

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2021/0258
Valid 28/04/2021

EAST VIEW CLOUDSIDE
CONGLETON

**THE PROPOSED
DEVELOPMENT IS FOR AN
AGRICULTURAL BARN
CONSTRUCTED OUT OF A
STEEL PORTAL FRAME.**

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

- (i) Whether the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt having regard to the revised Framework and any relevant development plan policies
- (ii) The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

Embanked rural field with wooded fringe and scattered trees. Adjacent to the adopted road known as Cloudside listed as D1073 unclassified. The location is within enclosed fields on the perimeter lower slopes of the hill known as The Cloud which is owned by the National Trust and open to public access.

PROPOSAL

The proposed development is for an agricultural barn constructed out of a steel portal Frame. It will be positioned on the North West corner of the site for the secure storage of feed and machinery, to work and maintain the land on which it will be sited (specified as hay and straw, quad bike and tractor, use during lambing season.

Steel framed, dual pitch steel roof, clad in profiled metal sheeting, and two roller shutter doors to front. Plan area c.9m x 7m (63sq m), height c.3.6m eaves and c.4.8m ridge.

The building would make use of an existing access with the highway that appears to have been recently constructed. It would be positioned on a shelved platform that has been excavated into the sloping ground.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Local Plan Development Plan Document (Adopted 2020)

S01 Spatial Objectives
SS1 Development Principles
SS10 Other Rural Area
DC1 Design Considerations
DC3 Landscape Character

T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

DET/2020/0051 Erection of shed. Prior Approval Required and Not Permitted.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 8th June 2021

Neighbour consultation period ends: 8th June 2021

Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

None

Town / Parish Comments

Rushton Parish Council: No Objection

OFFICER COMMENTS

Impact on the Green Belt

The planning application is made on the basis that the proposed building is to be used for agricultural purposes. Paragraph 145 of the National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework) states that the construction of new buildings is inappropriate in the Green Belt but it provides a number of exceptions, which includes buildings for agriculture and forestry. Policy SS10 of the LP refers back to national policy in respect of development in the Green Belt.

The appellant owns 0.8 ha of land which includes the dwelling and its generous curtilage, with about 0.5ha remaining as rough sloping grazing and wood land to the lower slopes of the gritstone edge. The application statement refers to other rented land, but there is no evidence or detail provided in respect of this. The detail of the farming enterprise or activity is not provided, however, there are casual references to lambing, maintenance of the land, and storage space for quad bike, tractor, hay and machinery.

In these respects there is some concern that the proposed building is intended to be used for more general purposes and not necessarily or specifically for agricultural purposes relating to the land on which it would be located. However, on site it was evident that there were a small number of sheep grazing on the land and the building of the design and size proposed could provide lambing shelter, hay/feed storage and space for a quad bike.

Ultimately, the application must be determined on the basis of what is applied for. In particular, there is no obvious reason to conclude that the development would not be used for, or be suitable for, agricultural purposes in conjunction with the small area of grazing land and number of sheep. Therefore, as a building for agriculture, the proposed development would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt and

it would be in accordance with the exception set out in paragraph 145 of The Framework. In this respect, the proposal would also be in accordance with Policy SS10 of the LP. As the proposal is a building for agriculture, there is no policy requirement to undertake any further assessment of the impact that would arise upon the openness of the Green Belt or against the purposes of the Green Belt.

Character and appearance

The proposal would be positioned in a prominent location elevated above and adjacent to the front boundary of East View with the public highway. Cloud Side is a narrow country lane that skirts the bottom edge of 'The Cloud' gritstone edge to the west. The lane falls steeply to the north, cutting between tree lined steep roadside verges and drystone walls. To the west the land rises steeply from the roadside, forming the lower slopes of the gritstone edge with views between trees to the scrubby woodland fringe, areas of heathland, and large gritstone rocks breaking between the trees and hillside. To the east of the road, views are much more open across the farmland, small scale irregular field parcels enclosed by hedgerow, woodland coppice and stone wall, falling into the valley below. These aspects are key components of the character and appearance of the locality in which the application site sits, identified in the 'character assessment' as being of a 'Gritstone Highland Fringe' landscape character type, it is of the highest sensitivity, at risk, in particular, from poorly positioned and designed agricultural buildings. On approach from the east public footpath, Rushton 4, climbs steeply toward the road, providing views of the applicant's land and the gritstone edge above, the path crosses the road and links with the National Trust right of way that rises toward and runs adjacent to the site of the proposed building and gives an access and climb to the summit of 'The Cloud' above. From the roadside and the footpaths the quality and significance of the landscape is very apparent.

The proposed building would be of a substantial height and bulk and it would sit very close to, and prominently elevated above, Cloud Side. As a result of its size, utilitarian steel clad appearance, and its positioning, it would be a visibly dominant structure and it would appear as an incongruous feature in the context of its immediate surroundings and Cloud Side street scene. The building would appear in the break between the existing deciduous planting where it would appear incongruous and obscure attractive views of the landscape behind, any additional screen coniferous planting would in itself also appear incongruous in this setting and serve to obscure views of the landscape. This would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area.

For these reasons, I conclude that the proposed development would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area. Consequently, the proposal would fail to accord with Policies SS10, DC1 and DC3 of the LP, where they seek to protect character and appearance.

CONCLUSION

There would be significant harm to the character and appearance of the area and subsequent conflict with the development plan, there are no matters that would outweigh or justify that harm. I therefore conclude that planning permission should be refused.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : REFUSE

Case Officer: Ben Hurst

Recommendation Date: 23rd June 2021

X *B.J. Haywood*

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council