

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2024/0373
Valid 13/08/2024

MOUNT PLEASANT FARM
LASK EDGE ROAD
LASK EDGE
LEEK

AGRICULTURAL BUILDING
FOR THE STORAGE OF
FODDER

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

- Impact on Green Belt
- Impact on Character and Appearance of the Area
- Impact on Biodiversity habitat

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

Mount Pleasant Farm is a roadside, 2ha holding, accessed from, and adjacent to, Lask Edge Road. It occupies high ground, a ridge top location with the land falling toward the valleys of Knypersley to the west and Horton to the east. The holding consists of the farmhouse and a pole barn clad with metal sheeting these two buildings occupy a central position, set back from the roadside by approx. 30m, surrounded by grazing farm land.

The holding is to the south of the Cross Roads - Crowborough Rd/Lask Edge Road/Blackwood House Lane, and is bounded to the north by Blackwood House Lane and to the west by Lask Edge Road. It is open to surrounding farm land to the east and south.

The character of the surrounding area is wide, open plateau high ground with far reaching views. Field parcels are irregularly sized and shaped. Field boundaries are traditional hedgerow interspersed with more mature trees. From the front, the west, the farm is screened by a belt of tree planting.

The application concerns a pre-existing compacted stone hardstanding, adjacent to, and to the north of, the existing pole barn.

PROPOSAL

The application originally proposed the erection of a 13m by 13m enclosed lock up shed, said to be for the storage of up to 700 small bales of hay taken from the 2ha holding. 3m high to eaves and 5.3m to ridge formed by shallow full pitched roof. The building would be steel frame with box profile sheeting above concrete panel at base.

The proposed development has been revised, responding to comments from the planning officer. The proposed building as revised would be open fronted to provide ventilation for the hay and access for stacking.

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
NE1 Biodiversity
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

94/00196/OLD vehicular access. APPROVED
06/00129/FUL replacement dwelling including conversion of attached shippon.
APPROVED.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 25th September 2024
Neighbour consultation period ends: 25th September 2024
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

None

Town / Parish Comments

Horton Parish Council: No Objection

Staffordshire County Council Highways

Acceptance no objection. Access to the proposed building will be via an existing access off Lask Edge Road detailed on plan titled Block Plan & Proposed Landscaping.

The proposal is in line with the existing agricultural use of the land, and it is considered that no significant additional trips will be generated.

The proposal will not have a detrimental impact on the highway and therefore I have no objection to the proposal (SMD/2024/0373).

OFFICER COMMENTS

Impact on the Green Belt

The site is in the Green Belt where development is inappropriate and, by definition, harmful unless it is provided for by one of the exceptions that appear in the closed lists in the NPPF.

One such exception is a building for agriculture. It is the applicant's evidence that he requires a building for the storage of a quantity of hay bales taken from the 2 ha holding. The applicant has 2ha of grazing/grass field which requires maintenance, mowing, or grazing – it is said that this is currently carried out by contractors. As an open fronted shed to provide ventilation and full access for stacking bales, the building would appear to be designed appropriately for the storage of hay and therefore agricultural purpose.

The development would be provided for by the exception and the development would not be inappropriate or harmful to the Green Belt.

Design and Impact on Character and Appearance of the Area

The development would be obviously agrarian in character and design, specifically for the purposes of storing hay bales. It would be similar in appearance and character to other farm buildings within the landscape and vicinity.

The building would occupy high ground in a relatively open landscape. Hedgerow enclosure and tree line would provide some screening and limit views of the proposed building from certain aspects. The building would be most apparent from the north and certain points on Blackwood House Lane. However, from these positions the building would be viewed against the backdrop and in the context of the adjacent, pre-existing, pole barn shed to the south that would be of similar size and height, both buildings would be viewed as a farm grouping.

In these regards the building would not appear intrusive in the countryside or harmful to landscape character. There would be no conflict with Local Plan policies DC1 and DC3 or the NPPF in these regards.

Biodiversity Impacts

The applicant claims exemption from BNG requirements, pointing to the placement of the building on a pre-existing stone hardstanding that has no biodiversity value but was provided for outside agricultural storage.

There is a pre-existing hardstanding on site, provided for agriculture on a holding of less than 5ha. The construction of a hardstanding would have been authorised development as development permitted by Class B, Part 6 of the GPDO 2015.

The application site plan proposes hedgerow planting to the northern and eastern edges of the building. There would be some additional biodiversity value with the provision of a new hedge.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

Small scale agricultural development that would not be inappropriate to the Green Belt or harmful to landscape character/character and appearance of the area. There would be no loss of biodiversity habitat and some enhancement in those regards. There would be no conflict with the Local Plan policies listed above or the terms of the NPPF.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : APPROVE

Case Officer: Ben Hurst

Recommendation Date: 8th October 2024

X *B.J. Haywood*

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council