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From: planningcomments@staffs Moorlands.gov.uk
Sent: 29 March 2026 14:02
To: Planning Comments (SMDC)
Subject: Comment Received from Public Access

Categories: [REDACTED]

Application Reference No. : SMD/2026/0099 Site Address: Land South Of Farmside Lane Biddulph Moor
Staffordshire Comments by: Glen Pearson
From:

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Submission: Objection

Comments: Planning Application Objection & Permission in Principle (7 Dwellings)

Site: Land South Of Farmside Lane, Biddulph Moor

I wish to formally object to this Permission in Principle application for the development of 7 dwellings on land south of Farmside Lane, Biddulph Moor.

While it is acknowledged that the site is being considered under the emerging concept of 'grey belt', this does not automatically render the development acceptable. The proposal must still be assessed rigorously against the requirements and overarching principles of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and in this case, it fails to do so for the following reasons:

1. Inappropriate Development in the Green Belt

The NPPF is clear that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. Even where land is described as 'grey belt', it does not lose its Green Belt designation unless formally released through the Local Plan process.

Paragraphs 152-154 of the NPPF confirm that inappropriate development in the Green Belt should not be approved except in very special circumstances. No such circumstances have been demonstrated within this application for Land South Of Farmside Lane. A search result on Rightmove.co.uk, shows 84 properties for sale within a 1 mile radius of this planned development, so a lack of housing in the area certainly isn't one of them.

The proposal would:

Erode the openness of the Green Belt

Contribute to incremental encroachment into the countryside surrounding Biddulph Moor

Undermine the long-term permanence of Green Belt boundaries

2. Conflict with the Plan-Led System

The NPPF places significant weight on the plan-led approach (Paragraph 15), ensuring that development is directed to sustainable and appropriate locations through an adopted Local Plan.

The identification of 'grey belt' land is a strategic matter that should be tested through the Local Plan process, not determined through speculative, piecemeal Permission in Principle applications such as this proposal at Farmside Lane.

Granting PiP in this instance would:

Pre-empt proper plan-making and public consultation

Undermine confidence in the planning system

Set a harmful precedent for further speculative development in Biddulph Moor

3. Lack of Demonstrated Sustainability

The NPPF (Paragraphs 7&9) emphasises the need to achieve sustainable development across economic, social, and environmental objectives.

At the Permission in Principle stage, insufficient information has been provided to demonstrate that Land South Of Farmside Lane represents a sustainable location for housing. There is no clear evidence that:

The site has suitable access to key services and facilities within Biddulph Moor

Transport impacts can be safely and effectively mitigated

Local infrastructure has the capacity to support additional dwellings

Without this information, it is not possible to conclude that the development complies with the NPPF's presumption in favour of sustainable development.

4. Prematurity and Lack of Detail

Permission in Principle applications are intended for sites where the acceptability of development is clear. In this case, the principle of developing Land South Of Farmside Lane is fundamentally contested due to its Green Belt status.

Approving PiP without full assessment of:

Landscape and visual impact

Highways access and safety along Farmside Lane

Ecology and environmental constraints

would be contrary to the NPPF's requirement for informed and evidence-based decision-making.

5. Harm to Character and Countryside

The NPPF recognises the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside (Paragraph 180). Development of Land South Of Farmside Lane would urbanise an open area on the edge of Biddulph Moor, resulting in:

Loss of rural character

Visual harm to the surrounding landscape

Encroachment into open countryside

Conclusion

In summary, this proposal for Land South Of Farmside Lane, Biddulph Moor represents inappropriate development in the Green Belt, conflicts with the plan-led approach, fails to demonstrate sustainability, and would result in harm to the character and openness of the countryside.

The NPPF sets a clear and high bar for development in such locations, and this application does not meet that threshold.

For these reasons, I strongly urge the Local Planning Authority to refuse Permission in Principle for this development.

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