DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2020/0388 **Valid 24/07/2020**	**LITTLE BLACKWOOD HOUSE BLACKWOOD HOUSE LANE HORTON**	**PROPOSED AGRICULTURAL AND IMPLEMENT STORAGE BUILDING.** **(FULL - MINOR)**

MAIN ISSUES

- Impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
- Impact on neighbouring amenity.
- Impact on highway safety.
- Whether the proposed development comprises an exception to inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site comprises part of a field located to the north of Blackwood House Lane and to the southwest of the applicant's dwellinghouse (Little Blackwood House). The field is relatively level and a hedge, interspersed with mature trees, forms the boundary treatment to the lane.

The application site is in the Green Belt and the applicant's dwellinghouse comprises a non-designated heritage asset.

PROPOSAL

Full planning permission is sought to erect a purpose-built agricultural building for the storage of livestock (sheep), farm machinery and hay/animal feed. The applicant has provided details regarding the agricultural enterprise (breeding rare sheep for meat) and his land holding, which equates to 7.52 hectares. There are no existing agricultural buildings on any of the parcels of land. The building will be used for lambing, the overwintering of sheep and the storage of farm machinery/vehicles, hay/fodder and animal feed. Details of the farm machinery the applicant owns has been provided together with details of the farm holding number and DEFRA number.

The Design & Access Statement submitted with the application states that the building has been carefully sited so that it is screened by the roadside hedge, but will still be within sight and sound of the applicant's house in order to provide security and supervision during lambing.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (Adopted September 2020)

SS1 Development Principles

1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
SS2 Settlement Hierarchy
SS10 Other Rural Areas Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
DC2 The Historic Environment
DC3 Landscape and Settlement Setting
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph(s) 1 - 14
Section(s) 4, 12, 13

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

None

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 17/09/2020
Neighbour consultation period ends: N/A
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments: None

Town / Parish Comments: None

Staffordshire County Council Highways: No objection

Severn Trent Water: No objection and do not require a drainage condition to be applied.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2019) promotes a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. For decision takers this means (c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or (d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are more important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission, unless: i) the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or ii) any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.

Paragraph 8 of the NPPF (2019) identifies three dimensions to sustainable development as being economic, social and environmental. In accordance with policies SS1 and SS1a of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan, the Council will expect all new development to make a positive contribution towards the sustainability of communities and to protecting, and where possible, enhancing the environment. When considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF (2019).

Policy SS10 outlines that the areas of countryside and Green Belt outside of the development boundaries of the towns and larger villages and the open countryside surrounding the smaller villages will provide only for development which has an essential need to be located in the countryside. The application site is in the Green Belt and the proposal is for an agricultural building to house livestock, machinery and hay/feed. The development has an essential need to be in the countryside and therefore the principle of the development is acceptable.

Green Belt

The application site is in the Green Belt. Policy SS10 states that strict control will continue to be exercised over inappropriate development within the Green Belt allowing only for exceptions as defined by Government policy. Paragraphs 143 and 144 of the NPPF (2019) states *'that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances'* and *'when considering a planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt'*.

Paragraph 144 of the NPPF (2019) states, *'local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations'.*

Paragraph 145 of the NPPF (2019) states that Local Planning Authorities *'should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt'.* However exceptions to this include *'a) buildings for agriculture and forestry'*. The proposed development therefore comprises an exception to inappropriate development in the Green Belt, in accordance with paragraph 145 of the NPPF (2019).

Design

Policy DC1 refers to design and seeks to secure development of a high quality which is designed to add value to the area and to respect the site and its surroundings. New development should promote a positive sense of place and identity through its scale, density, layout, siting, landscaping, character and appearance.

Paragraph 127 of the NPPF (2019) requires the design of a development to add to the overall quality of an area, by being sympathetic to local character and by being

visually attractive because of good architecture. The Council's Design SPD outlines the Council's expectations in respect of the design of new buildings.

The proposed building will measure 24.4 metres x 10.7 metres with an eaves height of 4.3 metres and a ridge height of 5.9 metres. It will be mainly constructed of profiled metal sheeting, anthracite in colour. However, the elevation closest to the applicant's dwellinghouse will be partially constructed of reclaimed stone with stone quions. Two roller shutter doors will be present: one within the eastern end elevation and another within the northern elevation. An open-sided canopy will extend from the southern elevation of the building towards the roadside boundary hedge that will have an eaves height of 3.16 metres. This will be used as a covered shelter for the sheep.

The building will have the appearance of a modern agricultural building that is characteristic of the type of buildings that are found within the surrounding rural area. The applicant has outlined within the supporting Design & Access Statement, on the submitted plans and via requested additional information why a building of the size and scale proposed is required and it is agreed that it has been fully justified.

The building would be sited adjacent to an existing roadside hedge that is interspersed with mature trees. A gap will be maintained between the hedge and the open-sided lean-to shelter. Given the limited foundations that will be needed to construct the open-sided shelter, it is not considered that it would have a detrimental effect on the wellbeing of the existing hedge or trees. The building would be sited approximately 6 metres from the roadside hedge and outside the canopies of the existing trees and therefore its construction is not considered to have a detrimental effect on their wellbeing. The existing hedge and mature trees will highly screen the proposed building from the adjacent road and no public footpaths are in close proximity of the site. It is therefore considered that the siting of the proposed building will not have a detrimental effect on the character or appearance of the surrounding rural landscape.

The building is proposed to be dark grey (anthracite) in colour. However other agricultural buildings in the area tend to consist of dark green metal cladding or weathered timber cladding to the walls and grey cladding to the roof. Given the building's siting adjacent to the roadside boundary hedge, it is considered that a dark green colour would be better suited to its surroundings. This should be conditioned accordingly.

Heritage Assets

The applicant's dwellinghouse is located to the northeast of the application site and comprises a non-designated heritage asset that is listed on the Historic Environment Record (HER). The dwellinghouse is stone built and of probable 17th Century origin.

Policy DC2 states that the Council will safeguard and where possible, enhance the historic environment by resisting development which would harm or be detrimental to the special character and historic heritage of the District's towns and villages and those interests of acknowledged importance; promoting development which sustains, respects or enhances buildings and features which contribute to the character or

heritage of an area; and preventing the loss of buildings and features which make a positive contribution to the character or heritage of an area through appropriate re-use and sensitive development.

Paragraph 193 of the NPPF (2019) states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Paragraph 197 of the NPPF (2019) relates to non-designated heritage assets and states that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application and that a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

The proposed agricultural building would be sited approximately 35 metres from the dwellinghouse. The building has been designed so that the elevation closest to the dwellinghouse will be constructed of reclaimed stone with stone quoins for the first two metres, in place of the coloured cladding that will be used for the remainder of the building. Due to the distance separating the proposed building from the adjacent dwellinghouse and the materials proposed, it is not considered that it will have a detrimental effect on the setting of this non-designated heritage asset. The proposed development will therefore not result in harm to the significance of the non-designed heritage asset.

Amenity

Core Strategy policy DC1 and paragraph 127(f) of the NPPF (2019) seek to secure development that protects amenity, including residential amenity, in terms of satisfactory daylight, sunlight, outlook, privacy and soft landscaping.

The application site is surrounded by fields, with no residential properties (other than the applicant's house) located in close proximity. The proposed building will therefore not have a detrimental effect on amenity.

Highway Safety

Policies DC1 and T1 seek to achieve a level of parking and an access that is appropriate to the development it serves.

Access to the building will be via the existing access off Blackwood House Lane which is an unclassified road with a speed limit of 60mph. The Highway Engineer undertook a site visit and noted that parking and turning is sufficient within the curtilage of the site as per the submitted drawing and they did not consider the proposal would cause a significant increase in trip generation. They do not consider the proposal would have a detrimental impact on the highway and therefore they raise no objection.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

For the reasons outlined above, the proposed development is considered to accord with the relevant policies contained in the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (2020) and the NPPF (2019). As such the application is recommended for approval.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE subject to Conditions

Case Officer: Ailsa Berry
Recommendation Date: 18/09/2020

X B.J. Haywood

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council