

Mr. B. Haywood
Development Services
Staffordshire Moorlands District Council
Stockwell Street
Leek
ST13 6HQ

16th December 2024

Dear Ben

ERECTION OF GENERAL PURPOSE AGRICULTURAL BUILDING – OVERTON FARM, HOLLINGTON

On behalf of my client Mr. J. Bloor, I would be grateful if you would find enclosed a full planning application for the erection of a general purpose agricultural building at the above site.

The proposed agricultural building will occupy a floor area of 922 square metres and stand to a ridge height of 8.5 metres. The building is to be used principally for the storage of hay and straw, but on occasion may also be used for the storage of agricultural implements. The applicant's holding (registered under Agricultural Holding Number 370180012) extends to some 600 acres (owned) plus an additional 600 acres rented. The business rears in the order of 450 beef cattle. The building will be used to provide additional storage for hay and straw grown on the holding to provide feed for the cattle.

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 rural diversification and sustainability of the rural areas, promotes sustainable tourism or enhances the countryside. This will be achieved by, amongst other measures, enabling the limited expansion or development of business for employment uses where a rural location can be justified.

In this particular case the applicant has a long established agricultural enterprise, with a large head of cattle (circa 450 animals) which along with the 1200 acre holding generates an attendant need to provide storage space for hay and straw grown on the holiday, as well as for storage of implements. The proposed general purpose agricultural building will meet these ongoing needs of the business and thereby support and facilitate its continued growth. The proposed development is therefore firmly in accordance with policy SS10 of the Local Plan.

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In terms of visual impact considerations, the proposed building will be located to the west of the existing cluster of buildings that make up the farmyard, on an existing area of hardstanding that is enclosed by a bund. A recently constructed agricultural building (permitted under application SMD/2022/0355) will be located to the southeast, with other agricultural buildings located to the east and southeast. The building will have a typical agrarian appearance, comprising of portal framed building with blockwork / timber boarding to its elevations and a fibre cement roof. It will stand to a not dissimilar height to the other agricultural buildings on the holding and have a close physical association with them.

The principal views of the Overton Farm farmyard are from the south along Fole Lane and public bridleway Checkley 24, and from public footpath Checkley 34 to the north. In views from Fole Lane / bridleway Checkley 24 the building will be seen alongside, and in close physical association with the existing agricultural buildings on the site, with its visual impact softened by the existing bund that surrounds the southwestern / western flank of the farmyard. The proposed building will not have a material adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area in such views. Likewise, in views from public footpath Checkley 34, the building will be read in the context of the existing buildings on the site, to which it will have a close physical association. Consequently, the proposed building will not appear strident or incongruous within its surroundings.

In determining the previous application on the site (SMD/2022/0355) the Local Authority concluded that:

“Generally modern agricultural buildings will have some impact on landscape, in varying degrees dependent on the circumstances in each case, but it is acknowledged that such buildings are essential to the countryside and to the nation’s food supply with economic or employment benefit outweighing any harm. In this particular case the applicant has a long established agricultural enterprise, with a sizeable land holding and large head of cattle. The proposed building will provide essential storage”.

The Local Authority went on to conclude overall that:

This is a recognised agricultural practice and one which will enhance the sustainability of the existing agricultural business. The proposed building is therefore in accordance with policy SS10 of the Local Plan.

The same conclusions ring true for this proposed building which will further support the sustainable growth of the applicant’s agricultural enterprise, which has further expanded since that previous application was granted.

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Having regard to the considerations set out above it is concluded that the proposal is in full accordance with policies SS1, SS10, DC1 and DC3 of the Local Plan and that consequently there is a compelling case for planning permission to be granted for the proposed development.

I trust this proposal will be of interest and should you have any queries or concerns with the application then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

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