
**Supporting Planning, Design &
Access Statement**

**Retrospective application for
reorientated agricultural building**

**Land east of Meadow View Farm
Eaves Lane
Armshead
ST2 8NA**

March 2026

**Statement prepared by:
Russell Adams
MSc, BA Hons, MRTPI**

For and on behalf of the landowners

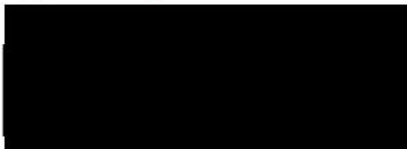
Supporting Statement

Land at Meadow View Farm, Kerry Hill

March 2026

Ref: 2021 – 10e

Approved by:



Russell Adams - Director

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Adams Planning + Development Ltd (APD) have prepared this Supporting Statement on behalf of the landowners Chris Holt and Gail Thompson. This Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the following form of development:

“Retrospective planning application for reorientation of agricultural building with associated access track and infrastructure.”

- 1.2 This planning application comprises of the following information:

- A Covering Letter
- Planning Application Form & Certificate A
- This Supporting Statement
- Planning Application Forms
- A Site Location Plan (Drawing No. AD04-2115-01, Rev. A)
- A Block Plan (Drawing No. AD04-2115-02, Rev. B)
- A Floor Plan (Drawing No. AD04-2115-03, Rev. C)
- Elevations (Drawing No. AD04-2115-04, Rev. B)
- A Groundsure Coal Mining Report

- 1.3 A pre-application consultation was submitted by the applicants to Staffordshire Moorlands Council in September 2020. The pre-application consultation response identified that the whole site is located within the Green Belt, a Coal Development Area and had has the Wetley Moor Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) to the south of the land.

- 1.4 The Council advised it would be appropriate to engage the services of an architect and planning consultant to advise on the above planning policy and environmental considerations. The Applicants subsequently instructed APD and The Lakeland Building Group to update and submit the enclosed planning submission which has been designed to ensure that it complies with Staffordshire Moorland Council's adopted Development Plan policies.

- 1.5 Planning permission was granted for an agricultural building (Ref: SMD/2021/0175) on 3rd September 2021. A subsequent application (Ref: SMD/2024/0437) was made to the Council in September 2024 to amend the approved plans referenced in Condition 1 of the original planning consent. The applicants were subsequently advised that the Council required a new consent for the re-orientated building due to the revised siting being sufficiently materially different from the approved plans to warrant a full application.

2.0 Site and surroundings

- 2.1 The Applicants landholding is an area of 2.42 hectares (6 acres) of grazing land that is bound to the north by Kerryhill Nurseries, to the east by the existing access track, to the south by the Wetley Moor SSSI and to the north and east by Meadow View Farm, Kerry View Farm, JE Robinson's Dairy Farm, the Serenity Farm Project and their associated landholdings.
- 2.2 The land has an existing gated access on the southeastern corner that will be retained as the main field access to the site. The land is relatively flat and free of trees aside from a large Oak tree that sits on the northern side of the eastern portion of the land. The majority of the land that sits on the southeastern side of this tree is registered as Common Land, which is seemingly a historical allocation that bears no relationship to any defining characteristic of the land in its current state.
- 2.3 The site rises gradually from the south to the north and benefits from existing mature hedgerows and tree screening on the northern, eastern, southern and western sides of the site that will screen third party views of the proposed new agricultural barn.
- 2.4 The Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan Proposals Map extract below (see Figure 1) identifies that the land in question is not constrained by Flood Risk, lies outside designated Conservation Areas, has no protected trees and lies due north of the Wetley Moor SSSI and Special Protection Area.

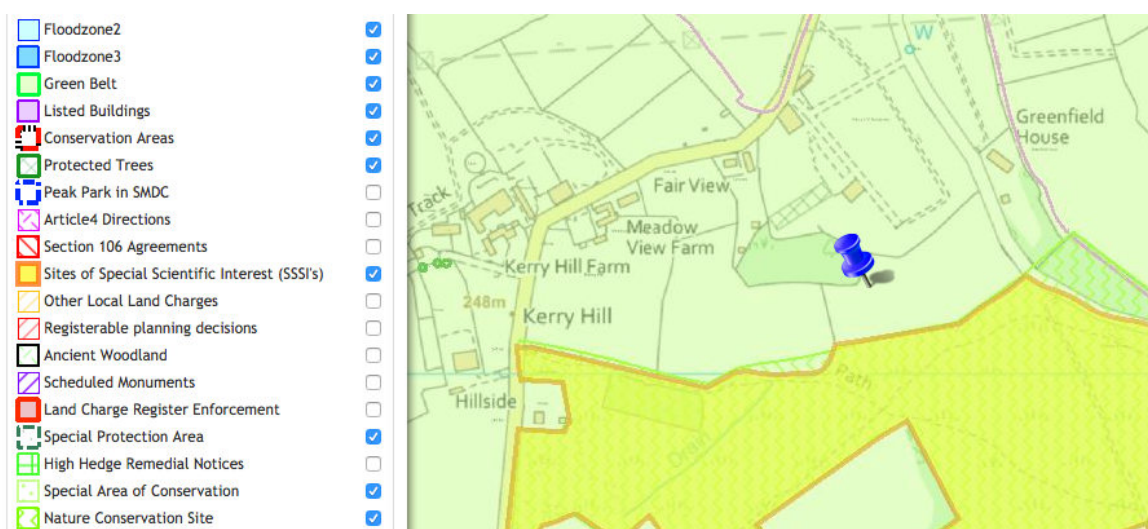


Figure 1 – Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan Proposals Map Extract

- 2.5 There are no known technical constraints that exist at the subject landholding.

3.0 Development Proposals

- 3.1 The Applicants have an established smallholding for a modest animal rearing business that utilises their farming knowledge which both Chris and Gail have accrued over their lifetimes, having both been brought up and worked on farms for a large portion of their lives.
- 3.2 Chris Holt is registered blind. His loss of peripheral sight forced him into retiring from his previous employment as an HGV driver.
- 3.3 Gail Thompson was previously working as a dog behaviourist but gave this up in order to care for Chris whom she has to be with 24/7 in order to assist him cope with his blindness. Gail has extensive experience of rearing cattle, sheep and pigs and has previously run three businesses. Both parties are keen to rear animals and work within the safety of their own land, with the backing of the Blind Veterans, supporting a simple, sustainable and healthy lifestyle.
- 3.4 The enclosed updated plans reflect the following key changes to the originally approved plans (Ref: SMD/2021/0175):
- Re-orientation of the building by 90 degrees at the advice of the contractor due to the presence of ground water at the site that made the previous orientation unbuildable.
 - The re-orientation of the barn has resulted in the massing and frontage of the barn being reduced from 22 metres to 11 metres when viewed from the nearest public footpath.
 - The insertion of a lean-to extension that accommodates both hay storage and a dedicated chicken hut for ease of access.
 - A W/C to enable the applicants to wash and clean themselves on site.
 - Insulated walls and ceilings for the incubation rooms given the need to retain a constant heat for incubating the chickens' eggs that they are breeding on site.
 - Moveable stalls that are stored in the barn that can be moved around the open plan area to accommodate the chickens, sheep and lambs during lambing season.
- 3.5 The agricultural barn has been reorientated 90 degrees at the advice of the contractor who advised the previous siting would have led to the barn being flooded at times of heavy rainfall. The alterations to the barn orientation and floor layout improves the accessibility of the barns to the applicants thus enabling better animal husbandry for the animals that the applicants keep within the barn.
- 3.6 Mr Holt's eyesight has continued to deteriorate since beginning the smallholding venture so the use of the barn and the type of animals they tend to have had to evolve. Originally the applicants kept sheep, pigs and goats as well as chickens; however, Natural England only allowed for two pigs to be kept at the smallholding so keeping pigs became unviable given that the upkeep would outweigh the income generated from the pigs.
- 3.7 The applicants did also originally try rearing goats but they found that they jumped out of the paddock fencing and escaped to the nearby Moors to feed. The agricultural business has, therefore, focused on the area of the business that Chris finds easiest to manage as well as being profitable, with the building now being registered as a hatchery for 95 birds.
- 3.8 The barns internal configuration is very open plan to assist Chris to move around the barn better. The internal insulated incubator rooms enable Chris and Gail to maintain the exact

temperature and humidity needed to rear their chicks. Prior to inserting the incubation rooms, they lost more than 100 chicks to hyperthermia, hypothermia, and predatory deaths. Their hatching rate was 30% but this has risen to 80% since using the insulated rooms. The incubator rooms are necessary given that young chicks cannot regulate their own body temperatures and barn can reach 40 degrees in summer and minus 10 in the winter with neither of these temperature extremes being acceptable for chicks 0-6 weeks.

- 3.9 The young chicks do not gain perch control until 6 weeks, so the nursery room segregates them and keeps them off the floor of the main open plan barn, away from rats. The applicants also allow their brooding hens to raise chicks in the room and they keep feed bins in the room to ensure that there is no humidity which can cause mould to form on the food.
- 3.10 The collected eggs are selected for 3 different uses. Unfertilised eggs are placed in a refrigerator for sale to local people directly or at 3 local car boots. Fertilised eggs are sold to individuals and by postage orders. The second incubator rooms used to store and packaging these eggs that have to be kept in a dry, cool environment to ensure they will hatch for the buyer.
- 3.11 There are five removable pens for hens in the barn to separate out the different breeds of hens. The applicants rear Giant Brahma hens alongside other rare breeds and selling fertilised eggs at between £1 and £3 per egg makes the hens the most profitable part of the business.
- 3.12 Whilst the original plans made provision for hay and straw to be kept in the barn the condensation from having a tin roof caused excessive mold in the hay making it unusable as feed to the animals. Furthermore, keeping the feed inside the barn resulting in a rat infestation which affected the egg laying of the hens. The lean to is dry and well insulated and has overcome the aforementioned issues.
- 3.13 The sheep rearing side of the business has also evolved. The flock of sheep the applicants originally bought were Southdown sheep that weigh approximately 55 kilos, were prone to foot rot and needed sheering. This was something that Chris and Gail found challenging to do and they were unable to find anyone willing to do this. As a consequence, they now breed a rare small breed sheep called Soay sheep that are self-shedders, and weigh 25 kilos, are easier and safer to handle, are hardier to ailments and have the added benefit of increasing the numbers of the rare breed.
- 3.14 The updated internal alterations also remove the former storage, brew room and kennel facilities detailed on a previous submission in-line with the advice received from lead members of the Council's Planning Team in correspondence and discussions held in July and August 2022. The proposed floor plans do, therefore, represent the 'as built' improved internal layout requested by the Council.
- 3.15 The enclosed Groundsure Coal Mining Report does identify that the siting of the barn does just fall within the area of 'probable shallow coal mining' with the Report identifying that:
- "The property does not lie within the potential zone of influence of any recorded underground coal workings.
The property is indicated to lie in an area where coal deposits have been worked at shallow depth in the past but for which no plan exists.
A coal outcrop is recorded to pass through the property boundary. There is a possibility of unrecorded mining features associated with this coal outcrop within the property boundary."*
- 3.16 The Report confirms that there are no underground coal mining workings, with all coal mining therefore being surface based. Our clients have inspected the subject land that is intended to accommodate the building and are happy that the proposed siting of the building is appropriate, the land is structurally stable, and the siting will not compromise any third

Land at Meadow View Farm, Kerry Hill, Stoke
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party ownerships. This will be evident to the appointed planning officer when they conduct the site visit.

4.0 Planning Policy Considerations

- 4.1 Paragraph 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, December 2024) identifies that decisions on planning applications “*must be made in accordance with the [development] plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.*”
- 4.2 The ‘Development Plan’ for Staffordshire Moorlands is the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan adopted in September 2020.
- 4.3 The NPPF is also a strong material consideration in this instance given that it has only recently been adopted, and outlines the Government’s most up-to-date planning policy guidance.

National Planning Policy

- 4.4 Paragraphs 10 and 11 of the NPPF identifies that:

*“So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a **presumption in favour of sustainable development** (paragraph 11).*

*For **decision-taking** 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 most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance⁷ provides a strong 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 this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.”

- 4.5 Paragraph 85 of the NPPF identifies that:

*“Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. **Significant weight** should be placed on the need to **support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.** The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future.”*

- 4.6 Paragraph 88 identifies that:

“Planning policies and decisions should enable:

a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;

b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;

c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and

d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.”

4.7 Paragraph 89 recognises that:

“Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable.”

4.8 Paragraph 125 of the NPPF identifies that:

“Planning policies and decisions should encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains – such as developments that would enable new habitat creation or improve public access to the countryside.”

4.9 Paragraph 135 identifies that:

“Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
- f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.”*

4.10 Paragraph 154 of the NPPF is of particular relevance the proposed agricultural building. This clarifies that:

“A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are a) buildings for agriculture and forestry.”

Local Planning Policy

4.11 The Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (September 2020) is consistent with the NPPF in supporting agricultural-based businesses in the Countryside and Green Belt locations.

4.12 Policy SS10 – ‘Other Rural Areas Strategy’ clarifies that in these areas the Council and its partners will support businesses that have an essential need to be located in the countryside, and will sustain the rural economy by enabling the development of business for employment uses where a rural location can be justified. The agricultural uses being proposed in this instance, including the rearing of farm animals and the growing of crops and trees all require a countryside location.

- 4.13 Policy SS10 aims to enhance and conserve the quality of the countryside by requiring all new development to respect and respond sensitively to the distinctive qualities of the surrounding landscape and the proposed siting of the building, its scale and colour scheme and the proposed low-intervention access track certainly respond to Policy SS10's objectives whilst ensuring that the porous surface does not lead to surface water run-off.
- 4.14 The proposed introduction of additional Hawthorne hedges and the addition of new fruit trees, plants and vegetables together with the wide range of rare breed animals will provide enhanced biodiversity and enrichment of the land, in line with Policy SS10's aims, as well as offering employment benefits to the Applicants who sell their produce locally at farmers markets and market stalls and over the internet. The barn's design has been specifically designed and the care of animals evolved to enable Chris to work within the building, with the open plan arrangement ensuring that his disability doesn't matter whilst the applicants are working together in the barn.
- 4.15 Chris can undertake work at the building without fear of falling and blind veterans have helped a lot and given Chris any support he needs. As a consequence, his mental health is much better since waking every day and going to work with animals that need feeding, worming, vaccinations and the rewards back are immense, with the animals under their care not being capable of judging a disability.
- 4.16 The proposals are sensitively designed and accord with both National and Local Plan policies. The agricultural barn provides a small scale, sustainable form of development that should be supported in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, and due to the fact that the Applicants have demonstrated that there are no technical constraints that might prohibit the proposed agricultural barn in the manner being proposed in this instance.