

PLANNING STATEMENT

**UPPER FERNYHILL BARN
BASFORD**

NOVEMBER 2023

Site Address:

Upper Fernyhill Barn, Basford Green Road, Basford, ST13 7ET

Applicant:

Mr. J. Harrison

Proposal:

Erection of stable block and associated change of use of land to equestrian use

Planning Statement:

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Report Prepared By:

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Rob Duncan Planning Consultancy Ltd. has been instructed by Mr. J. Harrison to seek full planning permission for the erection of a stable block on land at Upper Fernyhill Barn, Basford, along with the associated change of use of the land from agricultural use to equestrian.
- 1.2 The proposed stable block is to be located to the northeast of the existing property within an existing field, with its principal elevation facing southeast. The stable building will occupy a footprint of 106 square metres and stand to a ridge height of 4.4 metres.
- 1.3 The building will encompass a gabled roof design and be finished in timber cladding (forest green finish) with a black corrugated sheet roof. Photovoltaic panels are proposed on the southeastern roof slope of the building in order to provide the stable block with a renewable source of electricity.
- 1.4 The building will comprise of four stables, along with a hay store and feed store. A concrete slab turn out area will be provided to the southeast of the building enclosed by post and rail fencing, with a gate leading into the adjacent field. Two existing container style structures located within the field which have a combined floorspace of 30 square metres, along with an adjacent turn out area, are to be removed from the land as part of the submitted proposal. Those features are located to the southeast of the proposed stable block.
- 1.5 The stables are to be used for the private domestic purposes of the applicant and his family who reside at Upper Fernyhill Barn.

2 Site & Surroundings

- 2.1 The application site is located within the rural area and comprises of agricultural fields that extend to some 3.32 hectares in area (8.2 acres). The fields gently undulate and extend northwards from the building as well as to its south and east.
- 2.2 The applicant's dwellinghouse (Upper Fernyhill Barn) is located to the southwest of the site, with the dwellings of Upper Fernyhill Farm and House Martin Cottage located further beyond to the south and southwest. The fields are all enclosed by mature hedgerows. Open fields extend to the northeast and southeast, with the carriageway of Basford Green Road enclosing the far northwest site boundary.
- 2.3 The site is not located within a Conservation Area, nor are there any statutorily listed buildings located in proximity of the site. Public Footpath Cheddleton 28 runs along the route of the vehicular access drive before turning in a southeasterly direction across the southern boundary of the application site. The public footpath will be unaffected by the proposed development.

3 Planning Policy

3.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan taking into consideration any material considerations that may be relevant. The Development Plan for this area comprises the recently adopted Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (2020) of which the following policies are considered to be of relevance:

3.2 Policy SS1 of the Local Plan relates to 'Development Principles' and states that the Council will expect the development and use of land to contribute positively to the social, economic and environmental improvement of the Staffordshire Moorlands in terms of delivering, in partnership with other agencies and services:

- a mix of types and tenures of quality, affordable homes, including starter homes, to meet the needs and aspirations of the existing and future communities
- quality local services, including provision for education, healthcare, leisure, community, cultural and tourist facilities in response to anticipated population change and visitor numbers;
- easy access to jobs, shops and transport services by all sections of the community;
- increased economic prosperity and opportunities for employment and greater local capacity with an educated, skilled and flexible workforce;

- a healthy, safe, attractive, active, well-designed and well-maintained environment;
- development which maintains the locally distinctive character of the Staffordshire Moorlands, its individual towns and villages and their settings;
- development that is undertaken in a way that protects and enhances the natural and historic environment of the District and its surrounding areas, including the Peak District National Park, both now and for future generations.
- support development which secures high quality, sustainable environments, efficient and effective use of resources and contributes effectively to tackling climate change and reduced carbon emissions.

3.3 Policy SS10 of the Local Plan relates to the 'Other Rural Areas Strategy' and 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 or enhances the countryside. This will be achieved via a number of measures, including:

- 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

3.4 Policy SD3 of the Local Plan relates to 'Sustainability Measures in Development' and states that the Council will support further carbon-saving

or water-saving measures in both new and existing developments, in the following ways:

1. Supporting developers who propose exceeding the thermal efficiency or water conservation standards required by law for new buildings or extensions, at the time of the application. In the case of larger developments such as housing estates the Council will support measures such as 'communal' renewables, or District Heating installations.
 2. The Council will support measures by landowners/developers designed to contribute to existing or emerging District Heating networks (for example by connecting 'exporters', with receptors, of heat).
 3. The Council will support measures designed to improve the sustainability of existing buildings (such as improved thermal insulation, water conservation, or the installation of micro-renewables).
- 3.5 Policy DC1 of the Local Plan relates to 'Design Considerations' and states that all development shall be well designed and reinforce local distinctiveness by positively contributing to and complementing the special character and heritage of the area in line with the Council's Design Guide SPD. In particular, new development should:
1. be of a high quality and add value to the local area, incorporating creativity, detailing and materials appropriate to the character of the area;
 2. be designed to respect the site and its surroundings and promote a positive sense of place and identity through its scale, height, density, layout, siting, landscaping, character and appearance;

3. create, where appropriate, attractive, active, functional, accessible and safe public and private environments which incorporate public spaces, green infrastructure including making provision for networks of multi-functional new and existing green space (both public and private), landscaping, public art, 'designing out crime' initiatives and the principles of Active Design;
4. incorporate sustainable construction techniques and design concepts for buildings and their layouts to reduce the impact of the development;
5. protect the amenity of the area, including creation of healthy active environments and residential amenity, in terms of satisfactory daylight, overbearing development, sunlight, outlook, privacy, soft landscaping as well as noise, odour and light pollution;
6. promote the maintenance, enhancement, restoration and re-creation of biodiversity and geological heritage, where appropriate;
7. provide for safe and satisfactory access and make a contribution to meeting the parking requirement arising from necessary car use;
8. require new developments to be well integrated for car, pedestrian and cycle use as well as other sustainable transport links;
9. ensure that existing drainage, waste water and sewerage infrastructure capacity is available, and where necessary enhanced, to enable the development to proceed;
10. ensure, where appropriate, equality of access and use for all sections of the community;

11. be served by high speed broadband (>30mbps) unless it can be demonstrated through consultation with Next Generation Access Network providers that this would not be possible, practical or economically viable. In all circumstances during construction of the site sufficient and suitable ducting should be provided within the site and to the property to facilitate ease of installation at a future date.

3.6 Policy DC3 of the Local Plan relates to 'Landscape and Settlement Setting' and states that the Council will protect and, where possible, enhance local landscape and the setting of settlements in the Staffordshire Moorlands by:

1. Resisting development which would lead to prominent intrusion into the countryside or have a significant adverse impact on the character or the setting of a settlement or important views into and out of the settlement as identified in the Landscape and Settlement Character evidence
2. Supporting development which respects and enhances local landscape character and which reinforces and enhances the setting of the settlement as identified in the Landscape and Settlement Character evidence
3. Supporting developments which conserve or enhance the biodiversity qualities of any natural or man-made features within the landscape, such as trees, woodlands, hedgerows, walls, watercourses or ponds
4. Supporting opportunities to positively manage the landscape and use sustainable building techniques and materials which are sympathetic to the landscape
5. Ensuring that development does not adversely affect the wider setting of the Peak District National Park.

4 Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

- 4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) seeks to secure the delivery of sustainable development and sets out guidance, *inter-alia*, in respect of promoting healthy communities and securing high quality design. The content of the NPPF has been taken into consideration in the preparation of this application.

5 Planning Assessment

Principle of Development

- 5.1 The application seeks planning permission for the erection of a stable block and an associated change of use of the land to equestrian use on a site that is located within the rural area. Policy SS10 of the Local Plan confirms that the rural 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.
- 5.2 The erection of stable blocks have long been held to constitute development that has a need to be located within the countryside, as evidenced by the Local Authority's approval of numerous other stable developments within the District. The proposed stable block consequently constitutes an appropriate facility for outdoor sport and recreation.
- 5.3 Owing to its modest scale and siting the proposed stable block will not give rise to any material adverse harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area, and the associated change of use of the land to equestrian use is likewise held to be acceptable in terms of its impact on the character and appearance of the area.
- 5.4 The site area extends to some 3.32 hectares (8.2 acres) and consequently affords ample grazing land to meet the British Horse Society recommendations of 1 - 1.5 acres per horse (a total of four stables being proposed). The principle of development is therefore considered to be acceptable and in accordance with policy SS10 of the Local Plan.

Design and Layout

- 5.5 The proposed stable block will constitute a modest structure, and by virtue of its muted palette of materials (timber cladding finished in forest green colour, with a black sheeted roof) will have a low-key impact that assimilates positively with its rural surroundings. The design and appearance of the building is not considered to be contentious, and also provides associated hay and feed storage areas all under one roof.
- 5.6 The development will not be visible from Basford Green Road, owing to the mature hedgerow and dry stone wall that encloses the northeastern site boundary. Similarly, when walking towards the site from the north along Public Footpath Cheddleton 28, much of the approach to the site is screened by a continuation of the mature hedgerow. Once more or less alongside the site, or when approaching from the southeast along the public footpath, the stable block will be visible, but will be read against a backdrop of rising land behind coupled with mature vegetation. The stable block will not appear incongruous within its surroundings.
- 5.7 In consideration of matters of visual impact, one also needs to have regard to the fact that the application proposes the removal of two existing field containers which have existed on the site for over 10 years. The appearance of those structures is somewhat alien to the character and appearance of the area, and they lie immediately adjacent to the public footpath. In design terms they are highly discordant and their removal as part of the application constitutes a notable benefit of the proposed development.
- 5.8 It is consequently concluded that the proposed development is of an acceptable scale, massing, design and layout and will not give rise to harm to the surrounding area or landscape. The proposal is therefore held to meet the requirements of policies SS1, SS10, DC1 and DC3 of the Local Plan.

Residential Amenity

- 5.9 There are no immediate neighbouring properties to the proposed development, the closest being the applicant's own property located approximately 60m to the southwest of the stable block. The stables will not have any adverse impact on the amenity of the other neighbouring properties further to the south, who lie in excess of 90 metres distant. The proposed development is consequently held to meet the requirements of policy DC1 of the Local Plan.

Renewable Energy

- 5.10 The submitted proposal encompasses the provision of photovoltaic panels in order to provide the stable block with a renewable source of electricity. Policy SD3 of the Local Plan confirms that the Council will support carbon saving measures in new developments, including the installation of micro-renewables.
- 5.11 The provisions of policy SD3 reflect guidance set out within paragraph 158 of the National Planning Policy Framework which confirms that local planning authorities should:

*"not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy, and **recognise that even small-scale projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions**" (our emphasis)*

- 5.12 The proposed photovoltaics will avoid the need for the development to make use of non-renewable sources of electricity, and in doing so accords with the objectives of policy SD3 of the Local Plan and paragraph 158 of the NPPF in cutting greenhouse gas emissions. Such benefits lend weight in favour of the proposed development.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 The proposed stable block and associated change of use of the land constitutes an appropriate form of development within the rural area, and by virtue of its modest scale, massing, design and discreet location, will not materially detract from the character and appearance of the surrounding area or the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.
- 6.2 The proposal will also benefit the character and appearance of the surrounding area by removing the existing field containers from the site. The proposed development will also contribute towards cutting greenhouse gas emissions by providing a renewable source of electricity to meet the needs of the stable block, and will not give rise to harm to neighbouring amenity.
- 6.3 The proposed development is consequently held to meet the requirements of policies SS1, SS10, SD3, DC1, and DC3 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (2020) and guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.