

**Land opposite Whitehouse End Cottages, Tower Hill Road, Mow
Cop, Staffordshire, ST7 3PS**

Proposed Stable accommodation

Design and Access Statement

May 2018

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Description of the Site and Surroundings
3. Site Context
4. Design and Access Statement
5. Conclusions

1. Introduction

This document has been prepared by MR K.D. Ryder on behalf of Mr P.R. Bibby in relation to this Full Planning Application for the erection of a Stable Accommodation building consisting of two stables, associated tack room and hay/feed store, and grazing for two ponies.

The subject land area is owned by the applicant, as also are the two ponies that this proposal is designed to permanently accommodate.

The applicants' ponies are currently being temporarily accommodated in an adjacent field and require a permanent home.

To confirm, the applicant has owned these two ponies from birth, dating back to when his family owned a nearby farm.

This Planning Application is submitted following informal Pre-Application discussions with Mrs Lisa Howard, the Staffordshire Moorlands District Council Planning Case Officer, and with Mr David Plant, the Staffordshire County Council Highways Case Officer.

This Statement includes a description of the development site and planning history, an evaluation of the context of the site, and a Design and Access Statement to justify the design rationale behind the proposed development, followed by a summary of the main planning considerations relevant to this proposal.

2. Description of the Site and Surroundings

The development site is located within the Eastern fringe of the rural settlement area of Mow Cop, in the Eastern part of the District of Staffordshire Moorlands.

This development site is located within the North Staffordshire Green Belt.

Historic OS mapping denotes this development site as previously undeveloped.

It is bordered to the North by a combination of existing farm / agricultural buildings and open countryside, to the East by open countryside and existing stable accommodation beyond, to the South by existing highway infrastructure, residential housing and open countryside beyond, and to the West by existing highway infrastructure and open countryside beyond.

The application development site is some 0.12 ha (0.29 acres) in area, is broadly rectangular in shape, and is situated on the Northern side of Tower Hill Road.

The nature of the topography is of a fairly level make up, with slight fall from the West to the East.

A previous Planning Application for the erection of a pig farrowing unit and store for associated animal feed, being planning application reference: SMD/2015/0542 was formally refused by Staffordshire Moorlands District Council on the 14th December 2016.

3. Site Context

The development site is located in a rural area and neighbourhood, being surrounded on all compass points by open countryside, along with existing agricultural buildings to the North, and existing residential properties and existing highway infrastructure to the South, being the Tower Hill Road frontage.

To the North are an existing group of four agricultural / farm buildings, and open countryside beyond.

Historic OS mapping indicates that these were constructed between 1974 and 1993, and being stereotypical of their purpose.

To the East is a combination of open countryside and existing field stable accommodation beyond.

To the South is a combination of existing highway infrastructure, being Tower Hill Road, residential housing, being numbers 1, 2 and 3 Whitehouse End Cottages, and open countryside beyond.

Historic OS mapping indicates that these were constructed between prior to 1885, and being two storey semi detached dwellings of a stone/render wall and plain tile construction, being stereotypical of their era in this location.

To the West is a combination of existing highway infrastructure, being Tower Hill Road, and open countryside beyond.

The previous planning application SMD/2015/0542 highlighted, via the consultation response from British Coal, the requirement for a Coal Mining Risk Assessment to be undertaken by a qualified person, to adjudge any potential impact of the proposed development of this parcel of land given the historic mining activity in the locality.

Included within this planning application submission is such an assessment, undertaken in the context of this specific proposal.

4. Design and Access Statement

The following statements explain how the proposed development addresses the site context and local characteristics in respect of its use, amount, layout, scale, appearance, landscaping and access.

Use

The development site is located within the Eastern fringe of the rural settlement area of Mow Cop, in the Eastern part of the District of Staffordshire Moorlands.

This development site is located within the North Staffordshire Green Belt.

Historic OS mapping denotes this development site as previously undeveloped. Having then assumed to always have historically been farm agricultural grazing land.

As stated, this proposal is for the erection of a Stable Accommodation building consisting of two stables, associated tack room and hay/feed store, and grazing for two ponies.

It is considered that this proposal is an acceptable use within its location, and would further add to and enhance the quality of both itself and its surroundings, and positively contribute to the overall character and appearance of the area as a whole, without detriment to itself or its neighbours.

Layout, Scale, Appearance, Landscaping and Access

This proposal is for the erection of stable accommodation and associated grazing land.

This does constitute an efficient reuse of this site, and an acceptable use in the context of both itself and its surrounds, whilst both recognising and observing the key constraints of its rural and Green Belt status location, the location and position and amenity of existing nearby dwellings, and respecting and reflecting the character and form of the existing locality as a whole.

The development site is broadly uniform in its shape, and reasonably level, with a slight fall from a Westerly to Easterly direction.

Careful consideration has been given in development terms to achieve a successful proposal that actually works whilst respecting and integrating with the surrounding locality in all its forms, and simultaneously positively contributing to the same.

The proposal, as stated, is for the erection of stable accommodation and associated grazing land.

It is proposed that the stable accommodation be situated on the Eastern side of the site.

This has been carefully selected to achieve maximum separation and line of sight exclusion from the existing nearby Cottages on the Southern side of Tower Hill Road, being, not only due to its design and scale, but also due to the location of the existing stone outbuilding to Number 1 Whitehouse End, which, in this position, does effectively screen the Cottages from the proposed stable.

Also, this proposed position provides the optimum location to not only service the site, and access the adjacent grazing land, being that which is the subject of the existing Rental Agreement, yet also, simultaneously, provides a safe means of access and egress to and from the site overall.

The proposed orientation of the building is to front out facing South.

This not only works well in conjunction with the overall proposed site layout, but also provides the optimum scenario for its inhabitants from both a social and security aspect, looking out onto Tower Hill Road and towards the nearby Cottages.

The proposed stable accommodation building has been carefully designed to not only be fit for purpose and of robust construction for longevity, but also to compliment and fit in with its rural surroundings.

It is of a simplistic appearance, consummate with its purpose, and a modest footprint, being only some 48.9m² internal area.

It is noted that the building previously proposed via planning application SMD/2015/0542 was significantly larger at some 90 m² internal area, and even at that scale, received no objection from nearby residents.

It is, of course, single storey, with the ridge height being only some 3.98m, with a low 20 degree roof pitch.

It is, as a matter of fact, that historically, farm and agricultural buildings across Staffordshire, are predominantly of robust brick and tile construction.

It is proposed that the building, whilst being of internal block wall construction, will, externally, be timber clad with a suitable timber.

Larch is proposed, which, will mature and weather, and blend itself into the natural landscape well.

It is proposed that the roof of the building will be tiled.

Marley Duo slate grey tiles are proposed, which, whilst being able to accommodate the low pitch of the roof, also reflect and replicate well, the historic plain tile predominant in the local area, as seen on the nearby Cottages.

The frontage canopy does allow for a number of uses: it will provide shade, protect from wind and rain when stabled but with the stable door upper half open for ventilation and social interaction with each other, allow for outdoor grooming regardless of the weather, and also serve as an outdoor field shelter in inclement weather conditions when grazing outside.

No external lighting is proposed as part of this planning application.

The site measures some 0.3 acres, and is, as stated, proposed for the stabling and grazing for two number ponies.

Having regard to the British Horse Society guidance, as a good practice point of reference, this land area in isolation is not sufficient for this purpose.

Therefore, an adjoining area of land within the adjacent field to the East is the subject of a current Rental Agreement, to extend this land coverage to some 1.9 acres, thus, given that it is proposed to operate a system of combined livestock management, and that the two animals within the applicants ownership are ponies, not horses, is considered to satisfy good practice.

That land being the subject of the Rental Agreement is that shown edged Green upon the enclosed plans.

Currently, the site has two existing gated points of access along its frontage onto Tower Hill Road, which, from a highway safety perspective could be considered to be potentially dangerous, especially given that they are both on the negative side of the bend of the road, and with very limited forward visibility.

It is proposed as part of this proposal to permanently stop these up.

Firstly, it is proposed to reuse the existing gates within this proposal and to infill the subsequent boundary gaps left by their removal with post and wire fencing, to match that already existing.

Secondly, currently, this frontage to Tower Hill Road has very limited hedgerow cover along its boundary, both at its South Eastern frontage, and its Western frontage.

It is proposed that, upon removal of the existing gated entrances, and stopping up with boundary fencing to match, the existing sporadic elements of frontage hedgerow will be reinforced with native

Hawthorn hedging, being already very commonplace in the locality, and therefore deemed to be acceptable, to provide a continuous boundary hedge line directly behind the post and wire fence. This will not only improve the presentation and outlook along this highway frontage, yet will also have a positive ecological enhancement value.

This will also, in turn, further assist in screening this low level building.

Aside from these matters, no further landscaping is proposed, given its location, existing make up and purpose.

It is proposed that both the frontage boundary fence and hedgerow be no more than 900mm in height above the level of the highway, to enable and maintain a clear line of visibility across the entire frontage to Tower Hill Road, in accordance with the requirement of the County Highways Development Control Officer.

It is proposed that a new point of access to the site onto Tower Hill Road be created at the South Eastern corner of the site.

This is situated at the optimum position on the positive side of the bend of the road to enable maximum exposure to highway forward visibility, providing splays along Tower Hill Road, set back to 2.4m of some 79m to the West/North West, and some 159m to the East/South East, in accordance with the requirement of the County Highways Development Control Officer.

Whilst this does involve slight realignment of the existing frontage fencing, the proposed position and setting back of the proposed gate also takes maximum benefit from the existing verge, expanding the same to enable a vehicle to comfortably and safely pull off the highway, park, and open the outer gate, then pull into the outer compound when accessing the site, and in reverse to pull out of the outer compound and egress the site, and close the outer gate behind, all within the confines of the verge without encroachment onto or obstruction of the highway.

This also enables a vehicle when egressing the site, to have clear forward visibility onto Tower Hill Road in both directions, from within the confines of the verge before proceeding to pull out onto the public highway.

Further, in the alternative, this does also allow a vehicle to pull onto and park on the verge without vehicular access to the site, without encroachment or obstruction to the public highway and other vehicular traffic, being a clear positive in terms of highway safety in all regards.

In this highway context, the layout of the site here has been carefully considered.

It provides, as stated, ample provision to safely pull over, park, and access and egress the site via the verge without danger to highway safety.

It allows a vehicle to park off road, open the outer gate, then pull into the same without danger to highway safety, but also in the context of the livestock within the site, as the outer compound is secure and isolated from both the remainder of the site, the stable block and adjacent additional grazing land by virtue of the proposed internal fencing and inner gate positions, and therefore can be kept isolated from the same, removing any risk or danger of livestock getting loose onto the public highway at any time, without restricting the coming and going of vehicular traffic.

This planning application proposes 2 number parking spaces.

Whilst the outer compound could potentially, especially along with the off road verge accommodate a greater number, it is considered that even 2 spaces to be an absolute maximum at any one time, especially considering that this site is only some 5 minutes walking distance from the applicants residence.

Therefore, this number is considered to be a maximum, and in all likelihood, the site will in reality see very limited and sporadic vehicular traffic flow.

Consideration has been given to the surfacing of both the verge and outer compound.

Currently both are natural, being soil with grass cover.

Whilst the implementation of this proposal will see a degree of temporary disturbance during the construction phase, it is, on reflection, proposed that these surfaces should remain natural.

The area surrounding the stable building in the inner compound will be made good and reseeded back to its original condition immediately following completion of construction.

Whilst it may, on initial inspection, appear the obvious choice to hard surface the outer compound and verge, as stated, it is considered that this would not be appropriate in this instance.

Firstly, this site is located within the rural area, and better cohesion with the natural environment would be achieved by leaving this surface natural, rather than urbanising it with a hard surface, when, it is considered that in this instance, it is not necessary.

Secondly, given the proposal of combined management of the livestock, and that they are privately owned by the applicant, therefore not forming any form of commercial enterprise, and especially considering that the proposal contains an onsite feed store, and that the applicant only resides some 5 minutes walking distance away, the perceived degree and frequency of vehicular movements on and off the site is considered to be very low.

As such, the ground underfoot will not see such a high level of traffic flow to decimate its structure, and churn up the soil into mud for example, or to negatively impact upon the public highway, sufficient to warrant hard standing provision.

Thirdly, again using the British Horse Society guidance in this specific context, it is also appreciated that the outer compound will be also used by the livestock, crossing the same to access and return from the adjacent grazing land for instance, and their safety and wellbeing has to form part of this consideration.

Whilst the guidance considers a number of stone and modern day produced surface treatments for ground surfacing around stables, it concludes that, ultimately, there is quite simply no better substitute for natural soil and grass cover ground.

It highlights that all other/man made substitute products do not perform as well to ensure the stability and surefootedness of the animal underfoot, being a notable weakness of a horse or pony.

As with the inner compound area surrounding the stable building, whilst the implementation of this proposal will see a degree of temporary disturbance during the construction phase, it is, on reflection, proposed that these surfaces should remain natural.

The area within the outer compound will be made good and reseeded back to its original condition immediately following completion of construction.

5. Conclusions

This proposal has been given a great deal of careful consideration, culminating in this submission to you.

As you are aware, i have worked at considerable length with both yourself in particular and Mr Plant of SCC Highways Development Control, to ensure that this planning application does accord with your requirements and considerations, to ensure its acceptability in all regards.

It is considered, without repeating commentary already scribed above, that, in short, this proposal does constitute appropriate development, and would, when considered as a whole, complement and enhance both the site itself and the locality, without detriment to either.

It would provide positive benefit, not only from the perspective of creating needed permanent accommodation for the applicants' livestock, but also from a highway safety context.