
From: planningcomments@staffs Moorlands.gov.uk
Sent: 12 July 2021 16:26
To: Planning Comments (SMDC)
Subject: Comment Received from Public Access

Application Reference No. : SMD/2021/0374 Site Address: Land East Of Leek Road Wetley Rocks Staffordshire
Comments by: Alan Dickinson National Farmers Union

From:
NFU Office
Rear of Newspaper House
Brook Street
Leek
Staffordshire
ST13 5JE

Submission: Support

Comments: As the local representative of the National Farmers Union (NFU) it is very important that I support young people setting out in life with their ambition of running a successful farming business. Everyone has to start somewhere and Mr Stonier has chosen this corner of North Staffordshire at Wetley Rocks to try and fulfil his dream of farming sheep, with his own machinery and equipment to make the land as productive and well kept as possible. He enjoys being surrounded by nature, with the pond on the land he has bought being an added attraction to him deciding he wanted to be situated there. He intends to increase the area of good habitat for wildlife so that it becomes his own little nature reserve, which is nicely situated away from all developed areas, but at the same time he needs to comply with the Code of Good Agricultural Practice and wants to excel where he can. However, all farm businesses in this country are heavily regulated by Cross Compliance rules for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) and his animals must be properly fed and looked after, which can only be done properly if he has a building to put any sick sheep in where he can tend to them and nurture them back to full health once again. Animal welfare is more than ever a concern and quite rightly so, which means more time needs to be spent with his livestock with the right facilities provided all year round. As the land in this area is very wet it needs to have a rest in the winter months by being able to put the sheep in a shed, giving it time to recover and grow fresh grass for spring, thus reducing the need for bought in feed which then helps the farm's 'carbon footprint', with soya and grain often coming from the far side of the Atlantic. The Cross Compliance rules also state that your land must not be heavily trodden, overgrazed, or encourage water run-off, which is what the new shed would help prevent.

The Government is currently promoting a scheme to encourage ageing farmers to retire and let or sell their land to the new generation of young farmers just setting out in business, which is designed to encourage young people like Mr Stonier be the new generation of farmers. If Government are trying to create the correct landscape for these people there is no reason why the local planning office should be putting stumbling blocks in their way. He has addressed the issues with the access off the main road and is now proposing the siting of a farm building that is not excessive or ugly on the eye in a well screened position that will not impose on any local residents or admirers of the beautiful scenery we have in the Staffordshire Moorlands.

To make his business venture successful he cannot afford to have his machinery deteriorating and depreciating in our harsh weather, as they are investments for his future, so they need to be under cover. If further screening and landscaping of the building is deemed to be necessary, I know Mr Stonier will see it as another opportunity to engage with nature, providing more trees to fight CO2 emissions, as well as increase bird nesting habitat and blend in with the surrounding area. No one seems to doubt Mr Stonier's intentions for the building, so please show a

little encouragement for what he would like to do, rather than putting barriers in his way, otherwise it will show that help for the younger generation is not as forthcoming as what it is made out to be.

Do you really need to print out this Email? Be green - keep it on the screen.

This email is intended for the addressee(s) only and may contain sensitive, privileged or confidential information that could be protectively marked. If you are not the addressee please do not use the information in any way. If you have received this email in error please notify the sender immediately and delete it from your system. Thank you.

The Council may be required to disclose this email or any responses to it under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The way in which we handle personal information is set out in our privacy notice and is available at <https://www.staffs Moorlands.gov.uk/YourData>
