



Mon 10/01/2022 17:34

Dominic Cooney

RE: SMD/2021/0758 Longshaw Farm

To  'Swithenbank, Arne'

Hi Arne, an extension of time until 3rd February is agreeable.

Regarding the fallback position of Class R, it is a central consideration to this application for planning permission, the farm shop itself could operate from an existing building on the farm, and yes if it is under 150sqm then highways cannot be considered. But if we were to apply under Class R for a farm shop between 150 and 500 sqm then highways would be considered, and presumably object to the use of the existing access drive meaning that it could not go ahead. This is also the reason that the proposed new building is under 150sqm, to show that the proposed Farm Shop can actually go ahead on this site without requiring planning permission, i.e. the principle is perfectly acceptable.

We take the Staffordshire County Council's concern over highway safety very seriously, and this is why we engaged in pre-application discussion with the Highways department as well as with SMDC. It should be noted that Highways also prefer that visiting members of the public are kept separate from agricultural vehicle movements in the central farm yard, which is another reason for proposing the new entrance drive.

Regarding your suggestion that a shop in Leek would be a better solution, every Farm Shop that I have ever been to has been on the farm itself. Perhaps you know of ones that are normally in towns?

Would it help if I made a list of all the farm shops that I can find? (to take just two examples, "Shuker's Farm Produce" at Thornfields Farm, Weston Coyney, ST3 5BE is closer to the empty shops in Meir than our application site is to Leek. Also the Chatsworth Estate Farm Shop is closer to Bakewell than our application site is to Leek)

Part of the visitor experience is to see the animals themselves on the farm, for customers to understand where their food is coming from. This is the educational aspect of the scheme.

I also note the enthusiastic support of the Parish Council to the proposal in their consultation response. In this respect, the proposed development **supports the rural diversification and sustainability of the rural areas, promotes sustainable tourism** (there are many holiday lets in Bradnop within walking distance of the farm) **or enhances the countryside** (substantial biodiversity enhancement planting is proposed), and given that this is the location of the farm that needs the farm shop, I would suggest that it also demonstrates an **essential need to be located in the countryside**.

I would also like to add, that my clients have approached this scheme in an open and honest manner. They could have secured a Permitted Development agricultural building and then applied for change of use in the future, but instead this scheme is properly thought out and designed to be an asset to the area. It is a genuine scheme of agricultural diversification with proper consideration given to highway safety, which should be supported by the LPA.

Kind Regards,

Dominic Cooney BA(Hons) MSc MRTPI

Planning Department
Bagshaws LLP
Email: dominic.cooney@bagshaws.com
Mob: 07973 379847



6 Market St, Leek ST13 6HZ
website: www.bagshaws.com

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From: Swithenbank, Arne <arne.swithenbank@staffs Moorlands.gov.uk>
Sent: 04 January 2022 18:00
To: Dominic Cooney <Dominic.Cooney@bagshaws.com>
Subject: RE: SMD/2021/0758 Longshaw Farm

Hello Dominic

I'm afraid we are running somewhat behind in many instances at the moment due to exceptional nos of applications coming in for the greater part of last year.

The decision date should be 18th Jan but I need to ask you please if you can agree an extension to this taking us to 3rd Feb?

I probably should advise at this point that there may be very limited weight the LPA can give to your suggested fall back. The fact of the matter is that Highways safety is not eligible to be considered if the proposal were submitted under Class R (conversion of up to 150m2). If the Government does not require Highway safety to be considered – at all – in schemes up to 150m2 I am not convinced that it wld be appropriate for the LPA to introduce this consideration and give weight to a posited highways reason to support this scheme. I have looked back at the PAD response and note the conclusion:

“Fundamentally, in order to gain policy support the proposal must justify why it has to be in a green field undeveloped location. The applicant could pursue their PD options but if for whatever reason these are not suitable to the applicant they would then need to show why the development must be at the farm. This is the crux because in the rural areas as covered by policy SS10 the determining principle is 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, promotes sustainable tourism or enhances the countryside.** Given the farm's proximity to Leek (in terms of any operational practicalities eg to supply produce to the outlet) and the probably availability of premises in the town and that this would be a wholly new development rather than using assets within the farm's existing resources (if not done as PD) I would suggest that the essential need to be located within the countryside may not be readily demonstrated.”

Arne

In your communications with me please always quote the planning reference number if you have one.

Arne D. Swithenbank
Planning Officer and Ecologist
Regulatory Services: Planning Applications
Staffordshire Moorlands District Council
Moorlands House
Leek ST13 6HQ
Staffordshire

also at High Peak Borough Council
Buxton Town Hall, Buxton

tel **01538 395578**
Mbl 07766 160 460

e-mail: arne.swithenbank@staffsmoorlands.gov.uk

From: Dominic Cooney <Dominic.Cooney@bagshaws.com>
Sent: 04 January 2022 16:43
To: Swithenbank, Arne <arne.swithenbank@staffs Moorlands.gov.uk>
Subject: SMD/2021/0758 Longshaw Farm

Hi Arne, just checking on progress with this application and that you have everything that you need to be able to determine the application positively?

Kind Regards,

Dominic Cooney BA(Hons) MSc MRTPI

Planning Department
Bagshaws LLP
Email: dominic.cooney@bagshaws.com
Mob: 07973 379847



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