

Biodiversity Gain Statement

**PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE CONVERSION OF A STABLE BLOCK INTO
A NEW DWELLING, WITH ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPING AND ACCESS AT
STONEY DALE FARM, OAKAMOOD, ST10 3AH**



Photo from Google Maps

February 2026

Introduction/Context

This statement has been prepared to support the full planning application for the conversion of a stable building into a single dwelling, with associated landscaping and access works.

Stoneydale Farm is located south of Oakamoor. The existing farmhouse has adjoining land totaling 17 acres, which mainly consists of open pasture and woodlands. The brick stable block is the only other significant building on the site, which is positioned adjacent to the existing dwelling, in between an existing access track to the other side and a small paddock to the front.

The development site encompasses the building, pasture to the west and south, and an existing access track. The track has an existing tarmac finish and the courtyard area between the stable buildings is concrete. The area to the side and in front of the building is rough pasture, besides a small dilapidated outbuilding close to the side of the stables. The paddock is tree lined in the Northeast and Southeast corners, which mainly consist of mature conifer specimens with other smaller shrubbery.

Biodiversity Net Gain

A small site biodiversity metric calculation has been produced to support the application. This includes the relevant site areas, in existing and proposed conditions, and the metric calculations for the habitat and hedgerows which are to be introduced. With the new features introduced as part of the proposal, a gain of 13.24% has been achieved in habitat and a further 40.52% in hedgerows, surpassing the 10% target uplift in both areas.

Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat surveys identifies the development area to be mainly the habitat type as B6 poor semi-improved grasslands. There is an existing hard standing track, all of which has become overgrown with some ruderal vegetation. Such areas provide minimal value habitat for invertebrates and small mammals. There is tree lined boundary to the Northeast and Southwest corner, however these are to be protected and retained.

As the principle of the application is the conversion of an existing building, the only notable loss of biodiversity habitats are the areas of grass where the driveway and parking area etc. is to be installed. The areas of the building which are being extended/rebuilt are over areas of existing concrete.

The primary measures being introduced to increase biodiversity across the site include the introduction of new planting within an adjacent field, to the west of the development site. To the other side of the access track, 4no. Silver Birch (*Betula Pendula*), 4no. Rowan (*Sorbus Aucuparia*) and 4no. Wild Cherry (*Prunus Avium*) saplings, 150-175cm tall, nursery standards will be planted at an approximate separation of 5m. If the field continues to be grazed, a new post and rail fence will be erected 2m beyond the planted trees to protect them from grazing livestock. The specimens shall be suitably staked to protect against winds, and have guards applied to protect against wildlife damage. These should be removed once the trees are sufficiently established, potentially after three years, however the trees should be showing strong signs of growth and trunk strength before removal. The removal of these protection measures is imperative to ensure healthy and sustained growth of the trees, as if left indefinitely, it will inhibit growth and lead to the premature decline of the tree.

A new native hedgerow will be planted along the East boundary with the existing driveway which serves Stoneydale Farm. This will be a mix species, including Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) and Dog Rose (*Rosa canina*). 500mm whips will be planted at 300mm centres, in two staggered rows with 300mm separation. New plants to have protective sleeving and staked during first three years of growth. Early pruning will encourage thicker growth from the base, before protective measures can be removed. The existing Buxus hedge along the rear elevation of the building will be replaced by a new beech hedge, as an existing to the existing beech specimens in the Northwest corner of the site. These *Fagus sylvatica* specimens are to be "instant hedge" plants 1-1.8m tall in order to provide immediate screening on the boundary between separate dwellings. All hedge planting will take place in the dormant October-February period to aid establishment and watering, particularly of the large Beech specimens will be required for the first growing season.

New habitat areas are identified on the Biodiversity Net Gain Plan (PL04) supplied with the application.

