

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2022/0178
Valid 01/04/2022

UPPER PARK FARM PARK
LANE
IPSTONES

GENERAL PURPOSE
AGRICULTURAL BUILDING FOR
STORAGE OF HAY, STRAW,
FEEDSTUFFS, MACHINERY AND
LIVESTOCK.

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

- Principle of development
- Design and visual impact
- Environmental Health
- Coal
- Footpath

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site is a parcel of land to the western side of the Upper Park Farm dwellinghouse. Accessed via a lengthy driveway (through farm gate/over cattle grid), the property sits to the north of Park Lane and sits at a much higher land level compared to the road. The parcel of land earmarked for the location of the agricultural building also slopes towards the northern field boundary

For the purposes of planning policy consideration the application site lies within the open countryside, however it does not have a Green Belt designation. The site is also a low-risk coal development area.

PROPOSAL

The proposed development is the construction of a general purpose agricultural building which would be positioned to the north of the field. Due to the rising land levels some excavation would be required. The building would have a footprint of 9.144m x 13.716m, have a ridge height of 5.25m and eaves height of 4.1m. To the front of the building there would be a yard area and access would be through an existing farm gate at the south-eastern side of the red-edged land.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan

- SS1 Development Principles
- SS10 Other Rural Areas Strategy
- DC1 Design Considerations
- DC3 Landscape and Settlement Setting
- T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

Supplementary Planning Guidance

1. Design Principles for Development in the Staffordshire Moorlands

Supplementary Planning Document

1. Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide

National Planning Policy Framework

Including sections;

2. Achieving sustainable development
6. Building a strong, competitive economy
9. Promoting sustainable transport
12. Achieving well-designed places

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

Some planning history relating to holiday cottage development and domestic extensions.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice. Expired.

Public Comments: No representations received during the statutory consultation period.

Ipstones Parish Council: Support the application.

Environmental Health: – No objections in principle. Recommend conditions.

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

Staffordshire County Council (Public Rights of Way): The application does not acknowledge the existence of Public Footpath No. 68 Ipstones Parish which runs through the farm. From the submitted documentation it does not appear that the footpath will be directly impacted by the proposals.

SCC recommend a number of footpath related informative notes to be added to the decision in the event of planning permission being approved.

Rambler's Association: No representations received during the statutory consultation period.

Peak and Northern Footpaths: PROW Ipstones 68 is very close to or within the proposed site. Use of the PROW, and the safety of users must not be affected by the development, nor during the work taking place. This comment is made on behalf of Peak and Northern Footpaths Society, a registered charity which exists to protect and improve public rights of way for use by walkers. Nothing in this response should be taken to imply the Society's support for the development.

Coal Authority: The application site does not fall within the defined Development High Risk Area and is located instead within the defined Development Low Risk Area.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

The application site is within the open countryside but is not within the Green Belt. Local Plan policy SS10 states that *'These areas will provide only for development which has an essential need to be located in the countryside, supports the rural diversification and sustainability of the rural areas.'* SS10 goes on to say that the council will help to sustain the rural economy by *'Enabling the limited expansion or development of business for employment uses where a rural location can be justified'* and *'Support(ing) the diversification of existing farm enterprises.'*

The accompanying Design and Access statement provides much information concerning the current farming arrangements and also the need for the new building. The information is summarised as follows;

- Site is a 4.63ha smallholding
- Holding is registered with DEFRA under the holding number 37/062/0412
- Actively farmed by the applicant over the last 6 years
- There is a flock of 18 breeding ewes which are registered
- Traditional buildings at the rear of the farmhouse are not conducive to modern day farming practices, their limited openings and low eaves height, stepped floors means it is impossible to accommodate modern machinery or feed stuff in any quantity.
- At 5 ewes to the hectare all of the land is given over to grazing which means that all fodder needs to be bought onto the site.
- Lambing ewes generally need 2.3 sq metres which for 18 ewes would equate to just over 41.4sq metres which would account for one bay of the building. The absence of a suitable building on site currently means that lambs are fattened and sold on in the autumn. A suitably sized building would allow the applicant to retain the lambs and breed from them rather than having to sell them.
- One bay would provide bedding (straw/shavings) and feed stuffs including large baled hay and corn along with appropriate storage for medicines etc
- Third bay would provide secure and suitable storage machinery used in conjunction with the holding include a tractor, trailer, roller, topper, chain harrows, as well as other handheld tools and equipment. This would reduce dependency on third party machinery contractors.
- Development would assist with the functional and financial management of the holding. Allow the applicants to purchase feed stuffs in larger quantities and in advance when it is cheaper rather than being beholden to seasonal fluctuations and supply issues.
- Warm and safe environment for the breeding ewes during lambing thereby reducing preventative deaths which will obviously increase productivity and thereby profit and providing suitable isolation facilities should these be required which is a basic requirement.

In addition to the information above, during the site visit the applicant also stated that at the time there were also an additional 24 lambs. It was also noticed that the farm gate and driveway leading to the back of the house is not particularly wide, therefore not being easy for agricultural machinery etc to use. The Design and Access Statement also informs that there is a range of traditional outbuildings to the rear of the farmhouse, but that these are not conducive to modern day farming practices due to limited openings, low eaves height and stepped floors. The applicant has provided photographs of the traditional outbuildings.

It is clear that this application complies with the principal aims of Local Plan policy SS10, there is clear agricultural justification for the building and justification for the proposed building size.

Design and visual impact

Agricultural buildings can often be very large, however this scheme sees the proposal for a more modest structure. With a footprint of 9.144m x 13.716m, ridge height of 5.25m and 4.1m eaves, the building cannot be said to be excessively large. The single opening is proportionately sized and the mix of building materials (in addition to the portal frame) is acceptable. Proposed materials include grey, profiled fibre cement sheets for the roof and walls constructed with concrete panels and vertical Yorkshire Boarding. An array of solar panels will be added to the south-western facing roof slope. The proposed design of the building is acceptable, this is a simply formed building, designed for its purpose and proposing acceptable building materials. The addition of solar panels will not have any detrimental visual impact upon the building whilst generating renewable energy and taking the opportunity to use south/south-west facing roof space.

To the front of the proposed agricultural building there would be a concrete yard area which appears to be reasonably and proportionately sized. Access would be through an existing farm gate at the south-eastern side of the red-edged land. The amended plan shows that whilst the access route would be through the south-eastern located gate, there would not be any additional hardstanding to form a track.

In terms of wider visual impact, there are no significant concerns. Whilst the building would be seen from the footpath, it has already been concluded that this is to be a well-designed building of modest proportions. There would be some excavation and levelling required due to the upwards sloping nature of the land (towards the timber post boundary). The excavation will enable the building to sit more comfortably and less prominently within its setting. From the Park Lane entrance to the application site, building will not be particularly visually prominent due to the significant separation distance from the road (approximately 255m) and the rising land levels.

Environmental Health

The Council's Environmental Health officers have not raised any objections to this application and have recommended a number of conditions in the event of planning permission being approved. Conditions include times of day in which noisy elements of the construction/demolition works can be carried out; manure management and storage; importation of any fill material prior to it being tested; unexpected contamination; and restriction of any plant/machinery noise. However a number of these conditions are considered to be unreasonable and unrelated to the development. The closest neighbour is over 200m to the south east of the site and therefore would not be adversely affected by the operation of the building.

Due to the separation distances involved, there are no issues such as overbearing relationships or blocking of light (to neighbouring dwellings) which need to be considered.

Coal

The application site is located within a low-risk coal-development area. The Coal Authority have not objected to the application and confirm that there is 'no requirement under the risk-based approach that has been agreed with the Local Planning Authority' for a Coal Mining Risk Assessment to be submitted or for The Coal Authority to be consulted. It is recommended that a coal related informative is added to the decision notice in the event of permission being approved.

Footpath

Footpath number 68 (Ipstones Parish) is located roughly to the south-east of the proposed building but not close to it. Amended plans show that the development will not involve the addition of any hard-surfacing and that the existing vehicular access gate in the corner of the field would be used (which is currently the case). No objections have been received from any third party about potential impact upon the footpath.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

For the reasons outlined within the report, it is recommended that planning permission is approved subject to conditions and informative notes.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : Conditional approval.

Case Officer: Lisa Jackson

Recommendation Date: 20.07.2022.

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Signed by: Jane Colley Signature

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council