

Supporting statement for retrospective planning permission for a polytunnel at Rock End Stables, New Street, Buddulph Moor, ST8 7NW.

Overarching principles and ethos of Rock End Stables development.

My intentions at Rock End Stables are

- to create more diverse environments for plants and animals
- to increase appropriate community involvement and access to the land
- to improve productivity and to diversify land use, in ways that are sustainable and support restorative agriculture practice.
- To make the land more beautiful through nurturing natural habitats and introducing more plants and trees.

The polytunnel is part of a larger plan to achieve the above goals. The polytunnel will extend the growing season for users enabling crops to be grown all through the year. It will protect plants from inclement weather, including high winds, heavy rain and frosts. It will protect plants from feral pests including rats, rabbits, deer and birds.

Half of the growing space has been rented to local families to enable them to grow their own food. This also gives the users opportunities for additional social contact, sharing knowledge and expertise and exchanging plants and produce.

The other half will be used by the owner/ developer to grow fruit, vegetables and plants for her own use and for sale to the public. A table beside the stables will be used for sales for people passing by.

Growing practice will be organic and restorative, so all plant waste will be composted and incorporated back into the soil. No chemical products will be used, thus protecting local wildlife.

The polytunnel building itself.

This is a commercial sized tunnel, 20 x 10 meters built from aluminium poles and clear plastic covering. It has been built in the most north eastern corner of the site to capture maximum sunlight and where it is protected from winds by a high hedge. The high hedge also obscures the tunnel from the public along its longest side. It is a thick hawthorn hedge that has not been thinned or trimmed in decades and therefore works well to hide the tunnel. The ends are however clearly visible at the moment but these views have been mitigated by planting trees at both ends of the tunnel. The trees will however take time to grow tall enough to cover the ends. The tunnel is not visible from Buddulph Moor, but only visible for about 500 yards along New Street because of turns, dips and valleys in the road.

Raised beds have been built in the interior of the tunnel as best practice in growing vegetables. The beds have been filled with wooden log, wood chips, compost and soil found on the farm or in the local vicinity. Local families have rented 3 x raised beds for £40 year to grow their own food.

A water collection system has yet to be built, but water from the tunnel roof and walls will be collected and stored for plant irrigation.

There are already seasonal vegetables growing in the tunnel, fruit trees and potting/ plant propagation benches installed.

Parking facilities.

There is already space for 3 to 4 cars in the stable yard. It is anticipated that this will be adequate for polytunnel users. Many families prefer to walk to the facility as part of the function of using the facility is to increase exercise opportunities, and walking to the stables adds to this benefit.

Community Involvement

Since purchasing the stables I have facilitated several volunteering opportunities to which local Biddulph Moor residents have responded well. People can come and walk up to the rocks, feed the animals and assist with infrastructure building projects. Most recently local residents have assisted in planting 1000 trees, on the land, donated by the Woodland Trust. 4 – 8 people turned up every day after the trees were delivered and planted up to 200 trees each day.

4 families have rented raised beds inside the poly tunnel and when I build more beds I am sure that I will be able to rent them out to more families in the area.

If you need further information about the tunnel or my plans for the land at Rock End Stables please let me know, I am happy to provide it and am keen to ensure that plans at the stables are in keeping with local priorities and interests. Any advice and guidance on the development will be readily received.

View from The South, showing trees planted, will hide tunnel.



View from New Street South of The Tunnel.



View from North of The tunnel, showing tall hawthorne hedge.



View from North of tunnel, on New street, 4 rows of trees planted to hide tunnel.



View from New Street, looking through Hawthorne hedge -
in winter with no leaves.

