

Dean Aggett
36 Stratford Avenue
Exeter
EX4 8ES

HRN/15

09 February 2022

Dear Sirs

Re Meadow Forge, Hillside Barn, Cadeleigh

I write further to the receipt of the Planning Contravention Notice concerning my property, above, and have attached a copy duly completed, as requested.

I have noted the allegations set out in the PCN re:

Alleged 'Change of use' of: Agricultural building/Workshop' and Conversion of Agricultural building into 'alleged' Unauthorised mixed use to 'Residential/Workshop'. And, the stationing of a 'Shepherds Hut' for human habitation', including the Unauthorised use of Land' for the 'Stationing of Vehicles' and, 'Unauthorised' 'Change of Use' of adjoining Agricultural Land', to part Domestic/Agricultural, without the benefit of planning permission.

In order to assist your enquiries, I would advise that: -

Primarily, there is no residential use of the building, the shepherd's hut, or the land. I believe that my use of my land and building for my work is in compliance with the planning permissions, both those granted specifically or by other legislation, and that the allegations are false.

The building that is the subject of this PCN started life sometime in the 1970s as an open silage clamp, later being covered and then used as storage for the business at East Court Farm that made agricultural implements and steel frame buildings. I purchased Hillside Barn in 2006 after consulting with Mid Devon District Council as to whether such a business use would be supported in this location, and planning permission was granted for the change of use of the building from agriculture to a blacksmith's forge on 14 December 2009 (Your ref: 09/01587). My business, Meadow Forge Blacksmiths is now over 39 years old, and has operated from the above address for over 15 years.

Since 2011 I have worked mostly on my own, employing sub contractors to provide the work I cannot do myself. I have a strong drive to make Meadow Forge as environmentally sound as is possible, and this has led to the adoption of policies to reduce and reuse.

This includes the conservation of the environment, and the provision of materials, equipment, and fuels from as close a source as possible with many being supplied from the land surrounding the workshop. One example is the raising, planting, and coppicing of trees to provide the materials to provide the raw ingredient for charcoal making that provides the fuel used in forging, casting and heat treating of metals used in my business, and heat the office, small workspaces, and water system within the business premises, reclaiming heat from the forges to use for heating.

I also use local reclaimed or natural materials for the maintenance of the forge building, and any repairs or improvements to building, such as insulation from waste wool from my neighbour's sheep flocks, cob from the ground, timber from the trees grown here. I make all my own tools, jigs, fixtures etc, and either make or refurbish the heavy machinery used in my business both in the workshops or on the land, I also am following systems of fertility increments, biodiversity, and carbon capture and sequestration with all of these requiring more labour as I don't use chemicals at all or machinery where a better option is possible.

This means that this is equivalent to a least 2 full time jobs, and this, coupled with a personal health problem that limits the length of time I can do any one activity continuously, leads to long hours at the workshop and land. In addition, I work off site at the buildings I work on, I also attend many events each year both promoting and teaching blacksmithing and my business, and sustainable practises and solutions.

I have had, and continue to have, support for my working methods from the majority of my neighbours, I practise a no chemical, traditional crafts and techniques approach to land management and business with modern sustainable practices included.

With regard to my business vehicles these are parked here as they are used in my business and are when appropriate in the furtherance of my business. I undertake blacksmithing here or at shows, events, competitions, mobile training, restoration work. This work takes me away from here throughout much of the year for days and often weeks at a time. As for the last time each of the vehicles left my property, some such as the forklifts, have never left the workshop in over 15 years, but those involved in use such as the shows and events have not had those to attend since the world went into lockdown and restriction,

The tractors and others used for agriculture and forestry on this land have continued to be employed in those roles throughout and have mostly not left my property for anytime in the last ten to fifteen years or so. All are of the types normally associated with use for agriculture or forestry and would be found on any such smallholding in agricultural use, in fact the same types of vehicles some being the same models even as those being on almost all of my neighbour's properties.

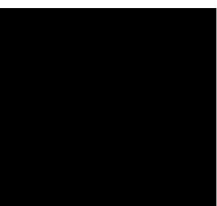
The yellow and blue lorry is due to leave the premises soon to be reconditioned and serviced ready for transporting tools and equipment to one of the five large jobs lined up to take place some time over the year, these are in Dorset, Devon, two in Wales, and one in Scotland. The camper is also undergoing preparation to travel to sites.

How long it will be onsite or how much time I will be will not be known until the jobs are completed. Some such works have taken up to 4 years in the past, with me splitting my time between the site and the workshop, so it's a very variable process and timescale, but the blue lorry will hopefully soon be again attending events across the west country and Wales. When this will recommence is pure guess work at the moment but hopefully client confidence will resume soon.

I hope the above assists your enquiries. It is apparent from the information that I have provided, and the information on the application file that the allegations of a breach of planning control are unfounded, and I trust that the matter will now be closed.

If, however, you wish to arrange a site visit then do please let me know your available dates to I can check my diary. I will need to be present to let you into the forge and any visitor to the premises must abide by health and safety regulations while there. A maximum of 2 people are permitted inside the building and masks will be required to be worn at all times.

Yours sincerely



Mr D Aggett



compensation will be payable in respect of any loss or damage which could have been avoided had you given the Council the information required by this notice, or had you otherwise co-operated with the Council when responding to it.

To **MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

RESPONSE to Planning Contravention Notice

From: The Owner/Occupier, Meadow Forge, Hillside Barn, Cadeleigh, Tiverton

Re: **Alleged 'Change of Use' of: Agricultural building / Workshop' and Conversion of Agricultural building into 'alleged' Unauthorised mixed use to 'Residential / Workshop'. And, the stationing of a 'Shepherds Hut' for human habitation', including the 'Unauthorised use of Land' for the 'Stationing of Vehicles' and, 'Unauthorised' 'Change of Use' of adjoining 'Agricultural Land', to part Domestic / Agricultural, without the benefit of planning permission.**

Land at Meadow Forge, Hillside Barn, Cadeleigh, Tiverton, Devon.

QUESTIONS

ANSWERS

1.0	Yourself:	
1.1	Please state your full name	Dean Aggett
1.2	Please state your home address	36 Stratford Avenue, Exeter EX4 8EX
1.3	Please provide a contact telephone number	Email or letter to my business address is my preferred communication, as I often have low signal.
1.4	Please provide an email address (If applicable)	meadowforge [REDACTED]
1.5	Please state your date of birth	This private personal information is only provided to banks etc and is irrelevant to planning law.

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1.6	Please state your interest in the land (ie. freehold, leasehold, occupier, tenant)	Owner
2.0	Other persons having an interest in the land. Please state the full name and address of:	
2.1	Freehold owner(s)	N/A
2.2	All tenants/lessees of the land	N/A
2.3	Directors/Business partners	N/A
2.4	The name and address of any person having a charge on the land (ie. bank, building society, private lender)	N/A
3.0	With reference to the matters set out in "Schedule 2" of the Notice:	
3.1	With reference to above.	



3.2	Please provide the details of your permanent residential address?	As in 1.2, above, 36 Stratford Ave Exeter EX4 8ES
3.3	How long have you lived at this address?	4 years
3.4	PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AS ACURATELY AS YOU CAN.	
3.5	Please provide the precise date you started using the agricultural barn, at Hillside Cadeleigh for Blacksmith purposes/use?	It would be approximately late 2006 or early 2007, and certainly after planning permission was granted for the change of use of the barn from agriculture to blacksmith's forge on 14 December 2009.
3.6	Is the agricultural barn solely used for Blacksmiths use only? In other words, do you use the barn for any other purpose / uses other than Blacksmiths use?	Yes, Meadow Forge is and has been in sole use as a blacksmith's forge since I purchased it. All metal working, manufacture, and fabrication take place inside the building, along with ancillary storage of materials and tools, manufactured goods, office, design and test space, display area, and cloakroom and staff kitchen. Meadow Forge is not used for other purposes or uses.
3.7	If the answer to the above question is 'YES' you do use the barn for other uses, then please explain what other uses /purposes this barn is used for:	Meadow Forge is not used for other purposes or uses.



3.8	If the barn has and is currently used for 'residential use', then please provide the precise date you first used this barn for residential purposes.	There is no residential use.
3.9	Please explain how you started to convert the barn into 'residential use'.	There is no residential use.
4.0	Please list all the facilities which have been installed and are now in place within the barn, which is solely connected and used for the residential use.	Kitchen: Bathroom: Bedroom(s) (how many): Toilet: Cooker: Furniture (describe what type): Windows: Carpet(s): Curtains / Blinds: Heating System: The answer to all is none
4.1	Is there electricity or gas or both, connected to the residential use inside this barn? IF 'YES' then please confirm which or both, and for what purposes are they use for, i.e heating system, cooking, lightening, etc	No



4.2	Has a separate access been formed to the barn, in addition to the main access which front the lane?	No
4.3	Have you installed a front timber door into the barn?	No. The original doors are steel
4.4	Have you installed window[s] within the barn? If the answer is 'YES' then Please state how many and on what elevations and levels.	There always have been windows in the workshop, on two elevations providing working light. Two new windows have been installed to the design room and workshop at first floor level.
4.5	Have you extended the barn, to provide additional accommodation?	No
4.6	If the answer to the above question is 'YES' then please provide the date when this addition was created and what the use / connection is of this addition is to the residential use. i.e Please describe what this addition is used for.	N/A
4.7	Please explain what other parts of the barn, (internally and externally) you have and, are currently converting into residential use.	None



4.8	Please provide the date[s] when you first started these works.	No works started
4.9	Please give the precise date on how long this barn has been used for residential purposes.	It has not been used for residential purposes.
5.0	The land directly to the rear of this barn, is this used in association with the residential use? If the answer to this question is 'YES' then please describe how and what has been placed on this land. i.e washing line, flowers pots, leisure / garden furniture, etc..	There is no residential use, incidentally the land to the rear of Hillside Barn is a slope of approximately 40 to 50 degrees and comes right up to the footings of the workshop.
5.1	In regards to the adjoining field shown on the attached plan as 'ADJOINING FIELD' have you erected any outbuildings, poly tunnels, vehicles, or any other items on this land? Is the answer is 'YES' then please describe what they are.	The shepherd's hut on the land is for the storage of animal feed and charcoal making tools etc, the equipment is that which is used for agricultural and forestry purposes on this land, see covering letter for more detail, but basically charcoal kilns, tractors and associated trailers and timber handling machinery all commonly used for these purposes in conjunction with the forge business use.



5.2	If the answer to the above question is 'YES' then please provide the dates with the dates they were erected and completed.	N/A
5.3	If the answer to the above questions is 'YES' then please describe what these structure are used for.	N/A
5.4	Have you installed curtains or blinds on any of the windows installed?	Some of the workshop windows have curtains/blinds because of sun glare when working. I manufacture curtain poles and use my own products.
5.5	How many levels / floors are there within the residential use of the barn?	There is no residential use of the barn
5.6	Is the conversion of the barn into 'residential use' completed? If the answer to this question is 'YES' then please give the date when the inside of the barn was completed into residential use.	There is no residential use of the barn
5.7	If the answer to the above question is 'NO' then please provide details of what works are still ongoing and what other	



	internal works you are intending to do, in respect to the residential use of this barn.	No works are ongoing and there is no residential use of the barn.
5.8	What is your future intention of the use of this barn for residential purposes?	I do not intend to use it for residential purposes. It is my place of work.
5.9	Is part of the barn still used for Blacksmiths purposes?	All of the building is used for my Blacksmith's business purposes
6.0	If the answer to the above question is 'YES' then, please explain what part of the barn is still used, and whether members of the public visit the site for Blacksmiths purposes.	See above. Members of the public have never been encouraged to visit the works, its an industrial business, with many process that are not easily made safe for untrained persons to be around. In addition, a condition precludes retail sales from the premises.
6.1	If you are using the barn for residential purposes, please explain why planning permission was not sought, to regularise this 'unauthorised use' in planning terms?	There is no residential use of the barn.
6.2	Please explain why you are currently in the process of installing additional windows in the elevations of this barn.	I'm not currently installing windows, but all windows that have ever been installed in the building are to allow light and air into the working spaces to make a safe environment to work. Part of the ethos of my business is to create without using additional resources and windows provide these naturally occurring free non-polluting necessities.
6.3	How many windows are you intending to install?	I have sufficient at present.

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6.4	Please explain what is the purpose of these additional windows you are currently installing? i.e. Are the windows currently being installed in association with the residential use? i.e additional rooms?	No windows are currently being installed but windows supply natural light for my work as a blacksmith. There is no residential use of the building.
6.5	Do you pay Council tax or Council rates?	Yes
6.6	If the above answer to the question above is 'YES' then please provide the exact date when you started paying Council Tax and Council rates.	Council Tax: The exact date would be in the files of the council office, as it is to the locale office that I have paid, but roughly since 2006/7. Rates: Business Rates:
6.7	Do you use the barn for any other purposed or uses other than, Blacksmiths and residential use?	No. The forge is used only as a blacksmith's business as approved. There is no residential use.
6.8	If the answer to the above question is 'YES', then please explain what the other uses are, and for how long (time period), and date when these other uses first started.	N/A



6.9	In respect to the shepherds hut, please explain where exactly this shepherds hut is currently stationed.	The shepherd's hut is at the top of the field on the right. The original shepherd's hut occupied this site for 15 years but was lost in a storm, whereupon I moved my second hut, which had been stored on site since 2010 into the top field position.
7.0	What is the shepherds hut currently used for?	Please see question 5.1, above
7.1	Please provide a list of what facilities has been installed within the shepherds hut.	Kitchen: It is a small single space with lift up sides to allow the display of goods at markets/events, and a storage compartment accessible from the outside only. Bathroom: Heating: Sitting Area:
7.2	Do you use the shepherds hut for overnight accommodation?	No
7.3	If the shepherds hut rented out or used for letting purposes?	No
7.4	If the answer to the above questions is 'YES', then please provide the dates and how long the shepherds hut has been used for letting purposes and time periods etc.	N/A



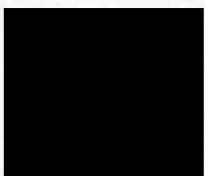
7.5	In regards to the vehicles stationed at the front of the barn. Please can you explain why these vehicles have stationed for such a long period of time?	The vehicles are used for my business as a blacksmith and such vehicles have been stationed at my forge workshop premises for as long as the business has been in operation; some 15 years.
7.6	What is your intention in regards to these vehicles? i.e use.	Their continued use is intended for my business. I am not a delivery company with daily movements of all vehicles, each has a specific job within the company and are used for those specific uses. Please see additional information in covering letter regards lockdown with no shows or events anywhere in the UK for the last 20 plus months. Building sites have also been affected, and clients have been resistant to visiting workers.
7.7	Please provide the date[s] when you last moved the following vehicle[s]: 1. The Lorry blue cab at the front with orange writing): 2. Tractor: 3. Horse box / trailer: 4. Yellow lorry container: 5. Silver and blue topped vehicle: From the front of the property?	Please see above. My vehicles move as they are required for work and are all used for specific work within my business as a Blacksmith. 1.Lorry: 1 Blue lorry(a historic vehicle) last attended an event promoting my products just before covid restrictions shut down all such movements 2 Tractor has been in constant movement employed on the agricultural holding 3 No horse box trailer, I presume (although presumption can lead to error) that you are referring to the goods trailer , that is normally pulled by the blue lorry and attended the same event being attached to the blue lorry at the time 2.Tractor 3. Horse 4. Yellow 4, yellow box body lorry, is used on larger jobs from time to time, often with long periods out on site or at the workshop, this is due shortly to be moved to another workshop to be serviced and from there deployed to a job, 5.Silver a 5 this (historic vehicle) was driven last year and is currently awaiting the manufacture of unobtainable parts before continuing to attend Blacksmithing competitions as it has for the last 20 plus years .
7.8	The Council are aware that a steel flue chimney has been installed at the side of the barn.	No flue to the side of the workshop, there is however several to the rear of the workshop, all have been in place since at least 2007, the new one is a replacement for one that burnt down in January 2021, luckily I was around when it ignited and was able to save the building (local fire brigade in attendance) and is for the heating system for the office and other workspaces.



	Please provide the precise date this flue was installed and for what purposes it is being used for. i.e is it in association with the residential use?	
7.9	Do you use the barn for any agricultural use?	No
8.0	If the answer to the above question is 'YES', then please explain and describe what agricultural uses are still being used within the barn.	N/A
8.1	Is the adjoining land being used for agricultural uses?	Yes
8.2	If the answer to the above question is 'YES' then please explain and describe what agricultural uses are still being used on the adjoining land.	Hay production , orchards, forestry, charcoal making for use in the forge, raising of trees, growing of animal feed, etc. The use is still the same as that set out in the planning officer's report when permission was granted for my forge, and no change of use has taken place.



I hereby declare that the information provided on this Notice is correct to the best of my knowledge.



Signature:

Date: 08 February 2022