

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2022/0124
Valid 24/03/2022

PEAKSTONES FARM
CHEADLE ROAD
ALTON

CONSTRUCTION OF 20M X
40M MANÈGE FOR PIVATE
USE ONLY

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

- Countryside
- Design

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

Peakstones Farm is a private dwelling with outbuildings set in c.1.5ha (3.7 acres) located in open rural countryside c. one mile west from the village of Alton. The site of the proposal is an area of pasture, located adjacent to the main farm house. The pasture is currently used for the grazing of horses. A separate un-related dwelling, Peakstones Barn (DET/2014/0046) shares the access drive from Cheadle Road.

PROPOSAL

Planning permission is sought for the construction of a 20 by 40 metre manège. The proposed manège is to be used only for the private use of the residents of the farm.

To achieve a flat surface the existing ground level will be raised or dropped by a maximum of 1 metre where necessary. The manège is to have a post with three rail fencing to be 1.2 metres high with an access gate to be 3.6 metres wide. The surface would comprise of fibre and sand, with soakaway drainage below.

The access to the site will not be altered. No tree or vegetation, beyond the necessary grass and top soil, would be removed or affected. It should though be noted that a copse of mature trees borders the upper (southerly) edge of proposed manège site.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Local Plan (adopted 9th September 2020)

SS1 Development Principles
SS2 Settlement Hierarchy
SS10 Other Rural Areas Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
DC3 Landscape and Settlement Setting
NE1 Biodiversity and Geological Resources

NE2 Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework February 2019

Paragraph(s) 1 – 14;

Section(s) 4 – Decision making; 6 – Building a strong and competitive economy; 7 – Ensuring the vitality of town centres; 8 Promoting healthy and safe communities; 11 – Making effective use of land; 12 – Achieving well designed places; 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Adopted Supplementary Planning Documents/Guidance (SPD/G):

- Space About Dwellings SPG
- Design Principles SPG
- Design Guide SPD adopted 21st February 2018

Local Plan Supporting Evidence Documents:

- Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment (2008)

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/2002/0050 – Two storey rear and first floor side extensions APPROVED
09/04/2009

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 21/06/2022
Neighbour consultation period ends: N/A
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

None received

Town / Parish Comments

No Objections

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

The site is outside of the development boundary of Alton laid out in LP Policy SS 8. The site is instead considered to be countryside under LP Policy SS 10, which 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, promotes sustainable tourism and enhances the countryside. A riding

exercise arena for horses can reasonably be considered to need a rural location if it is to be positioned alongside or in association with their grazing land. The development can therefore be found acceptable in principle. The main issues in this case are landscape character and appearance.

Design

To form level ground a maximum in 1 metre will be lowered, and respectively raised. This will have a minimal impact upon the visual appearance of the field, with no excessively steep artificial slopes.

The 800 metres square size only allows for space to exercise one horse at any one time.

The manège is proposed to be surfaced with fibre and sand as it is darker in colour and will be less noticeable from a distance. The manège would be enclosed by a 1.2 metre high three rail fence with 3.6m access gate. The manège will be partially shielded by surrounding trees and hedge rows, reducing its visual impact. Cut and fill operations will be limited to 1m each side.

Amenity

The site is within a rural location with no impact upon any neighbouring residents. The manège will also be for private use of the applicant and won't lead to any increased traffic or footfall to disturb the local area.

Natural Environment

LP Policy NE 2 protects existing trees, woodlands and hedgerows, in particular, ancient woodland, veteran trees and ancient or species-rich hedgerows from loss or deterioration.

The application states that no trees or hedgerows are to be affected by the proposal. However a copse of mature trees stands on rising ground close to the southern edge the manège. These overhang into the application field by c. 6m to 7m. This is likely to represent tree rooting area and the necessary cut-and-fill excavations to form the level manège would risk significant harm to the trees if roots were affected. A condition should be attached to require that notwithstanding the submitted plans no excavation and no changes to ground levels shall be carried out within 6m of the fence line (metal estate railings in the file photos) running parallel with the southern boundary of the manège site.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The development is considered acceptable in terms of design, amenity and consideration of the natural environment subject to condition. It is considered to be in

accord with the relevant policies put forward in the Local Plan and the NPPF.
Therefore this application is recommended for approval.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : Approve

Case Officer: Arne Swithenbank c/o Rachel Robinson

Recommendation Date: 19th October 2022

X *B.S. Haywood*

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council