DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2018/0626 **Valid 09/10/2018**	**LIME TREE FARM** **CLEWLOWS BANK** **BAGNALL**	**ERECTION OF AGRICULTURAL BUILDING** **(FULL - MINOR)**

MAIN ISSUES

- Green Belt
- Neighbour Amenity
- Public amenity – public footpath right of way alongside
- Design

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

Lime Tree Farm comprises an extended series of largely equestrian related facilities occupying a c.0.7ha site projecting into open rural farm fields to the North East of Clewlows Bank, Bagnall. The village centre is c.400m to the SW. The farm site slopes to the N and NE to overlook the valley occupied by Stanley Pool and looks across to Stanley on a similar level c.1km opposite to the North.

At the LPA's request additional information has been submitted to confirm the extent of the farm. Copies of the Rural Payments Agency plans have been provided and the agent reports the holding to extend to 18.6ha at Lime Tree with a further 3.5ha at Endon and that the farm currently has 12 head of cattle are.

PROPOSAL

Described by the agent as a lean-to agricultural storage building, and also as a lean-to extension to an existing range of stables, the proposal is to provide general purpose agricultural storage located in a position between two established buildings where it is described as having "the least impact on the wider landscape". The proposal is a 6m deep lean-to building (or building extension) along the full 23m end elevation of an existing building.

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

Local Plan Submission Version (February 2018)
SS1 Development Principles
SS1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
SS10 Other Rural Areas Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
DC3 Landscape and Settlement Setting
E1 Rural Diversification
H1 Rural Housing
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework July 2018
Paragraph(s) 1 – 14;
Section(s) 4 – Decision making; 12 – Achieving well designed places; 13 – Protecting Green Belt Land; 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS
SMD/2016/0462 – change of use of agricultural building to enclosed manège – approved
SMD/2015/0443 – retention of agricultural building – approved
SMD/2014/0575 – change of use of existing agricultural building – withdrawn
SMD/2010/0797 – agricultural building – approved
[the above three relate specifically to the building subject of the 2016 application]
SMD/2010/0196 – outdoor manège [alongside to NW] – approved
SMD/2010/0127 – agricultural storage building – approved
SMD/2009/0514 – beef rearing building – withdrawn
SMD/2007/1191 – change of use of barn to 12 stables – approved
SMD/2007/0544 – retention of livery stables, staff mess and changing facilities; tackle room, storage and drying room – refused
SMD/2006/1367 – as above – refused
SMD/2006/0703 – Change of use of garage loft space to changing facilities, change of use of farm buildings to stables and erection of new stables (retrospective) – refused
SMD/2006/0216 – Change of use of garage loft space to changing facilities, change of use of farm buildings to stables and erection of new stables (retrospective) – refused

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity
Site Notice expiry date: 12th November 2018
Neighbour consultation period ends: 8th November 2018
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments
None

Town / Parish Comments
Bagnall parish Council – no objection

OFFICER COMMENTS

General approach
When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF. This means that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Core Strategy shall be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether: Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.

Principle of Development
Policy SS6c for the rural areas supports only development which meets an essential local need and supports rural diversification and sustainability of the rural areas (or supports sustainable tourism or enhances the countryside).

Within the Green Belt, Policy SS6c is that strict control will continue to be exercised over inappropriate development allowing only for exceptions as defined by Government Policy. The location is in the open rural countryside of the North Staffordshire Green Belt in the Ancient Slope and Valley Farmlands Landscape Character Type (LCT). At this location the landscape quality for this LCT is ranked as high – level four on five point scale where five is highest – in the county-wide assessment.

The NPPF states at paragraph 144 that: "When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt."

Inappropriate development is by definition harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances (NPPF 143). Local Planning Authorities are to regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt.

NPPF paragraphs 145 and 146 set out specific exceptions by which certain forms of development can be considered as being not inappropriate in the Green Belt. One of these exceptions is at 145(a), "buildings for agriculture or forestry".

Subject to Green Belt requirements, policy SS6c allows the extension of an existing rural building (SS6c1); or, development which would support the diversification of existing farm enterprises (SS6c2) in accordance with R1. Policy R1 expects a

balanced consideration of the extent to which a proposal protects and benefits rural qualities and supports rural economic and community needs stating that “appropriate development should not harm the rural character and environmental quality of the area”.

Design

The proposal is a 6m deep lean-to building (or building extension) along the full 23m end elevation of an existing building. It would be open to the farm yard in its shorter NW end and walled in breeze block along its north easterly length and to the short SE end. A narrow upper band of vertical timber boarding would overlap the top of the walling from below the eaves. This arrangement generally corresponds with that employed in the existing building. The material finish to the shallow mono-pitch lean-to roof slope is not specified but is corrugated green sheeting to the existing building.

The breeze block walling to the long NE side is quite high and may in some locations not be accepted. In the situation here however it faces across a short gap of c. 4m towards an existing larger building (that subject to the 2016 change of use consent) and is thus largely concealed from potential view.

Amenity

There are no near neighbours and as a storage building rather than accommodation for livestock no neighbour amenity issues would arise. The short SE end of the building would face towards a public footpath which runs NE to SW along the outside of the farm yard boundary but the 6m width of the extension would be of little additional noticeable impact as a proportionately narrow extra to the larger existing building to which is would be attached.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

In accordance with policies SS1 and SS1a, the Council expects the development and use of land to contribute positively to the social, economic and environmental improvement of the Staffordshire Moorlands.

If the proposal is assessed as a building for agriculture there is no express or specific policy provision either in the current Core Strategy or the Local Plan (submission version) to support the proposal outright. The proposal therefore falls to be determined on its merits based on benefits versus harm. More specifically Policy R1 expects a balanced consideration of the extent to which a proposal protects and benefits rural qualities and supports rural economic and community needs stating that “appropriate development should not harm the rural character and environmental quality of the area”.

The further submitted information from the agent shows that there is a small scale of farming operation here which would equate to a hobby or side-line. The Lime Tree farm premises also support a livery stables which occupy a range of other buildings. For the proposal now under consideration the Green Belt test is that the building is ‘for agriculture’. For the extent of the holding and headage of cattle indicated this

proposed additional new building (attached to an existing building associated with the stabling / livery) is found to be modestly sized and may be judged proportionate to the holding and therefore reasonable to serve the likely scale of need without exceeding that which could be anticipated as being necessary for agriculture at this holding. This conclusion is reached notwithstanding the 2010 consent SMD/2010/0127 which approved an 18m x 12m building for agricultural storage. The now proposed additional building would not be prominent nor even particularly noticeable in the surroundings and therefore of little harm to the landscape and public amenity. On balance therefore it is found acceptable. A condition should be attached that in the event the agricultural need and use ceases it shall be removed and the land restored to its current open undeveloped state.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : approve

Case Officer: Arne Swithenbank
Recommendation Date: 7th December 2018

X B.J. Haywood

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council