

**Supporting Planning, Design &
Access Statement**

**Installation of agricultural
building and associated
infrastructure**

**Land at Meadow View Farm,
Kerry Hill, Stoke, ST2 8NA**

March 2020

Statement prepared by:

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For and on behalf of the Landowners

Supporting Statement

Land at Meadow View Farm, Kerry Hill

March 2021

Ref: 2021 – 10a

Approved by:



Russell Adams - Director

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Adams Planning + Development Ltd (APD) have prepared this Supporting Statement on behalf of the landowners Chris Holt and Gail Thompson. This Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the following form of development:

“Erection of agricultural building with associated access track and infrastructure.”

- 1.2 This planning application comprises of the following information:

- A Covering Letter
- Planning Application Form & Certificate A
- This Supporting Statement
- Planning Application Forms
- A Site Location Plan (Drawing No. AD04-2115-01)
- A Site Location Plan (Overlay) (Drawing No. AD04-2115-01)
- A Block Plan (Drawing No. AD04-2115-02)
- A Floor Plan (Drawing No. AD04-2115-03)
- Elevations (Drawing No. AD04-2115-04)
- A Groundsure Coal Mining Report

- 1.3 A pre-application consultation was submitted by the applicants to Staffordshire Moorlands Council in September 2020. The pre-application consultation response identified that the whole site is located within the Green Belt, a Coal Development Area and had has the Wetley Moor Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) to the south of the land.

- 1.4 The Council advised it would be appropriate to engage the services of an architect and planning consultant to advise on the above planning policy and environmental considerations. The Applicants subsequently instructed APD and The Lakeland Building Group to update and submit the enclosed planning submission which has been designed to ensure that it complies with Staffordshire Moorland Council's adopted Development Plan policies.

2.0 Development Proposals

- 2.1 This section provides a review of the site and surroundings and the proposed siting and use of the agricultural barn.

Site and surroundings

- 2.2 The Applicants landholding is an area of 2.42 hectares (6 acres) of grazing land that is bound to the north by Kerryhill Nurseries, to the east by the existing access track, to the south by the Wetley Moor SSSI and to the north and east by Meadow View Farm, Kerry View Farm, JE Robinson's Dairy Farm, the Serenity Farm Project and their associated landholdings.
- 2.3 The land has an existing gated access on the south eastern corner that will be retained as the main field access to the site. The land is relatively flat and free of trees aside from a large Oak tree that sits on the northern side of the eastern portion of the land. The majority of the land that sits on the south eastern side of this tree is registered as Common Land, which is seemingly a historical allocation that bears no relationship to any defining characteristic of the land in its current state.
- 2.4 The site rises gradually from the south to the north and benefits from existing mature hedgerows and tree screening on the northern, eastern, southern and western sides of the site that will screen third party views of the proposed new agricultural barn.
- 2.5 The Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan Proposals Map extract below (see Figure 1) identifies that the land in question is not constrained by Flood Risk, lies out side designated Conservation Areas, has no protected trees and lies due north of the Wetley Moor SSSI and Special Protection Area.

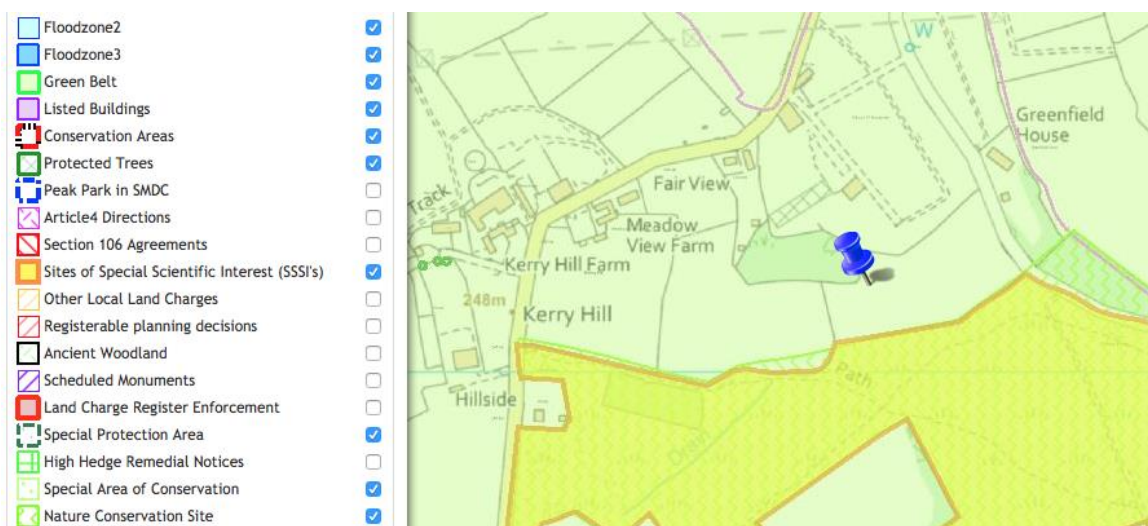


Figure 1 – Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan Proposals Map Extract

- 2.6 There are no known technical constraints that exist at the subject landholding.

Development Proposals

- 2.7 The Applicants have recently purchased the landholding in order to set up a smallholding for a modest animal rearing business that utilises their farming knowledge which both Chris and Gail have accrued over their lifetimes, having both been brought up and worked on farms for a large portion of their lives.

- 2.8 Chris Holt unfortunately began losing his sight 18 months ago and at the same time lost his livelihood as a lorry driver. Chris's loss of peripheral sight prevents him from being employed as an HGV driver; however, Chris was brought up on a farm that specialised in rearing poultry and bee keeping.
- 2.9 Gail Thompson was working as a dog behaviourist but has had to give this up in order to care for Chris whom she has to be with 24/7 in order to assist him cope with his physical ailment. Gail has extensive experience of rearing cattle, sheep and pigs and has previously run three businesses. Neither party wish to retire so they are keen to rear animals and work within the safety of their own land, with the backing of the Blind Veterans, supporting a simple, sustainable and healthy lifestyle.
- 2.10 The enclosed plans illustrate the following form of development:
- Provision of a low intervention porous crushed MOT field track with grass strip in the middle from the existing field access.
 - Installation of a modest 232m² wooden agricultural building that is only 3.6 metres in height and will be painted dark green with anthracite corrugated cement sheets that will blend in with the grasslands and raised tree and hedgerow planting that borders the proposed site on the northern, eastern and western sides.
 - Installation of a modest parking area, capable of accommodating up to three vehicles with associated turning area (in accordance with Appendix 2 of the Local Plan), that is provided on the eastern side of the building. This will be used for the parking of our client's vehicles.
 - The barn and parking area has been positioned in a location that is naturally screened from the north, east and west by existing planting, and the proposed Block Plan details the introduction of additional hawthorn screening along the eastern side to screen the proposed new.
 - The barn location also sits due west of the 'Common Land' designation as a precautionary measure and on the very edge of a 'Low
- 2.11 The proposed barn is open plan internally which allows the Applicants flexibility to partition off various areas for their proposed animal rearing and plant and vegetable propagation activities. Our clients are intending on introducing the following farm animals/activities within the barn:
- 4 Kalahari Red Nanny Goats
 - 2 Duroc Sows
 - 2 Berkshire Sows
 - The following rare breeds of sheep:
 - 2 Kerry Hill Ewes
 - 2 Coloured Ryland Ewes
 - 2 Black nosed Valais Ewes
 - Keeping 50 assorted breeds of hens for egg production for local shops and market stall
 - Incubate and rear various breeds of poultry for sale
 - Incubate and rear various breeds of ducks for sale
 - Produce from seed various vegetables, selling small potted plants and growing these on the land for sale.
 - Planting Cherry, Apple, Plum and Pear Trees
 - Bee Hives for honey production

- 2.12 There is an existing electricity supply to the land and the applicants are currently arranging mains water to the land. The barn location has been updated from the proposed siting within the pre-application consultations so that there is no third party views of the proposed location. The enclosed Groundsure Coal Mining Report does identify that the siting of the barn does just fall within the area of 'probable shallow coal mining' with the Report identifying that:

"The property does not lie within the potential zone of influence of any recorded underground coal workings.

The property is indicated to lie in an area where coal deposits have been worked at shallow depth in the past but for which no plan exists.

A coal outcrop is recorded to pass through the property boundary. There is a possibility of unrecorded mining features associated with this coal outcrop within the property boundary."

- 2.13 The Report confirms that there are no underground coal mining workings, with all coal mining therefore being surface based. Our clients have inspected the subject land that is intended to accommodate the building and are happy that the proposed siting of the building is appropriate, the land is structurally stable and the siting will not compromise any third party ownerships. This will be evident to the appointed planning officer when they conduct the site visit.

3.0 Planning Policy Considerations

- 3.1 Paragraph 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) identifies that decisions on planning applications *“must be made in accordance with the [development] plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.”*
- 3.2 The ‘Development Plan’ for Staffordshire Moorlands is the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan adopted in September 2020.
- 3.3 The NPPF is also a strong material consideration in this instance given that it has only recently been adopted, and outlines the Government’s most up-to-date planning policy guidance.

National Planning Policy

- 3.4 Paragraph 38 of the NPPF identifies that:

“Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way...Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.”

- 3.5 Paragraph 80 of the NPPF identifies that:

*“Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. **Significant weight** should be placed on the need to **support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development**. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future.”*

- 3.6 Paragraph 83 identifies that:

“Planning policies and decisions should enable:

- a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;*
- b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;*
- c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and*
- d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.”*

- 3.7 Paragraph 84 recognises that:

“Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable.”

- 3.8 Paragraph 117 of the NPPF identifies that:

“Planning policies and decisions should encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains – such as developments that would enable new habitat creation or improve public access to the countryside.”

3.9 Paragraph 124 identifies that:

“Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
- f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.”*

3.10 Paragraph 145 of the NPPF is of particular relevance the proposed agricultural building. This clarifies that

*“A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. **Exceptions** to this are a) buildings for agriculture and forestry.”*

Local Planning Policy

3.11 The Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (September 2020) is consistent with the NPPF in supporting agricultural-based businesses in the Countryside and Green Belt locations.

3.12 Policy SS10 – ‘Other Rural Areas Strategy’ clarifies that in these areas the Council and its partners will support businesses that have an essential need to be located in the countryside, and will sustain the rural economy by enabling the development of business for employment uses where a rural location can be justified. The agricultural uses being proposed in this instance, including farm animals, bees that rely on plants to harvest honey, and the growing of crops and trees (etc) all require a countryside location.

3.13 Policy SS10 aims to enhance and conserve the quality of the countryside by requiring all new development to respect and respond sensitively to the distinctive qualities of the surrounding landscape and the proposed siting of the building, its scale and colour scheme and the proposed low-intervention access track certainly respond to Policy SS10’s objectives whilst ensuring that the porous surface does not lead to surface water run-off.

3.14 The proposed introduction of additional Hawthorne hedges and the addition of new fruit trees, plants and vegetables together with the wide range of rare breed animals will provide enhanced biodiversity and enrichment of the land, in line with Policy SS10’s aims, as well as offering employment benefits to the Applicants who intend on selling their produce locally at farmers markets and market stalls.

- 3.15 The proposals are sensitively designed and accord with both National and Local Plan policies. The agricultural barn provides a small scale, sustainable form of development that should be supported in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, and due to the fact that the Applicants have demonstrated that there are no technical constraints that might prohibit the proposed agricultural barn in the manner being proposed in this instance.