

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2025/0069
Valid 17/02/2025

LAND SCHOOL LANE
LONGSDON

**INSTALLATION OF STABLE
DOORS TO TURN EXISTING
FIELD SHELTERS INTO 4X
SECURE STABLES AND 2X
STORAGE ROOMS.**

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

- Whether the proposal comprises an exception to inappropriate development in the Green Belt
- Design
- Amenity
- Highway Safety

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site consists of an area of hardstanding, set within a larger grass field. Two existing field shelters are located on the area of hardstanding. The site is accessed via a shared vehicle access which also serves the adjacent field. The field rises slightly away from School Lane and is shielded from view by a mature hedge row.

PROPOSAL

The proposed development comprises of the installation of stable doors to turn existing field shelters into four secure stables and two storage rooms. The proposed doors would be constructed from timber to match the existing stables.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (Adopted 2020)

SS1 Development Principles
SS2 Settlement Hierarchy
SS10 Other Rural Areas Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
DC3 Landscape and Settlement Setting
NE2 Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph(s) 1 – 14

Section(s) 4 – Decision making, 12 – Achieving well designed places, 13 – Protecting Greenbelt Land

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/2024/0032 – Proposal for a 40m x 25m sand and fibre all-weather outdoor arena. Approved.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 28/03/2025

Neighbour consultation period ends: 28/03/2025

Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

No public comments have been received.

Town / Parish Comments

Councillors have been consulted on this application and no objections were received.

Ramblers Association

P.R.O.W Longsdon 11 runs very close to where the proposed work is to be done. This must not affect the use of this R.O.W during or after development has taken place.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) promotes a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. For decision takers this means (c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or (d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are more important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission, unless: i) the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or ii) Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the

Framework taken as a whole.

Paragraph 8 of the NPPF identifies three dimensions to sustainable development as being economic, social and environmental.

In accordance with Policies SS1 and SS2 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan the Council expects all new development to make a positive contribution towards the sustainability of communities and to protect and where possible enhance the environment. A more limited focus on future growth is to be directed to smaller villages, including the rural area of Longsdon. When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The application site is located in the Open Countryside and Green Belt whereby Policy SS10 of the Local Plan (2020) is applicable. Policy SS10 states that these rural areas will provide only for development that 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.

Part (3) of policy SS10 seeks to protect the quality and character of the area and requires all development proposals to respect and respond sensitively to the distinctive qualities of the surrounding landscape.

The site is located within the Green Belt. Part (6) of Policy SS10 states that the Council will “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.”

Paragraph 154 of the NPPF (2024) outlines that the construction of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate in the Green Belt unless it meets an exception. Paragraph 153 of the NPPF (2024) states that ‘inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances’. One such exception is (b) *the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use), including buildings, for **outdoor sport, outdoor recreation**, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.*

The principle of the development is therefore considered acceptable. However, it must be determined if the proposal will harm the openness of the Green Belt.

Notably, an outdoor arena has recently been approved on land adjacent to the proposed site under the application SMD/2024/0032. The permission granted includes a small parking area, with small areas for a muck truck and temporary shelter on skids (subject to this application) for the intention of moving around the neighbouring field when required.

The existing field shelters are on skids so that they can be moved around. The purpose of adding doors to the field shelters is to change them to stables and

storage rooms, adding further security to the buildings so that horses can be kept inside during the winter months. Additionally, they would be used for personal items including tack and feed bins. The use of the proposed stables and storage rooms for these purposes indicates that their degree of permanence would be increased, in that there would clearly be no intention to move them.

As the field shelters have already been approved, the Council are assessing whether the addition of doors to the buildings and their resulting increased degree of permanence as stables and storage rooms would detrimentally impact the openness of the greenbelt.

The two buildings would sit within the existing cluster of development at the site, on the area of hardstanding previously approved for parking adjacent to the approved outdoor arena under SMD/2024/0032. Therefore, it is considered that the buildings would sit within the context of the portion of developed landscape at the site. The additional doors on the buildings would barely be visible from the wider public domain and surrounding countryside; they would be visually shielded by mature soft landscaped tree and hedge cover on the site boundary. As such, impact on openness is considered minimal and therefore acceptable.

The addition of doors to existing buildings on the site would not have a detrimental impact on the openness of the greenbelt; this would be considered di minimis.

Design

Policy DC3 of the Local Plan seeks to protect and where possible, enhance local landscape and the setting of settlements in the Staffordshire Moorlands.

Policy DC1 seeks to ensure that all development is well designed and of a high quality, contributing to local distinctiveness and harmonising with sense of place.

Despite the close proximity of the buildings to the roadside boundary, the mature soft landscaping comprising of hedgerow and tree cover would predominantly screen them from the wider public domain. Thus, they would not be widely visible from outside the site or the surrounding countryside.

Timber doors would be added to the buildings, which would match the timber used in the construction of the existing field shelters. Thus, the proposed material would match the existing material and harmonise with the host buildings, not detracting from the character of the buildings or wider area.

The proposal, by virtue of its size, scale and siting would maintain the character of the existing field shelters and area. The proposal would therefore accord with the provisions of local plan policies DC1, DC3 and section 12 of the NPPF in this regard.

Amenity

Paragraph 135 f) of the NPPF seeks to secure a high standard of amenity for all

existing and future occupants. Local Plan Policy DC1 requires development to achieve a satisfactory relationship to adjacent development and to not cause unacceptable effects by reason of visual intrusion, overlooking, shadowing, overbearing effect, noise, light pollution or other adverse impacts on local character and amenity.

The proposed addition of timber doors to the existing field shelters to make them secure stables and storage rooms will not lead to any overlooking or amenity impact due to the isolated location of the site. A public footpath runs through the blue edged portion of the applicants land but will not be obstructed in any way. As such there are no amenity concerns.

Highway Safety

Paragraph 109 of the NPPF states that patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes and should contribute to making high quality places. Policy T1 seeks to provide safe and sustainable access and ensure that development does not lead to an increase in on street parking.

The addition of timber doors to the existing field shelters would not impact the off-highway parking at the site. Off-highway parking spaces shall continue to be retained as detailed on the plan referenced and titled '1686_02_02 Site Plans'. To ensure that the off-highway parking at the site will be retained for the lifetime of the development, this shall be secured by way of condition.

Thus, the proposed development would have no impact on highway safety, in accordance with Policy T1.

Other Matters

Notably, public right of way 'Longsdon 11' runs within very close proximity to where the proposed stables and storage rooms are located. The Ramblers Association have submitted a comment regarding the proposed works, stating that the proposed development must not affect the use of this right of way during or after the development has taken place.

The proposed addition of doors to the existing field shelters to make them secure stables and storage rooms would not impact the use of the right of way, therefore the development is considered acceptable in this sense.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

In consideration of all of the above, the application is recommended for approval. Due to the application having no adverse effect upon neighbour or street scene

amenity, no impact on the openness of the greenbelt and no overall impact on the highway, it is deemed acceptable under planning policy. Therefore, the proposed development is recommended for approval, subject to compliance with all conditions.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE

Case Officer: Hannah Varley

Recommendation Date: 01/04/2025

X 

Signed by: Jane Colley Signature

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council