

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2021/0194
Valid 22/03/2021

ROCK TENEMENT FARM
587 CHEADLE ROAD
WETLEY ROCKS

PROPOSED LIVESTOCK
BUILDING

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

- Green Belt
- Landscape and character
- Neighbour amenity
- Design

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The farm buildings group is set up above and set back from Cheadle Road and is also in an elevated position in views across fields from Folley Lane on the east side. It is chiefly from the latter east side that the proposal building would be visible and would be seen in conjunction with existing not dissimilar buildings.

PROPOSAL

Covered livestock housing, open fronted on one long side where there is a feeding rail. The applicant's farming operation is stated as extending to a total of approximately 76 acres of grassland, with 6 acres owned by the applicant and 70 acres rented serving 55 head of cattle. Accompanied by Design and Access Statement.

Concrete base wall to 2m on three sides with timber Yorkshire boarding above on the long rear (east) side and corrugated metal sheeting on the north and south end elevations.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Local Plan (adopted 9th September 2020)

SS1 Development Principles
SS10 Other Rural Areas Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
DC2 The Historic Environment
DC3 Landscape and Settlement Setting
E1 New Employment Development
H1 New Housing Development
NE1 Biodiversity and Geological Resources

NE 2 Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

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):

- Space About Dwellings SPG
- Design Principles SPG
- Design Guide SPD adopted 21st February 2018

Local Plan Supporting Evidence Documents:

- Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment (2008)

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

DET/2016/0007 – agricultural building – approved

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 17th May 2021
Neighbour consultation period ends: 26th April 2021
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

None

Town / Parish Comments

Cheddleton parish Council – no objection but request to stipulate always used for agriculture.

Severn Trent Water

Minimal impact on the public sewer system therefore no objection and no requirement for drainage condition.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

General approach

In its general approach, in accordance with policy SS1, 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 Local Plan shall be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Principle

Policy SS10 for the rural areas is that:

“These areas will provide only for development which has an essential need to be located in the countryside, supports the rural diversification and sustainability of the rural areas, promotes sustainable tourism or enhances the countryside. The Council and its partners will achieve this through the following actions: [inter alia]

SS10(2) Sustain the rural economy by:

- Enabling the limited expansion or development of business for employment uses where a rural location can be justified
- Supporting the diversification of existing farm enterprises

Policy SS10 (3) is to Enhance and conserve the quality of the countryside by: “Giving priority to the need to protect the quality and character of the area and requiring all development proposals to respect and respond sensitively to the distinctive qualities of the surrounding landscape;”

For this site which is within the North Staffordshire Green Belt, Policy SS10(6) applies saying:

“that strict control will continue to be exercised over inappropriate development within the Green Belt allowing only for exceptions as defined by Government Policy”.

Government policy is that a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt (NPPF 145). However, NPPF paragraphs 145 and 146 set out specific exceptions by which certain forms of development can be considered as being not inappropriate in the Green Belt. One of these exceptions is at NPPF 145 (a) “buildings for agriculture and forestry”.

As an agricultural building this proposal is therefore in principle not inappropriate in the Green Belt. The remaining considerations are impact on landscape character and appearance, neighbour amenity and the overall design.

Design

The proposal is for a covered livestock housing with an open front along one long side (c.14m) providing a feeding rail. The enclosed end walls are 7.6m in width but then there is a c.1.5m roof overhang above the feeding rail making the width of the building c.9m in total. The eaves height is c.3.7m and the ridge c.4.7m.

With timber 'Yorkshire boarding' above a concrete panel base wall to a height of 2m the main long and more publicly prominent east side elevation of the building would have an appropriate design and appearance which would be acceptable in a rural area for livestock housing. The proposed use of corrugated metal sheet cladding to the north and south end elevations (again above a concrete panel base wall) is acceptable subject to colour, which has not been specified, being stipulated by condition.

The roof is stated to be of cement fibre board to be finished in "a natural colour". This non-specific colour description could result in a light and therefore un-necessarily conspicuous roof colour finish and it would be important therefore to stipulate by condition that a dark and thereby 'recessive' colour finish be used. In this case as the existing buildings are in green, a dark juniper green should be specified to fit in.

The application proposal obviously takes note of the prominence of the site in views from the east and north east and proposes a band of tree / shrub planting. No planting details have been provided and again this needs to be addressed by condition.

Amenity

Residential neighbours to the east are typically at c.250m distance, and beyond, and can be judged unlikely to be affected by this modest sized livestock building. Although numbers 585 and 602 and other residential properties on Cheadle Rd are closer at c.100m and 80m for the two mentioned again it is judged unlikely that they could be affected in terms of amenity whether for example by odour or by noise.

Highway Safety

Existing vehicular access is available to the farm from Cheadle Road and by a farm track from Folly Lane, which latter is shown in this case as the means of access to the proposal site. The proposal can be considered unlikely to significantly alter the overall usage of the access. Consequently it is considered that there are no highway concerns with the development proposals.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

As an agricultural building to provide farm livestock housing the proposal is not inappropriate in principle in the Green Belt. The main issue is the prominence of the proposed site in an elevated position when seen in views from the east.

The application proposes that the development be accompanied by a tree planting scheme although no details have been provided and these need to be secured by condition. Some details of the external materials colour finish are also left unaddressed and again need to be set out by condition.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : Approve subject to conditions

Case Officer: Arne Swithenbank

Recommendation Date: 17th May 2021

X 

Signed by: Jane Colley Signature

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council