

ITEM 3

Application Reference	DC/076452
Location:	The Great Barn Hollyvale Marple Bridge Stockport SK6 5AS
PROPOSAL:	Erection of 1 stable and 2 field shelters.
Type Of Application:	Full Application
Registration Date:	17/04/2020
Expiry Date:	12/06/2020
Case Officer:	Mark Burgess
Applicant:	Ms C Rabin
Agent:	Corin Yarrow Architect

DELEGATION/COMMITTEE STATUS

Committee Item. Should Marple Area Committee be minded to agree the Officer recommendation to grant, the application shall be referred to the Planning and Highway Regulation Committee for determination as a Departure from the Development Plan.

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

Full planning permission is sought for the erection of 1 no. stable building and 2 no. field shelters within land in the ownership of The Great Barn, Holly Vale, Marple Bridge.

The proposed stable building would be sited within an existing levelled area of field to the North East of the existing residential dwellinghouse at 'The Great Barn' and would have a length of 12.736 metres, a width of 3.736 metres and a maximum height of 2.9 metres, with a pitched roof. The proposed stable building would comprise two stables (11.8 square metres each) and a store (5.6 square metres). The materials of external construction are specified as treated timber shiplap cladding for the external walls with one course of engineering brickwork and bitumen sheets for the roof. The proposed stable building would include a hardsurfaced and timber fenced enclosure to the South.

One of the proposed field shelters would be sited in a larger area of field to the South East and one of the proposed field shelters would be sited in a larger area of field to the East of the existing residential dwellinghouse at 'The Great Barn'. Each of the proposed field shelters would have a length of 3.6 metres, a width of 3.6 metres and a maximum

height of 2.945 metres. The materials of external construction are specified as treated timber shiplap cladding for the external walls and bitumen sheets for the roof.

Information submitted in support of the application confirms that the proposed stable block is for non-commercial horse related development for the sole use of the applicant who have recently acquired the site. The applicant wishes to own two donkeys and horses in the future and would like to make stabling arrangements with this in mind. The proposed field shelters are to provide shelter for the applicants 3 Alpacas which graze on the land, along with storage for their feed. The existing grazing fields would remain as such.

The application is accompanied by the following supporting documents :-

- Planning Statement.
- Design and Access Statement.

Details of the design and siting of the proposed development are appended to the report.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application site of approximately 1.35 hectares is located at the Southern end of Holly Vale in Mill Brow, Marple Bridge and comprises a residential dwellinghouse at 'The Great Barn', previously an outbuilding associated with the adjacent 'Green Hill Farm', which was converted to residential use as part of planning permission DC014830 in 2014. The wider site consists of a small area of levelled ground to the North East where the proposed stables would be located and a larger area of fields used for grazing to the East and South where the proposed field shelters would be located. The site is enclosed by a variety of agricultural fencing, low stone walls, mature trees and hedges and is bounded on all sides by Public Rights of Way. Access to the site is taken from Mill Brow to the North East, via a long, narrow and steep sloped gated access road/track which serves both the site and the adjacent 'Green Hill Farm'.

Open field and farmland adjoin the site to the East, South and West. Residential properties in proximity to the site include 'Green Hill Farm' directly adjacent to the North, with 'Vale Cottage' and 'Blackberry Hall' separated from the site to the North East and South West respectively.

POLICY BACKGROUND

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

The Statutory Development Plan for Stockport comprises :-

- Policies set out in the Stockport Unitary Development Plan Review (saved UDP) adopted on the 31st May 2006 which have been saved by direction under paragraph 1(3) of Schedule 8 to the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004; and
- Policies set out in the Stockport Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document (Core Strategy DPD) adopted on the 17th March 2011.

The application site is allocated within the Green Belt and within a Landscape Character Area (Marple Bridge), as defined on the UDP Proposals Map. The site is located within the Mill Brow Conservation Area. The following policies are therefore relevant in consideration of the proposal :-

Saved UDP policies

- LCR1.1 : LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS
- LCR 1.1A : THE URBAN FRINGE INCLUDING THE RIVER VALLEYS
- NE1.2 : SITES OF NATURE CONSERVATION IMPORTANCE
- HC1.2 : SPECIAL CONTROL OF DEVELOPMENT IN CONSERVATION AREAS
- GBA1.1 : EXTENT OF GREEN BELT
- GBA1.2 : CONTROL OF DEVELOPMENT IN GREEN BELT
- L1.7 : RECREATION ROUTES : MAINTENANCE AND EXPANSION OF NETWORK
- L1.9 : RECREATION ROUTES AND NEW DEVELOPMENT

Core Strategy DPD policies

- CS1 : OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES : SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT - ADDRESSING INEQUALITIES AND CLIMATE CHANGES
- SD-1 : CREATING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES
- SIE-1 : QUALITY PLACES
- SIE-3 : PROTECTING, SAFEGUARDING AND ENHANCING THE ENVIRONMENT
- CS9 : TRANSPORT AND DEVELOPMENT
- CS10 : AN EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT NETWORK
- T-1 : TRANSPORT AND DEVELOPMENT
- T-2 : PARKING IN DEVELOPMENTS
- T-3 : SAFETY AND CAPACITY ON THE HIGHWAY NETWORK

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF, initially published on 27th March 2012 and subsequently revised and published on 19th February 2019 by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these

are expected to be applied. The NPPF will be a vital tool in ensuring that we get planning for the right homes built in the right places of the right quality at the same time as protecting our environment.

In respect of decision-taking, the revised NPPF constitutes a 'material consideration'.

Paragraph 1 states '*The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied*'.

Paragraph 2 states '*Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise*'.

Paragraph 7 states '*The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development*'.

Paragraph 8 states '*Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives) :-*

- a) An economic objective*
- b) A social objective*
- c) An environmental objective'*

Paragraph 11 states '*Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking this means :-*

c) Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

d) Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless :-

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole'.

Paragraph 12 states '*.....Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local Planning Authorities may take*

decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed’.

Paragraph 38 states ‘Local Planning Authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way..... Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible’.

Paragraph 47 states ‘Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Decisions on applications should be made as quickly as possible, and within statutory timescales unless a longer period has been agreed by the applicant in writing’.

Paragraph 213 states ‘existing policies should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted or made prior to the publication of this Framework. Due weight should be given to them, according to their degree of consistency with this Framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given)’.

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

NPPG is a web-based resource which brings together planning guidance on various topics into one place (launched in March 2014) and coincided with the cancelling of the majority of Government Circulars which had previously given guidance on many aspects of planning.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- DC014846 : Demolition of stables and wash house (Conservation area application) : Granted – 26/05/04.
- DC014830 : Barn extension and conversion into dwelling with detached garage : Granted – 26/05/04.
- DC008128 : Erection of 4 no. poultry rearing sheds : Granted – 22/07/02.
- DC006529 : Timber poultry housing unit and mesh fencing enclosure (Retrospective) : Granted – 04/04/02.
- DC002210 : Conversion of existing agricultural building (Great Barn) to a dwelling and detached garage : Granted – 06/02/01.

NEIGHBOUR'S VIEWS

The owners/occupiers of surrounding properties were notified in writing of the application. The neighbour notification period for the application expired on the 14th May

2020. The application was advertised by way of display of notices on the site and in the press, the consultation periods for which expired on the 14th May 2020 and the 13th May 2020 respectively.

No letters of representation have been received to the application.

CONSULTEE RESPONSES

Conservation Officer

The application seeks permission for the construction of a stable and two field shelters.

In respect of the proposed stable block, the form, design and materials proposed are substantially similar to other stables found in the conservation area, and is of reduced scale to a comparable stable block at Vale Farm to the north-east of the application site. The stable would be located at the far north end of a field to the north of The Great Barn. This field is sited on raised ground above the publicly accessible road to the north (that runs west to east, leading to Vale House and Farm), atop a steep embankment. It is not clear from the submitted information how close to the edge of this embankment the stable would be and therefore how visible it would be from this access road beneath, however it would appear that the degree of vegetation on the embankment and tree cover (marked on the submitted plans) would provide screening. The topographical position of the land and the presence of a stone wall with tall hedge boundaries would provide screening from public views from the south of the field. From vantage points further south, long range / distant public views or glimpses of the structure may be possible?

Much the same can be said in respect of the two proposed field shelters, which are substantially smaller than the proposed stable block (measuring W3.6m x L3.6m x H2.945m). Field Shelter 1 would be situated in a field at a lower level than Great Barn, and a publicly accessible route that runs to the south, south-east and south-west of the house. It would be positioned close to a stone wall cut into the landscape which would provide screening and existence of vegetation within the field, and on the perimeter of the publicly accessible route would provide sporadic screening, though some vantage points from the south of the site may allow long range / distant public views or glimpses of this shelter. Field Shelter 2 would be sited in a field to north-east of Great Barn and would be screened by existing hedge and tree planting. The small scale and limited number of field shelters proposed by the current application further limits the impact of these structures, however it should be noted that a proliferation of such structures would likely have a more harmful effect on the special character and appearance of the conservation area.

The form, design and materials of the proposed buildings are typical of existing stable blocks and field shelters in the area, and their agricultural nature is consistent with the

context of the conservation area. The topography of the landscape and the natural screening provided by existing tree and hedge planting at the proposed locations, minimise the impact of the structures on public views through and across the conservation area. As such, I raise no objections.

Highway Engineer

Providing the stables and shelters are used for domestic use only and to stable animals kept in the land in which they are situated (which can be conditioned), the proposed stables and shelters should not materially affect the public highway. As the stables will be accessed from tracks which are public rights of way (notably 83, 87 and 88 Marple), comments should be sought from the Public Rights of Way Officer.

- Recommendation: No objection, subject to a condition.

The approved stables and field shelter shall remain for domestic use only and to stable animals kept in the land in which they are situated (as identified on drawing 92B). They shall at no time be used for commercial purposes.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed development does not result in a level of vehicle movements to / from the site greater than the level considered as part of the planning application and that an appropriate level of parking is provided, having regard to. Policies T-1 'Transport and Development', T-2 'Parking in Developments' and T-3 'Safety and Capacity on the Highway Network' of the Stockport Core Strategy DPD.

Arboricultural Officer

The proposed development is within or affected by a Conservation Area (Mill Brow).

There is no legally protected tree within this site or affected by this development.

The proposed development in relation to the construction of the buildings to the agricultural property site will not have a negative impact on trees located on or adjacent site, all remaining trees on or adjacent to the site are to be retained, so in line with council policy and further enhancements can easily be achieved through landscaping planting as well as tree protection through root protection fencing.

The lack of an arboriculture report is disappointing due to the Conservation Area status even with the lack of impact on trees on site, however due to the limited impact it can be worked around and details the health and condition of all trees present on site has been identified through site visit and professionalism of the officer.

The main concern for the development is the lack of detailed information in relation to the material storage or deliveries in close proximity to any protected trees and the landscaping plan to enhance the site therefore further detail will be required to enhance the screening of the site.

The sites front and rear boundary has a fair level of vegetation and trees and as such there cannot be any loss of trees on site as this will have a negative impact on amenity and biodiversity without an enhanced landscaping plan showing an agreed level of replacements.

In principle the scheme as a whole will not have a negative impact on trees in the area, therefore should be considered for approval from an arboriculture aspect. If the scheme is considered for approval then a landscaping plan needs to be considered to enhance and replace the lost tree frontage to the site over the years.

The following conditions are required if the scheme is approved :-

Condition Tree 1

- No existing tree within the site shall be cut down, topped, lopped, uprooted, wilfully damaged or wilfully destroyed without the prior written approval of the local planning authority, with the exception of those indicated otherwise on the approved plan. Any hedgerows, woody plants or shrubbery removed without such consent or dying or being severely damaged or being seriously diseased, within 5 years of the development commencing, shall be replaced within the next planting season with trees of such size and species as may be approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Condition Tree 2

- No development shall take place until all existing trees on the site except those shown to be removed on the approved plans, have been fenced off in accordance with BS 5837:2012 "Trees in relation to construction - Recommendations". The fencing shall be retained during the period of construction and no work, excavation, tipping or stacking of materials shall take place within any such fence during the construction period.

Condition Tree 3

- No development shall take place until details of all proposed tree planting, including the intended dates of planting, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. All tree planting shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the development being brought into use.

Nature Development Officer

The site itself has no nature conservation designations, legal or otherwise. The application area is approx. 50m (at its closest point) from Woodland at Marple Bridge Site of Biological Importance (SBI). Given the nature of the proposals and the

distance from the designated area, I would not consider any significant adverse impacts on the integrity of the SBI.

Records for badger exist within the woodland habitats to the north of the site. Badgers are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 which makes it an offence to kill, injure or take a badger (or attempt to do so), and also to disturb a badger while it is occupying a sett. It is also an offence to damage, destroy, or obstruct access to a badger sett. No badger setts were observed within 30m of the proposed development footprint. Full access to the whole site was not possible due to the presence of livestock within the field, but the topography of the un-surveyed area meant that a badger sett was unlikely to be present within this area. No signs indicative of badger activity (such as footprints, hair, dung) were noted. The proposed works are therefore considered to be of low risk to badgers (and badger setts). Precautionary measures during works are recommended to further reduce the risk of inadvertently harming any badgers which may pass through the site.

Trees and vegetation offer suitable nesting habitat for breeding birds. All breeding birds and their nests are legally protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). The proposed stable/field shelters are sited in open fields and so no vegetation clearance works are anticipated.

Ponds and their surrounding terrestrial habitat have the potential to support amphibians such as great crested newts (GCN). GCN are protected under Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. The latter implements the Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora. GCN are included in Schedule 2 of the Regulations as 'European protected species of animals' (EPS). Under the Regulations it is an offence to:

- 1) Deliberately capture or kill a wild EPS
- 2) Deliberately disturb a wild EPS in such a way that significantly affects:
 - a) the ability of a significant group to survive, breed, rear or nurture young, or to hibernate or migrate.
 - b) the local distribution of that species.
- 3) Damage or destroy a breeding place or resting site of such an animal.

No records for GCN exist in the local area but an absence of records may just reflect a gap in the baseline data rather than be confirmation of GCN absence. Two ponds are present within 250m of the proposed stable/field shelter locations. The nearest pond is >120m away. GCN can travel up to 500m from their breeding pond but terrestrial habitats within 100m of ponds are considered 'core habitat' where they are more typically found. The habitats where the stable and field shelters are proposed comprise grazed grassland and this is a less favourable terrestrial habitat for GCN. Precautionary working measures are recommended to minimise potential risk to GCN during works.

Paragraph 016 of the Natural Environment Planning Practice Guidance states that the local authority should only request a survey if they consider there is a reasonable likelihood of a protected species being present and affected by development. In this instance I would not consider it reasonable to request further ecological survey work as part of the application as the risk of impacting protected species is considered to be low, particularly if the recommended precautionary measures during works are implemented.

The proposed works are considered to be of low risk to protected species, such as badger, breeding birds and GCN. As a precautionary measure, an informative should be attached to any planning permission granted so that the applicant is aware of the potential for protected species to be present on site. It should also state that the granting of planning permission does not negate the need to abide by the laws which are in place to protect biodiversity. Should at any time any protected species be discovered on site, work should cease immediately, and Natural England/a suitably experienced ecologist should be contacted.

Should any vegetation clearance works be required to facilitate the proposals it is advised that this is timed to avoid the bird nesting season (which is March-August inclusive) where possible. If any works are proposed during the nesting bird season (which is typically March-August, inclusive), then the following informative should be used [BS42020 D.3.2.2] as part of any planning consent: Trees, scrub and structures are likely to contain nesting birds between 1st March and 31st August inclusive. Some of these features are present on the application site and are to be assumed to contain nesting birds between the above dates, unless a recent survey has been undertaken by a competent ecologist to assess the nesting bird activity on site during this period and it is absolutely certain that nesting birds are not present.

It is recommended that reasonable avoidance measures are implemented during works to minimise the risk of impacting protected species such as badger and GCN should they pass through the site: Ramps should be provided in excavations left open overnight to provide a means of escape and open pipework greater than 150 mm diameter be blanked off. It is also advised that materials are stored on raised pallets so that they do not provide suitable refugia for amphibians.

Biodiversity enhancements are expected as part of developments in line with local (paragraph 3.345 of the LDF) and national planning policy (NPPF). Suitable measures include the provision of bird boxes/artificial swallow cups on the proposed stable building. Additionally, any proposed landscape planting should comprise locally native species to maximise benefits to biodiversity.

Public Rights of Way Officer

The planning application acknowledges the existence of the Public Right of Way (88 M) and does not seem to refer to any proposed closure. As such the only comment I would make is that any closure should be avoided as much as possible

ANALYSIS

Green Belt

The application site is allocated within the Green Belt, as defined on the UDP Proposals Map. As such, each element of the proposal requires assessment against relevant saved UDP policies and the advice contained within the NPPF.

Proposed Stables

With regard to the proposed stables, saved UDP policy GBA1.2 states that within the Green Belt, there is a presumption against the construction of new buildings unless it is for a limited number of purposes including :-

(ii) Essential facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation...and for other uses of land which preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in it.

This is reflective of National Green Belt policy contained within Paragraph 145 of the NPPF which considers that an exception to inappropriate development within the Green Belt includes :-

(b) The provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or change of use) for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation, as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.

In an attempt to demonstrate that proposed stables would comprise essential and appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation, a Planning Statement has been submitted in support of the application which asserts the following :-

- The proposed stables would comprise non-commercial horse related development for the sole use of the applicant. The applicant wishes to own donkeys and horses in the future and would like to make stabling arrangements with this in mind.
- The size and height of the stables is largely dictated by the minimum space standards provided by the British Horse Society. The size of each stable has been designed in line with recommendations from professional bodies, relating to minimum space standards for floor space and height.
- The height, mass and scale of the proposed stables is in keeping with the equestrian nature of the building and would be sited at existing levels. The intention is that these levels would allow views of the proposed stables to be masked by the existing boundary hedge.

In addition, Members attention is also drawn to the fact that stables of a similar size as proposed have previously been approved within the field to the South East of the site as part of planning permission DC012610 in October 2003 and at Vale House to the North East of the site as part of planning permission DC046556 in April 2011, justified on the grounds of facilities for outdoor sport and recreation.

In view of the above, the proposed stables are considered to comprise appropriate development within the Green Belt and would be of a siting and size that would maintain and preserve the openness of the Green Belt. As such, the proposed stables comply with saved UDP policy GBA1.2 and the advice contained within Paragraph 145 (b) of the NPPF.

Proposed Field Shelters

In respect of the proposed field shelters, Saved UDP policy GBA1.2 states that within the Green Belt, there is a presumption against the construction of new buildings unless it is for certain limited specific purposes including :-

(i) Agriculture and forestry (unless permitted development rights have been withdrawn)

Given that the site is located within an area where agricultural permitted development rights have been withdrawn, by virtue of an Article 4 Direction (Ludworth Moor, Cobden Edge and Whalley Moor) of the Town and Country Planning General Development Order 1973, the proposed field shelters, comprising agricultural buildings, technically represent a departure from the Development Plan.

Notwithstanding the above, it is noted that Paragraph 213 of the NPPF requires that due weight should be given to Development Plan policies, according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF. In this context, Paragraph 145 (a) of the NPPF simply identifies 'buildings for agriculture' as an exception to what otherwise should be regarded as inappropriate development and does not refer to the withdrawal of agricultural permitted development rights. Accordingly, Members should apply limited weight to saved UDP policy GBA1.2, which is not somewhat out of date in relation to Paragraph 145(a) of the NPPF.

In an attempt to demonstrate a genuine agricultural need for the proposed field shelters, a Planning Statement has been submitted in support of the application which asserts the following :-

- The land at the Great Barn is an agricultural holding (County Parish Holding Number : 44/763/0468).
- The site of approximately 1.35 hectares comprises existing areas of field used for agricultural grazing and would continue as such.

- The applicant owns 3 Alpacas which currently graze on the land, with a possible greater variety of grazing animals in the future.
- The proposed field shelters would provide an area of simple covered shelter that the animals could seek if the weather takes a turn for the worst, along with providing storage for their feed.
- The land is divided into 3 paddocks. Along with the proposed stable block, the proposal for 2 field shelters would allow the animals in each paddock to reach shelter.
- The materials for the proposed field shelters are typical in nature for their building type and are appropriate for their location within agricultural land.

In addition, Members attention is also drawn to the fact that buildings of a similar size as proposed for use as poultry rearing sheds have previously been approved within the site as part of planning permission DC008128 in July 2002 and within the field to the South East of the site as part of planning permission DC006529 in April 2002, justified on the grounds of agricultural need.

In view of the above, it is considered that the submitted Planning Statement clearly demonstrates that the proposed field shelters are genuinely required for the purposes of agriculture and would be of a size commensurate with the scale of the operation of the holding and the number of animals within it. As such, the proposal represents an exception under Paragraph 145 (a) of the NPPF and is considered to be justified as a departure to the Development Plan. Accordingly, there is no requirement to demonstrate 'Very Special Circumstances'.

Impact on Character of Conservation Area

The application site is located within the Mill Brow Conservation Area. The detailed comments received to the application from the Council Conservation Officer are contained within the Consultee Responses section above.

The Conservation Officer notes that the form, design and materials of the proposed stable block are similar to other stables within the Conservation Area and are of a reduced scale to a similar stable block in the vicinity of the site. The proposed stable block would be located to the far North end of a field to the North of The Great Barn, which is sited on raised land above the publically accessible road to the North. Whilst it is unclear how close to the edge of this embankment the proposed stable would be sited and therefore how visible it would be from the access road, it is noted that the degree of vegetation, tree cover, tall hedge boundaries and the presence of a stone wall would provide screening from public vantage points from the South of the field.

The Conservation Officer notes that the proposed field shelters would be substantially smaller than the proposed stable block. Field shelter 1 would be situated in a field at a

lower level than The Great Barn and a publically accessible route that runs to the South, South East and South West of the property. Field shelter 1 would be positioned close to a stone wall cut into the landscape which would provide screening. The existence of vegetation within the field and on the perimeter of the publically accessible route would provide some sporadic screening, although some vantage points from the South may allow long range/distant views of field shelter 1. Field shelter 2 would be sited in a field to the North East of The Great Barn and would be screened by existing hedge and tree planting. The small scale and limited number of field shelters proposed further limits the impact of these structures. It is however noted that a proliferation of such structures would likely have a more harmful effect on the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area, although this would be subject to further consideration as part of any future planning application.

The form, design and materials of the proposed buildings are typical of existing stable blocks and field shelters in the area and their agricultural nature is consistent with the context of the Conservation Area. The topography of the landscape and the natural screening provided by existing tree and hedge planting at the proposed locations, minimises the impact of the structures on public views through and across the Conservation Area.

In addition, Members are advised that stables of a similar size as proposed have previously been approved within the field to the South East of the site as part of planning permission DC012610 in October 2003 and at Vale House to the North East of the site as part of planning permission DC046556 in April 2011. Timber agricultural buildings of a similar size as the proposed field shelters have previously been approved within the site as part of planning permission DC008128 in July 2002 and within the field to the South East of the site as part of planning permission DC006529 in April 2002. Such developments have therefore previously been considered acceptable within the Conservation Area.

In view of the above, in the absence of objections from the Conservation Officer, it is considered that the proposal would not result in harm to the character of the Mill Brow Conservation Area within which the site is located. On this basis, the proposal is considered to comply with saved UDP policy HC1.2 and Core Strategy DPD policy SIE-3.

Impact on Landscape Character Area

The application site is located within the Marple Bridge Landscape Character Area and saved UDP policies LCR1.1 and LCR1.1A seek to strictly control development in the countryside to ensure that the landscape quality of the area is not adversely affected.

Whilst public vantage points of the proposed development would be available from adjoining Public Rights of Way and the proposed development would undoubtedly have a degree of impact on the Landscape Character Area, the design, size, scale and appearance of the proposed building would be of typical agricultural form and

appearance, would reflect the agricultural use of the land and would be typical of other such buildings which characterise and are commonplace within the countryside and rural areas. The siting of the proposed stable building would be such that it is located close to the residential curtilage, on an existing levelled area and would require no significant disruption from earthworks, allowing the building to nestle into an existing banked area to the East. Existing boundary treatment and vegetation would ensure that the proposed development would be appropriately screened, minimising its impact on the character of the area. This would ensure an acceptable visual appearance that would be sympathetically absorbed and assimilated within the Landscape Character Area without damaging the rural character of the surrounding area.

In addition, Members are advised that stables of a similar size as proposed have previously been approved within the field to the South East of the site as part of planning permission DC012610 in October 2003 and at Vale House to the North East of the site as part of planning permission DC046556 in April 2011. Timber agricultural buildings of a similar size as the proposed field shelters have previously been approved within the site as part of planning permission DC008128 in July 2002 and within the field to the South East of the site as part of planning permission DC006529 in April 2002. Such developments have therefore previously been considered acceptable within the Landscape Character Area.

In view of the above, it is considered that the proposed development could be successfully accommodated on the site without causing undue harm to the visual amenity of the area or the quality of the Marple Bridge Landscape Character Area within which the site is located, in accordance with saved UDP policies LCR1.1 and LCR1.1A and Core Strategy DPD policy SIE-1.

Impact on Residential Amenity

The proposed field shelters would be sited within existing fields, well separated from the nearest residential properties at Vale Farm to the North East, Green Hill Farm to the North and Blackberry Hall to the South West. Although it is noted that the proposed stables would be sited relatively close to the East of Green Hill Farm, they would be of a siting, scale, height and domestic use that would ensure that the residential amenity of this property would be preserved. On this basis, it is considered that the proposed development could be accommodated on the site without causing undue harm to the residential amenity of surrounding properties, in accordance with Core Strategy DPD policy SIE-1.

Highways Considerations

No objections are raised to the proposal from the Council Highway Engineer, subject to the imposition of a condition to ensure that the proposed development is used for domestic purposes only and to stable animals kept in the land in which they are situated, rather than for commercial purposes. Subject to compliance with such a condition, the proposal is considered acceptable from a traffic generation, parking and

highway safety perspective, in accordance with Core Strategy DPD policies T-1, T-2 and T-3.

Impact on Public Rights of Way

It is noted that the application site is adjoined to all sides and accessed from tracks which are Public Rights of Way. The Council Public Rights of Way Officer notes that the application does not refer to any proposed closure and, provided that any closure is avoided, raises no objections to the proposal. On this basis, the proposal complies with saved UDP policies L1.7, L1.8 and L1.9 in terms of its impact on adjacent Public Rights of Way.

Impact on Trees

Existing trees on site are afforded protection by virtue of the site being located within the Mill Brow Conservation Area. The detailed comments received to the application from the Council Arboricultural Officer are contained within the Consultee Responses section above.

Whilst it is noted that an Arboricultural Report has not been submitted in support of the application, the Arboricultural Officer considers that the proposed development would not have a negative impact on trees and notes that all trees on the site are proposed to be retained. Whilst concerns are raised as to the potential for negative impacts on trees during construction, this could be mitigated by the imposition of conditions to ensure that no retained tree is worked to and to require the installation of protective fencing to retained trees during construction. A further condition is recommended to require additional tree planting to further enhance the site.

In view of the above, in the absence of objections from the Arboricultural Officer and subject to conditional control, the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of its impact on trees, in accordance with Core Strategy DPD policies SIE-1 and SIE-3.

Impact on Protected Species and Ecology

The detailed comments received to the application from the Council Nature Development Officer are contained within the Consultee Responses section above.

Whilst it is noted that the site has no nature conservation designations, legal or otherwise, the site is located approximately 50 metres from Woodland at Marple Bridge Site of Biological Importance (SBI). However, given the nature of the proposal and the distance from the designated area, no significant adverse impacts on the integrity of the SBI are envisaged by the Nature Development Officer.

Records for badger, a protected species, exist within the woodland habitats to the North of the site, however no badger setts were observed within 30 metres of the proposed development footprint. Whilst full access to the whole site was not possible, the

topography of the un-surveyed area is such that a badger set is unlikely to be present within this area and no signs of badger activity were noted. As such, the proposed works are considered to be of low risk to badgers, subject to recommended precautionary measures during works.

Due to the fact that the proposed stable and fields shelters would be sited in open fields, no vegetation clearance works are anticipated.

Whilst no records for Great Crested Newts (GCN), a protected species, exist in the local area, the absence of such records may reflect a gap in the baseline data rather than be confirmation of GCN absence. Two ponds are present within 250 metres of the location of the proposed stables and field shelter, however the habitats where the stables and field shelters are proposed comprise grazed grassland which is a less favourable terrestrial habitat for GCN. Precautionary working measures are recommended to minimise potential to GCN during works.

Provided that recommended precautionary measures during works are implemented, the risks of impact on protected species, is considered to be low and the Nature Development Officer does not consider it reasonable to request the submission of further ecological survey work as part of the application. The applicant will be advised of the potential for protected species to be present on the site, legislation in place to protect biodiversity and procedures to follow should protected species be present on site by way of informative. A further informative is recommended in relation to procedures regarding proposed works during the bird nesting season. The implementation of reasonable avoidance measures are recommended during works, to minimise the risk of impacting protected species such as badgers or GCN should they pass through the site. It is also recommended that biodiversity enhancements, such as bird boxes/artificial swallow cups on the stable building and the proposed landscaping to comprise locally native species, should be incorporated within the development.

In view of the above, in the absence of objections from the Nature Development Officer and subject to conditional control, the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of its impact on protected species, biodiversity and the ecological interest of the site, in accordance with saved UDP policy NE1.2 and Core Strategy DPD policies Cs8 and SIE-3.

SUMMARY

At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 of the NPPF establishes three dimensions to sustainable development – economic, social and environmental and Paragraph 8 of the NPPF indicates that these should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system.

Full planning permission is sought for the erection of 1 no. stable building and 2 no. field shelters within fields in the ownership of The Great Barn, Holly Vale, Marple Bridge. In the absence of objections from relevant consultees and subject to conditional control,

the proposal is considered acceptable with regard to its impact on the character and appearance of the Mill Brow Conservation Area; its impact on the Marple Bridge Landscape Character Area; its impact on residential amenity; its impact on highway safety; its impact on trees; its impact on protected species and ecology; and its impact on adjacent Public Rights of Way.

The application site is located within the Green Belt. As the proposed stable building would comprise a 'facility for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation', it is considered to comply with saved UDP policy GBA1.2 and Paragraph 145 (b) of the NPPF.

Due to the fact that agricultural permitted development rights have been withdrawn in the area, the proposed field shelters are deemed to be contrary to criteria (i) of saved UDP policy GBA1.2 and therefore technically represent a Departure from the Development Plan. Notwithstanding this, it is recognised that this policy is somewhat out of date in relation to Paragraph 145 (a) of the NPPF and, accordingly, Members should apply limited weight to it. The Planning Statement submitted in support of the application clearly demonstrates that the proposed field shelters are genuinely required for the purposes of agriculture. The proposed field shelters therefore represent an exception under Paragraph 145 (a) of the NPPF, do not amount to inappropriate development in the Green Belt and, as such, are considered to be fully justified as a Departure to the Development Plan.

In view of the above, in considering the planning merits of the proposal against the requirements of the NPPF, the proposal is considered to represent sustainable development. On this basis, the application is recommended for approval.

Given the conflict of the proposed field shelters with criteria (i) of saved UDP policy GBA1.2, this element of the proposal remains a Departure from the Development Plan. Accordingly, should Members of Marple Area Committee be minded to grant planning permission, the application will be required to be referred to the Planning and Highways Regulation Committee for determination as a Departure from the Development Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

Grant - Should Marple Area Committee be minded to agree the Officer recommendation and grant planning permission, the application should be referred to the Planning and Highway Regulation Committee for determination as a Departure from the Development Plan.