

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2025/0248
Valid 21/05/2025

BASFORD HALL FARM
BASFORD GREEN ROAD
CHEDDLETON

**PROPOSED NATURAL POOL
AND ASSOCIATED
LANDSCAPING TO EXISTING
FARMYARD, INCLUDING
EXISTING GARAGE TO BE
UTILISED AS A CHANGING
AREA.**

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

The principle of development
The impact on the setting of a listed building
The impact on the character and appearance of the area
The impact on residential amenity
Ecological impacts and BNG

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The site is part of the Basford Hall Estate in the countryside (but not in the Green Belt), about a mile to the south-east of Cheddleton village. It comprises a large hardstanding and hardcore area a short distance to the west of Basford Hall itself, a large traditional stone residence and its associated barns and outbuildings, also made of stone, a number of which are used as holiday lets. It is reached via the main access drive into the Basford Hall Estate which runs from Basford Green to the north and passes Basford Hall and the adjacent Basford Hall Farmhouse (both of which are Grade II listed) to the east with the application site on the other side of the drive to the west, with the drive continuing south serving other buildings which form part of the estate. The site is ringed by perimeter trees to the north, south and west separating the hard-standing from open fields. Within the site there is also a domestic stone-and-tile double garage on the eastern boundary of the site and a concrete sided materials/midden enclosure agricultural midden in the north-west corner. A timber posted gazebo structure with pitched roof also appears to have been recently added. There is also a shepherd hut next to the garage but this is shown to be just outside the application site red line boundary. The site formerly was occupied by modern agricultural storage buildings which have been demolished, leaving outdoor yard areas present. There are mounds of gravel/aggregate and hard-surfacing materials and during the site visit, small diggers were present and some new surfacing of part of the site has taken place.

PROPOSAL

This is a full planning application for the formation of an outdoor “nature pool” for leisure purposes in association with the holiday let uses present at the Basford Hall estate. The existing garage would be converted into a changing room. An outdoor seating area would be provided in the concrete enclosure with a pergola-type structure added and the application also proposes a covered timber gazebo with felt pitched roof. The pool would be in the middle of the site and the rest of the site would be landscaped including new paths, stone setts paved areas, timber decking and native tree planting to compliment the existing perimeter trees which would not be removed.

The application was accompanied by a Heritage, Design and Access Statement, Landscaping Scheme, Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) Report, Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) report with BNG Metric calculations and a Planning Statement.

In October 2025, an amended Location Plan and amended proposed Block Plan were received showing a red edge application site boundary line consistent with the BNG Report red line boundary. A Lighting Plan was also submitted in the same month. An amended application form (correcting the BNG calculation), amended BNG Report and corrected Metric calculations were also received in October 2025.

The landscaping scheme includes wildflower planting, a wildflower meadow, native pool oxygenator plants and native pool marginal planting in order to achieve a Biodiversity Net Gain.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (Adopted Sept 2020)

- SS10 Other Rural Areas Strategy
- SS11 Churnet Valley Strategy
- E4 Tourism & Cultural Development
- DC1 Design Considerations
- DC2 The Historic Environment
- NE1 Biodiversity

National Planning Policy Framework (Dec 2025)

Sections 6 (Economy), 12 (Design), 15 (Natural Environment) and 16 (Historic Environment).

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/2014/0693: Change of use of barn into ancillary residential accommodation (for Basford Hall). Approved and implemented. This included the application site within its “curtilage”.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 29.7.25.
Neighbour consultation period ends: 29.7.25
Press Advert: 4.6.25.

Public Comments

None.

Town/Parish Council Comments

Cheddleton PC (rec 5.11.25): To be clarified if it is retrospective, what is actually going on and we request, if appropriate, more information.

Local Highways Authority

Initially a recommendation of refusal was recommended on the grounds of insufficient information relating to the amount of spoil that would be removed to construct the pool and the method of disposal as this would determine the number of vehicle movements required affecting local roads.

Revised consultation response: No objection.

Highways previously requested additional information be submitted to show the volume of the pool and proposals for disposal of spoil from the excavation of the pool.

This information was submitted on 13th June 2025 and states that the pool is 236m³ (300m³ with bulking) and that the spoil will be retained on site to fill in a former slurry pit. This confirms that no spoil will be removed from the site - no spoil will be transported on the highway.

This proposal could not be considered to have a severe effect on the highway.

Environmental Health

No objection subject to conditions relating to construction hours and measures, lighting, machinery noise restrictions, dealing with unexpected contamination and amplified noise restrictions. Comments provided below:

Lighting: Any lighting installed should not cause increased luminance or glare at any nearby residential properties. (condition advised).

Water Quality Advisory: This type of pool relies on biological filtration and does not use chemical such as chlorine for ensuring water quality is suitable for swimming. This can cause algae growth and host dangerous bacteria and parasites if the pool is not properly managed.

Ongoing maintenance and testing of water quality will be required to ensure user health and safety is not compromised.

Noise: the plant appears to be housed so there is not predicted to be any significant risk of impact to residential amenity but we would advise the plant is selected and installed so as not to increase background sound levels. Any music played should be

inaudible at any neighbouring residential property not in the ownership of the applicant/operator.

Water Discharge: It is not clear from the application how waste water will be discharged, but we would advise the applicant consult with the Environment Agency to check if any discharge consent is required.

Conservation Officer

No objection. In summary, the proposal would likely have a negligible impact on the setting of the Listed Buildings. The setting of the Listed Buildings would be preserved, which would satisfy the provisions of s.66 of the Act, Section 16 of the NPPF and policy DC2 of the local development framework. There are no objections to the proposal from a conservation perspective.

Consultation comments below:

The proposed development would be more domestic in appearance due to the ancillary features, such as a gazebo and pergola, which would alter the agricultural setting and legibility of the listed farmhouse. However, the former modern portal buildings and hardstanding were of no architectural merit, their scale and modern palette of materials detracted from the historic vernacular interest of the listed farmhouse.

The proposed retention of the more openness of the site would be more akin to the historic setting of the buildings (as indicated in Fig.1-3). In addition, the proposed plans indicate a more verdant landscape character to the site which would integrate the yard with the surrounding rural open fields, the latter of which makes a positive contribution to the wider rural setting of the listed farmhouse and hall.

The proposed platform/decking for the pool would be low-rise and, visually, not compete with the surrounding heritage assets. The proposed gazebo and pergola would be sited at the far western and northern part of the site. Whilst these are more domestic in nature, their siting away from the principal and curtilage listed structures would minimise the visual impact of the development on their immediate setting and appreciation.

There would be no material changes to the appearance of the garage. Clarification was provided in email (dated 27/06/25) that the enclosure to the pool area would be a timber post and rail fence to match the height and design of the fence currently to the rear of the garage. This would be sympathetic to the rural character of the site.

Further information was also provided on the proposed lighting design – this would be low-level lighting columns. Whilst the proposed lighting would be more domestic in nature, the scale and low-rise nature of the lighting columns would unlikely detract from the overall appreciation of the vernacular character of the principal listed farmhouse and curtilage listed cottage.

Historic England

Historic England provides advice when our engagement can add most value. In this case we are not offering advice. This should not be interpreted as comment on the merits of the application. We suggest that you seek the views of your specialist conservation and archaeological advisers.

SCC Flood Authority

This development does not appear to be a major development, therefore we are not statutory consultees and have no further comments to offer.

Staffordshire Wildlife Trust

On the basis of amended plans and amended BNG report, no objection is raised subject to conditions.

SCC Minerals Authority

No comment.

OFFICER COMMENTS

The site is mostly covered by a large hard-standing and gravel area following the removal of two large modern agricultural storage buildings. The site has historically been a farming site connected to the adjacent Basford Hall Farmhouse which lies to the east and along with Basford Hall itself, also nearby, is Grade II listed. Agricultural usage of the site has ceased and in 2014, the site was included in an application to change the use of one of the nearby barns into residential accommodation in connection with Basford Hall, a dwelling. The former agricultural use of the site has effectively changed to residential curtilage. There is a domestic double garage and a concrete sided materials store and most of the site is covered by a hard-surfaced yard. The site can therefore be deemed to be brownfield i.e. Previously Developed Land (PDL). A proposal to remove the yard and replace it with a nature pool and surrounding landscaping, change the garage into a changing room and provide a gazebo (which has already been built and therefore this is a retrospective application) for the holiday let guests in the converted buildings at the Basford Hall Estate is therefore not unacceptable in principle and does not conflict with Policy SS10, the strategy for the countryside or Policy SS11 (Churnet Valley strategy). In enhancing the tourist/visitor overnight accommodation experience there is also compliance with Policy E4 which encourages sustainable tourist development.

The proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the area or the wider rural landscape. There would be no encroachment of built development beyond the current yard and concrete sided enclosure. New structures include a pergola contained within the enclosure and a gazebo and the retention of the perimeter tree belts ensure that no part of the development would be visible from outside of the Basford Hall Estate.

The development is regarded as having a negligible impact on the settings of the Grade II listed Basford Hall Farmhouse and Basford Hall, which were affected by the presence of the yard and concrete sided enclosure and former modern agricultural storage buildings. The existing garage building is made of stone with a pitched roof and does not affect the settings of the listed buildings. The proposed pergola and gazebo are placed appropriately on the opposite side of the site to the listed buildings and the proposed new stone sett and buff stone paths, hard-standings and small areas of timber decking are an improvement on the grey gravel and yard surfaces in terms of character and appearance.

There would be no impact on residential amenity due to the distance between the proposed pool and residential properties outside of the Basford Hall Estate property.

Neither the use of the pool (restricted to holiday let guests at Basford Hall and not for general public use) or the construction works would lead to any significant additional traffic or harms to highway safety.

Finally, the works would not have an impact on the ecological value of the site with the safeguard of conditions to ensure works are carried out in accordance with the measures outlined in the PEA report and a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) would be achieved via new planting including wildflower areas.

CONCLUSION

The proposal is acceptable in principle and would not lead to any harms to the setting of listed buildings or the overall visual or residential amenities of the area or lead to any other environmental harms and would achieve BNG. The proposal would comply with the Council's Local Plan and the government planning guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : APPROVE

Case Officer: Chris Johnston
Recommendation Date: 12.11.25

X 

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council