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Design and access statement

PLANNING APPLICATION FOR PROPOSED CONVERSION OF REDUNDANT STABLE INTO DWELLING WITH EXTENSION
At
MOLLATTS WOOD DRIVE, LEEK



Photo courtesy of google earth

October 2017

partner LABC

Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists

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Design and Access Statement

Planning application for proposed conversion of redundant stable into dwelling with extension At Mollatts Wood Road, Leek.

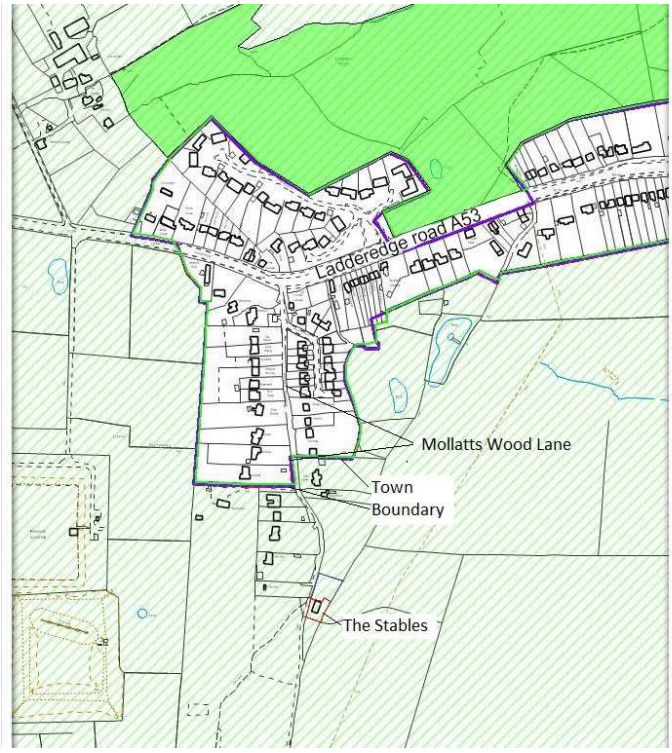
Introduction/Context

This statement is produced to support an application to convert a redundant stable block into a 1 bedroom self contained residential dwelling.

The stable was subject to a planning approval in 2005, 05/01459/FUL for private stabling of horses and not for commercial purpose whatsoever to safeguard the amenities of the area and to minimise the possibility of inconvenience to nearby residents by the establishment of a commercial concern.

Mollatts Wood Road forms part of the Staffordshire Way, some 86 miles long starting in Mow Cop, through Mollatts Wood, down to the Caldon Canal through the Churnet Valley and finishes in South Staffordshire at Kniver edge.

The site in question is located at the end of Mollatts Wood road, which a predominantly a residential road on the edge of the town boundary. The stables along with around 8 other dwellings are located outside the draft town boundary according to the July 2017 local plan, see extract below.



Pre-application consultation with the planning officers has determined the site is located with the Green belt. National Planning Policy Framework allows for the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of a permanent and substantial construction.

The stables forming the basis of the application are 'L' shape on plan, split into bays approximately 3.6m internally, the corner bay has a small tack room within the main area. Each stable has the traditional split door arrangement, and a smaller ventilation window. The construction is of a 100 x 50mm stud frame clad externally with horizontal shiplap cladding and internally with an OSB panel to give structural stability and security to the structure, all of which is built on a concrete slab approximately 200mm thick. The stables have been in existence in excess of 12 years and are considered to be of a substantial and permanent construction.

Applicants are keen to live as far as reasonably practical to live off grid. They have arranged for a bore hole to be installed to provide them with all their drinking water requirements. It is understood that all of the dwellings on Mollatts Wood Road use a septic tank arrangement for the drainage because mains sewer is not available, although there is an indication from Severn Trent that a sewer may be installed. The applicants however will prefer to install a packed treatment tank on site to aerobically treat the waste water using a bio-disc or similar. Generation of electricity on the site may result with unsightly solar panels, wind turbine or the like so they would opt for a main electricity supply to the dwelling. Heating and cooking would be carried out with an LPG tank buried in the ground the providing fuel for a boiler and gas cooker.

They intend to use the site as a small holding, with a small number alpaca on site and grow vegetables, etc on the site.

The applicants have both taken retirement having lived in a chalet style cabin in Cheshire in the past they intend to turn this unsightly stable block into a successful, light, easy-on-the-eye home with minimal impact on the environment. They want to preserve the original building, while enhancing it for the future, their mantra is to reuse, restore and recycle, by salvaging the existing building, and choosing sustainable building materials where possible.

The design of the conversion will be that of a contemporary building, whilst mimicking for the benefit of the walkers along the Staffordshire Way, what looks like the original stables.

Mrs Walker has a historic medical condition affecting her feet. An annual visit to the consultant will render her in a wheelchair for a short period of time. The design of the proposed dwelling will allow her mobility within the dwelling. There will be a suitably designed ensuite bathroom to include a bath which is therapeutic treatment during the periods after operations. Between these periods of immobility Mr & Mrs Walker enjoy walking which helps her foot condition.

Site clearance

Since purchasing the site the applicants have worked hard to clear the site of accumulated rubbish that has been dumped and left by the previous owners. The site is adjacent to the Staffordshire Way, which Mollatts Wood road forms part of, leading to the Churnet Valley and to the Churnet Valley railway line. The images below show the site at the time of purchase which have now been cleared by the applicants







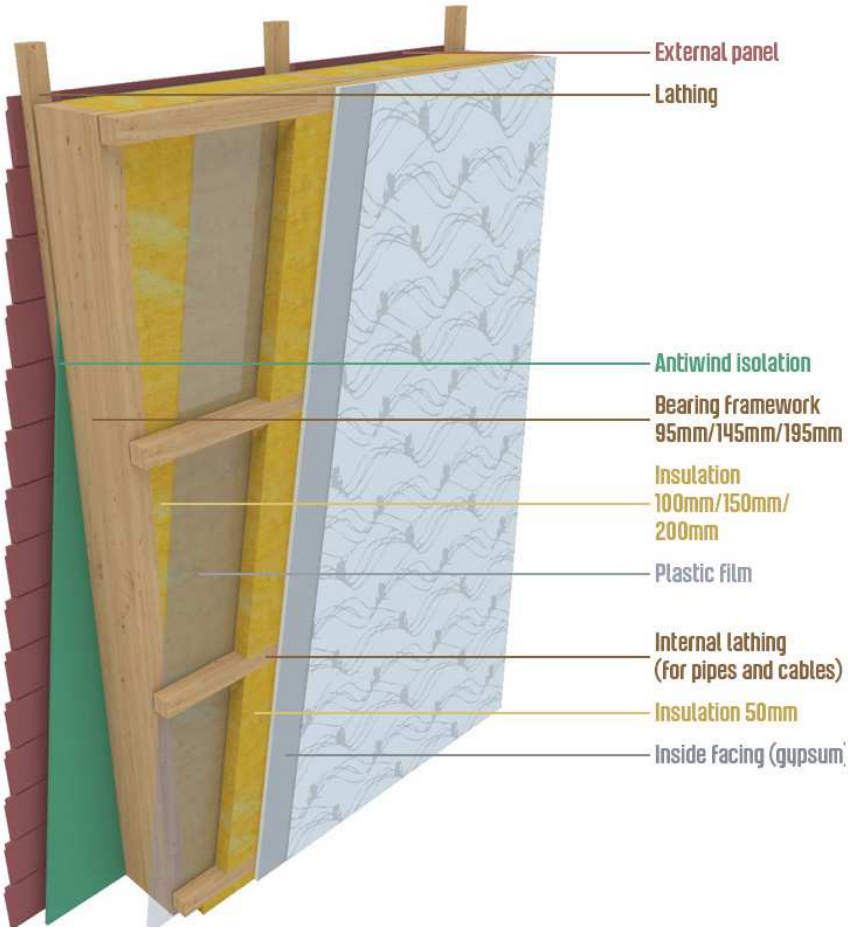
The site and adjoining field have now been cleared of all debris. The fields shall be grazed by Alpaca and Llama which are owned by the applicants.

Proposal

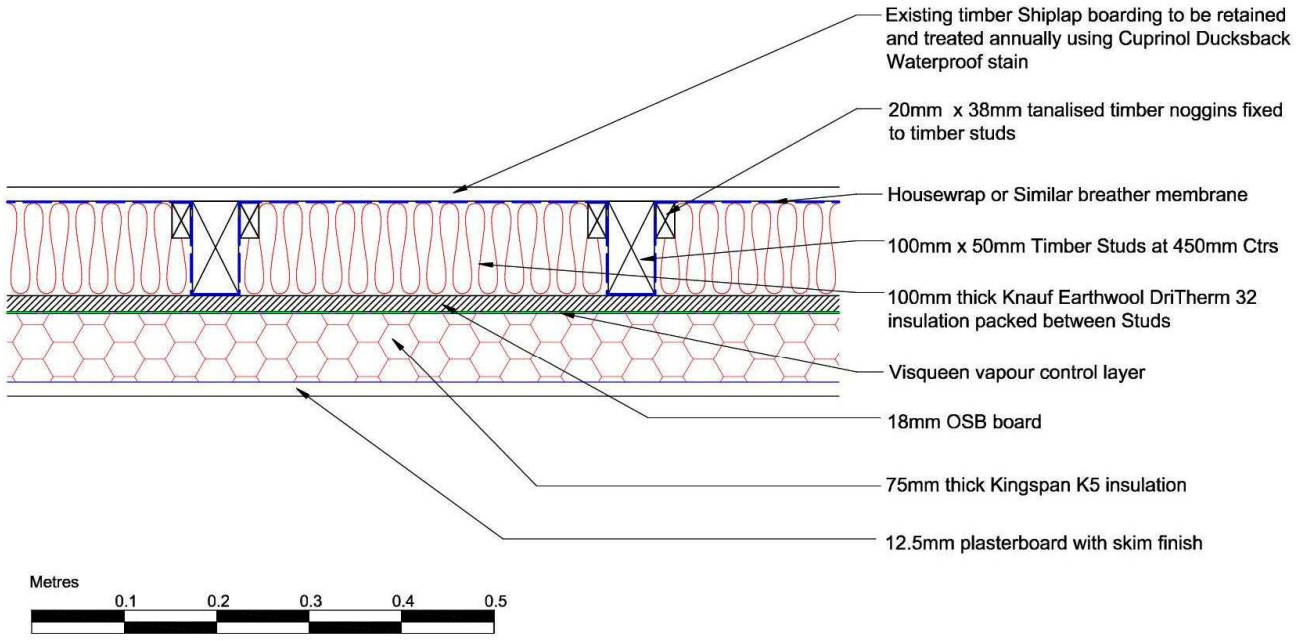
The application is to convert the existing structure into a dwelling and to extend to the front to square of the internal corner of the footprint to provide a 1 bedroom self contained dwelling with disabled accessible ensuite bathroom, open plan lounge and kitchen with a separate utility room.

The front of the proposed dwelling would be almost fully glazed to make the most of the view across the valley and to ensure the most amount of natural light can be brought to the rear of the dwelling, which would be retained as a fully clad wall to maintain the existing appearance from the roadside and for walker using the Staffordshire Way. The external cladding shall be retained as existing, with some corner fillets to improve the appearance and protect the sawn edges and to give the appearance of a timber cabin

Timber cabins are a common form of dwelling both as full time residential or popular for holiday homes, both follow the same construction method, which is similar for dormer window construction. An example below is an extract from a website detailing how the wall construction would be carried out to meet building regulation requirements. The introduction of an OSB sheathing board to the inside face of the frame would provide increased rigidity to the external wall.



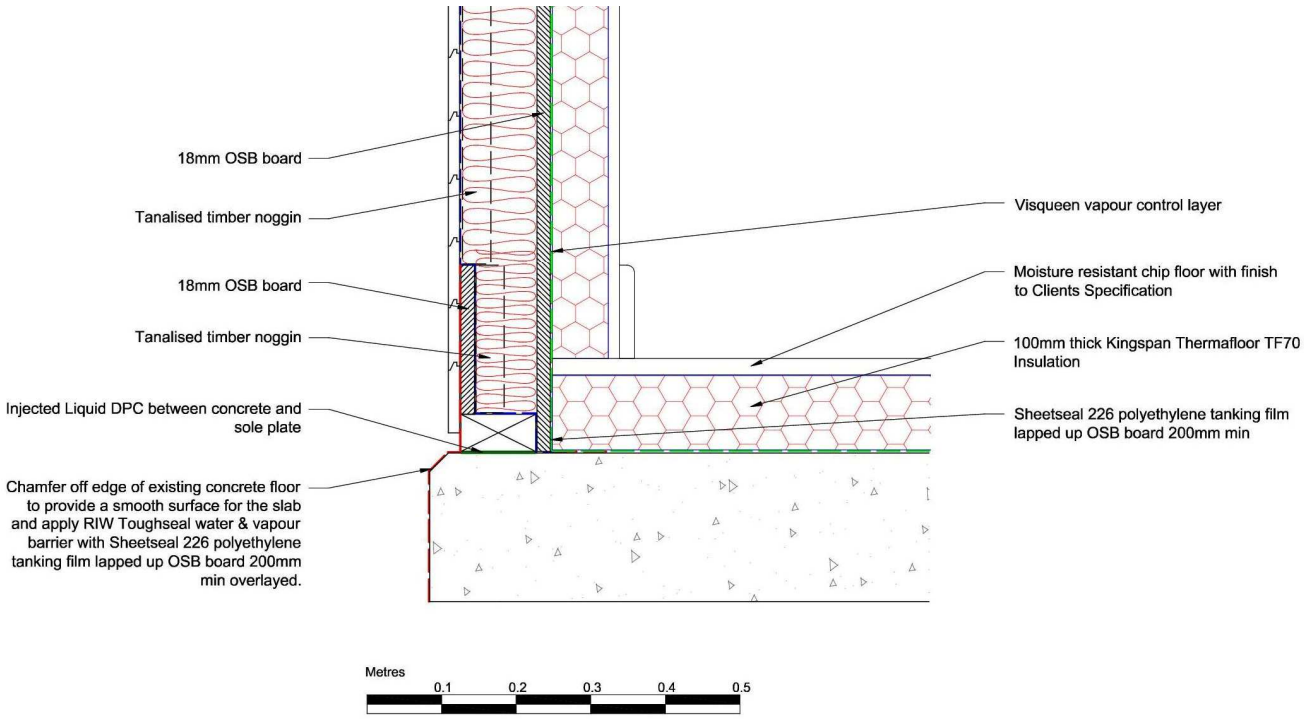
The proposed conversion of the former stable would be carried out from the inside, leaving the external cladding in place to maintain the overall appearance. The existing internal OSB panel would be removed, to expose the stud frame which would be treated with a suitable timber preservative to prevent rot and insect damage. Where the external frame would be wrapped around the outside with the antiwind isolation as noted on the sketch above, in this instance the studs would be wrapped internally across the face of the cladding with a vapour permeable membrane and sandwiched in place with a timber batten screw fixed each side of the stud. This will allow mineral fibre insulation to be fitted between the studs and faced with the OSB panel again with a vapour control membrane. This will ensure any moisture which may get inside the frame will find an easier route to outside than inside, the vapour control membrane on the inside face will ensure that any moisture inside the dwelling cannot migrate into the timber frame. The inside would be faced with a rigid insulation panel with an option to provide an air gap using timber battens for services before overboarding with plasterboard and a skim finish, similar to the image below.



Typical external wall construction 1:5

In respect of the floor construction the existing slab would be treated with much the same principle as a garage conversion, having a layer of Visqueen or similar damp proof membrane laid over the slab and dressed up the external walls approximately 200mm and sealed to the wall, allowing a layer of rigid foil faced insulation, to be laid on over, approximately 100mm thick to comply with building regulations. Head height inside the proposed dwelling may be an issue, so a floating floor using a chipboard T & G finish loose laid over the insulation will act as a substrate for a suitable floor finish to clients requirements.

The base of the existing wall may not have a damp proof course laid on the concrete before the timber frame was built. The existing structure doesn't appear to have suffered by the omission because the timber frame is still in a sound condition free from defects, however for best practice we would use a liquid injected DPC under the timber soleplate (base rail of the timber frame). To prevent the risk of water penetration affecting the base of the wall and causing damp issues, a waterproof tanking membrane would be applied to the concrete base and dressed up the base of the wall approx. 200mm as the detail below.



Typical Tanking Detail 1:5

Details for the conversion of the stable block have been produced for building regulations compliance, and submitted to Approved Inspectors independent building control. Conditional approval has been provided and submitted with the application.

Use/Amount

The proposal is to convert the existing structure into a dwelling. The existing single storey structure is a redundant stable block 'L' shape on plan. The applicants are a retired couple requiring only a single bedroom, therefore the dwelling will take the form of a one bedroom bungalow. The applicant has health issues affecting her feet which results in the periodic use of a wheelchair. The rooms are designed to allow for space to manoeuvre around furniture and bathroom/kitchen fittings, etc with a wheelchair or other mobility aids.

A modest external patio shall be provided outside which shall be provide seating area, etc and the existing track entrance shall be retained to provide parking for 2 vehicles.

Layout

The proposed layout utilises the existing building with an extension to provide a one bedroom bungalow having the bathroom as an ensuite to the rear, a separate WC shall be provided for visitors, etc. As side entrance shall be formed adjacent to the gated access track where the parking will be, leading to the utility room, in turn leading to the WC and kitchen area.

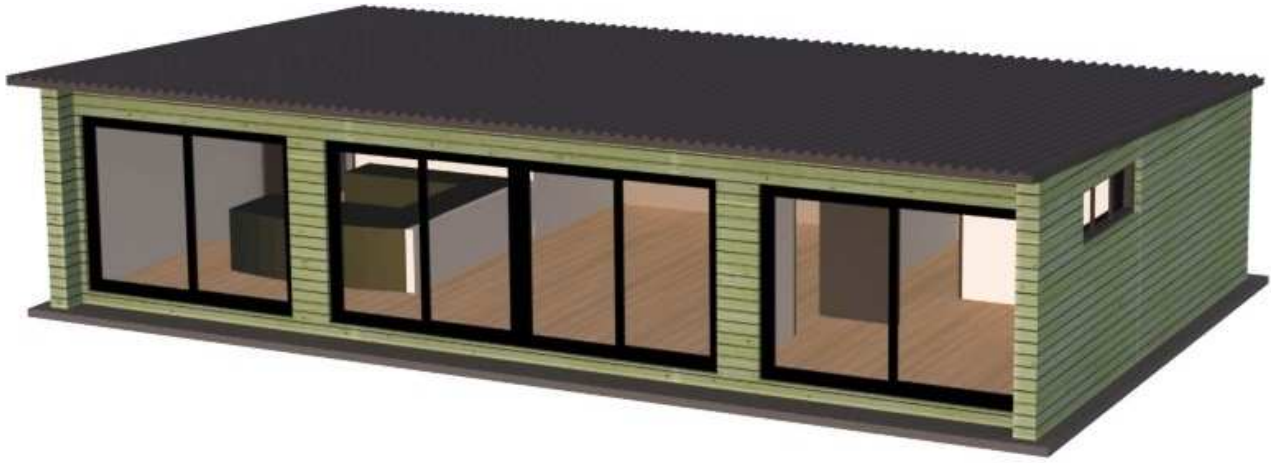
Scale

The scale of the proposed dwelling uses an existing building. The building is currently an 'L' shape on plan with a mono pitched roof overhanging the front internal corner. The internal corner is proposed to be 'infilled', the mono pitch roof would be extended in a similar manner to provide a sun and weather screening to the frontage which will marginally raise the roof by around 250mm.

Appearance

The building and surrounding landscape are to be aesthetically attractive, the trees and hedges generally on the site shall be retained. Additional screening shall be provided using a mixed native species informal hedge planted on the boundary with a cluster of trees planted to the field adjacent to provide further screening.

The redundant stable block has been in existence on the site and is considered to be a substantial and permanent structure. Pre-application consultation with the planning department returned the following response: *With regards to design, if the stable block was to be converted, it is highly unlikely that the council would support an application for a dwelling which would have the characteristics and appearance of a stable block.*
The design of the conversion will be that of a contemporary building, whilst mimicking for the benefit of the walkers along the Staffordshire Way, what looks like the original stables. Only from the north elevation of the conversion will the real architectural change and enhancements be seen. The Staffordshire Way abuts the south elevation.



The local plan and National Planning Policy Framework requires development abutting or clearly visible from the Green Belt to pay special regard to its Green Belt setting in terms of form, scale and design and to provide a high standard of landscaping, especially where this will provide a better definition of the Green Belt/urban boundary. The edge of the town boundary as noted previously cuts across Mollatts Wood Lane, outside of which there appears to be a further 8 dwellings between the application site and the town development boundary, indicating that there is already a blurring of the Green belt/urban boundary.
Proposals for the site take full account of the character and interest of the buildings and the applicants seek to enhance their setting. Reuse of the stables for housing use would be acceptable in principle and as such the sympathetic conversion and re-use of these buildings should take place.

Landscaping

The land around the proposed dwelling will remain as existing with grass and boundary hedges to include the existing trees and the adjacent field. Additional native trees shall be planted to provide some natural screening to the new dwelling.

The driveway / site access shall remain as a stone finish track to provide off road parking for two vehicles.

Natural sandstone flags shall be laid to the front of the proposed dwelling to provide a garden terrace area for seating, the remainder of the site shall remain as agricultural field. A French Drain shall be formed around the building to ensure rainwater is directed around the building.

The adjoining field has been cleared of rubbish and weeds, and is to be grazed by Alpaca and Llama.

Access

Access to the site is using Mollatts Wood Road off the Ladderedge road A53. The road is a residential serving in excess of 30 dwellings with a small side cul de sac serving additional dwellings.

The road is tarmac finished for the most part but because it is a private road, it is understood the residents recently has the road resurfaced and the tarmac ends at the field boundary. The road reverts to a hardcore track with central grassed strip which is suitable for vehicle and pedestrian access.



Planning Statement

The applicants have approached SMDC planning department for pre-application advice to receive the following statement:-

We have reviewed your proposed plans and photographs of the site and have jointly reached a conclusion as to the likelihood of the council supporting your proposal. As such, please find below the council's view below with regards to your proposal to covert an existing stable block to a single storey residential dwelling on land adjacent to Mollatts Wood Road, Leek.

As you will be aware paragraph 90 of the NPPF allows for the re-use of buildings within the Green Belt provided that the buildings are of a permanent and substantial construction. In a previous email to you in July, it was stated to you that your proposal to convert this existing stable block to a dwelling may be acceptable – subject to the review of further information and proposed plans.

Having reviewed the information and photographs and discussed them with senior colleagues, the council are not convinced that the existing stable block can be classed as a permanent and substantial construction in the context of a residential dwelling. In order for this application to be acceptable in principle, a structural survey would need to be provided as evidence that this stable block could easily be converted (and not re built) into a dwelling using the existing foundations, external infrastructure etc.

Notwithstanding the above, the council would have concerns regarding the sustainability of the proposal, particularly with regards to the location of development and its design. Paragraph 55 of the NPPF states that local authorities should avoid isolated dwellings in the countryside. The site is located outside the settlement boundary in an isolated location and is a considerable distance from any nearby services and facilities – Leek is approx. 2.5km to the north east and Endon approx. 5km to the south west. At these distances, there would be a heavy reliance on the private car and would likely be viewed as unsustainable.

With regards to design, if the stable block was to be converted, it is highly unlikely that the council would support an application for a dwelling which would have the characteristics and appearance of a stable block.

Having reviewed the submitted material it is the council's view that this proposal would more than likely result in the replacement of a building rather than a re-sue of the building, and that due to the change of the proposed use to the building, it would be unacceptable in principle as it would result in a change of use and therefore comprise inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

In response to the items raised:

Planning Officer comment …..Paragraph 90 of the NPPF allows for the re-use of buildings within the Green Belt provided that the buildings are of a permanent and substantial construction. In a previous email to you in July, it was stated to you that your proposal to convert this existing stable block to a dwelling may be acceptable – subject to the review of further information and proposed plans.

A structural inspection of the existing building has been carried out and has been submitted with the application. The existing stable block has been in existence for an excess of 12 years after having planning permission to retain the building approved 2005. We are not sure when the building was originally constructed, however a new build dwelling would only receive a 10 year structural warranty (NHBC or the like). Despite the rough and ready nature you would expect from the construction of a timber stable, there are very few 'defects' with the structure which would need to be addressed. Unfortunately the shallow pitched roof has a mineral felt roof covering which would need to be replaced. There are some of the plywood substrate which may also need to be replaced. This is a common condition with mineral felted flat roofs on houses which only probably have a 10 – 15 year life expectancy. The bitumen in the felt softens during warmer weather and shrinks and cracks during colder months leading to leakage. It is common to cover a flat roof with small limestone ballast to reflect the heat from the sun from the roof surface to make the roof last. Inevitably however the felt roof on a house would need to be replaced and the stable should be treated in the same manner.
The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. Paragraph 90 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) establishes that certain forms of development are not inappropriate in the Green Belt, provided that they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. The re-use of buildings of permanent and of substantial construction is identified under this paragraph.
In conclusion the existing structure must be viewed as being of a permanent and substantial construction and the re-purposing of the building for use as a residential dwelling must be considered acceptable.

Planning Officer comment ….Having reviewed the information and photographs and discussed them with senior colleagues, the council are not convinced that the existing stable block can be classed as a permanent and substantial construction in the context of a residential dwelling. In order for this application to be acceptable in principle, a structural survey would need to be provided as evidence that this stable block could easily be converted (and not re built) into a dwelling using the existing foundations, external infrastructure etc.

A structural assessment of the stable block has been carried out on the stable block and it is considered to be structurally sound – with exception of a defective roof covering. There are no signs of rot or other defect to the timber structure. It can considered that a stable block during the course of a number of years would not be treated as thoughtfully or caringly by the occupants as we might prefer, however there are few signs of wear and tear within the structure either. A detailed plan has been prepared for a building regulations plan check to demonstrate that the existing structure can be converted readily into a dwelling without the need to rebuild it. The existing concrete slab can be considered to be similar if not better than a concrete garage floor which are regularly subject to conversion into a habitable part of the dwelling.

Details for the conversion of the stable block have been produced for building regulations compliance, and submitted to Approved Inspectors independent building control. Conditional approval has been provided and submitted with the application.

The NPPF encourages the re-use of redundant buildings in the countryside. The structure does not require substantial modification before it could be converted to form a dwelling. The installation of thermal insulation and boarding required to upgrade the timber frame to habitable standards is not considered to be any greater than that required for the conversion of a rubble fill stone barn. There is no requirement to carry out major excavation for replacement of floor slab, alterations to foundations, etc which are usually required for the conversion of a stone barn with shallow foundation and a compacted soil floor.

The existing concrete slab whilst of a substantial depth of around 200mm thick is only 25 – 50mm wider than the timber superstructure. The internal design of the proposed dwelling has ensured that the drain connection shall be close to the perimeter of the building, which means a builder having the use of a core drill (diamond tipped heavy duty hole cutter) would bore a hole down through the slab to the subsoil close to the edge of the concrete slab (approx. 200mm in from the edge, which can easily be excavated beneath the slab to install the drain pipes and service entries such as the water supply pipe, electricity etc.

In summation the cost and scope of work required to convert the stable into a habitable dwelling to meet current building regulations is considerable less than that required to convert a similar sized stone rubble filled redundant shippon type building.

Planning Officer comment ……Notwithstanding the above, the council would have concerns regarding the sustainability of the proposal, particularly with regards to the location of development and its design.

The use of timber cladding in house construction is more popular than ever, particularly with contemporary buildings. Western red cedar is among the most popular softwoods used today. Aside from a relatively knot-free, ‘clean’ appearance, this softwood has a natural resistance to decay and moisture absorption. It’s also the most stable of the softwoods, subject to little movement when installed. It is crucial to get the corner details and those around windows and doors right when it comes to timber cladding, both for aesthetic purposes and to ensure moisture is not allowed to seep behind the boards. The corners of the stable have not been finished to best practice, leaving the sawn ends exposed but despite this, the timber does not appear to be suffered for it. The standard detail to deal with corners is to fix a length of timber which has been cut into at the back to form a V-shape that fits over the corner and covering the sawn ends and providing a neat finish.



The image above is an example of the use of timber cladding used on a modern building designed by this office for a development in Newcastle under Lyme.

In the 20th century, timber cladding was generally stained black or brown, reflecting the increasing number of barn conversions appearing at the time. White painted timber cladding was a popular feature in houses. Recently the fashion swing towards using unstained timber, mainly cedar and spruce, sometimes oak, which can last for many decades without any surface coating and that are designed to weather attractively over time.

The images below are a random selection of dwellings using a timber clad external wall similar to the existing stable block in question. It should be noted that they are manly naturally coloured as opposed to the green colour of the stable, however consideration should also be given that the timber cladding can be painted and maintained in whatever colour is deemed to be acceptable.










The concept of a timber clad building, especially in the countryside is not unusual or harmful to the character of the area. The structure has been a part of the landscape for in excess of 12 years.

Planning Officer comment …..Notwithstanding the above, the council would have concerns regarding the sustainability of the proposal, particularly with regards to the location of development and its design. Paragraph 55 of the NPPF states that local authorities should avoid isolated dwellings in the countryside. The site is located outside the settlement boundary in an isolated location and is a considerable distance from any nearby services and facilities – Leek is approx. 2.5km to the north east and Endon approx. 5km to the south west. At these distances, there would be a heavy reliance on the private car and would likely be viewed as unsustainable.

QUOTING FROM- Staffordshire Moorlands District Council Infrastructure Delivery Plan Baseline Report Issue 13 July 2016

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is founded on delivering and achieving sustainable development. This means supporting strong and healthy communities, protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment and contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure.
The existing Core Strategy was adopted in March 2014 and covers the future development strategy of the area of Staffordshire Moorlands outside of the Peak District National Park.

The vision for the future of Staffordshire Moorlands is founded on the delivery of sustainable and balanced communities with an excellent quality of life, with a diversified economy and regeneration assisted by tourism. It seeks to better meet the needs of all sectors of the community and ensure a high standard of design and quality environment within the three principal market towns of Leek, Cheadle and Biddulph as the focus of growth in the area...'

4.2.4 Walking and Cycling
The main strategic walking route that passes through the district is the **Staffordshire Way** which runs parallel to the River Churnet. Other less prominent walking routes are provided for specific attractions, and pedestrian provision within the three key centres is designed to maximise the walking mode share.
Acceptable distances for commuting are generally considered to be **2km for walking** and 5km for cycling although the government has moved away from using these statistics as it discounts other factors such as severance and topography. The latter of these is a major issue in Staffordshire Moorlands as it is generally perceived that the topography is a major barrier to walking and cycling.
Leek
The built up area of Leek is approximately 1km from north to south and 3km from east to west. This means that it sits well within the recommended 5km for cycle commuting and only those who live at one end and work at the opposite end would be above the 2km threshold for walking.
In terms of public transport there is currently a good connection between Leek and Hanley (A53) with services 16 and 18 combining to form 5 services per hour which is considered adequate.....'

*Mollatts Wood Road is on the A53 and is 50 metres from a bus stop on one of the main arterial bus routes into Leek. The Stables is a FLAT walking distance of 350 metres to the bus stop. This walking route is the **Staffordshire Way**

'.....4.2.4 Walking and Cycling
The main strategic **walking route** that passes through the district is the
Staffordshire Way.....'
Our proposal is actually on the **Staffordshire Way** which abuts our property.

Mrs Walker generally needs to have an operation each year to deal with tumours that grow in both feet. They grow on nerve endings and cause awful pain. Mrs Walker needs to have the tumours, nerves and their blood supply removed and has already had 13 procedures since being 32yrs old, collectively on both feet, her feet are numb at the front and this makes walking awkward.

Mrs Walker's left foot is worse because of chronic osteoarthritis requiring a bone transplant to replace the joint in her big toe. Bone was taken from her left hip and her big toe was extended with this hip bone in order to help with balance. Mrs Walkers' left foot also has a titanium plate in it, several screws to stabilise the toes. It is a very complex and unfortunate condition as the hospital are unable to stop her growing the tumours, which are fortunately benign. Both feet have considerable muscle wastage.
Mrs Walker has to take neuropathic pain blockers every day as these stop my brain from registering the pain. They also enable me to try and have a full a life as possible.

Every operation on Mrs Walkers feet takes one full year to recover. Generally she is none weight bearing for 6 weeks after each operation which is when the wheelchair is used. Around the house Mrs Walker also uses a Zimmer frame when necessary.

Mrs Walker is unable now to drive a manual car as using the clutch pedal puts too much pressure on her left foot and it aggravates the tumours. Mr & Mrs Walkers' car is an automatic and Mr Walker is the main driver.
Mrs Walker is a blue badge holder and is in receipt of high rate Personal Independent Payment benefit.
Mrs Walker qualifies for a disabled free bus pass and so Mrs Walkers' daily activities will revolve very closely with public transport and the bus stops that are at the end of Mollatts Wood Road.
Mrs Walker is unable to carry anything heavy as this puts far too much pressure on her feet and they subsequently start hurting. Mrs Walker uses a shopping trolley for all daily activities which has a built in seat in it so that I can sit down on it when my feet are bad.

Mrs Walker will not be heavily dependent on her car.

Planning Officer comment….Paragraph 55 of the NPPF states that local authorities should avoid isolated dwellings in the countryside.

Unless there are special circumstances where the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting.

SMDC planning approval 05/01459/FUL refers.
Condition No.1 applies where SMDC planning acknowledges the close proximity of 'nearby residents'.
The Stables is on a residential road.

The Stables are by no means isolated. Our next door neighbour is across the road, curtilage to curtilage, some 4 metres away. Mollatts Wood Road consists of 22 dwellings. Every single one is a unique design with no two the same. Every dwelling is separated at inconsistent intervals, the majority being more than 4 metres from their respective neighbours dwelling. See extract below:

Location of Development:
Land At Mollatts Wood Road Leek Staffordshire Moorlands

Description of Development:
Retention of stable block

In pursuance of their power under the above mentioned Act, Staffordshire Moorlands District Council Planning Authority, **HEREBY GRANTS PLANNING PERMISSION** for the development described above in accordance with plans ref: MW-01-02; MW-01-01; 001F; subject to the following condition(s):

1.The stables hereby permitted shall be used for the private stabling of horses only (including any purpose incidental thereto) and shall not be used for any commercial purpose(s) whatsoever.
Reason:-
To safeguard the amenities of the area and to minimise the possibility of inconvenience to nearby residents by the establishment of a commercial concern.

The Stables is on a residential road.
The Stables are by no means isolated. The next door neighbour is across the road, curtilage to curtilage, some 4 metres away.



Mollatts Wood Road consists of 22 dwellings. Every single one is a unique design with no two the same. Every dwelling is separated at inconsistent intervals, the majority being more than 4 metres from their respective neighbours dwelling.

Traffic will be significantly reduced as previously there were FIVE commercial businesses conducted from the stables by the previous owner;
1. a high volume used tyre RESALE business - several vehicles daily
2. a high volume used tyre PURCHASING business - several vehicles daily
3. a storage facility for canoes and scout activity paraphernalia - car + large box trailer several times/week
4. one horse out at livery - it's owner was car owner, visiting twice daily
5. a second horse out at livery - it's owner was a car owner, visiting twice daily

The above numbered points demonstrate that the reuse of this building to a one bedroom dwelling will significantly reduce the level of traffic, noise, inconvenience and have a measurable reduced environmental impact on the Staffordshire Way which runs along this residential road.

Planning Officer comment.....and is a considerable distance from any nearby services and facilities

Access to local services are 0.6km away at Ladderedge Stores, 38a Ladderedge, Leek ST137AE. This store provides all daily necessities, cash withdrawal facilities including all POST OFFICE facilities.
The bus service is every 20 minutes from the end of the road to the store and this walking route to the store also forms part of the Staffordshire Way.

Furthermore.
CS Policy T1 states that the Council will promote and support development which reduces the reliance on the private car for travel journeys, reduces the need to travel generally and helps deliver the priorities of the Staffordshire Local Transport Plan, where this is consistent with other policies.
Similarly, Paragraph 34 of the Framework says that decisions should ensure developments that generate significant movement are located where the need to travel can be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised.

The location of the proposed dwelling would encourage walking to the nearest services/facilities (as by default it is on the Staffordshire Way), and as a consequence necessary journeys would not be reliant upon the use of the motor car.

Planning Officer comment...The site is located outside the settlement boundary in an isolated location....

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan July 2015 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

Stage 1 .....2.2 This stage identified buildings or areas of land (including previously-developed sites and greenfield sites within and on the edge of settlements) that have development potential for housing in accordance with the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments practice guidance.....'

Furthermore it goes on to state.

2.6 In the light of the above factors it was considered that the survey should focus on the following types of sites and locations:

All sites within the current settlement boundaries of all of the towns.....This also includes, where appropriate, **sites which are in existing use if there were known opportunities for reuse.**

Continuing....

'..... **sites on the edge of the current settlement boundaries** of the towns including greenfield, open countryside and **green belt land**.....'

Paragraph 47 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires the Council to identify a five year supply of deliverable housing land sites, including a 5% buffer to allow for choice and competition in the market for land increased to a 20% buffer where there is a persistent under-delivery in past years. The Council calculates its 5-year land supply on a district basis. As at 31st March 2017, it was 1.99 years. The Planning Authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites.

Paragraph 49 states that relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites.

Paragraph 14 of the Framework states that where the development plan is absent, silent or out-of-date, planning permission should be granted unless: Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole; or specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted.

The Framework states that a presumption in favour of sustainable development should be seen as a golden thread running through decision making and is therefore necessary to examine the proposal as a whole in respect of the three strands of sustainable development. These are set out in paragraph 7 of the Framework.

There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:

● an economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;

● a social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and

● an environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.

Conclusion

The proposal complies with the development plan and the principles of Paragraph 90 of the NPPF for the re-use of buildings within the Green Belt.

The proposed development would improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area, comprising of a sustainable development.

Planning permission for change of use of the redundant stable building in the Green Belt should be granted because :

1. The physical changes to the building and its curtilage would maintain and enhance the openness, character and appearance of the Green Belt.

2. The building has been shown to be in a generally sound physical condition and is of a size, structural form and materials are suitable for the intended after use without need for substantial re-building.

3. Safe access for the building without harming the character and appearance of the countryside.

4. No significant additional expense to public utilities.

5. The building not of a scale which would harm the character of the countryside or have an adverse effect on the appearance of the countryside and the distinctive character of the landscape.

6. Residential use would not seriously harm the local economy.

7. It is understood there is a section 106 agreement on the parcel of land identified by solicitor during searches:

The search revealed a Section 106 agreement; this is an agreement containing a set of planning obligations contained in the Town and Country Planning Act 1971 relating to specific parcels of land. The agreement is a mechanism which makes a development proposal acceptable in planning terms that would not otherwise be acceptable.