**DELEGATED DECISION REPORT**

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| **DET/2020/0034**<br>**Valid 10/07/2020** | **WOODCOCK HURST FARM**<br>**GRATTON LANE**<br>**GRATTON** | **PROPOSED STEEL PORTAL FRAMED BUILDING FOR STORAGE OF FODDER AND AGRICULTUAL MACHINERY**<br><br>**(AGRICULTURAL/FORESTRY DETERMINATION)** |

**MAIN ISSUES**

- Whether or not the prior approval of the LPA is required as set out under GPDO Schedule 2 Part 6 Class A – namely as to the:
- Siting
- Design
- External appearance
- Landscape
- Heritage

**DESCRIPTION OF SITE**

Towards one corner of an open field at foot of valley side with farm on the slope above. Listed Buildings of The Ashes c.400m to the south with open landscape between. Historic water meadow archaeology to fields within 100m to the east. The location is within the North Staffordshire Green Belt and the Ancient Slopes and Valley Farm Land landscape character type.

**PROPOSAL**

Described as a steel framed portal building for the storage of fodder and agricultural machinery.

Building 43m x 15m. Eaves height 4.8m and shallow dual pitched roof to ridge height 6.5m. Fully open fronted to the long west elevation; enclosed to the east and north end elevations. Side wall to the southern elevation is limited to c.10m giving the building a deep open canopy at that end.

Concrete panel base wall to the walled elevations with profiled metal sheet above. Fibre cement roof with a pair of roof lights to each of seven bays on both roof slopes.

**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
DC2 Heritage
DC3 Landscape and Settlement Setting
R1 Rural Diversification
NE1 Biodiversity
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
DC2 Heritage
DC3 Landscape and Settlement Setting
E1 New Employment Development
NE1 Biodiversity and Geological Resources
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

Local Plan process

On July 20th 2020, the Council published the Inspector's final report thereby drawing a close to the examination in public. The report concludes that with the recommended main modifications, the plan satisfies the requirements of Section 20(5) of the 2004 Act and meets the criteria for soundness in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). As such, the main modifications which accompany the Inspector's report provide a clear indication of the final policy wording when read in conjunction with the Local Plan Submission Version (2018).

In this context, the Council's position on the weight to be given to the policies (as modified) 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 the most advanced stage of preparation prior to adoption as the Inspector has concluded that the Local Plan is sound subject to the recommended modifications being made.
- The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies – the Inspector has now drawn his final conclusions and there are no further matters to resolve
- The degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to this Framework – the policies (as modified) have been found by the Inspector to be sound in the context of the 2012 NPPF under which the Local Plan has been examined. One of the "tests of soundness" that the Local Plan has successfully been measured against is whether it is "consistent with national policy". As the Local Plan has been prepared and examined under the 2012 NPPF, it should be noted that in some limited cases, its policies do not directly reflect current national policy. However, planning law requires that applications be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Current

national policy is a material consideration and should be given weight accordingly.

Given the above, all policies (as modified) should be given substantial weight.

**National Planning Policy Framework February 2019**

Paragraph(s) 1 – 14;
Section(s) 4 – Decision making; 6 – Building a strong and competitive economy; 11 – Making effective use of land; 12 – Achieving well designed places; 13 – Protecting Green Belt Land; 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

**Adopted Supplementary Planning Documents/Guidance (SPD/G)**:
- Design Principles SPG

**Core Strategy Supporting Evidence Documents**:
- Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment (2008)

**SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS**

98/00569/OLD – extensions to agricultural buildings

**CONSULTATIONS**

No consultations or publicity undertaken for this prior notification stage.

**OFFICER COMMENTS**

**Principle of Development**

The application is made under the Permitted Development procedure for agricultural buildings contained at GPDO (2015) Schedule 2, Part 6 Class A.

Class A of Schedule 2 Part 6 to the GPDO provides for an agricultural building to be erected or extended as Permitted Development subject to a prior notification to the LPA, with subsequent assessment, and subject to the land being within an agricultural unit of 5 hectares or more.

The prior notification requirement is an opportunity for the LPA to determine whether prior approval should be required as to the siting, design and external appearance.

To qualify for the Permitted Development route the proposed works must be "reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture within that unit". The agricultural use of the land must be "for the purposes of a trade or business" and the

unit must be “occupied as a unit for the purposes of agriculture”, all as set out in the Interpretation Section (D.1) for Part 6 Classes A to C.

**Design / Siting**

The site is in the open rural countryside in a location considered to be of high quality (level four on a five point scale where five is highest) on the basis of the Staffordshire county-wide landscape assessment (Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment (2008), a planning policy evidence document). One of the stated landscape planning guidelines for the Ancient Slope and Valley Farm Land landscape character type is that: “The grouping and form of new buildings should reflect the juxtaposition, scale, form, enclosure and materials of traditional local buildings characteristic of this area”.

**CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE**

This is a large building at 43m in length and would be sited somewhat separately from the existing main farm buildings group. Given the sloping situation of the existing buildings it can be anticipated that the break-away position may be necessary due to the slope.

Nevertheless it is considered that the proposal should be subject to prior approval in order for the LPA to confirm matters. This will also enable any implications for heritage and setting of Listed Buildings at the Ashes Farm to be taken into account.

There is also nothing in the submitted details to show the extent of any yard area, access and turning space that must inevitably be required for practical and functional use of the building.

**OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : Prior approval required**

**Case Officer:** Arne Swithenbank
**Recommendation Date:** 5th August 2020

X B.J. Haywood

Signed by: Ben Haywood

**On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council**