

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2021/0364
Valid 02/06/2021

**LAND OFF ARMSHEAD
ROAD
WERRINGTON**

**PROPOSED AGRICULTURAL
BUILDING FOR STORAGE
AND STABLING**

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

- Whether the proposal comprises an exception to inappropriate development in the Green Belt.
- Impact on the character and appearance of the existing dwellinghouse and the surrounding area.
- Impact on neighbouring amenity.
- Impact on highway safety.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site comprises a field located to the rear of a number of dwellinghouses that front onto Armshead Road (No's 192 – 210). The field is relatively flat, extends to approximately 1.75 acres and is surrounded by fields to the north, east and west. The field is accessed via an existing driveway that provides access to No. 200 Armshead Road, as well as a builder's yard. The application site is located in the North Staffordshire Green Belt and the Open Countryside.

PROPOSAL

Full planning permission is sought for the erection of a detached building that will be used for storage purposes and stables. (It will not be used for agricultural purposes as described in the description of development).

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (Adopted Sept 2020)

- SS1 Development Principles
 - 1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- SS2 Settlement Hierarchy
- SS10 Other Rural Areas Strategy
- DC1 Design Considerations
- DC3 Landscape and Settlement Setting
- T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph(s) 1 - 14

Section(s) 4, 12, 13

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

None

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 20/07/2021

Neighbour consultation period ends: 06/07/2021

Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments: None

Town / Parish Comments: None

Severn Trent Water: No objection to the proposals and do not require a drainage condition to be applied.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021) promotes a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. For decision takers this means (c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or (d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are more important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission, unless: i) the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or ii) any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.

Paragraph 8 of the NPPF (2021) identifies three dimensions to sustainable development as being economic, social and environmental. In accordance with policies SS1 and 1a of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan, the Council will expect all new development to make a positive contribution towards the sustainability of communities and to protecting, and where possible, enhancing the environment. When considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF (2021).

Policy SS10 of the Local Plan relates to developments that are located within 'Other Rural Areas', of which the application site is located. The policy states that *'these areas will only provide for development which has an essential need to be located in the countryside'* and lists different types of development.

No information was included with the application as to why the building is required to be located in the Open Countryside and Green Belt and therefore further information was requested by the Planning Officer. The applicant responded with the following information:

'There is not sufficient outbuilding room to store all equipment as required. I would like to store a digger and my mixers to enable me to continue with my building business. There has recently been some episodes of theft of equipment and we need to ensure items can remain suitably stored and safe. Size of the building requested, which is dictated by the size of the equipment, additionally there could be a height adjustment if required. Furthermore, horses will only be stabled overnight occasionally when my daughters call.'

The building will therefore be used in conjunction with the storage of equipment associated with the applicant's construction business and the occasional stabling of horses overnight when the applicant's daughters visit. The applicant owns the adjacent dwellinghouse that has a very large rear garden. He also owns a large detached outbuilding that is sited between the garden and the application site. Sufficient space is therefore available to site a building to house construction equipment in a position that is less harmful to the countryside than the location that is proposed by this application. The occasional overnight stabling of horses not belonging to the applicant does not meet an essential need for providing permanent stables.

The proposed building does not comply with any of the examples listed in policy SS10 of the Local Plan (2020) and an essential need has not been justified for the proposed building for its intended use to be located within the Open Countryside and Green Belt. The proposed development is therefore unacceptable in principle and contrary to policy SS10 of the Local Plan (2020) and the NPPF (2021).

Green Belt

The application site is located in the North Staffordshire Green Belt whereby policy SS10 of the Local Plan (2020) and chapter 13 of the NPPF (2021) are applicable. Policy SS10 states that strict control will continue to be exercised over inappropriate development within the Green Belt, allowing only for exceptions as defined by Government policy.

Paragraphs 147 and 148 of the NPPF (2021) state *'that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances'* and *'when considering a planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt'*.

The proposal is for the erection of a building to be used for the storage of equipment associated with the applicant's contracting business and for the occasional overnight stabling of the applicant's daughters' horses when they come to visit. Paragraph 149 of the NPPF (2021) outlines that the construction of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate in the Green Belt unless it meets an exception.

A mixed use development, as is proposed by this application, of stabling and the storage of equipment used in conjunction with the applicant's contracting business would not comply with any of the exceptions listed within paragraph 149 of the NPPF (2021). It is for these reasons that the proposed building comprises inappropriate development in the Green Belt and is contrary to both Local Plan policy SS10 and chapter 13 of the NPPF (2021). No very special circumstances have been advanced by the applicant.

Design

Policy DC1 refers to design and seeks to secure development of a high quality which is designed to add value to the area and to respect the site and its surroundings. New development should promote a positive sense of place and identity through its scale, density, layout, siting, landscaping, character and appearance.

Paragraph 127 of the NPPF (2019) requires the design of a development to add to the overall quality of an area, by being sympathetic to local character and by being visually attractive as a result of good architecture.

The proposed building will measure 11.1 metres x 7.6 metres. It will have a pitched roof with an eaves height of 3.8 metres and a ridge height of 5 metres. It will be constructed of box profile sheeting to the walls and cement fibre roofing sheets, both Juniper Green in colour. The drawing shows the building being subdivided internally with two stables shown to one end and a larger part of the building used for storage. A pedestrian door and a larger sliding door will be positioned in the south eastern front elevation. No detail has been provided of the internal door arrangement to the proposed stables. The building will be sited in the northwestern corner of the field, over 40 metres from the field gate, but no track is proposed between the two.

Stables should be designed in accordance with the guidelines within the '*DEFRA Code of Practice for the Welfare of Horses...*' document and be of a scale commensurate with the size of the horse. No information has been provided as to the horses the applicant's daughters are said to own. The design of the building, with the stables opening onto a storage building to be used to store building equipment with no separation between the two uses would not meet these guidelines in terms of ventilation or on welfare grounds; the stables are not of the minimum size required for a standard horse; the eaves and ridge height of the roof is overly tall for stables; and the materials are not akin to a stables. Each horse requires 1.25-2.5 acres of land, where-as the field equates to approximately 1.7 acres. Insufficient land is therefore available to keep two horses on welfare grounds. The proposed building is therefore not designed for its intended use for the stabling of horses.

The building is commercial in its design, appearance and materials. It would be sited in an isolated position away from the applicant's dwellinghouse and outbuildings and

the other neighbouring dwellings and builder's yard. It would therefore result in encroachment into the Open Countryside and Green Belt. There is some tree and hedge cover to the northwestern field boundary however, the vegetation to the other field boundaries is sparse and therefore views will be available of the building from the other directions.

It is considered that the proposed building does not respect the character of its surroundings and the applicant has not demonstrated that a less prominent and less isolated location cannot be found for the additional space he requires. The building will intrude into the Open Countryside and Green Belt and be sited in an isolated position away from neighbouring buildings. It is for these reasons that the proposed building is considered to be contrary to policies DC1 and DC3 of the Local Plan (2020) and the NPPF (2021).

Amenity

Core Strategy policy DC1 and paragraph 127(f) of the NPPF (2019) seek to secure development that protects amenity, including residential amenity, in terms of satisfactory daylight, sunlight, outlook, privacy and soft landscaping.

The proposed building will be sited in the northwestern corner of the field; over 40 metres from the nearest residential property that is also sited on a higher ground level than the application site. Given the scale and siting of the proposed building, it will not adversely affect the amenity of neighbouring properties and will comply with policy DC1 of the Local Plan (2020) and the NPPF (2021).

Highway Safety

Policies DC1 and T1 seek to achieve a level of parking and an access that is appropriate to the development it serves.

The field will be accessed via the existing driveway positioned alongside the applicant's daughter's house that extends from Armshead Road down to the field. An existing field gate provides access into the field and a large parking and turning area is located adjacent to the field. The building will be used for additional storage purposes in association with the applicant's business and the stables will be used infrequently for overnight stays by the applicant's daughters horses when they come to visit. The amount of vehicle movements associated with the proposed building will therefore be low and will not result in a highway safety issue. The development will therefore comply with policies DC1 and T1 of the Local Plan (2020) and the NPPF (2021).

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The proposed building will comprise inappropriate development in the Green Belt and no very special circumstances have been demonstrated that clearly outweigh the harm caused by reason of inappropriateness or any other harm resulting from the proposal.

The proposed building does not comply with any of the examples listed in policy SS10 of the Local Plan (2020) and an essential need has not been justified for the proposed building for its intended use to be located within the Open Countryside and Green Belt. The proposed development is therefore unacceptable in principle and contrary to policy SS10 of the Local Plan (2020) and the NPPF (2021).

The proposed building has not been designed for its intended uses, it does not respect the character of its surroundings and the applicant has not demonstrated that a less prominent and less isolated location cannot be found for the additional space he requires. The building will intrude into the Open Countryside and Green Belt and be sited in an isolated position away from neighbouring buildings. It is for these reasons that the proposed building is contrary to policies DC1 and DC3 of the Local Plan (2020) and the NPPF (2021).

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: REFUSE

Case Officer: Ailsa Berry

Recommendation Date: 27/07/2021

X 

Signed by: Jane Colley Signature

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council