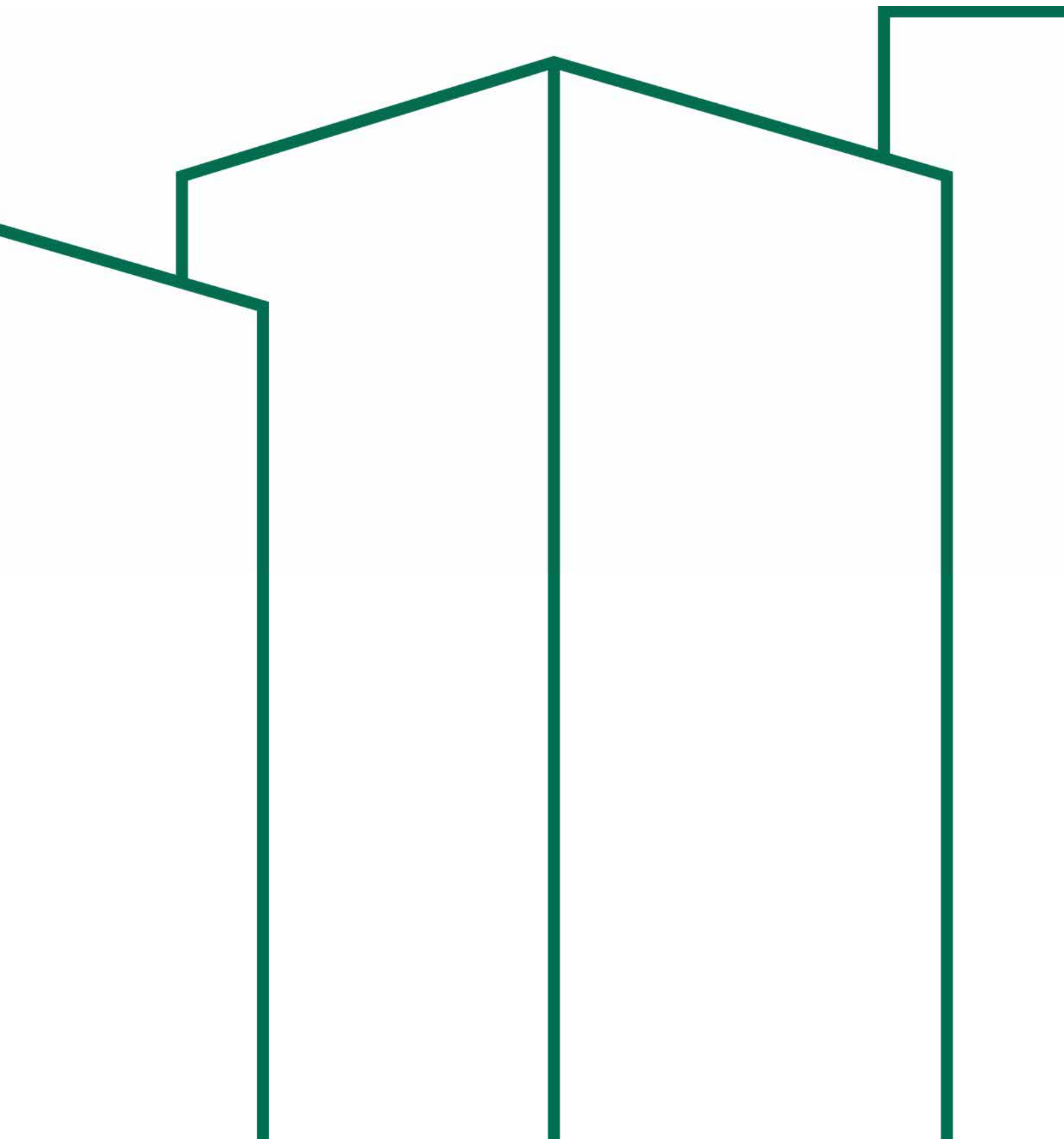




PLANNING STATEMENT

Mr & Mrs Colebatch  
Land to rear of  
4 Uttoxeter Road,  
Blithbury  
WS15 3HU



## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared to accompany a planning application that has been submitted to Lichfield District Council on behalf of Mr and Mrs Colebatch.

### Proposals

1.2 The application seeks planning permission for the erection of an agricultural building to be used for the storage of hay, machinery and the winter housing of Pygmy goats. The building measures 6 metres by 18 metres (108 square metres).

1.3 The proposed building will have an eaves height of some 4 metres and ridge height of 6 metres. The building has a main floor area of 108 square metres (18 metres by 6 metres) and divided internally into individual sections including hay storage (31.5 square metres), equipment store (24 square metres), winter stabling of goats (28 square metres), isolation pen (14 square metres) and food and medical store (10.5 square metres). The proposed building will be of steel frame construction and clad (walls and roof) in profile sheet metal cladding in Juniper Green colour.

1.4 The building is to be located to the south eastern corner of the field, predominantly screened by dense boundary hedging. The building is orientated on a north/south axis such that the long elevation is alongside the boundary.

### Description of Site and Surroundings

- 1.5 The application site is a field located to the western side of Uttoxeter Road, Blithbury, measuring some 1.33 hectares (3.28 acres) in area. The land does not currently have any other buildings within the site. There are currently 8no. Pygmy goats grazing the field and are contained by a low-level fence. There is an existing small temporary shelter within the fenced off area to provide emergency cover from wet weather conditions for the goats.
  
- 1.6 The site is not within Green Belt. The land is not the subject of any biodiversity, ecology or special landscape designation. It is not within a Conservation Area and not within the setting of a designated or non-designated heritage asset.

## 2.0 PLANNING POLICY

### The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework)

- 2.1 Paragraph 47 of the Framework reconfirms the requirement (Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Section 70 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Paragraph 2 of the NPPF confirms that the Framework “is a material consideration in planning decisions”.
- 2.2 The Framework advises that planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity. Paragraph 84 requires that planning policies and decisions should enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings.
- 2.3 The Framework advises (paragraph 28) that planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity. It requires that plans support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well designed new buildings.
- 2.4 Paragraph 81 of the NPPF states that “Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development”.

### Lichfield District Local Plan Strategy 2008 - 2029

2.5 The Lichfield District Local Plan Strategy 2008 – 2029 was adopted on 17 February 2015.

2.6 The following Policies contained in the Local Plan are considered to be relevant to the determination of this application:-

- Policy NR1 : Countryside Management
- Policy NR4 : Trees, Woodlands & Hedgerows
- Policy BE1 : High Quality Development
- Core Policy 1 : The Spatial Strategy
- Core Policy 3 : Delivering Sustainable Development

### 3.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 It is considered that the main matters for consideration are as follows:

Issue 1 – Principle of development

Issue 2 – Agricultural need

Issue 3 – Impact on the Character and appearance of the Countryside

#### Issue 1 - Principle of development

3.2 The application site is located within a field measuring some 4.13 hectares (10.21 acres), 1.33 hectares (3.28 acres) of which is within the ownership of the applicant. The land is grazing land within open countryside. Land around the site is predominately in agricultural use and mainly grassland or arable.

3.3 The definition of agriculture is set out at Section 336 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990:

"agriculture" includes horticulture, fruit growing, seed growing, dairy farming, the breeding and keeping of livestock (including any creature kept for the production of food, wool, skins or fur, or for the purpose of its use in the farming of land), the use of land as grazing land, meadow land, osier land, market gardens and nursery grounds, and the use of land for woodlands where that use is ancillary to the farming of land for other agricultural purposes, and "agricultural" shall be construed accordingly;"

- 3.4 The land is thus within agricultural use, being used as grazing land. The application seeks planning permission for the erection of an agricultural building to be used for the storage of hay, machinery and the winter housing of Pygmy goats, similarly an agricultural use. The use of the land in this manner is consistent with the important role agriculture and land management plays in the management and maintenance of the countryside. It is also a small but important contributor to the rural economy.
- 3.5 Farming cannot usually operate without buildings. The land surrounding the application site is characterised by farmsteads with portal framed buildings. In principle therefore, there should be no reason why a farm building should not be acceptable at the application site.
- 3.6 Against that context, the application is for an agricultural building to provide space for the storage of hay and machinery used in the maintenance of the land and the production of the hay. There is also a section within the building proposed to be used to offer shelter for the Pygmy goats in poor weather conditions, along with an isolation area to assist with containing goats when required for veterinary check-ups. It is a building that is commensurate in size with the land use. It is evidently a building to be used for purposes of agriculture and is thus an appropriate form of development within the countryside. In this respect, the proposed development is compliant with Local Plan Policies NR1 and BE1 of the Local Plan and the Framework.

### Issue 2 - Agricultural Need

- 3.7 The building will provide space for the storage of machinery operated on the farm, the storage of hay and the housing of Pigmy goats that graze a section of the land. The building will be used fully for agricultural purposes. The applicants currently own no. 8 Pygmy goats and will be obtaining an additional no. 8 Pygmy goats for breeding, alongside prospects of obtaining sheep for the site also.
- 3.8 Currently, although the goats will be grazing the land, it is important the goats are kept within a secure environment. The applicants are currently using no. 5 bales of hay per week for the existing no. 8 goats, which are being brought onto the land from elsewhere every 2-3 days as there are no storage facilities for the hay at present. As it is the applicant's intention to increase the number of goats to increase the breeding enterprise at the site, it would be prudent to increase hay production at the site with the benefit of being able to store the hay produced from the land within the proposed building.
- 3.9 Hay production will be increased utilising the approx. 3.3 acres of land at the site. Storage can only be to eaves height which is some 3 metres. Accounting for loading and unloading and the necessary clearance between bale and roof, a measurement of 2.5 metres is taken for loading purposes. Bales have to be stored in stepped layout for operational and safety reasons.
- 3.10 In light of this, it is proposed that some 31.5 square metres will be provided within the proposed building for the of storage space required for hay. This does not allow for space around the hay or provide for flexibility for productive



years. It is reasonable to allow for an additional space to ensure the building can contribute efficiently to the business.

3.11 The barn will also be used for the storage of equipment used by the Applicant in running the enterprise. This includes a tractor with mower attachment, hedge cutter and small trailer for mucking out. Accounting for the circulation space and room for maintenance, along with the space to provide flexibility for productive years where more hay is produced from the land, it is considered that the 24 square metres of equipment storage within the proposed building, is the minimum size necessary to serve the holding.

3.12 Within the proposed building will be winter accommodation for the goats, with an isolation pen also included. It is essential that for the breeding of the goats, they are provided with safe and healthy shelter to protect them from seasonal or viral diseases along with keeping the goats safely contained and away from predators. Although there is currently a small temporary shelter at the site to offer cover from rain, and shade from the sun, this is not substantial enough for breeding and bad winter months. The proposed building will enable proper ventilation and heating facilities during winters to ensure the animals are kept warm and dry and will also offer additional shade during the summer.

3.13 Although there is currently an outdoor isolation pen, there is also an essential need for an indoor isolation area. The isolation area is essential for the enterprise if an instance was to occur that one of the goats contracted a contagious disease. The isolation period will also be essential for assisting with maintaining the health of goats and to assist the vets who will regularly visit to

maintain health and assist with the breeding program. In this respect, the proposed development is compliant with Local Plan Policy NR1 and the Framework.

### Issue 3 - Impact on the Character and appearance of the Countryside

- 3.14 The proposed building, in terms of its design and appearance, is typical of many modern buildings to be found within the surrounding countryside. The proposed building is to be constructed with profile metal sheeting coloured in juniper green and will be modest in size with a low level eaves height of 3 metres and a maximum height of 4 metres to the ridge.
- 3.15 The proposed building is to be sited near to the eastern boundary of the site, which is well screened by existing mature trees and hedging to the eastern boundary of the site. The siting of the proposed building does not therefore stand in isolation within the countryside and will not be unduly prominent when viewed in the surrounding area.
- 3.16 The siting of the proposed building has also been carefully considered to ensure it is sited within a sufficient distance way from the hedge and tree canopies. This is to ensure the proposed building does not impact upon the health of the existing natural screening. In these circumstances, the building does not have any injurious effect upon the character of the site or the surrounding area.
- 3.17 Farming cannot usually operate without buildings. The land surrounding the application site is characterised by farmsteads with portal framed buildings. In

principle therefore, there should be no reason why a farm building should not be acceptable at the application site.

3.18 Against that context, the application is for an agricultural building to provide space for the storage of hay and machinery used in the maintenance of the land, the production of the hay and for winter accommodation for goats. It is a building that is commensurate in size with the land use. It is evidently a building to be used for purposes of agriculture and is thus an appropriate form of development within countryside.

3.19 In the light of these circumstances, it is submitted that the proposed development would not result in harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. In this respect, the proposed development is compliant with Local Plan Policies NR1, BE1 and the Framework.

#### 4.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 The land is thus within agricultural use, being used as grazing land. The application seeks planning permission for the erection of an agricultural building to be used for the storage of hay, machinery and the winter housing of Pygmy goats to assist with breeding, similarly an agricultural use. The use of the land in this manner is consistent with the important role agriculture and land management plays in the management and maintenance of the countryside. It is also a small but important contributor to the rural economy.
- 4.2 The size is the minimum size necessary to meet the needs of the holding at this time. The building is therefore considered an appropriate form of development within countryside.
- 4.3 The building is located within a discrete part of the site, close to the boundary. The building is of a colour that is appropriate and common within the locality. It will appear congruous within its setting and would not detract from the character and appearance of the countryside. In this respect, the proposed development is compliant with Local Plan Policies NR1 and BE1 of the Local Plan and the Framework.
- 4.4 No harm is caused to the amenity of residents, biodiversity/ecology or the character of the countryside. No 'other harm' is therefore identified. The proposal represents appropriate development and, in light of the above, it is respectfully submitted that planning permission be granted without delay.

JRL/TD/6136

12 October 202



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PLANNING STATEMENT

Mr & Mrs Colebatch  
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Our Reference: JRL/TD/6136  
Date: 14 October 2022

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