

PLANNING STATEMENT

**Proposed Covered Farmyard Manure Store and Covered Yard
at
Manor Farm, Uttoxeter Road, Draycott in the Moors,
Staffordshire, ST11 9AQ**

1. Introduction

This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of C W Pearce & Partners in support of a full planning application for the erection of a covered farmyard manure store and covered yard at Manor Farm, Uttoxeter Road, Draycott in the Moors.

The proposed development would replace the existing open farmyard manure store and provide a roof over the adjoining concrete yard between the manure store and the existing livestock housing building. The building would be positioned immediately alongside the existing slurry store and integrated into the established group of agricultural buildings at Manor Farm.

The proposal is required to improve the management of farmyard manure and contaminated yard water arising from the established dairy enterprise. Covering the manure store and adjoining yard would substantially reduce the volume of rainfall coming into contact with manure and soiled concrete, thereby reducing the generation of contaminated runoff and the risk of diffuse water pollution. Any contaminated runoff arising within the covered area would be contained and directed into the adjoining slurry store.

The development therefore represents a practical environmental improvement to the existing farm infrastructure while continuing to support the efficient and sustainable operation of an established dairy holding.

2. The Site and Agricultural Holding

Manor Farm is an established working dairy farm located on the southern side of Uttoxeter Road, Draycott in the Moors. The farm complex comprises a substantial

group of traditional and modern agricultural buildings, livestock accommodation, concrete yards, a slurry store and associated agricultural infrastructure.

The wider agricultural holding extends to approximately 270 acres, of which approximately 120 acres are owned by the applicants. The remainder of the land is farmed as part of the same agricultural enterprise.

The holding supports approximately 310 dairy livestock, including followers. In addition to maintaining the dairy herd, the applicants grow their own wheat, maize, barley and grass to provide feed and forage for the livestock. The scale and nature of the agricultural enterprise generate an ongoing operational requirement for suitable manure storage and associated covered farmyard infrastructure.

The application site is located wholly within the established operational farmyard. The proposed building would replace the existing open manure storage area and cover the adjoining concrete yard between the manure store and livestock housing building. It would not extend agricultural operations into an undeveloped field or introduce an isolated building into the open countryside.

The site is accessed through the existing established farm access from Uttoxeter Road. The proposal would not require the formation of a new highway access or alter the established access arrangements serving the holding.

3. The Proposed Development

The application seeks full planning permission for a covered farmyard manure store and covered yard.

The proposed building would measure approximately 24.384 metres in length and 17.373 metres in width, providing a footprint of approximately 424 square metres. It would have an overall ridge height of approximately 6.8 metres.

Internally, the building would provide a defined covered farmyard manure storage area together with an open-plan covered yard between the manure store and the existing livestock housing building. A canopy would extend alongside the existing slurry store, allowing the development to relate directly to the farm's existing manure and slurry management infrastructure.

The structure would connect to an existing agricultural building and would be constructed using materials characteristic of modern agricultural development. The roof would comprise natural-coloured fibre-cement sheeting incorporating translucent

GRP rooflights. The external elevations would include treated vertical Yorkshire boarding above pre-stressed concrete panels. The concrete panels would provide the durable and robust construction required around livestock and stored manure, while the Yorkshire boarding would provide ventilation and a visually appropriate agricultural appearance.

Although the proposed building would extend slightly beyond the footprint of the structures and storage area presently occupying this part of the yard, it would not project farther into the countryside than the established farm buildings. It would remain visually contained within the existing agricultural complex and would read as a logical continuation of the existing built form.

4. Agricultural Need and Justification

The proposed development is directly related to the operational needs of the established dairy enterprise.

The holding accommodates approximately 310 dairy livestock, including followers, and extends to approximately 270 acres. The applicants also produce wheat, maize, barley and grass to support the livestock enterprise. The management of manure and associated yard operations is therefore a necessary and unavoidable part of the day-to-day operation of the holding.

The existing farmyard manure store is open to the weather. Rainfall falling directly onto the stored manure increases the volume of contaminated liquid requiring collection and management. Rainfall also falls upon the adjoining concrete yard, where it can come into contact with manure and other soiling arising from routine farm operations.

Covering these areas would prevent a substantial proportion of rainfall from entering the manure management system. This would reduce the amount of contaminated runoff generated, improve the efficient use of the adjoining slurry storage capacity and provide greater control over the collection and management of agricultural effluent.

The proposed building would not facilitate an unrelated commercial activity or a material change in the character of the holding. It would provide improved infrastructure for an existing agricultural enterprise and allow the applicants to manage manure and associated yard operations in a more controlled, efficient and environmentally responsible manner.

The proposal would also provide a sheltered working area between the manure store and livestock housing building, improving day-to-day working conditions while protecting the existing concrete yard from direct rainfall.

5. Manure Management and Water Quality

The principal environmental benefit of the proposal is the reduction in rainfall entering the existing manure store and adjoining concrete yard.

The open storage of farmyard manure can generate contaminated runoff when rainfall passes through or comes into contact with the stored material. Similarly, rainfall falling onto a soiled concrete yard can increase the volume of dirty water requiring collection and storage.

The proposed roof would intercept rainfall before it reaches the manure and soiled concrete surfaces. This would substantially reduce the volume of contaminated water generated within this part of the farmyard. Any contaminated runoff arising from within the covered manure store and yard would be collected and directed into the immediately adjoining slurry store.

The development would therefore make use of the existing slurry management infrastructure rather than creating a separate or isolated system. Its position immediately alongside the slurry store provides a direct and practical relationship between the proposed building and the existing containment facilities.

The proposal would improve the control of agricultural runoff, reduce pressure upon the slurry storage system and decrease the risk of nutrients or contaminated water leaving the operational yard. It represents a positive preventative measure against diffuse agricultural pollution and would contribute to the protection of local soil and water quality.

The proposal is therefore not simply an expansion of the built farm complex. It is an environmental improvement to the way manure, dirty water and associated yard operations are presently managed.

6. Siting, Scale and Design

The siting of the proposed building has been informed by its intended agricultural function and the position of the existing manure store, concrete yard, livestock housing building and slurry store.

The building would occupy previously developed agricultural yard space comprising the existing open manure store and adjoining concrete yard. Its location avoids the unnecessary loss of agricultural land and enables the building to connect directly with the existing livestock accommodation and slurry management facilities.

The proposal would be enclosed by or viewed in the context of the existing farm buildings. While the building would extend slightly beyond some of the structures immediately adjoining it, it would not protrude farther into the countryside than the established farm complex. It would remain within the overall extent and visual envelope of the existing buildings.

The proposed scale is proportionate to the size of the dairy enterprise and the number of livestock maintained at the holding. The building would provide sufficient space to cover the existing manure store and adjoining yard without creating an unnecessarily large or isolated structure.

The use of fibre-cement roof sheeting, Yorkshire boarding and pre-stressed concrete wall panels reflects the appearance and functional requirements of established agricultural buildings. These materials are durable, appropriate to the rural setting and visually compatible with the surrounding farm complex.

The incorporation of Yorkshire boarding would also provide natural ventilation appropriate to the storage of farmyard manure and the building's relationship with the adjoining livestock housing. The rooflights would introduce natural daylight into the building, reducing the need for artificial lighting during daylight hours.

The development would consequently appear as an appropriate and coherent addition to the established agricultural complex rather than a visually separate encroachment into the surrounding countryside.

7. Landscape and Visual Impact

The proposed development would be viewed against the backdrop of the existing agricultural buildings at Manor Farm.

The farm already comprises a substantial and well-established collection of agricultural structures of varying sizes and forms. The proposed building would be positioned within this group, connecting to an existing building and standing immediately beside the existing slurry store.

Its siting would consolidate the built form of the farmyard and avoid isolated development elsewhere on the holding. The proposal would not project beyond the established outer extent of the farm buildings and would not materially alter the wider pattern of development within the landscape.

The agricultural design and recessive materials would be consistent with the character of the existing farm complex. The proposal would therefore preserve the predominantly agricultural character of the site and its surroundings.

Given its position within the established farmyard, its relationship with the existing buildings and its appropriate agricultural design, the proposal would not result in an unacceptable effect upon the character or appearance of the surrounding countryside.

8. Residential Amenity

The proposal relates to an established agricultural use and would not introduce a new or incompatible activity at the site.

The manure storage and routine use of the concrete yard already take place within this part of the farmyard. The development would cover and improve the existing facilities rather than relocating these operations towards neighbouring residential properties.

Covering the manure store may assist in containing rainfall, controlling runoff and providing a more managed storage environment. The proposal would not materially increase noise, vehicle movements or other activity beyond that normally associated with the existing dairy enterprise.

The development would therefore not result in an unacceptable effect upon the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers.

9. Highway Considerations

The proposed development would be served by the existing farm access and the established internal yard and circulation arrangements.

No new highway access is proposed. The building would support the existing agricultural enterprise and would not introduce a separate use or activity likely to generate a material increase in traffic on the surrounding highway network.

Manure, livestock and agricultural machinery are already handled within the farm complex. The proposal would improve the facilities available for these existing operations and would not give rise to an unacceptable highway safety or capacity impact.

10. Biodiversity Net Gain

The application is exempt from the statutory biodiversity net gain requirement because the development site contained within the red-line boundary measures approximately 1,225 m² (0.1225 hectares) and is therefore below the applicable threshold of 0.2 hectares.

From 6 August 2026, planning applications for developments where the total site area within the red-line boundary is 0.2 hectares or less are exempt from mandatory biodiversity net gain, provided the development does not adversely affect priority habitat.

The proposed building would occupy the existing open farmyard manure store and adjoining concrete yard within the operational farm complex. No priority habitat would be affected, and there would be no loss of grassland, hedgerow, trees or other semi-natural habitat.

The statutory biodiversity gain condition does not therefore apply to the application and a biodiversity metric is not required.

Notwithstanding the exemption, the siting of the proposal avoids harm to existing natural features. Its position entirely within the established farmyard avoids development upon surrounding agricultural land and ensures that existing field boundaries and vegetation are retained.

11. Planning Policy

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The relevant development plan comprises the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan, adopted in September 2020. Material considerations also include the National Planning Policy Framework published in August 2026.

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan

Policy SS1 establishes the Local Plan's overarching development principles and seeks to promote sustainable development which supports the economy while protecting and enhancing the environment.

Policy SS10 addresses development within the rural areas and supports development which has an essential relationship with the countryside, including development required for agriculture, where it is of a scale and design appropriate to its location and does not result in unacceptable harm to the character of the countryside.

The proposal is directly connected with an established agricultural enterprise and is necessary to improve the management of manure, yard operations and contaminated runoff. Its position within the existing farm complex, upon an established manure store and adjoining concrete yard, is consistent with the objective of directing necessary rural development towards the most appropriate and least intrusive location.

Policy DC1 requires development to be of a high standard of design which respects its site and surroundings. The proposal adopts a conventional agricultural form and uses materials suited to both its function and rural location. Its scale and position reflect the existing agricultural buildings at Manor Farm.

Policy DC3 seeks to protect and, where possible, enhance landscape character. The development would be visually contained within the existing farm complex and would not project beyond the established extent of the farm buildings. It would consequently avoid an unacceptable effect upon the wider landscape.

Policy SD4 concerns pollution and water quality. The proposed development is strongly aligned with the objectives of this policy. By covering the existing manure store and adjoining yard, the development would reduce the generation of contaminated runoff and improve the containment and management of agricultural effluent. Any contaminated runoff would be directed into the adjoining slurry store.

Policy NE1 seeks to conserve and enhance biodiversity and geological resources. The building would be erected over existing agricultural storage and concrete yard surfaces, with no loss of priority habitat or other natural features.

The development therefore accords with the relevant policies of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan.

National Planning Policy Framework

The August 2026 National Planning Policy Framework gives express support to development which sustains agricultural and other land-based businesses.

Policy E4 supports the development and diversification of agricultural businesses and development which maintains or enhances farm viability, sustainability and domestic food production. It also recognises that development serving rural businesses may need to be located outside settlements and encourages the use of sites that are physically well related to existing development.

The proposed development directly supports an established dairy enterprise and the production of milk, livestock and home-grown feed crops. Its agricultural function necessarily requires it to be located at the farm, while its position within the existing built complex represents the most logical and sustainable location.

The Framework also recognises the benefits for domestic food production, animal welfare and the environment which can be delivered through farm and agricultural modernisation. The proposal would provide improved working conditions within this part of the farmyard while materially reducing the amount of rainfall entering the manure and dirty-water management system.

Policy P3 requires development to avoid unacceptable water, soil and other pollution and states that opportunities should be taken, where possible, to reduce pollution affecting the wider area. The proposal would achieve precisely this by reducing contaminated runoff from the existing open manure store and adjoining concrete yard.

Policy F8 requires development affecting drainage to control runoff in a manner proportionate to the nature and scale of the proposal and to facilitate improvements in water quality where possible. The covering of the existing manure store and adjoining yard would reduce the volume of contaminated runoff generated, while any remaining contaminated water would be directed into the adjoining slurry store.

Policy N2 requires development to consider the environmental qualities of the site, minimise adverse impacts upon biodiversity and take opportunities to improve surface-water and pollution management. The use of an existing agricultural yard, with no loss of natural habitat, and the resulting improvement in dirty-water management are consistent with these objectives.

The proposal therefore accords with the relevant provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework and would deliver identifiable agricultural, operational and environmental benefits.

12. Conclusion

The proposed covered farmyard manure store and covered yard are necessary to support the continued efficient and environmentally responsible operation of the established dairy enterprise at Manor Farm.

The holding extends to approximately 270 acres and accommodates approximately 310 dairy livestock, including followers. It also produces wheat, maize, barley and grass to support the livestock enterprise. The provision of appropriate manure storage and associated farmyard infrastructure is therefore essential to the operation of the holding.

The building would replace the existing open manure store and cover the adjoining concrete yard between the manure store and livestock housing building. It would significantly reduce the volume of rainfall coming into contact with manure and soiled yard surfaces, thereby reducing contaminated runoff and improving the management of the existing slurry storage capacity. Any contaminated runoff arising within the covered area would be contained and directed into the adjoining slurry store.

The proposal is appropriately located within the existing farm complex and would not project beyond the established extent of the surrounding agricultural buildings. Its scale, form and materials are characteristic of modern agricultural development and would not cause unacceptable harm to the landscape, neighbouring amenity or highway safety.

The development is exempt from mandatory biodiversity net gain because the red-line application site measures approximately 1,225 m², which is below the 0.2-hectare threshold, and no priority habitat would be affected. Overall, the proposal represents proportionate agricultural development which would support domestic food production, support efficient farm operations and deliver a significant environmental benefit through the reduction of diffuse agricultural runoff. It accords with the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan and the August 2026 National Planning Policy Framework, and planning permission should therefore be granted.