

Dave Budd

Checkmate

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10/07/26

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in support of my friend Dean Aggett of Meadow Forge. We have known each other for the better part of 20 years and first met at a show where we were both demonstrating (me being a fellow blacksmith). Over the years I have had the pleasure of visiting Dean's forge and wonderful home on a number of occasions. Every time it fills me with wonder.

When I first went to Meadow Forge, I had seen photographs as bits were being built or cleared, but they didn't do it justice. Tucked away in such a small space, down a track, he has his entire livelihood as a professional blacksmith along with various classic vehicles being restored out the front. A full-time smithy is stuffed with equipment and materials, none of which is lightweight or small. I forget how many generations of the Aggett family have been blacksmiths in the local area, but I am sure his forefathers would be suitably impressed. Inside is a home that puts mine to shame and if I hadn't seen the kitchen, bathroom and other living areas for myself I would have expected a quaint little cottage somewhere. Dean also makes use of the adjoining land to grow food for himself and to make charcoal to fuel his forges. Again, so much being done in such a small space! Being able to live where he works is a massive boon to any craftsman and being able to nip out the back for fresh fruit from the apple tree is extra special.

If I didn't know where to find Meadow Forge, then I would have no idea that it was there, home or workshop. It took me several attempts to find it from the main road the first time I visited! All of Dean's activities are very low impact and extremely self-sufficient, much more so than most smiths or users of such properties. Unlike some metal

workers, the scope of Dean's work doesn't require huge and extremely noisy equipment or lorries coming and going with cranes (such as agricultural fabricators would), so there is very little disruption to the few nearby inhabitants or road users; probably far less than any agricultural activity in the area. Also, Dean is one of those helpful and very useful members of the community to have around (not least because he is a blacksmith and capable mechanic); any neighbours that don't appreciate that are likely to be the sort that I would not want to live near to.

I sincerely hope Dean that will continue to live and work in his home at Meadow Forge for many years to come. It has grown and become a thing of beauty from the rather neglected structure and overgrown near-vertical pasture that were there when he first moved there!

More support of this sort of endeavour please

Yours Sincerely

Dave Budd