

Location of proposed development

Stanley Farm Bungalow, Dial Lane, Congleton, Staffordshire, SK11 0RU

Description of proposed development

Timber Stable

Date

16th February 2026

Applicant

Mr Smallwood

Agent and consultants

Bayon Architectural Technology Ltd.(Agent)

Bayon Architectural Technology Ltd. (Design)

Evergeen Ecology Ltd (Ecology, BNG)

Introduction

This design and access statement has been prepared to support the full planning application for the construction of a timber stable building on land to the west of Stanley Farm Bungalow, Dial Lane, Congleton, Staffordshire, SK11 0RU. The stable will house 3 horses and 1 pony. It also includes a hay, feed & tack room.

The site is located within Green Belt. Development in greenbelt is restricted with exceptions made for 'appropriate development' The proposal is considered to fall within the exception that allows appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and recreation.

The proposal complies within relevant policies of the development plan and the National Planning Policy Framework. In accordance with s.38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and paragraph 11 of the Framework, planning permission can be granted. There are no material considerations which would indicate otherwise.

Background

The site was an agricultural holding totalling 9.7ha and includes The Bungalow and 2 agricultural buildings with yard, parking and pasture to the south. The site changed hands a few years ago from the original owners to their grandson, the applicant.

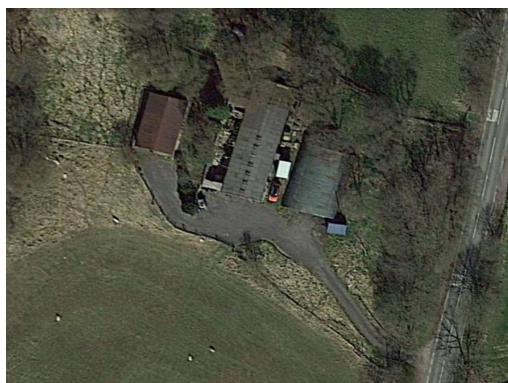
The site is no longer viable as a small holding and the applicant has plans to repurpose the site.

The applicant revived permission to convert the two brans on site, these permissions were then exchanged for one smaller, new build dwelling. Ref SMD/2025/0249

Ariel view of Stanley Farm

The Bungalow to the left, situated at the highest part of the site and to be repurposed as a garage for the approved dwelling.

Farm buildings to the east, to be demolished to make space for the new dwelling. Access road running from the bungalow to Dial Lane to the east.



The applicants family have a keen interest in equestrian and currently have horses in livery. The intention is to relocate the horses to their home, for this, a stable building is required.

The Application

The proposal is for a stable to house 3 horses and 1 pony with stable sizes following the guidance by The British Horse Society – 3.65m x 3.65m for horses and 3.05m x 3.05m for ponies, this allows the horses/ponies to lie down, stand up and turn around without difficulty.

It is advised the height should be 2.7m to 3.4m depending on the size of horse.

Doors should be 1.25m wide and the building should be sufficiently ventilated. Stable doors for the purposes of ventilation and allow the horses to fully look out. Window openings will be metal grills.

The stable is L shaped, 13.84m with a return leg of 8.98m, 2.7m to eaves height, and ridge of 3.54m. The roof will also have an overhang. This allows for the creation of 3 stables for horses, 1 stable for a pony and a feed and tack room. The L footprint allows an area to be fenced off for turning out the horses when mucking out. Stops the horses wondering off into the field.

The structure will be timber frame with horizontal treated timber cladding, timber stable doors and a bitumen based roof cover from 'Onduline' which will be green in colour. The roof also includes vision panels for natural light to all 4 stables.

Layout

The site is sloping, all buildings on site have been cut into the hillside to create a level area, the proposed stable is no different. A retaining wall will be created to three sides to accommodate the slope and create a level area for the stable and turning out area. A 600mm gap is created from the proposed retaining wall to the stable for ease of construction, maintenance and allow ventilation and avoid damp issues. The retaining wall will be faced in natural stone to give a dry stone wall appearance and graduated to follow the lie of the land.

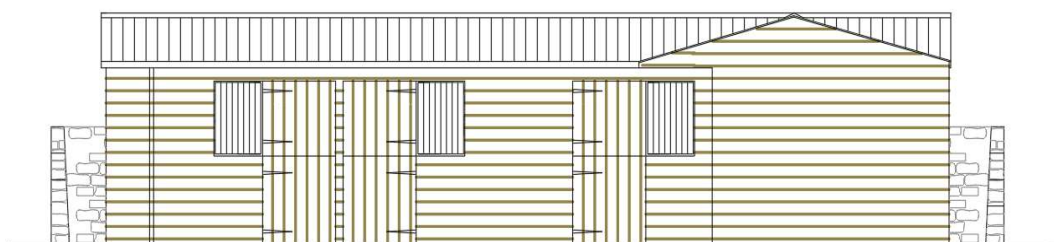
The access will be an extension of the existing driveway which is a short distance away, the access will be surfaced in loose stone and is directed around an existing Acer tree to a gate leading into the turning out area. There will also be a gate giving access to the adjoining field.

The stable will be sunk into the hillside and screened by the retaining wall to a large extent, furthermore, the existing buildings on site will also screen the building as the ridge is only 375mm higher than the adjacent bungalow which is to become a garage. This also gives the building shelter, the site is in an exposed location.

Appearance

Siting of the building adjacent to the existing bungalow makes it an extension of the former farmstead, along with cutting into the hillside creates partial screening and will not appear prominent. The materials are considered appropriate, commonly used in equestrian development which reflect the rural character of the site and its surroundings.

East Elevation of the proposed building pictured below



PROPOSED EAST ELEVATION

There are no immediate neighbours, the site is surrounded by open fields and woodland.

Trees and ecology

There is 1 Acer tree in proximity to the proposed development, the building work is a safe distance from this tree and the access track a safe distance as not to effect the existing tree. The track will also be low traffic and permeable, surfaced in crushed stone.

The application is accompanied by a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment prepared by Evergreen Ecology and show how the proposal will deliver 10% Biodiversity Net Gain.

Highways

The application does not propose any alteration or improvement to the existing access with the highway. The development makes use of the existing access arrangement which currently serve the site. It is not considered the proposal will itself increase the use of the access and highway demand to any significant degree and highway safety will not be compromised.

Policy

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004 requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan taking into consideration any material considerations relevant to the determination of the application.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as revised in December 2024 and an important material consideration in determining planning applications. The revised NPPF does not change the statutory status of the Development Plan, Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan in this instance, it is a starting point for decision making and provides guidance to LPA's. The NPPF confirms that at the heart of the guidance is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that for decision making means approving development proposals that accord with the Development Plan without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The following policies are the most relevant policies of the adopted Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan

- SS1 (Development Principles)
- SS10 (Other Rural Areas Strategy)
- DC1 (Design Considerations)
- DC3 (Landscape and Settlement Setting)
- NE1 (Biodiversity and Geological Resources)
- T1 (Development and Sustainable Transport)

Planning Considerations

Green Belt

Paragraph 154 of the framework states that the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt will be considered inappropriate and should not be allowed except in very special circumstances. It includes exceptions and the relevant exception in this instance is -

Provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purpose of including land within it.

The proposed stables and tack room would be used in connection with, and for, outdoor sport and recreation relating to equestrian activities.

The stable would not be visually intrusive, sunk into the hillside and screened by existing buildings to large degree and accord with the exception detailed above in the national policy. Siting adjacent to existing farmstead buildings ensures the adjoining field remains open and undeveloped.

The stables have been designed for their intended purpose. Single storey and predominantly timber built which is common for these types of buildings. Equestrian facilities are common within the vicinity with several small and large scale buildings in adjacent fields. Therefore, the proposal is considered acceptable in context of the surrounding rural development.

The siting, associated landscaping and scale of the proposal means it would not appear prominent within the rural setting. In terms of visual and special terms, the openness of the Green Belt would be preserved. The

proposal accords with the 5 purposes of the Green Belt set out in Paragraph 143 of the Framework. The stable is considered appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and recreation and therefore is not inappropriate development.

Conclusion

The stable block for 3 horses, 1 pony and tack/feed/hay storage on land to the west of Stanley Farm Bungalow would be appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and recreation.

The proposal is not uncommon for this vicinity and is not an inappropriate form of development in the Green Belt.

The proposal preserves the openness of the Green Belt

The proposal by its scale and landscaping would not be out of character with the surrounding area. No harm to landscape or amenity of neighbouring properties.

The proposal accords with policy DC1 of the local plan as it is well designed and reinforces local distinctiveness by positively contributing and incorporating creative detailing, appropriate materials, characteristic of the area.

Creative detailing and landscaping accords with the requirement of DC3 and will not lead to a prominent intrusion into the countryside or have adverse impact on character or important views.

The proposal accords with policies SS1, DC1, DC3 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan. Therefore, in accordance with s.38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and paragraph 11 of The Framework, planning permission can be granted as there are no material considerations to restrict the issue of a positive decision.