

Green Belt Statement.



Ref: 147.25

Project: Shippon Cottage

Date: 10.02.2026

Client: C Thompson

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RE: Planning Response – 10.02.2026

1. Case Officer Response

"As per our phone call last week, please find attached comments from the Conservation Officer. I have also copied below the comments from the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU).

Based on the comments from both consultees, it might be best for the application to be withdrawn and an alternative scheme devised. In any event, the required bat surveys will only be possible between May and September (inclusive) during the roosting season.

In terms of the principle of development, it is considered that the proposed stable building would constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt. It would not meet any of the inappropriate development exceptions as it would be materially larger than the stable building it replaces. No very special circumstances have been identified that would outweigh the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal. 'Any other harm' includes the less than substantial harm to the significance of the listed building and the insufficient information regarding protected species.

Please see below the comments submitted by GMEU:

A Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment of the buildings on site has been undertaken (Arbtech, 2025) which found two of the buildings to have high bat roosting potential, and therefore three nocturnal bat surveys were recommended, between May and September (inclusive). No information regarding these surveys appears to have been submitted.

As you may be aware, all species of bat and their roosts are protected under UK and European legislation and are a material consideration when determining planning applications. If the development is likely to disturb a potential bat roost then a bat survey should be carried out before the application is determined. Furthermore, as per Paragraph 98 and 99 of the ODPM Circular 06/2005, the presence of a protected species is a material consideration when a planning authority is considering a development proposal that, if carried out, would be likely to result in harm to the species or its habitat. As such, it is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development is established before the planning permission is granted. Ecological surveys should therefore only be left to coverage under planning conditions in exceptional circumstances."

2. Consulting Response (BCAE Architects)

We thank you for your detailed comments and those of the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit. We do not consider that withdrawal of the application is necessary at this stage but we would like to remove the annex from the proposed application and set out below further clarification and justification in response to the points raised, together with a willingness to positively engage to address any remaining concerns.

Principle of Development and Green Belt

The proposal seeks the replacement of an existing stable building that is in poor condition and no longer fit for purpose. While it is acknowledged that replacement buildings in the Green Belt must be carefully considered, the proposal has been designed to remain clearly ancillary in nature and function, with no change in use and no intensification of activity.

To assist the assessment, we have updated the drawings with outline overlays of the existing in plan and elevation. These will demonstrate that:

- The increase in footprint is proportionate to the needs of the client and the perception of the building ties in with the listed with regards to its external finish, rather than work against it as the current dilapidated stable building does.
- The overall height increase is limited and not visually dominant when assessed against the existing structure.
- The roof pitch reflects a more traditional agricultural form, consistent with local vernacular buildings. It is noted that elsewhere on site, a steeper roof pitch has been encouraged for ancillary structures; the proposal therefore aligns with this established design direction.

The stable building sits against an existing backdrop of hedgerows and mature vegetation, which significantly limits wider visibility and reduces any perceived openness impact on the Green Belt. As such, the proposal does not result in a material encroachment into the countryside or undermine the purposes of including land within the Green Belt.

Should the acceptability of the scale be established in principle, the applicant is also willing to explore constructing the replacement building at a lower finished floor level, further reducing visual impact.

Heritage Considerations and Setting of the Listed Building

The proposal results in less than substantial harm to the significance of the listed building, as identified, and this harm must be weighed against the public benefits of the scheme in accordance with the NPPF.

The replacement of the existing stables – which are in poor condition and detract from the quality of the wider setting – with a more sympathetic structure represents a clear heritage benefit. The proposed stone and slate building is far more consistent with local vernacular architecture and will positively enhance the setting and appreciation of the heritage asset.

Importantly, the stables are located on the more visually prominent rear aspect of the site, facing the motorway. Improvements to the design, materials, and roof form will therefore result in a noticeable enhancement to the wider setting of the listed building when experienced from public vantage points.

The proposal also offers an opportunity to secure higher-quality materials through the planning process. While these buildings are not curtilage listed, the use of traditional materials can be secured through this application, representing a further heritage benefit.

Ecology and Bat Surveys

We acknowledge the comments from GMEU regarding bat roosting potential and the recommendations of the Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment.

The applicant recognises the importance of protected species and confirms a commitment to undertaking the recommended nocturnal bat surveys within the appropriate survey window between May and September. These surveys will be commissioned and submitted to fully inform the application and ensure compliance with relevant legislation and policy.

With regard to the preliminary bat roost assessment, the two buildings identified as having high potential for bats were the main house and the garage. The stables were found to have a 'negligible suitability for bats'. Extract below:

B3

B3 is a small L shaped stable building of wooden construction with a corrugated metal roof. Significant light ingress and cobwebbing are present internally on this building, severely limiting bat potential. No crevices are present externally. Given the cobwebbing, lack of bat evidence and construction of this building, it is considered to provide **Negligible Suitability** for bats.

The applicant is keen to work proactively with the Local Planning Authority to agree an appropriate timescale for submission of this information.

Public Benefits and Very Special Circumstances

In addition to heritage considerations, the proposal delivers a range of wider public benefits which the NPPF is clear are not limited solely to heritage matters.

Animal Welfare and Rural Character

The proposed stables provide larger, safer, and more functional accommodation for horses. The existing structures are undersized and in poor condition, limiting appropriate animal care. Improved facilities will support better animal welfare and help ensure the continued presence of horses on the land, which contributes positively to the rural character and landscape of the area.

Investment and Local Economy

The scheme represents direct investment in local materials, labour, and specialist skills. While modest in scale, this investment nonetheless supports the local rural economy and is a recognised planning benefit.

Security and Site Management

The site is in a remote rural location with limited passive surveillance and a public footpath running through it. The upgraded replacement stables will improve visibility over the land and provide more secure structures, reducing the risk of theft, vandalism, and antisocial behaviour. This not only supports the optimum viable use of the site but also benefits public safety and site stewardship.

Conclusion

In light of the above, we respectfully consider that the proposal is capable of being supported, subject to the submission of additional information and minor refinements. The applicant remains fully committed to engaging positively with the Local Planning Authority to address concerns and would welcome further discussion to agree a clear way forward.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. El-Ammar', written in a cursive style.

Arron El-Ammar

RIBA Chartered Architect | Director

BCAE Architects.