

**STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE**

9 September 2021

Application No:	SMD/2021/0263	
Location	Land at Blakeley Farm, Blakeley Lane, Whiston, ST10 2HB	
Proposal	Erection of an agricultural workers dwelling (submission of reserved matters – access, appearance, landscaping, layout, and scale)	
Applicant	Mr. and Mrs. William Shaw	
Agent	Mr Allen Newby - PME Planning Services Ltd	
Parish/ward	Churnet Ward/Kingsley Parish	Date registered: 5 th May 2021
If you have a question about this report please contact: Benjamin Hurst tel: 07738506367 benjamin.hurst@staffsmoorlands.gov.uk		

REFERRAL

The application is before committee because the outline planning application was determined by members of the planning committee.

1. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

2.1 Blakeley Farm occupies a prominent and elevated 'hill-top' position that is isolated within the countryside. The village of Whiston is more than a kilometre away to the west. The Farm comprises of a range of traditional and modern portal frame buildings, being the base of a substantial dairy enterprise approximately 283.48 acres (114.722 hectares) with 215.67 acres (87.280 hectares) owned and a further 67.81 acres (27.442 hectares) rented on long term arrangements. The range of agricultural buildings are divided by Blakeley Lane which runs through the farm. The main cubicle housing, silage clamps and manure storage is located to the West of the road. To the East are the young stock buildings.

2.2 At the centre of the complex the existing stone farmhouse presents an end gable to the roadside and, on the other side, has an adjoining barn and outbuildings opposite. Together they form the linear plan historic farmstead that was established by the beginning of the 19th Century. It survives relatively unaltered, although now surrounded by newer sheds and buildings.

2.3 The application site lies on the eastern side of Blakeley Lane, immediately to the south of a gated farm track which provides access to a range of young stock housing and feed yards and pasture on the east side of the lane. The main farmhouse lies just below the crest of the hill. The ground drops away to the south. Buildings are aligned east to west and follow the natural contours. The new livestock buildings have also adopted this east to west alignment and construction work is now complete. Blakeley Lane is an unclassified adopted road.

2.4 The site is not in a Conservation Area or within the Green Belt. The Landscape Character is Dissected Sandstone Highland Fringe 3a - Ipstones and Whiston. This is a small to medium scale pastoral landscape with a rounded landform dissected by steep valleys and narrow wooded streams with wide and distant views over the wider Churnet Valley. Land use is predominantly agricultural with stone built farmhouses. The lanes are generally narrow and incised. Fields are lined with hedges and drystone walls with scattered hedgerow trees. Broadleaf native woodland is concentrated in the valleys. Large blocks of conifer trees have been planted on the valley sides around Cotton Dell and Moneystone.

2.5 Dwellings are isolated. Most houses in the area are of traditional construction with red gritstone elevations under blue clay tiled roofs. The main farmhouse and the adjoining shippon at Blakeley have a Tee shaped planform. The main range is aligned east to west with a subordinate double pile wing and cat slide offshoot to the north. The walls of the farmhouse are red gritstone. The roof is clad in Staffordshire blue clay tiles. The main range has a coped verge, the double pile wing has a plain verge. Boundaries are formed by drystone walls.

3. THE APPLICATION AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

3.1 Outline planning permission has been granted for the erection of a detached farm workers dwelling that would provide a second dwelling on the dairy farm to provide for generational lineage. The permission was granted on a relatively exposed and prominent roadside plot, it was considered that this site provided the best possibility of a safe and secure family environment for the farmer's daughter and son in law, now with a managerial and partnership role in the enterprise, and their three children – matters found to outweigh any harm.

3.2 This reserved matters application provides plans and details for approval relative to matters reserved from the outline application, namely – layout, access, scale, appearance and landscaping.

3.3 The reserved matters application proposes the construction of a dwelling to provide three generous bedrooms on a total footprint of 110 sq m. The dwelling would be faced with random coursed red gritstone built with ashlar quoins and stone mullioned windows. It would include grit stone internal chimneys from each gable. The dwelling would have a T shaped footprint with a subordinate gable projection to the rear with the main range facing south and the rear wing facing north. At ground floor level, the main range will accommodate a kitchen/dining room and living room. A boots-off area with shower, utility room and farm office would be accommodated

within the rear wing. The front elevation would face south, with a side end gable presenting parallel to the roadside.

3.4 The walls would be faced with random coursed tumbled gritstone with ashlar gritstone quoins, heads, cills jamb stone and chimneys. A reddish stone is preferred and selected material from the Birchover Quarry would be suitable. The roof would be clad in blue clay tiles with a stone oversailing eaves course and a plain verge. The windows and doors would be grey uPVC flush casements. The plans include landscaping and access details that show how there would be cut and fill to level the dwelling on the plots sloping gradient, a stone wall to boundaries, a grit stone sett access with highway, and a stone surfaced parking and turning area. The parking and turning areas will be surfaced in Type 1 DoT aggregate. To prevent loose material entering the road, the first 5m of the access will be surfaced in gritstone setts. The patio and perimeter path will be surfaced with Indian stone pavours.

3.5 The block plan submitted with the outline application suggested an access be located at the southern end of the plot. However, with this submission the access would be positioned to the northern end of the plot to provide quicker access to the farm in the event of a livestock emergency. Furthermore, the rear of the farmhouse and the access would be cut into the ground which would conceal parked vehicles more effectively and reduce the visual impact of the farmhouse. The building would be aligned to the contours and set into the ground to the maximum extent. The access gradient would be reduced to a minimum of 1 in 12 and the setting down area would be level.

3.6 Rainwater, shedding from the building and ground, would discharge to a soak-away to the south of the building and a connection to a private treatment plant is proposed for the discharge of foul water. The discharge to ground for a three bedroomed property will be less than 2 cubic meters and such a system is therefore licence exempt. To be compliant with building regulations, package treatment plants must be sited at least 7m from a dwelling, the discharge point should be more than 10m and the infiltration systems including soakaways and drainage fields more than 15m. While the treatment unit and the discharge sampling point could be sited within the curtilage for convenient access and maintenance, the soak-away and drainage field require little or no maintenance and it is proposed that these be located within owner-controlled land immediately to the south, requiring minor subterranean works for the drainage system beyond the site boundary.

3.7 The building will be constructed to fabric standards which exceed those set out in Building regs Part L1A. Heating will be provided by an air source heat pump. It is anticipated that the dwelling CO₂ emission rate (DER) will be significantly better than the target rate (TER). The site will be enclosed by a drystone wall to match the existing roadside boundary wall. There are few trees in the upland parts of Landscape Character Area 3a, so no screen planting is proposed.

3.8 This application follows a pre application exchange with officers. In response to officer comments the elevations were amended to show mullioned windows to improve vertical emphasis. The applicant's agent submits that the dwelling as designed would have traditional proportions, be aligned to the natural contours and positioned to optimise the extent of the cut and fill to lower the building into the ground as far as possible whilst maintaining low access gradients and a level setting down area.

3.9 Details of the application scheme can be viewed at:

<http://publicaccess.staffs Moorlands.gov.uk/portal/servlets/ApplicationSearchServlet?PKID=128617>

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 10/00949/FUL Agricultural building to house cattle. Approved.
SMD/2015/0577 Erection of replacement livestock building. Approved.
SMD/2020/0141 Livestock Building Phase I Approved.
SMD/2020/0142 Livestock Building Phase II Approved.
SMD/2019/0749 Outline permission for Agricultural Workers Dwelling.
Approved.

5. PLANNING POLICIES RELEVANT TO THE DECISION

- 5.1 The Development Plan comprises of:
- The Local Plan Development Document (adopted Sep 2020)

Adopted Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan - Sep 2020

5.2 The following Local Plan policies are relevant to the application:-

- SS1 Development Principles
- SS10 Other Rural Area Strategy
- H1 New Housing Development
- DC1 Design Considerations
- DC3 Landscape and Settlement Setting
- NE1 Biodiversity and Geological Resources
- T1 Sustainable Transport

Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

6. CONSULTATIONS

A site notice was posted and displayed on the 18th May, Expired on the 8th June.

4 near neighbours were notified in writing with a letter dated the 18th March.

Public response to consultation

6.1 3 Letters of support have been received - one lives in Oakamoor, the other in Newcastle under Lyme, neither within close vicinity of the application site and a neighbouring property. The following comments are made in support:

- Where the dwelling is located has been selected to ensure the above and is in keeping with local styles and traditions and certainly will not be a blot on the landscape. Approval of this application would no doubt see continued improvements for the farm and surrounding land, thus being beneficial to the business, the family and the local area.
- The level of investment put into this farm by the Cotton family shows their commitment to the area, and dairy farmers are to be encouraged. There is a clear succession plan for the farm, and, it is essential that the next generation live on site. Calving, harvesting etc all involve working through the night, so having working members of the family available 24 hours a day is a must. There is no alternative accommodation available in the immediate locale, so, in my opinion, there can be no logical reason to not wholeheartedly support this application.

Kingsley Parish Council

6.4 No objection, support.

SCC Highway Authority

6.5 No objection subject to conditions requiring visibility splays and correct construction detail. Original comment suggested dropped kerb edge, but later confirmed agreement to the sett edging detail in a supplementary plan.

“Setts would look better in this location. We’re really just looking for adequate support between the edge of carriageway and access which setts would provide”

AES Waste Services

6.6 No issues regarding waste collections.

Severn Trent Water

6.7 As there is no connection to the public sewerage system, we have no comments to make on the proposals.

7. OFFICER COMMENT AND PLANNING BALANCE

Introduction

7.1 When the outline application was considered and planning permission was granted, officers had suggested that this particular site was unduly prominent and exposed and that there might be alternative locations or means of providing accommodation available. However, the need to provide a safe family environment for the applicant and their children was given obvious weight and the site was considered to provide the best of possibilities in respect of that. As anticipated therefore, the reserved matters application, brings forward a detailed proposal to provide a sizeable family dwelling on the site. With an amendment to reposition the highway access, the application submits details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout, and scale for approval.

Design, scale, layout and landscape considerations

7.2 While the site is exposed and prominent, the proposal has been designed to provide a traditional moorland stone-built farm dwelling with quality architectural detailing appropriate to a dwelling of this character – double fronted with windows either side of central doorway, stone mullioned windows, flush casement, random course facing stone, twin internal chimneys, and stone quoins.

7.3 The use of stone and traditional detailing would reflect the character of the original farm dwelling and farmstead buildings to the north east. Overall, while prominent and exposed the scale and appearance of the building would not be at odds with moorlands farm dwelling vernacular.

7.4 Moreover, the excavations and ground works, to provide access and parking and to set the dwelling down on level ground, would limit the building's presence and prominence on the site, sitting it down behind surrounding land profile. The parking area would also be quite concealed behind the dwelling on an excavated land to the rear. The dwelling and its curtilage would be appropriately enclosed and contained by dry stone walls, features that are integral to the landscape character type. Given the site occupies upland high ground within the landscape, the applicant does not propose any tree planting that might be incongruous to the 'Sandstone Highland Fringe' character type, where broadleaf woodlands lie primarily in the valleys.

Highway and Access matters

7.5 The application proposes an amendment to access arrangement, moving it from the southerly position approved at outline to the northern end of the plot to provide quicker access to the farm in the event of a livestock emergency. The access gradient would be reduced to a minimum of 1 in 12 and the setting down area would be level.

A total of two off road parking spaces would be provided, and a first 5m of the access laid with gritstone setts to prevent any debris spilling onto Blakeley Lane. Visibility splays of 2.4m by 43m will be provided in each direction with the existing stone wall slightly realigned to provide the splay.

7.5 The Highway Authority has reviewed the proposed access arrangements and confirm that they have no objection, subject to the imposition of a number of planning conditions. Consequently, it is considered that the development proposals do not raise any highway safety concerns.

Conclusion and Planning Balance

7.6 The outline application was determined by Members at planning committee. It was considered that the site offers the best possibility of a safe and secure family environment whilst providing the necessary support to the enterprise – matters found to outweigh any harm. With this in mind, the application proposes the erection of a dwelling that would, on balance, be of an acceptable design, scale and appearance for the size and location of the plot, and the circumstances and needs of the applicant. A supplementary access detail plan confirms construction arrangements to the agreement of the highway authority using cobble setts to the edge of the carriageway.

8. RECOMMENDATION

A. That the matters of layout, scale and appearance of the building, and the access to and the landscaping of the site, which were reserved for later approval with the grant of outline planning permission (SMD/2019/0749) on the 2nd October 2020 for the erection of an agricultural worker's dwelling be Approved, subject to the following conditions:

1. This notice constitutes an approval of matters reserved under Condition 3 of Planning Permission SMD/2019/0749 and does not by itself constitute a planning permission.

Reason:- The application relates to matters reserved with the grant of an outline planning permission.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 2 years from the date of this approval of reserved matters.

Reason:- The time limit condition is imposed in order to comply with the requirements of section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

3. Notwithstanding any detail submitted with the outline application or the terms of condition 3 of that outline permission, the site and its access shall only be laid out and landscaped, with ground levels altered accordingly, and the development shall only be carried out and completed in accordance with the drawings referenced and numbered as 'Proposed Block Plan' 3 Rev 0, 'Proposed Plans & Elevations' 4, Rev 1, and 'Street Scene' 6 Rev 0, that were submitted with this application for the approval of reserved matters; and the 'Access Plan' 6 Rev 0 that was submitted on the 30th June 2021.

Reason:- For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

4. The development shall only be carried out using the external facing stone and roofing tiles that are specified on the drawing numbered 'Proposed Plans & Elevations' 4 Rev 1 in a

manner, arrangement and application that is described and detailed on that drawing. There shall be no variation without the prior consent in writing of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:- To ensure that the works are in keeping with adjacent development.

5. Before the development is brought into use, the site access with the highway shall be constructed and completed in accordance with 'Access Plan' 6 Rev 0 that was submitted on the 30th June 2021. To accord with that plan the access shall be provided with 2.4m x 43m visibility splays in each direction taken to the edge of the carriageway, a standard grit stone sett dropped edge to the carriageway, the bound grit stone sett surface for a distance of at least 5m from the rear of the carriageway edge, and the stone surfaced parking and turning areas. The visibility splays and the parking and turning areas shall, throughout the life of the development, thereafter be retained, maintained and made available, without obstruction, only for the parking and maneuvering of domestic vehicles kept for the incidental enjoyment of the dwellinghouse.

Reason:- For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

6. Before the development is brought into use the stone boundary wall and landscaping shall be provided in accordance with the drawings referenced and numbered as 'Proposed Block Plan' 3 Rev 0, 'Proposed Plans & Elevations' 4, Rev 1, and 'Street Scene' 6 Rev 0, that were submitted with this application for the approval of reserved matters and the 'Access Plan' 6 Rev 0 that was submitted on the 30th June 2021.

Reason:- To enable the Local Planning Authority to control the development and so safeguard the character and visual amenities of the area, and to ensure that adequate private open space is retained within the curtilage of the building.

7. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that order with or without modification), no development as specified in Part 1 Class(es) A, B, C, D, E, F, G and H and/or Part 2 Class(es) A, B and C, other than those expressly authorised by this permission, shall be carried out without express planning permission first being obtained from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:- To enable the Local Planning Authority to control the development and so safeguard the character and visual amenities of the area, and to ensure that adequate private open space is retained within the curtilage of the building.

8. The occupation of the dwelling shall be limited to a person solely or mainly employed, or last employed, in the locality in agriculture, or in forestry, or a dependent of such a person residing with him or her, or a widow or widower of such a person.

Reason:- The site is in an area where housing other than for agricultural purposes is not normally allowed.

Informative

The outline application was determined by Members at planning committee. It was considered that the site offers the best possibility of a safe and secure family environment whilst providing the necessary support to the enterprise – matters found to outweigh any harm. This application proposes the erection of a dwelling that would be of an acceptable design, scale and appearance for the size and location of the plot, it was necessary to seek any amendments or revisions as otherwise advocated at paragraph 38 of the NPPF.

B. In the event of any changes being needed to the wording of the Committee's decision (such as to delete, vary or add conditions/in formatives/planning obligations or reasons for approval/refusal) prior to the decision being issued, the Head of Development Services has delegated authority to do so in consultation with the Chairman of the Planning Applications Committee, provided that the changes do not exceed the substantive nature of the Committee's Decision.

Site Plan

