

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2022/0649
Valid 20/12/2022

GRANGE FARM
BLACKWOOD HILL LANE
GRATTON
ENDON

PROPOSED AGRICULTURAL
REPLACEMENT BUILDING TO
HOUSE LIVESTOCK

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

- Principle of Development
- Impact on the Green Belt and the character and appearance of the Area
- Impact on Neighbouring Amenity
- Impact on Highway Safety and Parking

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site is located off Blackwood Hill Lane, Gratton which is situated in the Horton Ward. Additionally, the proposed site is on Green Belt land. The main farm is located to the North of the dwelling Blackwood Hill Cottage with access from Blackwood Hill Lane which runs past the application site which is a Classified C road. The application site is located within Flood Zone 1.

The farm consists of 350 acres of land which is used for agricultural purposes.

PROPOSAL

The application seeks permission for development a replacement agricultural building to house current and new livestock. The existing building is an old brick structure which has been previously extended, they proposed development is to replace the existing structure with a new building to hold approximately 60 beef calves.

No changes to the existing farm access are required for the proposed works and will have no impact on the public footpath.

The application site does have a Grade II Listed Farmhouse, however to the rear of the main farmhouse and separated from the dwelling by a yard area are a range of large portal framed buildings which are all used for the agricultural operation. Therefore, the proposed development will not negatively impact any heritage asset.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Local Plan Development Plan Document (Adopted 2020)
S01 Spatial Objectives

SS1 Development Principles
SS10 Other Rural Area
DC1 Design Considerations
DC3 Landscape Character
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport
NE1 Biodiversity

National Planning Policy Framework:

12: Achieving well-designed places

13: Protecting Green Belt Land

16: Conserving and enhancing the Historic Environment

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/2015/0026 – Erection of Agricultural Building to house Livestock. FULL-APP.

SMD/2014/0439 – Agricultural Building to House Livestock & to store fodder & implements. FULL-APP.

SMD/2011/0288 – Proposed agricultural open-top slurry store. PERCON.

SMD/2008/0744 – Agricultural Track. PER.

SMD/2004/0146 – External alterations to Listed Building (demolition of existing workshop and erection of garage with workshop over). PERCON.

SMD/2004/0145 – Two storey garage with workshop over. PERCON.

SMD/2000/0166 – Agricultural implement store (notification application. APNTRQ.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity:

Site Notice expiry date: 01/02/2023
Neighbour consultation period ends: 11/01/2023
Press Advert: 11/01/2023

Public Comments:

No comments received within consultation period.

Town / Parish Comments:

No objection.

Right of Ways:

The Definitive Map of Public Rights of Way for Staffordshire shows a public right of way crossing the application site, partially along the site access and running immediately west of the proposed site. From the submitted information it would not appear that the public rights of way are directly impacted by the proposals.

The granting of planning permission does not constitute authority for any interference with the public rights of way and associated items - or obstruction (temporary or permanent).

The term obstruction, in this context, also applies to items such as gates or stiles which are regarded as licenced obstructions which must be sanctioned by the highways authority.

Users of the path must be able to exercise their public rights safely and at all times and the path be reinstated if any damage to the surface occurs as a result of the proposed development.

Where private rights exist that allow the use of vehicles along a footpath, drivers of vehicles must give way to pedestrians.

In the absence of private rights, driving a vehicle on a public right of way is a criminal offence.

Staffordshire County Council has not received any application to add to or modify the Definitive Map of Public Rights of Way in that vicinity. The possibility of the existence of a currently unrecognised public right of way, makes it advisable that the applicant pursue further enquiries and seek legal advice regarding any visible route affecting the land, or the apparent exercise of a right of way by members of the public.

Ramblers Association:

Neither.

HCC Highways:

Acceptance.

Environmental Health:

No objection in principle subject to condition.

Staffordshire Wildlife Trust:

No objection subject to conditions.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Policy NE1 paragraph 5 in the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan Adopted September 2020, expects that 'all development where possible seeks to deliver a net gain in biodiversity proportionate to the size and scale of the development. In circumstances where adverse impacts are demonstrated to be unavoidable, developers will be required to ensure that impacts are appropriately mitigated, with suitable compensation measures towards loss of habitat used only as a last resort where there is no alternative'

New bird features would provide a net gain, however any landscaping such as trees or climbers on walls of the building would be beneficial for screening and wildlife value.

Bats

The Preliminary Roost Assessment dated 4 February 2023 by Haslam Ecology found the outbuilding to be unsuitable for bats. The bird access feature in the gable end apparent in photos was blocked up.

Recommendations are made in section 5 with regards to bat precautions, bird enhancements and lighting.

In addition, barn owls have been recorded nearby and we recommend that a barn owl box be incorporated into the new building or on a tree nearby.

The above should be secured via condition.

Climate Change

The orientation of the proposed building roof is suitable for solar panels and this should be considered as an addition.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development and Impact on the Green Belt

The site is within the Green Belt where development is inappropriate and, by definition, harmful unless it is provided for by one of the exceptions that appear on the closed list at paras 149 and 150 of the NPPF.

One such exception is a building for agriculture. The building in this case is for agricultural purposes to hold livestock. There is an existing structure as existing for agricultural uses, however the supporting statement which was provided with the application states that the existing building is not adequately ventilated and is impractical for modern day farm use. The existing building has a floor area of 139.2 metres squared, with the proposed being larger than the existing with a floor area of 267.56 metres squared.

The supporting statement also states that the proposed use of the replacement agricultural building is to hold livestock and to ensure the building can accommodate

the required stocking densities and ventilation. The design and size of the building is to ensure maximum comfort and welfare to the calves.

Even though the size of the proposed development is larger than the existing building it will be used for agricultural activity to the extent that the building is “for agriculture”.

Provided for by one of the exceptions at para 149 of the NPPF, the development is not inappropriate and there would be no harm in those regards.

Design/ Visual impact

The proposed building is much larger than the existing building on site, however as the farm is built up in this area with a number of buildings, the larger building is considered to be acceptable. Due to the location of the proposed development on the application site, it will have limited views from public vantage points and therefore is not considered to have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the area.

The existing building is made out of brick, which has been extended previously and the bricks do not match. The proposed materials for the replacement building differs to the existing, however will match the surrounding buildings on the farm and is therefore considered acceptable.

For all of these reasons the building does not appear as obtrusive or intrusive in the landscape and it does not adversely affect landscape character.

There is no conflict therefore with policies DC1 or DC3 of the Local Plan or the Staffordshire Moorlands design guide 2018.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

Given the plot size and location of the development, the proposed building would not adversely impact the neighbouring properties.

Impact on Highway Safety and Parking

There are no changes to the existing access to the farm and the proposed development will not have an impact on highway safety or parking.

Environmental Health Matters

A number of conditions have been recommended by environmental health to protect the amenity of neighbouring occupiers during construction. However, given the distance to neighbouring properties, these are not considered necessary or reasonable. Conditions are also suggested relating to contamination. However, the building is not intended for human habitation and there is nothing to suggest large amounts of importation of material will be required. Therefore these conditions are not considered reasonable or necessary either.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE:

Not inappropriate development in the Green Belt and therefore not harmful to the Green Belt. There would be no undue harm to the character of the Landscape or the Character and appearance of the area. The proposed development will not have an impact on the neighbouring amenity of any dwellings. The proposed development will not have an impact on Highway Safety or Parking. No conflict with policies SS10, DC1, or DC3 of the Local Plan or the NPPF.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : APPROVE

Case Officer: Nicole Quinn

Recommendation Date: 04/05/2023

X *B.J. Haywood*

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council