**DELEGATED DECISION REPORT**

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| **SMD/2020/0192**<br>**Valid 08/04/2020** | **TICKHILL FARM TICKHILL LANE CAVERSWALL** | **OPEN PLAN AGRICULTURAL BUILDING TO STORE FODDER AND IMPLEMENTS**<br><br>**(FULL - MINOR)** |

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## MAIN ISSUES

Whether or not the proposal would amount to inappropriate development in the Green Belt
The impact on the character and appearance of the area
The impact on residential amenity

## DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The site lies within the countryside about a mile to the north-east of Caverswall Village and to the east of Caverswall Common. It comprises part of a farm accessed via a long track connected to Handley Banks (a country lane) to the east. The site is vacant and open but also a short distance from farm buildings to the north and north-east including the farmhouse. It is also on the southern edge of the farm, close to the south-west corner with the connected fields all lying to the north and east. The overall farm has a size of 40 acres (16 hectares). There is another farm holding immediately to the south comprising a large farm storage building and bungalow which both lie a very short distance to the south of the site but are within a separate ownership and have a different access. The farm is within the Green Belt.

## PROPOSAL

This is a full planning application for a completely metal-framed farm storage building with low-pitch roof, floor dimensions of 18.3 x 18.3m and a max height of 8.4 metres. It would be open on two sides with the gable elevations cladded in Juniper Green metal sheeting. The roof would comprise fibre cement sheeting. One of the slopes would be extended beyond the eaves to provide a weather canopy.

The Design and Access Statement states the following:

*The applicant requires this building to store the fodder in and the holdings implements. The existing buildings on site are used to house the stock levels and to store some of the implements required to manage the holding. The applicant is fully aware of the inadequate storage facilities available. This building will be used to store mini Heston bales of hay and straw. By enabling these bales to be stored in the building it will reduce the use of plastics therefore creating a more environmentally friendly holding. In addition to the above this building will also be used to store implements in which are currently left outside exposed to the elements. This building*

*will also enable the applicant to have shelter to mend any broken down implements. Implements to be stored include tractors, trailers, mower, sprayer and general agricultural equipment required to run the holding. This building will enable the equipment to be kept out of view and restricts the chances of the implements being stolen.*

## RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

### Core Strategy (Adopted March 2014)

SS6c Other Rural Areas Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations

### National Planning Policy Framework (Feb 2019)

Section 12 (Design).

### Emerging Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan

The Council agreed to publish the Local Plan Submission Version for representations in February 2018. At this point, the Council agreed that the Local Plan was "sound". Formal representations were then invited from residents, businesses and other stakeholders to provide them with the opportunity to support or challenge the soundness or legal compliance of the Local Plan. This stage in the process followed three previous public consultations since 2015 which had informed the preparation of the Local Plan alongside a comprehensive evidence base.

In June 2018, the Council subsequently agreed to submit the Local Plan Submission Version to the Secretary of State for examination. An examination in public is ongoing in order to determine whether the Local Plan is sound and legally compliant. Hearing sessions were conducted in October 2018 and the Inspector issued his initial post-hearing advice in January 2019 which set out some actions for the Council and a range of modifications that would be necessary to make the plan sound. The full schedule of modifications was agreed by the Council and the subject of public consultation between 18th September 2019 and 31st October 2019. The schedule consisted of modifications that the Inspector has deemed necessary to make the Local Plan sound. Following the consultation, the Inspector concluded that further hearing sessions were necessary to consider; proposals for safeguarded land at Gillow Heath in Biddulph, housing land supply, Local Green Spaces in Cheddleton (Ox Pasture), Biddulph (Dorset Drive and implications for the emerging neighbourhood plan) and Blythe Bridge. They were held on 4th and 5th February.

On 27th February, the Inspector issued his post hearing advice. Key recommendations in the letter include:

- The proposed safeguarded land at Gillow Health, Biddulph should be removed. Neither should the site be allocated for housing as requested by the landowners as the case for exceptional circumstances has not ben met. The land will remain Green Belt as per the Local Plan Submission Version agreed by the Council in June 2018

- No further housing allocations in Biddulph are required
- No further amendments to the housing trajectory are required aside from pushing back the predicted commencement of the Wharf Road, Biddulph site (excluding BDNEW) until 2022/23.
- Monitoring of housing supply will determine if a full or partial Local Plan review is required within 5 years
- Land at Ox Pasture (Cheddleton) and Dorset Drive (Biddulph) should revert back to the Local Green Space designations as per the Local Plan Submission Version as agreed by the Council in June 2018.
- Other modifications were considered during the recent hearings sessions are necessary to make the plan sound, including; updating neighbourhood area housing requirements (Policy SS4) to reflect the latest monitoring data, updating the employment land area for the Tunstall Road allocation to reflect the masterplan and other adjustments to the wording of Policy SS4 and Policy DC2.

No further representations will be sought by the Inspector. As such, the Local Plan policies as proposed to be modified in September 2019 along with the Inspector recommended revisions (February 2020) provide a strong indication of the final policies likely to be adopted in the Local Plan. The Inspector's final report is expected within 2 months and will reflect the post hearing advice. The Council will be able to consider the adoption of the Local Plan at this point. As such, the plan is at a very advanced stage of preparation with some of the key outstanding objections now having been resolved following the February 2020 hearing sessions.

In this context, the Council's position on the weight to be given to the policies contained in the Local Plan Submission Version in terms of the three criteria set out in Paragraph 48 of the NPPF is considered below:

- The stage of preparation – the Local Plan is now at an advanced stage of preparation as the main modifications have been subject to consultation
- The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies this varies depending on the policy in question – the Inspector wishes to explore outstanding objections on a limited number of issues at the February hearing sessions further before drawing conclusions.
- The degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to this Framework – policies have been modified to address soundness issues identified by the Inspector to date. It is the Council's view that the policies (as modified) are consistent with national policy. The Inspector has yet to draw final conclusions, particularly on the matters subject to further hearing sessions.

Given the above, the majority of policies (as modified) can be given substantial weight.

**Emerging Policies**

The following policies are considered to be relevant to this application:

SS10 Other Rural Areas Strategy

DC1 Design Considerations

## SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

None.

## CONSULTATIONS

### Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 2.6.20
Neighbour consultation period ends: 2.6.20
Press Advert: N/A

### Public Comments

None.

### Town / Parish Comments

None.

### Environmental Health

No objection subject to conditions.

### Severn Trent Water

No objection.

## OFFICER COMMENTS

The site is in the Green Belt and new buildings are generally not allowed in the GreenBelt (in order to protect the openness of the Green Belt) unless they fall under the exceptional criteria in paras 144 and 145 which lists the forms of development considered to not be inappropriate in the Green Belt and therefore not harmful to it. Agricultural buildings do fall under the criteria and therefore the principle of the building in this location is acceptable.

In terms of the justification for the need for it, it is fair to state that for a holding of 16 hectares, there are not many farm buildings other than the farmhouse and these appear to provide shelter for the stock. I consider there is a reasonable agricultural need for the adequate shelter of fodder, hay, equipment and machinery and to prevent the need for plastic covered hay bales scattered around fields. The building does appear rather large and high but not untypical of a farm storage building on farms of this size, including those which can be erected under permitted development without planning permission on farms of over 5 hectares. It is worth noting there are farm buildings of similar size and height immediately to the south on a neighbouring farm and these, along with the significant boundary trees, would help

to screen the proposed building when viewed from then south. Trees would also screen the building from the west and farm buildings on the farm itself and woodland to the east blocking views of the building from Tickhill Lane. The farmhouse lies a short distance to the north also screening the building from this direction. I am satisfied the building has been placed in the most appropriate position within the farm closely related to the farm building complex in a discreet and well screened location.

With regard to residential amenity, the farm building on neighbouring land to the south lies directly between the site and the bungalow and therefore the proposed building would not be harmfully prominent when viewed from the bungalow and the boundary trees also help in this respect. As the building is intended for equipment and fodder and not livestock the neighbours to be south would not be significantly affected by noise or smells. A condition can be imposed preventing any later storage of livestock.

The only significant concern with the scheme is the impact of surface water and rainwater run-off from the building affecting a nearby stream. A drainage condition can therefore be applied requiring details of drainage to allow this to be assessed and a satisfactory means of drainage approved to avoid polluting affects on the stream, along with other conditions aiming to achieve this.

**CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE**

The proposal is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt and there is sufficient justification for its need for the agricultural operation of the farm. The building would benefit from a good level of screening and would not harm the visual amenities of the rural area. With the safeguard of conditions, it would also not lead to any other environmental harms including harm to residential amenity. The proposal would therefore comply with the Core Strategy, the forthcoming Local Plan and the government planning guidance contained in the NPPF.

**OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : APPROVE**

**Case Officer: Chris Johnston**
**Recommendation Date: 3.6.20**

X B.J. Haywood

Signed by: Ben Haywood

**On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council**