

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2021/0703
Valid 14/02/2022

LOWER GRANGE FARM
OAKAMoor ROAD
CHEADLE

**CHANGE OF USE OF
EXISTING EQUESTRIAN
FACILITIES FROM PRIVATE
USE TO RIDING SCHOOL. A
TOTAL OF 7 PERMANENT
STABLES (AT LEAST 4 WILL
REMAIN AS PRIVATE USE
ONLY), A 20X40M RIDING
ARENA AND A ROOM (AN
EQUI-GYM) HOUSING AN
EQUISIMULATOR.**

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

- Principle
- Impact on visual amenity
- Amenity
- Highways

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application relates to Lower Grange Farm in Cheadle. The application site is located within the Open Countryside. The application relates specifically to the existing stable block and arena to the south of the main house. The site benefits from two accesses off Oakamoor Road but it is unclear which access is proposed to serve the proposed development.

PROPOSAL

Consent is sought to change the use of the existing private stable and riding arena to a riding school. 7 stables exist at the site and 4 would remain in private use. The other 3 would be available for commercial use. The riding arena and equi-gym would also be for commercial use. The applicant would allow for the stables to be hired on a boot camp/long or short term basis. The riding arena would be used on a 1-1 basis only. The equi-gym would be used by riders to rehabilitate from injuries or operations, disabled riders, those with illnesses such as MS as well as abled bodied riders wanting to further their skill level.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Local Plan

SS1 Development Principles
DC1 Design Considerations
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport
SS 10 Other Rural Areas Strategy
C 2 Sport, Recreation and Open Space

National Planning Policy Framework

Section 9

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/2007/0390- Construction of riding arena- approved
SMD/2009/0779- Stable block for family use- approved

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 28.04.2022
Neighbour consultation period ends:
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

None received within consultation period

Town / Parish Comments

No objections

Environmental Health Pollution

No objections subject to conditions

Environment Agency

No comments to make

Severn Trent Water

No objections

Staffordshire County Council Highways

Recommend refusal due to insufficient information and that the development would be likely to result in an increase in highway due to increase in use of an access with restricted visibility.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

The application site is located within the open countryside. Policy SS 10 states that the other rural areas comprise the countryside and the green belt outside of the development boundaries of the towns and larger villages and the open countryside surrounding the smaller villages.

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.

Subsection 2 of SS10 states that the Local Plan will sustain the rural economy by: Enabling the limited expansion or development of business for employment uses where a rural location can be justified.

Sub Section 3 of SS10 states that the Local Plan will enhance and conserve the quality of the countryside by:

- Giving priority to the need to protect the quality and character of the area and requiring all development proposals to respect and respond sensitively to the distinctive qualities of the surrounding landscape;
- Limiting uses which generate a substantial number of regular trips in areas that are not well served by public transport.

Policy C2 states that the Council will promote the provision of high quality recreational open space by implementing and supporting schemes that will protect, provide and improve the quantity, quality and accessibility of open space, indoor and outdoor sports and children's play facilities throughout the district.

Subsection 2 states that 2) New sport, recreation and open space facilities should:

- a) be located in accessible locations and supported by the local transport infrastructure;
- b) protect the residential amenity of the area;
- c) be of an appropriate quality, scale and form compatible with the local area, especially if the site is located outside the settlement boundary in the open countryside;
- d) not harm interests of acknowledged importance; and
- e) be designed so that they are fit for purpose

The proposed development is considered to comply with subsection 2 of SS10 as the development would enable limited expansion of an existing business. The

stabling of horses and associated uses is considered to be a type business that justifies being in a rural location. Subsection 3 relates to protection of the landscape. As the development is a change of use the proposal does not introduce any new built form and therefore the development complies with this section of the Local Plan.

Subsection 3 also requires for a development to limit uses that do not generate a substantial number of trips in areas that are not well served by public transport. From Cheadle there is a bus route that takes 7 mins towards Oakamoor that operates on Saturdays and Sundays once on each day. The closest bus stop to the site is Hales Hall Farm. This bus stop is approximately 5 minutes walk from the site but would mean that customers would have to walk on a national speed limit road that is unlit without a footpath. Between Monday – Friday the buses operate every half an hour between Cheadle-Utttoxeter Town – Oakamoor. Between Monday – Friday a bus does not travel past the site so to visit from bus customers would have to walk from Oakamoor which would take approximately 40 minutes. This road is national speed limit that is unlit and without a footpath. As such it would be reasonable to predict that most visitors to the site would travel by private motor vehicle when visiting the site. As such it is considered that the site is not well served by public transport.

In relation to whether the development would generate a substantial number of regular trips the documents submitted with the application have been reviewed.

The applicant has stated that of 7 stables 4 of these will remain private for the applicant. This means that 3 stables will be available to the general public. The applicant has stated that these stables could be use for boot camps, long and short stays. The boot camps will consist of 1 to 3 riders or horse and rider combinations visiting the site over a few days. The applicant does not have any overnight accommodation for these bootcamps which would mean visitors would come and go each day. As such this variation of uses could result in a number of visitors each week specifically for the stables.

The riding area will be used by the applicant to work with riders on a 1-1 basis only. The use of the riding area does not appear to be intended to be used solely by those using the stables. This would therefore create additional trips to and away from the site.

Finally, the equi-gym will be used to help riders rehabilitate from injuries or operations, disabled riders, those with illnesses such as MS as well as abled bodied riders wanting to further their skill level. The use of the equip-gym would therefore result in further trips beyond those for the riding area and stables.

Considering the above the proposal would result in the creation in a form of development that would result a significant number of trips by private motor vehicles and therefore the development is considering contrary to Policy SS10 and C2 which seeks to limit development that generates a substantial number of trips in areas that are not well served by public transport and be located in accessible locations and supported by the local transport infrastructure.

Impact on Visual Amenity:

The development does not propose any physical alterations to external elevations of the stable building or riding area. No additional lighting is proposed. As such the development is considered to have negligible impact on the visual amenity of the area.

Amenity

The neighbours with the most potential to be affected by the development are The Barn and The Grange. These neighbours share a boundary with the development site. The stable building is considered to be a sufficient distance away to ensure that the use of the building would have minimal impact on the residential amenity of these neighbours. The riding area is located close to the shared boundary. The riding area will be used by the applicant on a 1-1 basis. A condition could be attached to the permission to secure this. As such the development is considered to have an acceptable impact on these neighbours.

Highway Safety

Policy DC 1 states that new development should provide for safe and satisfactory access and make a contribution meeting the parking requirements arising from necessary car use.

Para 111 of the NPPF states that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

The site benefits from two accesses and the plans have not indicated which access would be used by visitors to the site. The highway authority considered that the development would intensify the use of one of these accesses and considers that both accesses are restricted. The highway authority consider that improvements could be made and they require the submission of a plan showing a visibility splay of 2.4m x 215m. This information has not been provided by the applicant and therefore the highway authority recommends refusal of the application due to insufficient information.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The proposed development is located within the open countryside and the development is not considered to be located in an accessible location and therefore the visitors of the site would be mainly reliant on the private motor vehicle. The development is therefore contrary to Policy SS10 and C2. As well as this the applicant agent has failed to provide sufficient information relating to visibility to provide a safe access. As such the development is recommended for refusal on the grounds of insufficient information.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : Refusal

Case Officer: Rebecca Bowers

Recommendation Date: 19.01.2023

X *B.S. Haywood*

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council