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Planning Statement (including Design & Access)

In relation to

Full Planning Application
for the

Roofing of Existing Silage Store

at

Little Greenhead Farm
Kingsley Moor
Stoke On Trent
Staffordshire
ST10 1EL

On behalf of

Mr G Brassington & Mr J Brassington

April 2024

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Application Overview

1.1.1 This Planning Statement is submitted in support of a full planning application for the roofing of an existing silage store at Little Greenhead Farm, Kingsley Moor, ST10 1EL. The application site which is a dairy farm is owned and managed by Mr Gordon Brassington & Mr John Brassington ('The Applicants').

1.1.2 The Applicants occupy approximately 170 acres of pasture comprising a mix of owner-occupied and rented land. The dairy herd number approximately 95 dairy cows yielding between 6,000-9,000 litres per year. There are also a small number of followers.

1.1.3 Due to the requirement to clamp and store silage for winter feed on the farm, there is an existing silage clamp on site measuring approximately 450m². This is currently an uncovered area and therefore is at a higher risk of producing contaminated effluent run off into nearby water sources such as streams, rivers, or groundwater, potentially leading to eutrophication and harmful algal blooms.

1.1.4 The Applicants have received advice from Catchment Sensitive Farming Advisor Johanna Green, who has confirmed that roofing this area would effectively mitigate this risk, reducing nutrient runoff and preserving water quality in the surrounding ecosystem.

1.1.5 The proposed roofing will be constructed from standard agricultural materials and will include box profile sheet roofing and wall cladding over a concrete panel wall base. It will blend carefully within the landscape in the context of the agricultural holding setting.

1.2 Scope of Planning Application

1.2.1 The scope of this planning application submission comprises the following documents, which should be read in conjunction with this planning statement:

- Application Forms
- Full supporting planning and architectural drawings
- Planning statement (this report)

1.2.2 This report is structured as follows:

- a description of the agricultural holding;
- the history of activities at Little Greenhead Farm;
- the design/external appearance of the building and appropriate access;
- the landscaping and residential amenity of the surrounding area; and
- the requirements of the farming enterprise

1.2.3 In terms of planning policy, this report will contain a review of the applicable national and local policies and an analysis of the planning and technical issues.

2.0 Farm Description

2.1 Little Greenhead Farm is situated in Kingsley Moor and is surrounded by several neighbouring farms. The location of the application site is on the east side of the holding, therefore benefitting from an appropriate level of existing building, hedgerow and distance screening.

2.2 According to Staffordshire Moorlands District Councils' Local Plan interactive map, it has been noted that the application site lies within the Green Belt. Therefore, the development proposal has been considered within this context to ensure this will not give rise to any harmful impacts within the Green Belt landscape.

2.3 Little Greenhead Farm has an Agricultural County Parish Holding Number (37/022/0011) and is a registered farm holding with DEFRA used for the keeping of livestock.

2.4 The applicants are dedicated to practicing sustainable farming and upholding stringent environmental standards, as demonstrated by their participation in an existing Agri-Environment scheme aimed at enhancing soil health and minimising water pollution. Furthermore, they have previously collaborated with the Catchment Sensitive Farming programme to enhance farmyard infrastructure, thereby mitigating run-off risks.

2.5 The covered clamps will be constructed using standard agricultural materials to enable it to preserve and enhance the current landscape.

2.6 The site benefits from existing satisfactory access from Broad Oak Lane. Please see accompanying site and location plan at **Appendix 2**.

3.0 The Proposed Building

3.1 Scale

3.1.1 The dimensions of the proposed roofed silage clamp measures 30.48m x 15.24m by 6.71m to the eaves level with a roof pitch of 15 degrees to ensure sufficient space for modern machinery to pass in and out. The total floor area amounts to approximately 450m².

3.1.2 Please see the accompanying elevation and floor plans (Drawing ref: 2416-01 Building Plan 1 to 100 A1) submitted with this application and provided at **Appendix 3**.

3.2 Design and External Appearance

3.2.1 The development will be handled sensitively to respect the visual amenity of the surrounding area and the current setting of the agricultural holding. Please see the accompanying site plan (Drawing Ref: 2416-01 Site Plan 1 to 500 A3) provided at **Appendix 2**.

3.2.2 The structure and roofing will consist of a steel portal framed structure with dark (slate) blue box profile sheeting on three sides above concrete panel walls with the front of the building being open fronted. The sheets will be laid in accordance with the manufacturer's specification. Please see the proposed elevations provided at **Appendix 3**.

3.2.3 The roof pitch is a standard 15 degree slope with the front (east) of the building open fronted to allow for ease of access and movement with regard to modern farm implements, machinery and fodder etc.

3.2.4 Each side would be fitted with a run of 6in HR PVC gutter, complete with the necessary 4in fall pipes. Clean roof water will go to existing clean drains.

3.3 Access

3.3.1 Little Greenhead Farm is accessed directly off Broad Oak Lane and the proposed building will be accessed within the main farmyard which serves the livestock buildings and feeding areas.

3.3.2 This access is considered satisfactory to serve this small-scale development and no improvement works are required as a result.

3.3.3 Please see the accompanying location plan (Drawing Ref: 2416-01 Site Plan 1 to 500 A3) showing the access point to Little Greenhead Farm provided at **Appendix 2**.

3.4 Landscape and residential amenity

3.4.1 The existing silage clamp area has been in situ for many years; therefore the addition of a roofing area and the resulting environmental benefits are considered to outweigh the negligible change within the landscape and the wider farmstead is already existing.

3.4.2 The clamp is located within the applicants' farmyard and therefore blends sympathetically with the agricultural nature of the surrounding land and is viewed in the context of the existing agricultural holding.

3.4.3 The development will only result in positive environmental benefits due to the reduced risk of run off pollution. In addition, it is considered that the roofing of the store will improve the visual appearance of the site.

3.4.4 Please refer to the accompanying plans provided in the **Appendices** for further detail.

4.0 Agricultural Justification

4.1 Roofing over a silage store is necessary and recommended to reduce water pollution primarily because it prevents rainwater from directly entering the silage and leaching nutrients into the surrounding environment. When silage stores are left uncovered, rainwater can infiltrate the stored silage, initiating fermentation and generating leachate rich in nutrients such as nitrates and phosphates.

4.2 This nutrient-rich leachate, if it escapes the silage store, can contaminate nearby water sources such as streams, rivers, or groundwater, leading to eutrophication and harmful algal blooms. By roofing over silage stores, farmers can effectively prevent rainwater from entering the area, thus reducing the risk of nutrient runoff and preserving water quality in the surrounding ecosystem.

4.3 At present, the site currently consists of an existing uncovered silage store, which although it is managed carefully, is at a higher risk of contaminated effluent run-off into watercourses.

4.4 It is also important to ensure that the newly roofed clamp is compliant with regulations laid out in the Water Resources (Control of Pollution) (Silage, Slurry and Agricultural Fuel Oil) (England) Regulations – known as the SSAFO regulations. This requires stores to have an impermeable base extending beyond any walls and impermeable drainage collection channels around the outside, flowing into an effluent tank. As part of this application, the Environment Agency will be consulted to ensure compliancy.

4.5 It is considered that the above justification presents a key need for the development, whilst ensuring that the roofing is of an appropriate scale and design in relation to the size of the holding. The site layout plan is shown on the following page in **Figure 1**.

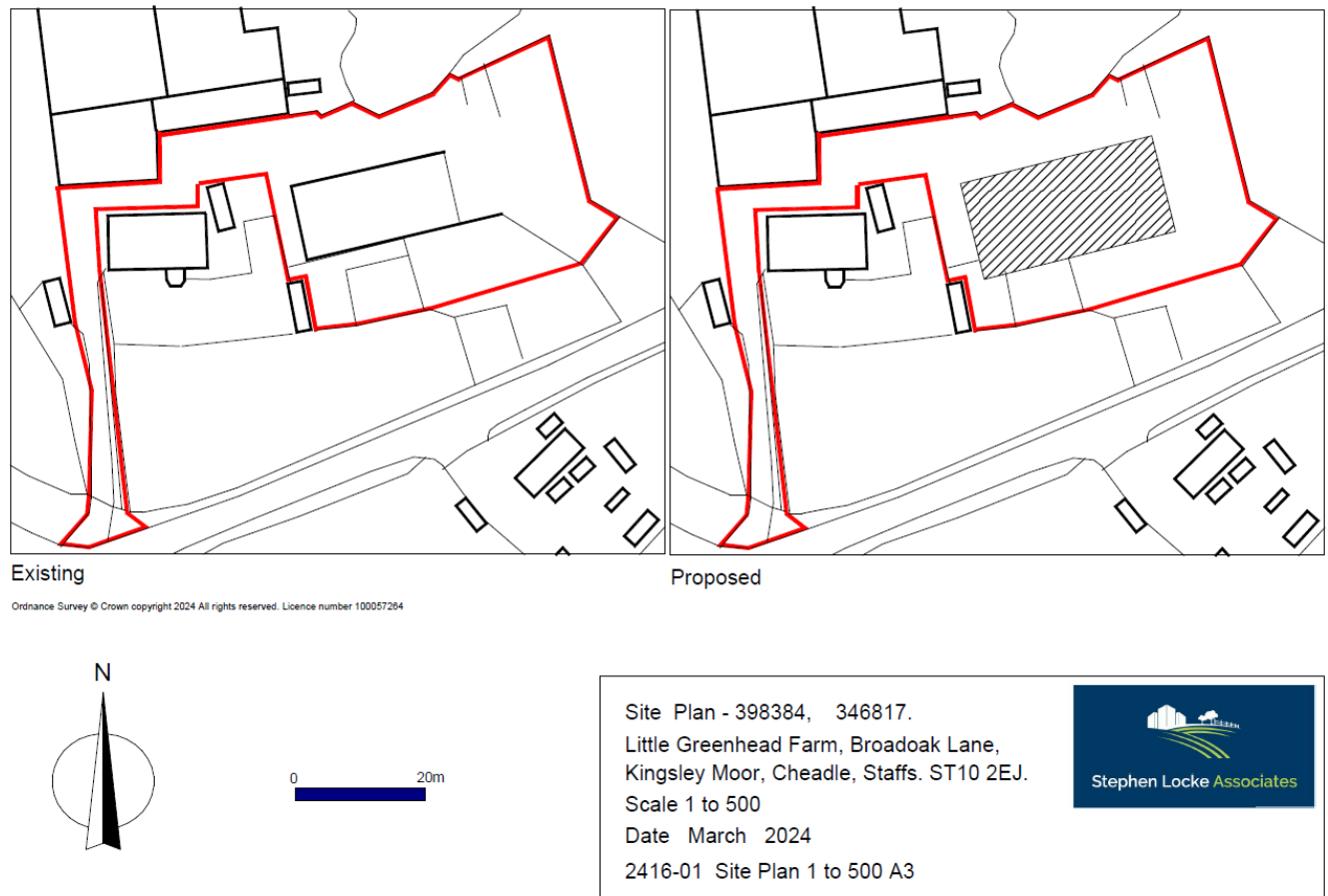


Figure 1 – Proposed Site Layout (Not To Scale)

5.0 Planning Policy Context

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires that proposals are determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan comprises those local planning documents which have been the subject of examination in public or testing through public inquiry and are adopted having been through the due processes.

5.1.2 The application site falls within the administration boundary of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council and the statutory development plan comprises of the Staffordshire Moorlands District Council Local Plan 2014 - 2033 (Adopted September 2020).

5.1.3 In addition to the statutory Development Plan, applications should also be assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF(2023)), which is a material consideration in any determination.

5.2 Statutory Development Plan

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council Local Plan 2014 - 2033 (Adopted September 2020)

5.2.1 This document addresses the key spatial development issues for the area and provides a strategic spatial planning policy framework to determine how the Staffordshire Moorlands district will develop physically up to 2033. Central to all of the policies contained within the Plan is the principle of sustainable development set out in Policies SD1 – SD5.

5.2.2 Key policies of relevance to the proposed farm building at Little Greenhead Farm include the following:

Policy SS10 – Other Rural Areas Strategy

Policy SS10 ‘Other Rural Areas Strategy’ covers rural areas within the countryside and the Green Belt outside of the development boundaries of the towns and larger villages and the open countryside. It 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. The Council and its partners will achieve this through the following actions:*

- *Enabling the limited expansion or development of business for employment uses where a rural location can be justified*
- *Supporting the diversification of existing farm enterprises”*

The proposal supports the maintenance and improvement of the existing agricultural enterprise and can only be considered a limited expansion, commensurate with the scale of the existing business. Therefore, the development accords with this policy.

The policy also makes reference to the Green Belt. The site is located within the Green Belt, which is demonstrated on the Local Plan Proposals Map. The supporting text states that *“the Green Belt serves a number of purposes which are derived from Government policy in the NPPF and the former Staffordshire Structure Plan. The Green Belt keeps land open and free from development over a long period, which extends beyond the plan period, in order to give assurance that its boundaries will endure. National policy on Green Belts is set out in the NPPF and will apply to the whole of the Green Belt.”*

Farms help to keep the green belt open and new agricultural buildings are allowed within a green belt setting.

Policy E1 – New Employment Development

Policy E1 of the Local Plan relates to ‘New Employment Development’ and states that such development will be assessed according to the extent to which it supports and improves the local economy in terms of providing for the needs and skills of the existing and future local resident workforce and meeting identified business needs, having regard to the Spatial Strategy Policies in SS2, SS3, area strategy policies, and general employment land requirements set out in Policy SS4.

It goes on to state that in general the Council will endeavour to support the expansion of existing businesses and new businesses in the District, and that to support the growth of the economy, the Council will encourage provision for small-scale and start-up businesses.

In this case, the farming business at Little Greenhead Farm is a key rural enterprise and its limited expansion proposal should be supported and encouraged.

Policy DC1 – Design Considerations

Policy DC1 of the Local Plan relates to ‘Design Considerations’ and states that new development should be of a high quality and add value to the local area, incorporating creativity, detailing and materials appropriate to the character of the area. It requires that new development should (amongst other criteria):

- *be of a high quality and add value to the local area, incorporating creativity, detailing and materials appropriate to the character of the area;*

- *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;*
- *protect the amenity of the area, including creation of healthy active environments and residential amenity, in terms of satisfactory daylight, visual impact, sunlight, outlook, privacy, soft landscaping as well as noise, odour and light pollution;*

In this case, the design and materials of the proposed roofing reflects that of the adjacent livestock buildings on site. Therefore, it is considered that this will not give rise to any adverse impacts on the character and setting of the area.

Policy DC3 – Landscape and Settlement Setting

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:

- *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;*
- *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;*
- *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;*
- *Supporting opportunities to positively manage the landscape and use sustainable building techniques and materials which are sympathetic to the landscape;*

In this case, the proposed development will not have any negative impact on the surrounding landscape and is considered to only result in positive impacts for both the environment and the farming business. The site is set back off the road with two established hedges in-between, providing good screening.

5.2.3 Taking the above policies into account, it is considered that the proposed development is appropriate in enhancing the rural economy, whilst also safeguarding the surrounding environment and Green Belt. The development relates to agriculture and supports the rural economy.

5.3 National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

5.3.1 At the heart of the NPPF is a '*presumption in favour of sustainable development*', a '*golden thread*' running through the planning system in the plan-making and decision-taking process. Through the plan-making process local authorities are encouraged to positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area.

5.3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (revised July 2021 and updated in 2023) states that planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas and a prosperous rural economy. This will help to create jobs and prosperity. Policies in new Local Plans should support the sustainable growth and expansion of **all types** of business and enterprise, including agricultural development and diversification (see **Appendix 5**).

5.3.3 The proposed development meets the three key pillars of sustainability: economic, social and environmental. The roofing meets the guidance set out in the NPPF which states that planning policies should enable well-designed new buildings.

5.3.4 In terms of economic growth the government and Staffordshire Moorlands District Council are committed to securing economic development, with the planning system encouraging sustainable rural advancements. The new building to cover the existing silage clamps will provide a number of economic benefits, including its erection which will create temporary employment within the local area. In addition, there are economic benefits for the agricultural business through the ability to provide roofing over the existing silage store, enabling a quality feed source and less wastage; and improving the on-site facilities offered by the farming enterprise.

5.3.5 Regarding social benefits, the building will support a local family farming business which will have wider social benefits.

5.3.6 From an environmental perspective, the proposed silage clamp roofing will benefit from being seen within the context of the existing farm complex and will not appear out of place in this agricultural context; therefore, this is not a greenfield development. It is best practice to locate new farm buildings as close as possible to existing buildings and to use similar traditional materials in order to reduce any potentially harmful impact upon the character and appearance of the countryside (previously contained in PPG7 Annex E). In this case, the chosen site complies with this best practice. It can be concluded that the siting of the proposal is acceptable in terms of the impact on the character of the countryside.

5.3.7 With regard to the Green Belt designation of Little Greenhead Farm, paragraph 154 of Chapter 13 within the new NPPF sets out the types of development which are not deemed to be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, and therefore acceptable in principle. Exceptions include “(a) *buildings for agriculture and forestry*”. This proposal is for roofing of an existing silage store and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. As the proposal does not constitute “inappropriate” development, it is not necessary for the applicant to prove “very special circumstances” to justify the development.

5.3.8 The site has an Agricultural Holding Number and is a long standing working dairy farm. As stated above and shown in accompanying plans, the new building will be sited over an existing silage store. As such, it is reasonable to consider that this proposal constitutes a ‘building for agriculture’ in line with part (a) to paragraph 154 of the NPPF.

5.3.9 Paragraph 88 of the NPPF is also important in this case and reads:

“Planning policies and decisions should enable:

a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;

b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses”;

5.3.10 Overall, the proposal aligns with national planning policy through promoting a sustainably located scheme on an existing unit. The farm has good access to the wider road network and would deliver economic, social and environmental benefits to the site and the wider Staffordshire Moorlands area as a whole, in line with national policy objectives.

6.0 Planning and Technical Assessment

6.1 The proposed development seeks permission for roofing an existing silage store. We have assessed the location of the site and the principal constraints that may relate to it.

The assessment has confirmed the following:

- The location of the building falls outside the notified Flood Zones (2 & 3)
- No rights of way exist across the site
- The site does not fall within any areas of historic interest.

- There are no records of any Tree Preservation Orders on the site
- The site is located in the Green Belt

6.2 A flood risk assessment is not required. The site falls within Flood Zone 1 and as such the land is not at risk of fluvial flooding. To demonstrate the site is located in Flood Zone 1 we have provided a flood risk plan at **Appendix 6**. Drainage of the building would go to the existing field drainage network.

6.3 The principle of the development is acceptable. The scheme is for the roofing of an existing silage store on an existing farm unit. The application accords with the local plan and the NPPF and thus planning permission should be granted without delay.

6.4 Local amenity – the amenity of local residents will not be adversely affected. The farm already exists and supports livestock rearing. The proposal will help to maintain the sustainability of the agricultural unit.

6.5 Ecology and biodiversity – the NPPF contains a series of policies relating to the natural environment. The application site currently consists of an existing uncovered silage store which is at heightened risk of contaminated effluent run off into nearby watercourses. This risk will be reduced as a result of the proposed development. The site does not result in the loss of any habitat and is already built over. No wildlife will be affected.

6.6 Ground conditions – as previously mentioned, the site consists of an existing silage clamp area with an impermeable base. Ground conditions are entirely suitable for the construction of a steel portal frame with roofing.

6.7 Highways and access – the site is part of an existing agricultural holding with an existing access point off Broad Oak Lane. The development will not increase traffic movements due to the nature of existing enterprises already operating on site.

6.8 Visual impact – the application site and surrounding farmsteads already support the nature and appearance of an agricultural building. The roofing will be constructed of materials typical to local farms and will blend into the landscape, whilst having no harmful impact upon the character and appearance of the Green Belt.

7.0 Conclusions

7.1 This planning statement has been prepared to support a planning application for the roofing of an existing silage store at Little Greenhead Farm. The scale and design of the structure and overall building is shown at **Appendix 3**. The roofing is required to provide covered storage of silage and to prevent the risk of producing contaminated effluent run off.

7.2 Planning legislation requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF is a material consideration and fully supports economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development. To promote a strong rural economy, local and neighbourhood plans should:

- support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;
- promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;

7.3 The proposed scheme at Little Greenhead Farm satisfies these aims and meets the policy guidance set out in the Plan for Staffordshire Moorlands District Council.

7.4 This statement and the supporting plans and information demonstrate that the application positively meets the Staffordshire Moorlands development plan as well as national planning objectives and is a sustainable development. Therefore, the applicants respectfully seek full permission for this development, subject to appropriate and reasonable conditions.

Stephen Locke BSc(Hons) MRICS MRTPI FAAV
Planning Consultant

Appendices

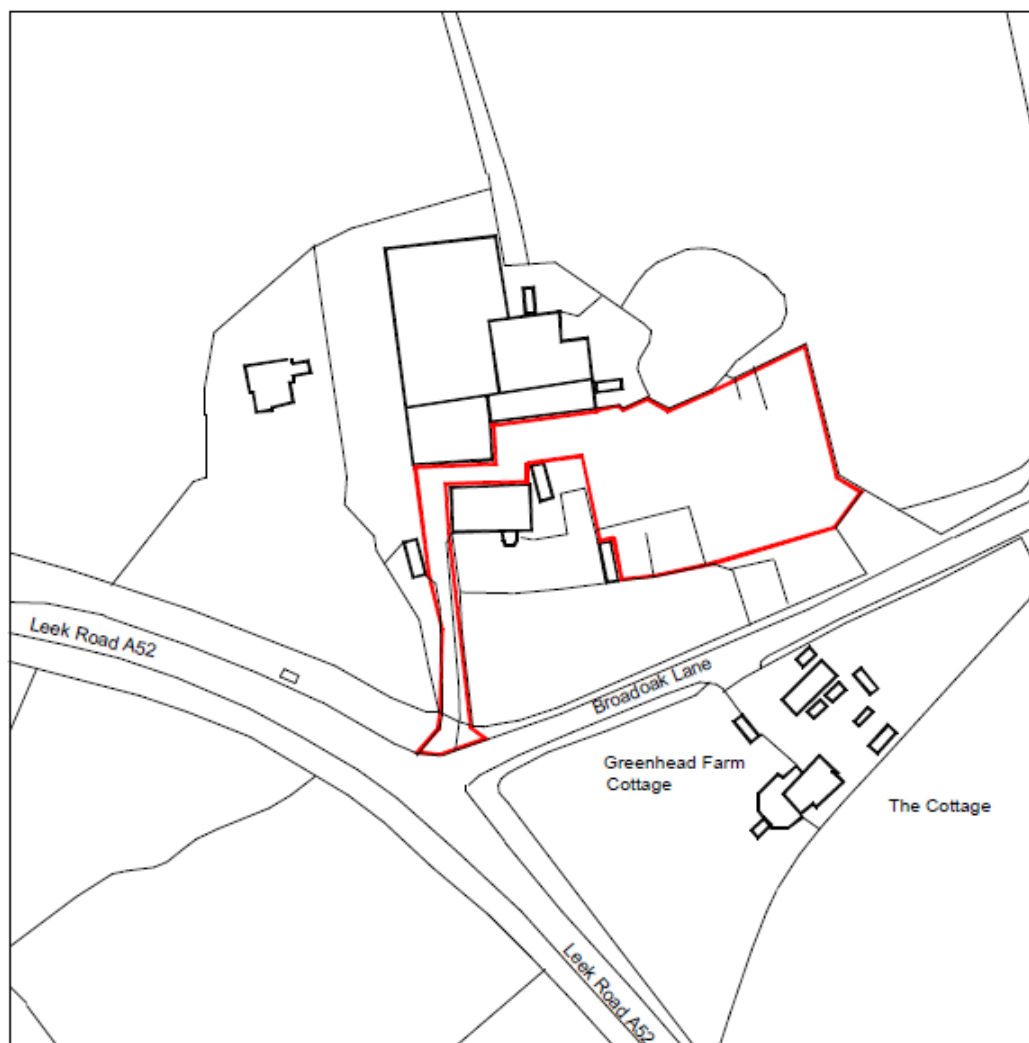
1) Aerial Image of Site



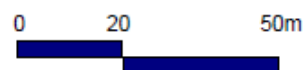
(Not to Scale)

2) Location & Site Plans

(i) Location Plan



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Location Plan - 398384, 346817.
Little Greenhead Farm, Broadoak Lane,
Kingsley Moor, Cheadle, Staffs. ST10 2EJ.
Scale 1 to 1250
Date March 2024
2416-01 Location Plan 1 to 1250 A4



(Not to Scale)

(ii) Proposed Site Plan



Existing

Proposed

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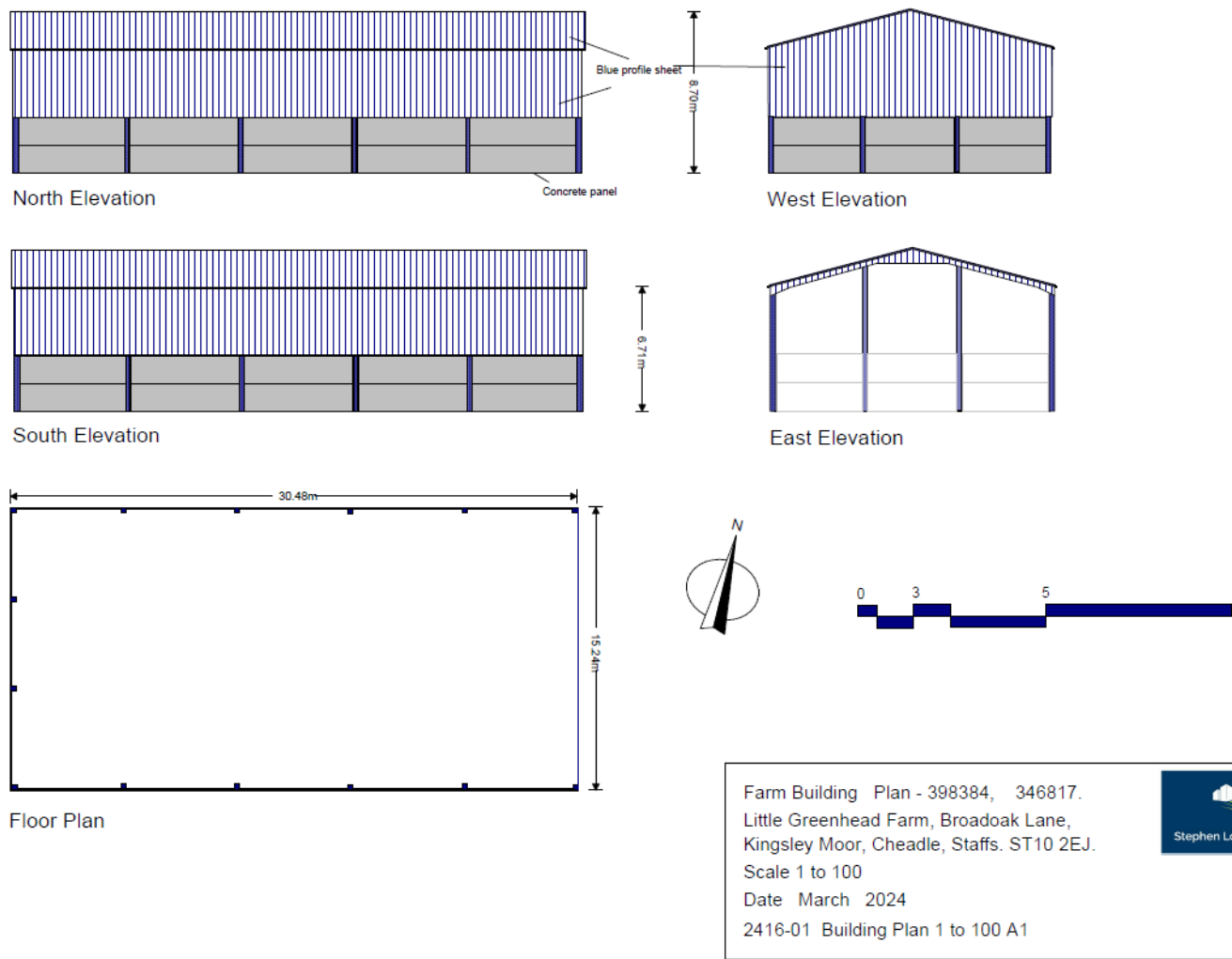
0 20m

Site Plan - 398384, 346817.
Little Greenhead Farm, Broadoak Lane,
Kingsley Moor, Cheadle, Staffs. ST10 2EJ.
Scale 1 to 500
Date March 2024
2416-01 Site Plan 1 to 500 A3



(Not to Scale)

3) Elevations and Floor Plan for New Silage Clamp Roofing



(Not to Scale)

4) Staffordshire Moorlands District Council - Policy Information

Policy SS 10

Other Rural Areas Strategy

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. The Council and its partners will achieve this through the following actions:

2. Sustain the rural economy by:

- Enabling the limited expansion or development of business for employment uses where a rural location can be justified
- Supporting the diversification of existing farm enterprises

6. Maintain the Green Belt within Staffordshire Moorlands. Strict control will continue to be exercised over inappropriate development within the Green Belt allowing only for exceptions as defined by Government policy.

5) National Planning Policy

Supporting a prosperous rural economy

88. Planning policies and decisions should enable:
- a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;
 - b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;
 - c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and
 - d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.
154. A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:
- a) buildings for agriculture and forestry;

6) Site Photographs



1. Existing Silage Clamp



2. Existing Silage Clamp



3. Existing Silage Clamp



4. View of clamp from farmyard



5. View of farmyard from the roadside – well screened by two separate hedges

7) Flood Risk Assessment Plan & Report



Flood map for planning

Your reference
<Unspecified>

Location (easting/northing)
398379/346822

Created
6 Apr 2024 21:52

Your selected location is in flood zone 1, an area with a low probability of flooding.

You will need to do a flood risk assessment if your site is **any of the following**:

- bigger than 1 hectare (ha)
- In an area with critical drainage problems as notified by the Environment Agency
- identified as being at increased flood risk in future by the local authority's strategic flood risk assessment
- at risk from other sources of flooding (such as surface water or reservoirs) and its development would increase the vulnerability of its use (such as constructing an office on an undeveloped site or converting a shop to a dwelling)

Notes

The flood map for planning shows river and sea flooding data only. It doesn't include other sources of flooding. It is for use in development planning and flood risk assessments.

This information relates to the selected location and is not specific to any property within it. The map is updated regularly and is correct at the time of printing.

Flood risk data is covered by the Open Government Licence **which** sets out the terms and conditions for using government data. <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/>

Use of the address and mapping data is subject to Ordnance Survey public viewing terms under Crown copyright and database rights 2022 OS 100024198. <https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/os-terms>

