

PLANNING STATEMENT

FOR THE

ERECTION OF A ROOF COVER OVER AN EXISTING

LIVESTOCK YARD AND MANURE STORE

AT

BACK LANE FARM

BACK LANE

BOTTOMHOUSE

LEEK

STAFFORDSHIRE

ST13 7PJ

ON BEHALF OF

MR B ROWLINSON

Report produced by:-
C G Barks MRICS
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the erection of a roof cover over an existing livestock yard and manure store at Back Lane Farm, Back Lane, Bottomhouse, Leek, Staffordshire, ST13 7PJ. The application is made on behalf of Mr B Rowlinson and falls to be determined by Staffordshire Moorlands District Council.

Back Lane Farm is an established livestock holding which has been the subject of continued investment in its buildings, handling facilities and manure storage. The proposals form the next stage of that programme and are directed at improving the management of farmyard manure and dirty water on the holding.

Both elements of the scheme involve the roofing over of existing external areas within the established farmstead.

The application is accompanied by the following plans and documents:

- Location Plan, Drawing No. BLF-001, dated 18/08/2026, scale 1:2500 @ A4
- Block Plan, Drawing No. BLF-002, dated 18/08/2026, scale 1:500 @ A3
- Floor Plan, Ian Harvey Fabrications Ltd, Version 1, dated 03/08/2026, scale 1:100
- Roof Plan, Ian Harvey Fabrications Ltd, Version 1, dated 03/08/2026, scale 1:100
- North and South Elevations, Ian Harvey Fabrications Ltd, Version 1, dated 03/08/2026, scale 1:100
- West Elevation, Ian Harvey Fabrications Ltd, Version 1, dated 03/08/2026, scale 1:100

2.0 AGRICULTURAL JUSTIFICATION

2.1 The Holding

Back Lane Farm is a commercial suckler beef holding. The land farmed by the applicant is summarised below.

Land	Hectares	Acres
Owned land at Back Lane Farm	34.68	85.7
Land taken on a mowing agreement (two cuts per annum, neighbouring owner)	12.00	29.7
Total area farmed	46.68	115.4

The owned land extends to 34.68 hectares (85.7 acres) and is farmed as permanent and temporary grassland in support of the suckler herd. In addition, the applicant rents approximately 12 hectares (29.7 acres) from a neighbouring owner, cut twice per annum, which contributes to the winter forage requirement of the herd. The total area from which forage and grazing is drawn is therefore approximately 46.68 hectares (115.4 acres).

2.2 The Livestock Enterprise

The holding carries the following cattle:

Stock class	Number
Suckler cows (plus calves at foot)	55
Store cattle, 12 months of age and over	approx. 30

All cattle are housed over the winter period within the existing buildings at the farmstead, and the yard and manure storage areas which are the subject of this application are used in connection with that housed period and with the handling and movement of stock throughout the year.

2.3 The Need for the Development

The cattle are bedded on straw and the holding produces farmyard manure. The purpose of the scheme is the separation of clean roof water from that manure and from contaminated yard water.

The proposals have been developed with the benefit of advice under the Catchment Sensitive Farming, which promotes precisely this form of infrastructure improvement as a means of reducing diffuse water pollution from agriculture. Roofing the areas in question is also directly relevant to the applicant's obligations under the Reduction and Prevention of Agricultural Diffuse Pollution (England) Regulations 2018 (the Farming Rules for Water).

The areas to be roofed are set out below.

Element	Dimensions	Area
Roof cover over existing livestock yard	13.72m x 14.52m	199.1 m ²
Roof cover over existing manure store	4.57m x 16.77m	76.6 m ²
Total area covered		275.7 m²

There is, in addition, a stock welfare and husbandry benefit. Covering the livestock yard provides a dry, sheltered area for the handling, loading and movement of cattle, which improves conditions for both the stock and those working with them.

2.4 Summary

The proposals are reasonably necessary for the purposes of the agricultural undertaking at Back Lane Farm. They serve an established commercial livestock business of 55 suckler cows and followers, they respond to a clearly identified environmental need, and they accord with the advice the applicant has received under the Catchment Sensitive Farming initiative.

3.0 PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

The site lies within the open countryside for the purposes of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan 2014–2033, adopted September 2020.

Policy SS 1 (Development Principles) supports development which protects and enhances the natural environment and which supports the rural economy. Policy SS 10 (Other Rural Areas Strategy) provides for development in the countryside which has an essential need to be located there, expressly including development required for the purposes of agriculture. The proposals are agricultural development on an established agricultural holding, serving buildings and yards which already exist on the site; there is no alternative location for a roof over an existing yard and manure store other than over that yard and manure store.

Policy SD 4 (Pollution and Water Quality) seeks to ensure that development does not give rise to pollution and, where possible, secures improvements to water quality. The scheme is a positive response to that policy: its whole purpose is the reduction of contaminated run-off and the protection of the water environment.

At national level, paragraph 88 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) provides that planning policies and decisions should enable “the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas” and “the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses”. The proposals are development of an existing agricultural business, on an existing farmstead, of a type the Framework expects to be supported.

The principle of the development is therefore established and accords with the development plan read as a whole.

4.0 SITING AND DESIGN

Both elements of the scheme are located within the established farmstead at Back Lane Farm and are contained on all sides by existing buildings and structures. The roof cover over the livestock yard occupies the existing yard between the current buildings; the cover over the manure store sits immediately alongside.

Materials have been selected to match those of the existing buildings. The roof will be finished in fibre cement sheets to match the existing roofs, with GRP rooflights; walling will be vertical box profile cladding above a shuttered concrete wall, again matching the established treatment of the adjoining buildings.

Policy DC 1 (Design Considerations) requires development to be well designed, to reinforce local distinctiveness and to respect the character of its surroundings. The use of matching materials, the containment of the structures within the existing built group, and the alignment of the new roofs with the existing roofscape mean that the scheme accords with Policy DC 1.

5.0 ACCESS

The farmstead is served by an established private access track running some 300 metres from the public highway, as shown edged red on the Location Plan, Drawing No. BLF-001. That track is used daily in connection with the farming operation and is of a standard appropriate to agricultural traffic. No alteration to the access is proposed and no new access is required.

6.0 VISUAL IMPACT

Policy DC 3 (Landscape and Settlement Setting) seeks to protect the local landscape and resists development which would result in prominent intrusion into the countryside.

The proposals are seen against the existing group of farm buildings, which enclose the site to the east and south and are of comparable scale, form and materials. The farmstead lies some 300 metres from the public highway at the end of a private track.

The proposals accord with Policy DC 3 and with paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

7.0 AMENITY

This scheme comprises the covering of an existing livestock yard and an existing manure store. Neither is moved or enlarged, no additional livestock capacity is created, and there is no intensification of the use of the farmstead. Covering both areas will reduce odour and prevent wind-blown material escaping from them.

The proposals accord with Policies DC 1 and SD 4.

8.0 BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

Biodiversity net gain is not engaged by this application. The application site area is below 0.2 hectares and no onsite priority habitat is affected, so the small site exemption applies.

Both elements are in any event located over existing hardstanding within the farmstead — an existing concrete livestock yard and an existing manure store — and no habitat is lost or degraded. The de minimis exemption applies in the alternative, the development affecting less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat and no linear habitat.

The scheme accords with Policy NE 1 (Biodiversity and Geological Resources).

9.0 CONCLUSION

The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a roof cover over an existing livestock yard and manure store at Back Lane Farm, Bottomhouse.

The proposals are reasonably necessary for the purposes of an established commercial suckler beef enterprise running 55 suckler cows and followers together with approximately 30 store cattle, farming some 46.68 hectares (115.4 acres). They have been developed with advice under the Catchment Sensitive Farming initiative and will separate clean roof water from farmyard manure and contaminated yard water, reducing the volume of dirty water requiring storage and spreading and reducing the risk of diffuse pollution.

Both structures are contained within the existing farmstead, are of matching materials and comparable scale to the buildings around them, and give rise to no harm to landscape character, residential amenity or highway safety. The proposals accord with Policies SS 1, SS 10, SD 4, DC 1, DC 3, NE 1 and T 1 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan 2014–2033 and with the National Planning Policy Framework.