DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2018/0099 **Valid 09/02/2018**	**GODLEY BARN COTTAGE** **GODLEY LANE** **DILHORNE**	**ERECTION OF DETACHED BUILDING FOR STORAGE, HATCHERY AND THE KEEPING OF GOATS AND PIGS.** **(FULL - MINOR)**

MAIN ISSUES

- Green Belt
- Landscape
- Design

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site is a c.80m2 fenced plot alongside the south westerly side of Godley Barn Lane opposite land which forms a plot containing Godley Barn Cottage on the north easterly side of the road. There are no immediate near neighbours and the cottage and the application site are surrounded by farm fields and the general lie of the land is relatively flat with views to rising ground in the near distance.

There is a public footpath right of way which approaches Godley Barn Lane from the north at a distance some 100m along the lane to the west and another approaches Godley Barn Lane from a generally southerly direction about 260m SE of the application site.

The application site is hedged to the roadside boundary and fenced with post and rail to its field edges. There is a vehicular width gateway off Godley Barn Lane at the south easterly roadside corner of the site.

There is a small brick and breeze block store building within the plot c.4m x 2.5m with mono pitch fibre sheet roof. To the side of this are the remains of a low partly sunken small brick structure.

PROPOSAL

To demolish the existing brick store and erect an 11m x 6.5m steel framed brick and sheet metal store height 3m to the eaves and 4m to the roof apex. Roof and side cladding to near ground level is proposed in colour coated sheet metal. A galvanised metal roller shutter door is proposed. The building would otherwise be fully enclosed by walls without openings.

The building purpose is described in the application as being for storage, hatchery and the keeping of goats and pigs which will be grazing on adjacent agricultural land with the consent of the adjoining owner.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Core Strategy Development Plan Document (Adopted 2014)

S01 Spatial Objectives
SS1 Development Principles
SS1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
SS6c Other Rural Areas Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
DC3 Landscape and Settlement Setting
R1 Rural Diversification
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph(s) 1 to 17
Section(s) 7 – Requiring Good Design; 9 – Protecting Green Belt Land.

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/2015/0281 – proposed garage and workshop – refused
SMD/2016/0422 – proposed demolition of existing store and erection of detached garage and store – withdrawn

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 10th April 2018
Neighbour consultation period ends: N/A
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

None

Town / Parish Comments

Dilhorne Parish Council – OBJECT for the following reasons:-

1. Size of the proposed building in relation to existing building is excessive;
2. The erection of a building for storage, hatchery and the keeping of goat on the size of the land, 340 sq metres, in our opinion is over development/use of the land;
3. The access/egress onto the Highway has visibility issues, there is no allowance for an entrance splay to ensure good visibility. NO indication within the plans or documents mentions where any vehicles will park when loading or unloading animals which will undoubtedly be needed at times;
4. No reference is made regarding the disposal of any animal waste or any drainage from the site;
5. No reference is made to the installation of any electricity or waste to the proposed building;
6. It would not be in keeping with the local area.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

The proposal site lies outside of any town or village development boundary and is in the Green Belt. The adopted Core Strategy Policy SS6c is that, "these areas will provide only for development which meets an essential local need, supports the rural diversification and sustainability of the rural areas, promotes sustainable tourism or enhances the countryside".

SS6c provides for (inter alia), "limited expansion or redevelopment of an existing authorised business for employment uses" and, "the diversification of existing farm enterprises (in accordance with policy R1)". Policy SS6c also commits to, "Enhance and conserve the quality of the countryside by [inter alia]: giving priority to the need to protect the quality and character of the area and requiring all development proposals to respect and respond sensitively to the distinctive qualities of the surrounding landscape". Finally, Policy SS6c is that, "strict control will continue to be exercised over inappropriate development within the Green Belt allowing only for exceptions as defined by Government Policy".

This proposal does not relate to an existing business nor to an existing farm enterprise and therefore gains no support in principle from Policy SS6c.

Government policy in the Green Belt is to regard the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt as inappropriate although "buildings for agriculture" are listed as an exception to this rule at NPPF paragraph 89.

In the application form the proposal is described as being a, "building for storage, hatchery and the keeping of goats and pigs which will be grazing on adjacent agricultural land with the consent of the adjoining owner". No details are given of the extent of the land to be used nor the nature of the arrangement with the owner. Nor are details given as to the numbers of livestock in the three types listed or their associated housing and storage needs and the role of the building in meeting those needs. In the absence of credible explanation and reasoning it becomes questionable that this proposal can reasonably be considered or accepted as being "for agriculture" in which case the NPPF paragraph 89 allowance would not apply.

Design

In design the building has the appearance of a secure store but is not credible as a building to house livestock being devoid of ventilation or light, save in what may be achieved by opening the roller shutter door. Water supply – essential for keeping livestock – and drainage and waste handling are not discussed. Waste handling and drainage requirements are potentially significant environmental effects which it cannot be assumed on a site as small as this could be satisfactorily accommodated. In appearance the proposed building would be stark and functional but not obviously agricultural and could just as well be industrial. As such it may be considered out-of-place in this open rural and Green Belt location.

Landscape
The site is within the Ancient Slope and Valley Farmlands Landscape Character Type as identified in the Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment (2008) – a supporting evidence document to the Core Strategy and Local Plan. In landscape quality terms this location is middle ranked on the five point scale of the County-wide assessment from which the Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment is derived. Policy DC3 is to protect and where possible enhance local landscape. The introduction of this utilitarian structure into the rural landscape must inevitably be seen as bringing some degree of intrusion and erosion of the countryside landscape.

Amenity
No adverse implications for neighbour amenity are identified.

Highway Safety
Utilising an existing entrance no consultation has been made with SCC Highways.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE
Core Strategy Policy SS1 sets the Development Principles for the District. The Council expects development and use of land to contribute positively to the social, economic and environmental improvement of the Staffordshire Moorlands.

Policy SS1a establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Proposals which accord with the policies of the core strategy are to be approved without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case the proposal finds no support in principle under policy SS6c this not being an existing business or farm enterprise.

The proposal would lead to a spread of development into open countryside intruding on to a rural landscape. It is appropriate to weigh the degree of harm to landscape with any economic or social benefits, however in this case the extent of any economic or social benefits are not evidenced in the application. Given the small scale of the building in terms of farming economics and in the absence of information to the contrary it must on balance be concluded that the economic contribution would be minimal. The size of the building would though be a significant visible structure in this flat relatively open location and due to its prominence it may be judged would have a harmful landscape impact.

In terms of Green Belt the proposal would only be considered potentially acceptable in principle if it were accepted as being a building for agriculture. From the design of the building and in the absence of explanation or supporting information as to the nature and scale of agriculture intended there must be significant doubt that the agricultural exception should apply. Given the high importance attached to upholding the protection of the Green Belt this is considered a fundamental limitation to the assessment of the submission.

In conclusion it is considered that the application should be refused due to its encroachment into open countryside and visual intrusion bringing a harmful

landscape impact and thus failing to enhance and conserve the countryside contrary to Policy SS6c and not being a proposal linked to the expansion or redevelopment of an existing business for employment uses or the diversification of an existing farm enterprise.

Secondly, as a development in the Green Belt the proposal is reliant on being for purposes of agriculture if it is not to be considered inappropriate development yet the application is devoid of agricultural justification and reasoning and the building design does not obviously indicate an agricultural purpose or function. In the absence of any such detail accompanying the application it is considered that there is insufficient information to legitimately regard the proposal as not inappropriate in the Green Belt and therefore it must be considered contrary to Policy SS6c and the NPPF.

In design the building is found out of place in this rural location as not obviously of agricultural type but with metal sheet cladding to near ground level and a steel roller shutter door it has an urban and industrial appearance and is therefore found contrary to policies SS6c, DC1, DC3 and R1.

Overall the proposal is found not to be sustainable within the meaning of the NPPF and therefore contrary to policies SS1 and SS1a and the NPPF as the harms identified are found not to be outweighed by any economic or social benefits.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : refuse

Case Officer: Arne Swithenbank
Recommendation Date: 9th April 2018

X B.J. Haywood

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council