

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2024/0395
Valid 29/08/2024

WHYMPNEY LODGE GODLEY
LANE
DILHORNE

AGRICULTURAL BUILDING TO
HOUSE MUCK STORE

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

- Principle of development (Green Belt)
- Design and visual impact
- Environmental Health
- Coal development area (High-risk)

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site is located to the rear of Whympney Lodge, a property located on the western side of Godley Lane Dilhorne. The site is an existing, established agricultural farmstead within the Green Belt which benefits from a range of agricultural buildings, storage areas and machinery.

The muck store is an area of hardstanding on the western side of the site, which has been formed following some land levelling. The hardstanding has the appearance of concrete slabs which are laid in a rectangular arrangement. The hardstanding is bounded by some vegetation on its southern and western sides, to the east is a large agricultural building, the northern side is open to the farmstead where a small track leads to lower ground level.

For the purposes of planning policy consideration the application site is located within the Green Belt and a high-risk, coal development area. The site is not within any Conservation Area and there are no listed buildings/structures or protected trees which need to be considered.

PROPOSAL

The application form initially described the development as a 'Cover over an existing hard standing muck storage area.' This was changed with the agreement of the applicant to reflect the fact that it is effectively for the construction of an agricultural building to sit upon the slab used as the muck store, it is understood that the building will prevent water from entering the manure storage site. The plans show a proposed building with rectangular shaped footprint measuring approximately 18.2m x 9.1m. The building eaves height would be approximately 3.5m with the shallow pitched roof extending to approximately 4.6m in height. The plans do not specify materials but the application form states 2.0m high concrete panels, Yorkshire boarding and fibre cement boarding. The agent has confirmed it will be box profile 6 sheeting (natural/light grey colour).

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan

SS1	Development Principles
SS10	Other Rural Areas Strategy
SD4	Pollution and Water Quality
DC1	Design Considerations
DC3	Landscape and Settlement Setting
NE1	Biodiversity and Geological Resources

Supplementary Planning Guidance

1. Design Principles for Development in the Staffordshire Moorlands

Supplementary Planning Document

1. Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide

National Planning Policy Framework

Including sections;

2	Achieving sustainable development
6	Building a strong, competitive economy
12	Achieving well-designed and beautiful places
13	Protecting Green Belt land

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

07/00979/NOT_AG	Agricultural building (fodder store) and roof covering to yard area. Approved.
SMD/2017/0075	Erection of an Agricultural Workers Dwelling including retention of Temporary Workers Accommodation until First Occupation. Approved.
DET/2024/0029	Application to determine if Prior Approval is required for a portal frame cover over an existing muck store. Prior approval required and details submitted refused.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice. Expires 11th October
Neighbour consultation period. Expired.

Public Comments: No representations received during the statutory consultation period.

Dilhorne Parish Council: The Parish Council do not have any objections to this application, subject to neighbours approval.

Environmental Health: The proposed cover is welcomed and would reduce the existing environmental impact from the manure store.

Coal Authority: No objections. Informative note recommended.

I have reviewed the site location plan, the proposals and supporting information submitted and available to view on the LPA website and can confirm that the application site falls partly within the defined Development High Risk Area. The Coal Authority's information indicates that the eastern and western part of the site, including the part of the site where development is proposed, lie in an area where historic unrecorded coal mining activity is likely to have taken place at shallow depth. Voids and broken ground associated with such workings can pose a risk of ground instability and may give rise to the emission of mine gases.

*As you will be aware, the Coal Authority's general approach in cases where development is proposed within the Development High Risk Area is to recommend that the applicant obtains coal mining information for the application site and submits a Coal Mining Risk Assessment to support their planning application. Nevertheless, in this instance we note that, the proposed building will utilise a pre-existing concrete hardstanding and its construction would not appear to require any new foundations or earthworks. On this basis, we do not consider that requiring a Coal Mining Risk Assessment would be proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed in this particular case and we **DO NOT OBJECT** to this planning application.*

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development, Design and Visual Impact.

The application is accompanied by a supporting statement which sets out the reasons and need for the proposed muck store cover in addition to providing information about the farm business. The statement informs that 'the applicants have a well-established farm business enterprise, farming 70 head of cattle and 700 ewes over 300 acres or thereabouts of grassland. The proposed development is aimed at improving nutrient content from cattle manure which is applied to the land and provides vital nutrients for the grassland, as well preventing greenhouses gases escape from the muck store.'

The Planning statement goes on to inform that 'the proposed development is designed to prevent rainwater from entering the muck store, which in turn improves nutrient quality of the muck when applied to the land and helps to prevent surface water runoff.' The LPA is further informed that 'the cover over the muck store helps to reduce greenhouse gases and improve air quality. The proposed cover over the existing muck store is very much focussed on aiding the applicant to farm in an environmentally friendly manner, actively working towards the government net zero by 2050 target.'

This application has been submitted following on from the determination of a Prior notification application for the same works. The Prior notification was unsuccessful as the building (due to its location) would not have complied with Part 6, Class A.1(i) of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). This part relates to development to be used for the accommodation of livestock or for the storage of slurry or sewage sludge where it is within 400m of the curtilage of a protected building.

The information submitted clearly shows that the proposed development is to be used for the purposes of agriculture. Paragraph number 154 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that Local Planning authorities should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. There are a number of exceptions and relevant to this application is the exception of buildings for agriculture and forestry. In addition to the information provided above regarding livestock numbers and extent of land ownership, it is clear from the site visit that this is a working farmstead.

The proposed building is acceptable in terms of its design. The building would have lower level concrete panel walls with Yorkshire boarding frame above. One end of the building would be open and the shallow pitched roof would consist of fibre cement boarding (box profile 6 sheeting in natural/light grey colour). The overall appearance of the building is simple and easily recognisable as an agricultural building.

Paragraph number 143 of the NPPF states the Green Belt serves five purposes, a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas; b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another; c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment; d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Visual impact is limited to within the site. The building would be situated upon an existing area of hardstanding, by the side of an existing agricultural building and against an area of raised, sloping ground on the southern side. To the north the land is already used as part of the farmyard/working area and therefore the building will not encroach into the open countryside.

For the above reasons, it is considered that this proposal is not inappropriate development within the Green Belt and is acceptable in terms of its design and impact on the character and appearance of the area

Environmental Health

There are no Environmental Health issues. The Environmental health officer confirms that the proposed cover is welcomed and would reduce the existing environmental impact from the manure store.

Coal development area (High-risk)

The Coal Authority have no objections to the application and confirm that in this instance a Coal Mining Risk Assessment is not required. In the event of the application being approved, the Coal Authority has requested an informative note is added to the decision notice.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

For the reasons outlined within the report it is recommended that the application is approved subject to conditions. It is found that the proposed development is not inappropriate development for its Green belt location, is acceptable in terms of design, positioning and visual impact and does not raise any Environmental Health or Coal Authority.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : Conditional approval.

Case Officer: Lisa Jackson

Recommendation Date: 18.10.2024.

X *Jane Curley*

Signed by: Jane Curley

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council