

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2021/0200
Valid 01/04/2021

HOLMWOOD RAMSHORN
ROAD
OAKAMoor

PROPOSED REPLACEMENT
AGRICULTURAL BUILDING

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

Is there an essential need to locate the development in the countryside and can a rural location be justified? Impacts on the rural character and appearance of the area and the residential amenity of neighbours.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

An area within a large expanse of garden, not necessarily dwelling curtilage, to the rear of the applicant's bungalow. The bungalow is in a short, scattered, well-spaced row of similar dwellings on a narrow country lane. The bungalow and its neighbours are within an 'other rural area', in Ramshorn, beyond the closest village settlements of Alton and Oakamoor.

The garden is bounded and enclosed by mature tree lines and behind the applicant's large area of garden there is a small scale field parcel of 0.5ha closely bounded and enclosed by woodland.

PROPOSAL

To build a portal frame lock up shed or unit in an area of the applicant's garden. It is described as a replacement agricultural building, it would be built on area currently occupied by a timber garden shed or garage.

The new shed would be 12m by 12m with a full pitch roof height of 5.3m. It would have a roller shutter door onto a new wide area of hardstanding and driveway. It would have a concrete panel base and corrugated box profile cladding and roof sheets.

A statement submitted with the application says that the applicant's run a small agricultural operation from three locations in the Ramshorn and Ashbourne areas, but that in addition to that Mr Moss carries out agricultural contracting and requires a building to store his plant, machinery and materials.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Core Strategy Development Plan Document (Adopted 2014)

- S01 Spatial Objectives
- SS2 Settlement Hierarchy
- SS10 Other Rural Area Strategy
- DC1 Design Considerations
- SD4 Sources of pollution
- T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

None

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 11th May 2021

Neighbour consultation period ends: 11th May 2021

Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

None

Town / Parish Comments

Awaited

Severn Trent Water

No objection

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

The new building would be provided within the countryside in an area identified in the settlement hierarchy as an 'other rural area'. In these areas the spatial strategy, SS10, only provides for development where there is an essential need for this development to be located in the countryside, it would support the diversification of existing farm enterprise, and a rural location can be justified. Policy E1 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan, directs the provision of new business development to existing employment areas in or on the edge of town centres.

The new building is described as a replacement agricultural building. However, the building that would be replaced is a large timber garden shed or garage, of a size which, together with other existing sheds/stables on site, might be expected for a garden or small holding of this size. The new building would be much larger (150sqm and 5.3 metres high), in comparison with the size of the garden and the land to the rear, disproportionately large.

On site there was no obvious evidence that the large garden or the 0.5ha of land to the rear was in any agricultural use, other than a handful of geese roaming free. Instead across the land stored out in the open were trailers, a mini digger, a dumper truck, and various materials and miscellaneous items. This ties in with the submitted statement, which does not discuss in any detail the agricultural activity or enterprise, but does explain that the applicant is involved with agricultural contracting on various sites. They have a storage building in Ashbourne but that will not be available after

this year and the items kept there will be brought to the applicant's home and stored in the open.

The need or justification for the building therefore is not relatable to the proposed rural location, it is not to support the farming or commercial use of the land on which it is located, rather it would be located out of convenience as a central 'depot' to service multiple and varied sites, which judging the type of equipment apparent on site are not obviously or necessarily agricultural. It amounts therefore to a commercial storage shed that would be more appropriately located on existing employment land.

There would appear to be a less than essential need for this development to be located in the countryside, it would not support the diversification of existing farm enterprise, and a rural location cannot be justified. As such, located in an 'other rural area', the development would be at odds with the spatial strategy at SS10 and Policy E1 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan, which provides 'only' for development that complies in those regards, and directs the provision of new business development to existing employment areas in or on the edge of town centres.

Impact on Residential Amenity

The immediate locality is residential in character and use. The large garden space has a rough L shape that, to the east, wraps behind the adjacent neighbour's property at 'Woodlands', but then has a flanking boundary to the side of the larger neighbouring garden at 'next door but one' property at 'St. Mary's Mount'.

In comparison to its neighbours, 'Woodlands' has a very modest garden, with a depth of 13m between the dwelling's rear elevation and the garden boundary. From the garden boundary the land level steps down so that the rear of the dwelling is set down at a lower level. The functional blank facing, 12m wide 5.3m high, side of the new building would be built just 7m from the neighbour's garden boundary. It would completely obscure the outlook and sense of space enjoyed by that neighbour from their windows and garden area, and they would instead look upon a very obtrusive and imposing functional building that would block views across the rustic garden between its woodland boundaries toward the surrounding farm land and woodland beyond. In these regards the building would change and be detrimental to the character and appearance of the environment that is enjoyed by this neighbour. To this extent, this neighbour's amenity would be unreasonably affected.

If the building is to be used to store and garage plant, machinery and equipment that is brought back from various sites where they have been engaged operations, there would appear to be a strong likelihood of jet washing, repair and maintenance being carried out in, or outside of, the building - the proposed hardstanding area would suggest the potential for outside activity. This types of activity, carried out frequently or regularly in connection with commercial enterprise, could create noise and disturbance above that which might normally be associated with a limited smallholding of 0.5 ha, or a residential property and area. Noise from these activities would disturb those surrounding, nearby neighbour's, that share a boundary with the applicant's property.

In all of these regards the development would be harmful to the amenity enjoyed by the existing residential neighbours and contrary to policy DC1 and SD4 of the Local Plan.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The development would contravene the terms of the spatial strategy (SS10) because there is no essential need or justification for it to be provided in a 'other rural location'; and, it be harmful to the amenity enjoyed by its residential neighbours. The development would be contrary to the development plan and the NPPF in these regards.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : REFUSE

Case Officer: Ben Hurst

Recommendation Date: 27/05/2021

X 

Signed by: Jane Colley Signature

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council