DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2019/0030	**MILLSTONES**	**PROPOSED OPEN PLAN**
Valid 22/01/2019	**ASHBOURNE ROAD**	**STEEL FRAMED**
	BOTTOMHOUSE	**POLYTUNNEL TO LAMB**
	LEEK	**SHEEP**
		(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

- Landscape
- Design
- Agricultural need

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

This is an established traditional farm running a pedigree Aberdeen Angus beef herd and pedigree sheep flock (Holding No. 37/053/0010). The farm is set down from the main road with first the farm house some 50m from the road side and then a linear succession of modern 20thC farm livestock buildings beyond. The proposal building would occupy a gap before the final existing building in the row.

It is understood from the submitted planning statement that the farm extends to 217 acres (88 ha) running 400 sheep with followers and 100 suckler cows.

PROPOSAL

A steel framed poly tunnel 18m x 9m x 3.4m high at the ridge top sited between two existing buildings. As first submitted the awning was given to be in white but the applicant has confirmed by e-mail that a black finish (though not green) is available and that he is happy to adopt this option.

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
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; 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment;

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

A succession of planning applications has provided for the sequential addition of farm buildings to the holding. The last (most south-westerly) in the row was approved under SMD/2011/0868 (11/00916/FUL).

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity
Site Notice expiry date: 4th March 2019
Neighbour consultation period ends: N/A
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments
None

Town / Parish Comments
Bradnop Parish Council – support

Severn Trent Water
No objection.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

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.

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:

(a) 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

(b) specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.

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).

As a new 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 purpose of this building is to support the functional operation of an established farm enterprise. To this extent the development may reasonably be assumed to contribute to the continued viability and therefore the sustainability of the farm business and in turn to the rural economy more generally. It was also very apparent from the LPA site visit that the farm buildings at this site are in full use and the rationale presented for the additional shelter as a lambing building was readily apparent taking into account the winter housing needs of the cattle.

Design and landscape impact

Situated between existing buildings the proposal would be to some extent concealed. There would be some potential visibility from the main Ashbourne Road and from a public footpath right of way passing east – west through the farm land some 160m to the south. The building would though be seen in the context of the existing farmstead building range and the adoption of a dark colour finish would further help minimise the prominence.

The proposal site contains an area of successful landscape tree planting associated with an earlier development – although its contribution has to some extent become eroded by the later (2011) approval of a further building to the south west of it. The applicant proposes to establish a new area of landscape planting though the position of this has not been specified. A positively worded condition is proposed to cover this point.

Amenity

With no near neighbours there are no likely adverse amenity impacts.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The farming business activity at these premises is not in doubt. It is important in the rural economy to support the continued viability of farm businesses and recognise the need to meet evolving good practice and welfare standards which, as a lambing building, the development would be supporting. As discussed above, the design is found suitable for the position and building function.

Although there is a loss of an area of recent and successful tree panting, the use of this site for the building would have less impact here than if a site which extended the farm building range further into the fields were chosen. New alternative planting to the building periphery should be adopted.

Given the relatively low key impact of the proposal on rural landscape and character, for the reasons discussed in the report, the proposal is assessed, having regard to policy R1, as being acceptable. The relatively minor degree to which there may be some landscape harm is more than off-set by the evident farm business need further aided by the applicant's commitment to new additional tree planting.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : approve

Case Officer: Arne Swithenbank
Recommendation Date: 4th March 2019

X

Signed by: Jane Colley

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council