



SUPPORTING STATEMENT

FOR THE

**REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING OUTBUILDINGS
WITH STABLE BLOCK AND OUTBUILDING
FOR DOMESTIC USE**

AT

**ASH TREE BARN
AKESMOOR LANE
GILLOW HEATH
STAFFORDSHIRE
ST8 6RS**

Prepared on behalf of:

Mr and Mrs C Barker

April 2014

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Introduction

Bagshaws LLP have been instructed by the applicants Mr and Mrs Barker to submit a planning application for the replacement of some of the existing outbuildings at the property with a timber stable block for the applicant's horses and an outbuilding for the applicant's machinery, equipment and vehicles all kept for their own personal use on the property or for hobby purposes. As part of this application, supporting information has been provided to give a background to the proposal.

The information contained within this report was provided by Mr and Mrs Barker or gained on inspection.

1.0 Background

Mr and Mrs Barker have owned and live at Ash Tree Barn since February 2012. They purchased the property to retire to as it offered the space for them to be able to enjoy their various interests including horse riding and vintage machinery and vehicles. The total smallholding extends to 5.88 acres (2.38 hectares).

When the applicants purchased the property, the dwelling had been largely completed however there were further works to do and permission was subsequently granted to add two conservatories to the dwellinghouse. These have since been completed to a high standard, indicating the standard of work that the applicants intend to eventually achieve across the whole property.

The outbuildings were in various states of disrepair when the property was purchased, however until now the house has been the priority to complete. The applicants completed temporary works to make the existing outbuildings as useable as possible in the interim period whilst they completed works to the house and they now require a replacement stable block and outbuilding to meet their needs as the existing buildings are impractical and unsuitable for the applicants' needs.

2.0 Need

Mrs Barker own three horses and require suitable stabling for them plus a secure tack room and storage for the associated bedding, forage and equipment. The applicants mow approximately 3.95 acres of hay for the horses each year which requires a considerable amount of storage space. There are a number of issues with the existing stables which make them unfit for purpose:

- The stables are in poor structural condition in terms of the roofing and walling and regularly leak water in.
- There are only two small stables and the applicant requires three for the three horses in her ownership. Currently, the third horse has to be kept at livery at extra cost as there is no stabling available on site.
- The stables were built many years ago as pony boxes and they are really too low and narrow to be used as proper stabling and provide the animals with adequate space.
- The storage room is insecure and currently tack and valuable equipment is stored in the house. A secure lockable tack room next to the stables is required.
- The stables currently jut out into the middle of the site which is not practical and makes manoeuvring vehicles difficult. The current layout does not make best use of the site.

As the existing stables are in poor condition, have no vernacular merit and do not meet the needs of the applicant as they currently stand, the proposal for a new purpose built timber stable block and yard is the most practical and viable way forward. Even if repair to the existing stables was viable, because of the positioning of the building within the yard, there is not enough room to create the third stable required on the end of this row.

In terms of the proposed outbuilding, it is required to replace a range of block-built garage type stores. The existing storage building is split into five separate units, each one having to be accessed independently, which is impractical and provides insufficient space for the applicant in the current layout. Mr Barker owns vintage vehicles and machinery which he displays at shows and requires an open space to be able to store, repair and manoeuvre the vehicles and equipment which the proposed building will provide. There will be a roller shutter providing access suitable for the various vehicles, in particular a large 1938 Dodge truck.

In addition to this, indoor storage is required for the applicants' tractor, associated implements and other grassland management equipment for use on the smallholding.

3.0 Use

For clarification purposes, it can be confirmed that the use of both buildings is domestic use incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse. The stables and the building are to be used for private use only in connection with the applicants' hobbies and the management of their property. In no way will either building be used in connection with any business or commercial venture.

4.0 Visibility and Appearance

The existing range of buildings is shown on the Block Plan submitted with this application. As shown, one brick range of outbuildings comprising a two storey barn and adjoining single storey storage room will be retained. They provide useful storage space including an undercover area, and are an attractive feature of the property. Photographs of the site and all existing buildings can be found at Appendix 1.

The existing range of stores that the proposed outbuilding is to replace is of block construction with profile sheet roofing. The unattractive materials and mono-pitch design creates an unappealing appearance which actually detracts from the character of the area. As this building is situated at the front of the site and is most visible in the wider landscape, albeit from long distances, it has the most impact on the site, hence the applicants' desire to replace this with a much smarter, appealing and building that appears much more appropriate in its surroundings. It is felt strongly that this building will hugely enhance the appearance of the site.

This is not only the view of the applicants but also the view of their neighbouring residents. They too are keen to see the unattractive block buildings replaced with the proposed building in order to improve the appearance of the area that they live in and have signed a letter to show their support. The signed letter, list of names and addresses and photograph of a similar building to the proposed that they were shown can be found at Appendix 2.

The stables and adjoining store room (which abut the buildings to be retained) offer no vernacular value and do not add to the appearance and character of the property or locality, being of a low standard of construction, materials and design. Their positioning, which juts into the centre of the hardstanding area around the house gives the site a disorganised and unappealing appearance.

By demolishing these stables and constructing a new purpose-built high-quality 'L' shaped timber stable block, the overall appearance of the site will be continue to be improved. The manufacturer's plans for the stable block can be found at Appendix 3. The new positioning makes much better use of the site and will look neater within the plot. It will be completely hidden from view from neighbouring properties and screened well by existing trees. The design and siting of both the stable block and outbuilding is discussed in more detail in the accompanying Design and Access Statement and a photograph of a similar stable block to the proposed can be seen at Appendix 4.

Furthermore, the proposed stable block will not be visible from any public footpaths and right-of-way. The gable end of the proposed outbuilding will be visible from a very small number of public rights-of-way and only from long distances. The unattractive existing outbuilding is positioned in the same location as the proposed, so it can already be seen from these locations and as discussed above, the proposed building will be much smarter-looking, more appropriate to the setting and pleasing to the eye and therefore the proposal will only benefit the area and people who use these rights-of-way.

5.0 Compliance with National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF was introduced on 27th March 2012 to replace the present many of the previous national planning policy statement and guidance documents. The purpose of the planning as clarified within the Ministerial Foreword to the NPPF is to achieve sustainable development. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. In addition to Local and Community plans, the NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions. The relevant extracts from the NPPF which are relevant to this proposal are detailed below:-

Achieving Sustainable Development

Paragraph 7 of NPPF confirms that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social, and environmental. These give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:-

- “An economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy
- A social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities
- An environmental role – contributing to protecting and **enhancing our natural, built and historic environment**; and as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy”.

Core Planning Policies

There are twelve core land-use principles that underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. The principles relevant to this development are shown below and set out that planning should:-

- “be genuinely plan led, empowering local people to shape their surroundings...;

- Not simply be about scrutiny, but instead be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives;
- Always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;
- Take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting the Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it;
- Contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution...;
- Encourage the effective use of land by reusing that has been previously developed...;
- Take account of land support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all...”.

Section 7 of the NPPF relates to the requirement for good design. In paragraph 56 it confirms that “the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people”.

Section 9 deals with the issue of ‘Protecting Green Belt Land’. Paragraph 81 states that local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and **enhance landscapes, visual amenity** and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land. This proposal will enhance the appearance of the site and therefore the wider landscape it sits within.

Section 11 relates to “Conserving and enhancing the natural environment”. Paragraph 1-9 states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:-

- “protecting and **enhancing valued landscapes**, geological conservation interests and soils;...
- Minimising the impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity wherever possible...

- Preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability...”.

Based on a review of the relevant guidelines contained within the NPPF, then it is considered that the proposal complies with the various requirements.

6.0 Compliance with Local Planning Policy

Ash Tree Barn is designated as being within the Biddulph Green Belt and also a Special Landscape Area under the Local Plan. The Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy was adopted on 26th March 2014 which replaced any saved policies from the Local Plan however is subject to a six week legal challenge period following the adoption.

Local Plan

The Local Plan saved policies dealt with specific issues and a number of these policies applied directly to this proposal including Policy N8, N9 which relate to the Special Landscape Area, N2 which relates to Green Belt development and also policy B22 which dealt specifically with Stables and Ancillary Buildings. For the avoidance of doubt, these policies have been addressed below:

“B22 - Stables and Ancillary Buildings

In the open countryside generally, planning permission will be granted for the construction of a stable or loose-box or other ancillary building subject to the building not having a damaging effect on the character and quality of the landscape and subject to the provisions of policy H13(c).”

The proposal complies wholeheartedly with the provisions of saved policy B22 as the building will not have a damaging effect on the character of the landscape. To the contrary, the proposed stable block and especially the proposed outbuilding will improve and enhance the character and quality of the landscape. Policy H13 referred to above is not relevant to this proposal.

“N8 - The Special Landscape Area

In the special landscape area permission will not be given for development which would materially detract from the high quality of the landscape because of its siting, scale, design and materials, and associated traffic generation. In areas where the special landscape overlaps the green belt there will be a presumption against most development in accordance with policy N2.”

"N9 - The Special Landscape Area

Within the special landscape area the Local Planning Authority will promote and require especially high standards of design for development."

In preparing the application, much consideration was given to the design of the proposed buildings to ensure the highest standards of design and is felt that the application reflects this. It is not felt that the proposal will materially detract from the quality of the landscape in the area, instead it is considered that it will enhance it. The necessity to conserve and enhance this landscape is supported by the applicant and the proposal is certainly felt to comply with this requirement however it is difficult to deter further from the quality of the setting when the applicant's property borders land which is such an eyesore in the area. The proposal is felt to meet the requirements of policies N8 and N9.

"N2 - The Green Belt

Except in very special circumstances, there will be a presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt, including the construction of new buildings for purposes other than:-

A) Agriculture and forestry;

B) Essential facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation provided that the associated built development is of a scale appropriate to the Green Belt; cemeteries and other uses of land which preserve the openness of the green belt and which do not conflict with the purposes of including land in it;

C) The conversion of rural buildings of permanent and substantial construction to suitable alternative uses in accordance with policy B21;

D) Limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings in accordance with policies H11, H12 & H13;

E) Limited infilling in villages listed in policy N3;

F) Limited infilling or redevelopment of the major existing developed site listed in policy n5 and in accordance with policy N4;

G) Limited affordable housing in accordance with policy h15.

As the property is situated in an area where the Green Belt and Special Landscape Area overlap, policy N2 is referred to. As this proposal is neither for a new building nor is it considered to be 'inappropriate development' given the existing buildings on site, it is felt that in this case policy N2 is not applicable.

The application has also taken into consideration saved local plan policy B13 which addresses design standards and whilst the proposal is felt to comply with this policy, this aspect has been discussed in more detail under the newly adopted core strategy policy DC1 which makes much of the same provisions.

Core Strategy

Policies from the newly adopted Core Strategy have been considered and whilst still relevant to this application, they deal less specifically with this particular development proposal. These policies are discussed below:

“DC1 - Design Considerations

All development shall be well designed and reinforce local distinctiveness by positively contributing to and complementing the special character and heritage of the area in line with the Council’s Design SPD. In particular, new development should:

- *be of a high quality and add value to the local area, incorporating creativity, detailing and materials appropriate to the character of the area;*
- *be designed to respect the site and its surroundings and promote a positive sense of place and identity through its scale, density, layout, siting, landscaping, character and appearance;*
- *create, where appropriate, attractive, functional, accessible and safe public and private environments which incorporate public spaces, green infrastructure including making provision for networks of multi-functional new and existing green space (both public and private) in accordance with policy C3, landscaping, public art, ‘designing out crime’ initiatives and the principles of active design;*
- *incorporate sustainable construction techniques and design concepts for buildings and their layouts to reduce the local and global impact of the development, and to adapt to climate change, in accordance with policy SD1;*
- *protect the amenity of the area, including residential amenity, in terms of satisfactory daylight, sunlight, outlook, privacy and soft landscaping; promote the maintenance, enhancement, restoration and re-creation of biodiversity and geological heritage, where appropriate, in accordance with policy NE1;*
- *provide for safe and satisfactory access and make a contribution to meeting the parking requirement arising from necessary car use;*
- *ensure that existing drainage, waste water and sewerage infrastructure capacity is available, and where necessary enhanced, to enable the development to proceed;*
- *ensure, where appropriate, equality of access and use for all sections of the community.”*

It is felt that the proposal complies fully with policy DC1 as the design considerations listed have been taken into account when preparing the proposal and it is felt that the proposal will add value

“DC3 - Landscape and Settlement Setting

The Council will protect and, where possible, enhance local landscape and the setting of settlements in the Staffordshire Moorlands by:

1. *Resisting development which would harm or be detrimental to the character of the local and wider landscape or the setting of a settlement and important views into and out of the settlement as identified in the Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment;*
2. *Supporting development which respects and enhances local landscape character and which reinforces and enhances the setting of the settlement as identified in the Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment;*
3. *Supporting opportunities to positively manage the landscape and use sustainable building techniques and materials which are sympathetic to the landscape;*
4. *Identifying through the Site Allocations DPD and protecting from inappropriate development, areas of visual open space where the intention will be to retain the land’s open and undeveloped appearance. Where appropriate the Council will seek public access agreements with the land owners and seek proposals for the enhancement or improvement of these areas as part of the green infrastructure network in accordance with policy C3. In exceptional cases, limited development of areas of visual open space may be acceptable where this will bring about overriding improvements to the open space itself; “*

Again it is felt that the proposal meets the criteria set out in policy DC3 as it will indeed enhance the local landscape character and by supporting the proposal, the Local Authority will be ensuring that the landscape is 'positively managed' and improved from its current appearance.

"R1 - Rural Diversification

*All development in the rural areas outside the development boundaries of the towns and villages will be assessed according to the extent to which it **enhances the character, appearance and biodiversity of the countryside**, promotes the sustainable diversification of the rural economy, facilitates economic activity, meets a rural community need and sustains the historic environment.*

*Appropriate development **should not harm the rural character** and environmental quality of the area or any sites designated for their nature conservation, or historical interest by virtue of the scale, nature and level of activity involved and the type and amount of traffic generated or by other effects such as noise and pollution.*

*Wherever possible, development should be within suitably located buildings which are appropriate for conversion. Where new or **replacement buildings are involved**, development should have **minimal impact on the countryside** and be in close proximity to an existing settlement.*

Within the Green Belt, inappropriate development which is otherwise acceptable within the terms of this policy, will still need to be justified by very special circumstances. Priority will be given to the re-use of rural buildings for commercial enterprise, including tourism uses, where the location is sustainable and the proposed use does not harm the building's character and/or the character of its surroundings.

The development will certainly enhance the character and the appearance of the countryside and will not harm the rural character of the area, indeed it will improve it. The outbuilding has a similar design to many agricultural buildings in the locality and whilst not being used for agricultural purposes it is felt that this design is most in-keeping with the semi-rural nature of the locality. This development will have very minimal impact on the countryside if any at all given the well-screened nature of the site and the supporting views of the only neighbours who can view it at closer distances. It is therefore it is felt that the proposal complies fully with policy R1.

"SS6c - Other Rural Areas Area Strategy

The other rural areas comprise the countryside and the green belt outside of the development and infill boundaries of the towns and villages, as defined in the Site Allocations DPD, including those small settlements and dispersed developments not identified in Policies SS5, SS6a and SS6b.

*These areas will provide only for development which meets an essential local need, supports the rural diversification and sustainability of the rural areas, promotes sustainable tourism or **enhances the countryside**. The Council and its partners will achieve this through the following actions:*

1. Meet essential local needs by:

- *Restricting new build housing development in the countryside to that which is essential to local needs, including affordable housing (in accordance with policies H2, H3 and R2);*
- *Allowing the conversion, extension or **replacement of an existing rural building in accordance with policies R1 and R2;***
- *Allowing suitable development which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset in accordance with policy DC2;*
- *Allowing rural exceptions housing (in accordance with policies H2 and R2)*
- *Allowing community facilities which meet a local need, where that need cannot be met in a settlement within the hierarchy. In such cases the development should be in a sustainable location close to an existing serviced settlement.*

2. Sustain the rural economy by:

- *Enabling the limited expansion or redevelopment of an existing authorised business for employment uses;*
- *Supporting the diversification of existing farm enterprises (in accordance with policy R1);*
- *Supporting the development of appropriate ICT and new means of communications to enable homeworking and small businesses reliant one-technology;*

3. Enhance and conserve the quality of the countryside by:

- *Giving priority to the need to protect the quality and character of the area and requiring all development proposals to **respect and respond sensitively to the distinctive qualities of the surrounding landscape;***
- *Limiting uses which generate a substantial number of regular trips in areas that are not well served by public transport;*
- *Ensuring renewable energy schemes are of an appropriate scale, type and location;*
- *Recognising and conserving the special quality of the landscape in the Peak District National Park (in accordance with Policy DC3);*
- *Encouraging measures which protect and enhance the biodiversity, geological resources and heritage of the District..."*

As discussed above, it is felt the proposal complies with policy R1 and therefore that policy SS6c supports this proposal in the context of the replacement of existing rural buildings.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Consideration has also been given to the Supplementary Planning Guidance document entitled "Design principles for development in the Staffordshire Moorlands" when preparing this application.

7.0 Conclusion

The above information provides a background to the site and an overview of the proposal for the replacement of outbuildings at Ash Tree Barn for private use incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse.

The proposed outbuildings have been sited and designed in a way which complements the local landscape and makes best use of the site. The external appearance of the buildings has been considered in order to minimise any impact and enhance the appearance of the site.

In light of the points discussed in this report, including the demonstrated compliance of the proposal with planning policy at national and local level, it is therefore recommended that the Local Authority view this application positively, especially given the well screened nature of the site, the support shown by neighbours and the applicants' clear commitment to improving the overall appearance of the property which will in turn have a positive impact on the surrounding area.

Appendix 1









Appendix 2

To: The Planning Department,
Staffordshire Moorlands District Council

With reference to a planning application by:

Mr and Mrs Barker
Ash Tree Barn
Acresmoor Lane
Gillow Heath
Staffs ST8 6RS

I have inspected an outline plan showing the location of a proposed agricultural type building and have seen a photograph of a similar building to that which is proposed (both attached). The location of the proposed building occupies substantially the same location as a run of existing unattractive sheds built in blockwork and corrugated metal sheeting. In particular, the new building will not protrude any further forward of the front elevation of Barkers' house than the existing buildings have done for over 50 years.

I understand the new building will be used by Mr Barker post his imminent retirement to store a number of historic vehicles and agricultural equipment which he plans to display at local shows.

I have no objection to the proposed development and do not believe it can impact the immediate area in any negative way.

Signed:

L



2.



3.

W D Wood

4.

A Jones

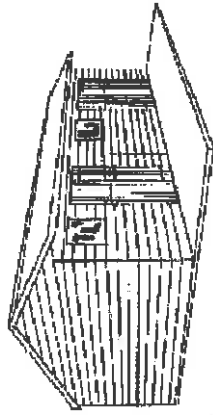
Example of similar building shown to neighbours



1. Barry Carney, The Falls, Akesmore Lane, Biddulph
2. Warren Potts, Falls Farm Barn, Akesmore Lane, Biddulph
3. Derek Wood, 4 Falls Cottage, Akesmore Lane, Biddulph
4. Debbie Dukes, 2 Falls Cottage, Akesmore Lane, Biddulph

This is everyone who would be able to see that our existing building has been replaced without resorting to binoculars.

Appendix 3

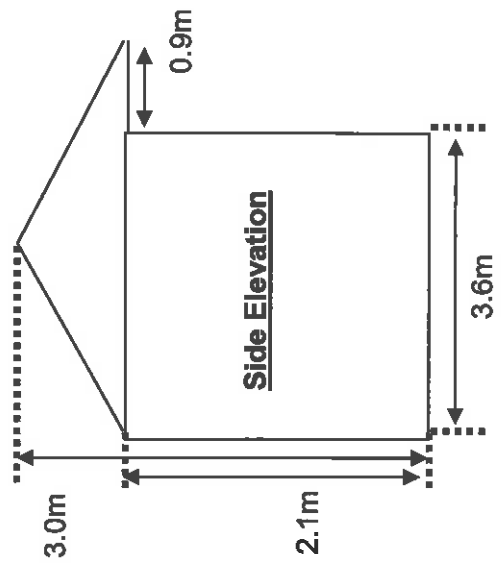
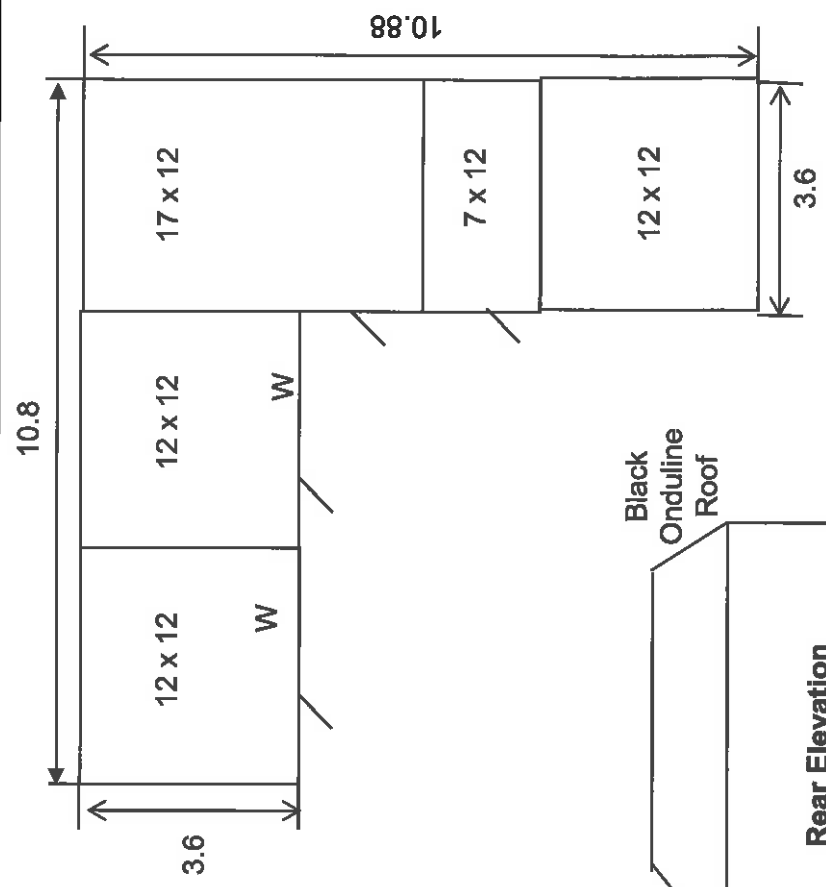


Sheds and Stables Direct
 Lighterage Yard
 Chesterway
 Northwich
 Cheshire
 CW9 5JJ
 Tel: 01606-45550
 Fax: 01606-45597
www.shedsandstablesdirect.com
 Vat No. 130 5962 27

5th April 2014

Trading Company of Cheshire Timber Suppliers Ltd

F.A.O. Mrs Carolyn Barker
 Ash Tree Barn
 Akesmore Lane
 Gillow Heath
 Stoke-On-Trent
 Staffordshire
 ST8 6RS
 Mobile: 07759483466
 Email carolyn.barker33@btinternet.com



Specification
 19mm Shiplap
 3 x 2 Framework
 4 x 2 Roof trusses
 Black Onduline
 Roofing

Appendix 4

