DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2017/0374	**REDMORLEA LOWER**	**PROPOSED STABLE BLOCK**
Valid 22/06/2017	**BARN LEEK ROAD**	
	WATERHOUSES	**(FULL - MINOR)**

MAIN ISSUES

- Landscape Character
- Ecology
- Design
- Amenity

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site comprises a small area of land east of the A523 Leek-Ashbourne Road which is ancillary to an existing two storey detached residential dwelling 'Redmorlea'. The site is accessed directly from the public highway via an existing gate and contains the residential dwelling 'Redmorlea' (converted from a barn under application SMD/2011/0653), an area of parking provision to the east of the property; a large area of ancillary garage space to the rear of the property to the south, beyond which is an agricultural field/enclosure separated by wooden fencing. On visiting the site it was noted that this field contained three horses.

The site is situated within a rural location approximately 1km west of the settlement of Waterhouses in the east of the District. No residential property lies within a significant distance of the site.

The site is bordered on all sides by natural vegetation which acts an effective line of screening from the wider area.

The site benefits from a grant of planning permission for a proposed stable block, approved under SMD/2006/0566 in 2006. This permission has now expired.

PROPOSAL

The proposed development is a modest single storey stable block with a pitched roof and two blank gables, to be positioned to the south east of the existing dwelling with the front elevation being at right angles to the rear elevation of the property.

As shown on the submitted Plans & Elevation drawing (Drawing No: 2002-1095-06 Rev A) the proposed stable block encompasses two stables, and has dimensions which amount to a length of 8.3m x a width of 5.35m, a height to eaves level of 2.5m and an overall height of 5.4m.

The application form states that the roof of the proposed stable block will be a blue tile to match the existing dwelling. The gable ends will be a natural coarsed stone

which also matches the existing barn conversion. The flank walls are to be constructed of block work faced externally with Canadian cedar ship lap boards.

The stable block is shown to have a front elevation which includes a double door and two small windows. The northern elevation is shown to include a small window above the eaves level of the gable. No windows are shown to be included within the southern of eastern elevations.

This application is identical to the approved application in 2006.

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)

SS1 Development Principles
SS1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
SS6c Other Rural Areas Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
DC3 Landscape and Settlement Setting
R1 Rural Diversification
NE1 Biodiversity and Geological Resource

National Planning Policy Framework

Achieving Sustainable Development	Paragraphs 1-17
Requiring Good Design	Chapter 7
Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment	Chapter 11

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/2005/1373 Erection of Stable Block (Refused)

SMD/2006/0566 Erection of Stable Block (Approved)

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 10th August 2017
Neighbour consultation period ends: 28th July 2017
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

No public comments received

Town / Parish Comments

Waterhouses Parish Council – no comments received

Ecological Officer

An initial objection was raised by the Ecological Officer due to a bat survey not being submitted within the application. However these comments were based on an understanding that a barn conversion formed part of the application. It was pointed out to the Ecological Officer that this was incorrect, and subsequently revised comments have been submitted which are set out below:

Revised Comment 14th July:

Further to these comments I can clarify that a bird and bat survey would not be appropriate in this instance. However it is appropriate to enhance the development by providing inbuilt nest sites for birds or roosting opportunities for bats. Appropriate bat bricks could conform to Schwegler Brick Box Type 27.

An appropriate sparrow nest box would be Schwegler 1SP Nest Box - Sparrow Terrace or similar. Both nest sites can be installed within the stonework of the new building.

Condition:

No development shall take place until the biodiversity design enhancements detailed below have been submitted to an approved in writing by the local planning authority.

This shall comprise:

a) Creation of bird nesting boxes within the fabric of the development according to best practice deigns. Open fronted and nest boxes for hole nesting species should be provided – at least three boxes suitable for house sparrow

b) Creation of two bat roosting opportunities integrated into the fabric of the new building.

c) Landscaping including *planting schemes that will benefit breeding birds and feeding or foraging bats.*

d) Persons responsible for implementing the proposed works.

e) Details of initial aftercare and long-term maintenance.

f) Details of monitoring and remedial measures.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

Policy SS1a of the adopted core strategy reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It states that planning applications that accord with relevant policies in the Local Plan will be approved without delay.

Paragraph 14 of the NPPF sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision taking this means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or specific policies indicate development should be restricted.

The site is set within the curtilage of an existing dwelling, situated outside of the defined built up area boundary in the Countryside. The application is therefore subject to Policy SS6c, which sets out the spatial strategy for the rural areas outside of development boundaries.

Policy SS6c states that development in these areas will support the rural diversification and sustainability of the rural areas. Priority will be given to the need to protect the quality and character of the area, which requires all development proposals to respect and respond sensitively to the distinctive qualities of the surrounding landscape.

A previous scheme for a stable block has been approved under SMD/2006/0566. In light of this fact, and the policy context set out above, it is considered that the principle of development is acceptable providing the application can demonstrate compliance with Policy SS6c of the adopted core strategy and all relevant national and local planning policies relating to Landscape Character; Design; and Amenity.

Landscape Character

Policy R1 of the adopted core strategy states that appropriate development in rural areas should not harm the rural character and environmental quality of the area.

Policy DC3 of the core strategy refers specifically to Landscape Character. The policy supports development which respects and enhances local landscape

character, resisting development which would harm or be detrimental to the character of the local or wider landscape.

The proposed development is for a modest stable block building to serve equestrian activities which are a common feature of the rural landscape. The need for development is clear, having observed three horses in the adjoining field within the site during my visit.

It is considered that this proposed development is appropriate within this location and sits comfortably within the local landscape without having any undue adverse impacts upon the areas landscape character. As such it is considered that the application complies with policies R1 and DC3 of the local plan.

Ecology

Policy NE1 of the core strategy refers to biodiversity and geological resources. It aims to positively manage these resources by ensuring development where appropriate, produces a net gain in biodiversity.

Chapter 11 of the NPPF sets out the relevant national planning policies for the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment.

The Ecological Officer has commented that there is an opportunity for a net gain in biodiversity through the construction of these stables by providing inbuilt nest sites for birds or roosting opportunities for bats.

Given these comments, it is considered appropriate to attach a condition that requires the applicant to submit a basic biodiversity enhancement scheme to maximise the opportunity for biodiversity gains. Subject to this condition being enforced and adhered to, the application is considered to comply with policy NE1 of the core strategy and Chapter 11 of the NPPF.

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.

Equestrian uses can often be quite transient in nature and normally the local planning authority would seek to avoid stable buildings which have a significant degree of permanence and would normally seek to secure timber stable buildings which could easily be removed if they become redundant.

However, in this case the proposed stable block is a similar design of the previously approved scheme in 2006, following a refusal in 2005 for a larger building, although it is noted that a higher eaves detail is proposed.

The previous approval was subject to conditions preventing the use of the building for any other domestic purposes and requiring it to be removed if it ceases to be required for equestrian purposes. These conditions should be reiterated.

However, it is noted that the flank walls are to be constructed of block work faced externally with Canadian cedar ship lap boards. The latter is not considered to be acceptable as it would create a building of too greater permanence. The previous approval showed timber clad, timber framed front and rear elevations. It is considered that this building should be the same and this can be secured by condition.

Given the previous approval, and subject to the above conditions, it is considered that the plans submitted as part of this application constitute development which is of an appropriate scale, height and massing which is subordinate to, and therefore relates well to, the existing barn conversion on site and that the proposed materials and finishes are appropriate for a development of this nature and reflect the materials and finishes used in the construction of the adjacent barn conversion.

Based on the above, it is considered that the proposal is of a high quality design which reflects the design principles within the local plan and the NPPF, compliant with policies SS1 and DC1 of the core strategy and Chapter 7 of the NPPF.

Amenity

Policy DC1 of the adopted core strategy requires all new development to protect the amenity of the area, which includes residential amenity, in terms of 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.

Due to the rural location of the site, there are no neighbouring properties within a significant distance of the proposed development. The proposed stable block is ancillary to the existing barn conversion ‘Redmorlea’ and has been appropriately sited to avoid any adverse harm to the residential amenity for the occupiers of this dwelling.

The amenity of the wider landscape is not considered to be affected for the reasons outlined within the Landscape Character section of the report in addition to the ribbon of natural vegetation screening which surrounds the site.

As such the proposed development is not considered to result in any adverse harm to the residential amenity of any property nor the visual amenity of the wider landscape, in accordance with policy DC1 of the core strategy and paragraph 17 of the NPPF.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The application seeks consent for a proposed single storey stable block which is similar in design to one which was approved in the same location in 2006. The need for this development in this location has been justified by the fact that there are three horses within the field adjacent to the site within the land ownership. Subject to conditions the design of the proposed stable block is considered to be of an appropriate scale, height and massing which relates well to the existing building which respects the overall landscape character. No amenity issues will occur given the proximity of the site from neighbouring residential properties and ribbon of natural vegetation which surrounds the site.

Overall, the application is considered to accord with all relevant local development plan policies and all other material considerations including the NPPF, and therefore constitutes sustainable development. The application is therefore recommended for approval subject to appropriate conditions.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: Approve with Conditions

Case Officer: James Stannard
Recommendation Date: 16th August 2017

X B.J. Haywood

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council