rural diversification and sustainability of the rural area. The policy aims to sustain the rural economy by supporting the diversification of existing farm enterprises in accordance with policy R1.

Policy R1 of the core strategy states that all development in the rural areas outside of the development boundaries of the towns and villages will be assessed according to the extent to which it enhances the character, appearance and biodiversity of the countryside, promotes the sustainable diversification of the rural economy, facilities economic activity, meets the rural community need and sustains the historic environment.

The applicant's agent have provided evidence of the fact that an agricultural business exists on site in the form of a agricultural holding certificate (Holding Number: 37 029 0053).

The Planning Statement at paragraph 5.4 states that the justification for this agricultural building is to allow the applicant to keep their own livestock on this holding and thus help the agricultural business to grow; and provide a suitable storage facility for fodder/feed and other associated agricultural products/equipment.

A previous application for an agricultural building on this site was withdrawn (SMD/2016/0261) following concerns raised by the case officer that the proposed building would be an isolated structure in a sensitive landscape. The case officer also states that the justification for the development was finely balanced.

In considering the evidence submitted by the applicants agent, I am satisfied that there is a agricultural business which exists on site and that an agricultural building of an appropriate scale would allow the business to grow sustainably. As such I consider that there is a reasonable justification for this type of development on this site and therefore the application accords with policy SS6a and policy R1 of the adopted core strategy.

Impact on Oakamoor Conservation Area

Policy DC2 of the adopted Core Strategy seeks to safeguard and where possible enhance the historic environment by resisting development which would harm or be detrimental to the special character and historic heritage of the District's towns and villages and those interests of acknowledged importance.

Paragraph 132 of the NPPF sets out how a local authority should consider the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance

can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.

Paragraph 133 of the NPPF states that where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm, local authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss.

Paragraph 134 of the NPPF states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

The site lies adjacent to the Oakamoor Conservation Area boundary. Discussions with the Conservation Officer have confirmed that the proposed development would not result in any adverse harm to any heritage assets and as such complies with policy DC2 of the core strategy and paragraphs 132-134 of the NPPF.

Impact on Landscape Character

The site falls within the Churnet Valley Strategy area and is therefore subject to Policy SS7 of the adopted core strategy. This policy states that any development should be of a scale and nature and of a high standard of design which conserves and enhances the heritage, landscape and biodiversity of the area and demonstrate strong sustainable development and environmental principles.

Policy DC3 of the adopted core strategy states that the Council will protect, and where possible, enhance local landscape and the setting of settlements in Staffordshire Moorlands by supporting development which respects and enhances local landscape character and reinforces and enhances the setting of the settlement.

A previous application for an agricultural building on this site (SMD/2016/0261) was withdrawn. Concerns were raised by the case officer relating to the building being sited in isolation within a sensitive landscape.

This application has sought to revise the design of the building to address these previous concerns with regards to adverse impacts upon landscape character. The revised design comprises the removal of solid walls which results in a transparent appearance. The overall height of the building has been reduced by 0.7m. The hardstanding access track has been removed.

It is considered that the revisions to the design of the agricultural building will result in a development which is of an appropriate scale in relation to the land holding, and is positioned in such a way that because of the topography, the building will be viewed as sitting below the ground level of the public highway.

The openness of the building is considered to reduce the concentration of development. Overall, it is considered that the proposed revisions to the design of the agricultural building addresses the concerns relating to landscape character raised by the case officer in the previously withdrawn application. As such the application is considered to be located in a sustainable location which responds positively to the immediate and wider landscape and thereby complies with policies SS7 and DC3 of the adopted core strategy.

Design

Policy SS1 of the adopted Core Strategy sets out a number of development principles which new development should adhere to in order to contribute positively to the social, economic, and environmental improvement of the Staffordshire Moorlands.

Policy DC1 of the adopted Core Strategy sets out a list of design considerations that new development should incorporate into any new scheme. It states that all development shall be well designed and reinforce local distinctiveness by positively contributing to and complementing the special character and heritage of the area. In particular new development should be designed to respect the site and its surroundings and promote a positive sense of place and identity through its scale, density, layout, siting, landscaping, character and appearance.

Chapter 7 of the NPPF highlights the importance of good design, that good design is indivisible from planning and should contribute positively to making places better for people.

As set out above, this application has revised the design of the previously withdrawn proposal which is thought to address the concerns relating to landscape character. The application is therefore considered to constitute high quality design and thereby complies with policies SS1 and policy DC1 of the adopted core strategy.

Amenity

Policy DC1 of the adopted core strategy requires all development to protect various aspects of residential amenity which includes satisfactory daylight, sunlight, outlook and privacy.

Paragraph 17 of the NPPF highlights twelve principles that should underpin both plan-making and decision taking. One such principle is that planning should always seek to secure high quality design and good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings

The site is situated in an area of agricultural land that is not immediately surrounded by any residential properties. The host property ‘Highwinds’ stands some 40m to the east of the proposed building. ‘Lightoaks Hall’ is situated to the south of Oakamoor Road and is well screened by natural vegetation. Similarly ‘West Lodge’ is situated to the south west of the site and is well screened by natural vegetation.

Given the site context and nature of development, it is not anticipated that the proposed agricultural building will result in any adverse impacts with regards to residential amenity, and as such the application is considered to comply with policy DC1 of the adopted core strategy and paragraph 17 of the NPPF.

Highway Safety

Policy T1 of the adopted core strategy aims to encourage sustainable modes of transport and ensure that all new development is located where the highway network can be satisfactorily accommodated in the existing highway network.

Paragraph 32 of the NPPF requires local authorities to consider, when determining applications, whether safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved.

The previous application included an access track which linked the proposed agricultural building to the existing access to Oakamoor Road in the south west corner of the site. This aspect of the development has been removed in this application. It is not envisaged that the proposed development will have a detrimental impact upon highway safety, given that the existing access can accommodate the necessary agricultural vehicles with good visibility in both directions. No objections have been received from the highway authority.

As such it is considered that the application will not result in any adverse impacts with regards to highway safety and complies with policy T1 of the adopted core strategy and paragraph 32 of the NPPF.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The application seeks permission for a proposed agricultural building on land to the north of Oakamoor Road, west of 'Highwinds', Oakamoor. The site is within the countryside and therefore subject to policies SS6 and SS6a of the core strategy. The site is not constrained by any policies listed at footnote 9 to paragraph 14 of the NPPF and therefore the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in policy SS1a of the core strategy and paragraph 14 of the NPPF is engaged.

The site was subject to a previous application for the same proposed development (SMD/2016/0261), however this was withdrawn due to concerns from the planning authority regarding the justification for a large scale agricultural building within the context of the land holding and potential impact on sensitive landscape character.

Evidence has been provided by the applicant's agent that there is an existing agricultural holding on this land. The Planning Statement puts forward the case for the justification of development. The proposed elevations demonstrates that revisions have been made to the scale and design of the building to reduce the impact upon landscape character.

It is considered that the proposed agricultural barn is located within a sustainable location and will allow the existing agricultural business to grow sustainably without having a detrimental impact to the immediate and wider landscape character; the setting of heritage assets; residential amenity; or highway safety.

In conclusion, the application is considered to accord with all relevant local development plan policies and other material considerations including the NPPF. There are no adverse impacts which will significantly or demonstrably outweigh the benefits to this proposal, and therefore within the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out within paragraph 14 of the NPPF, it is recommended that this application be approved subject to appropriate conditions being attached.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: Approve with Conditions

Case Officer: James Stannard
Recommendation Date: 10th April 2017

X B.J. Haywood

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council