

Planning application; Ref: HPK/2026/0049

Site address: Land Opposite Rose Cottage, The Wash. Chapel en le Frith, SK23 0QN

Applicant Name: Mr F Moss

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing in response to the current planning application under consultation. I had intended to submit my comments through your online system; however, despite numerous attempts on both my new mobile phone and my laptop—using direct links provided as well as searching for the application manually—I have been unable to access a functioning consultation page. As such, I hope you will accept this letter as my formal contribution to the consultation process. It is vital that public consultation remains accessible, and I trust this submission will be considered accordingly.

I write in my capacity as the local Parish Priest, with both pastoral and community responsibilities, and with a direct knowledge of the land and its use.

During the time that Mr Moss has owned the small woodland area in question, I have witnessed significant and careful stewardship of the land. He has repaired boundary walls, removed invasive ivy that was damaging established trees, and cleared fallen timber in a way that has allowed the woodland to regenerate naturally. The result is a visibly healthier ecosystem: the trees are now thriving, and the woodland floor has become richly carpeted with bluebells, a clear sign of improving ecological conditions.

In addition, Mr Moss has undertaken sensitive land management practices, including the use of dead hedging to support bird habitats and the general tidying of the woodland floor without compromising biodiversity. His work reflects a thoughtful balance between intervention and preservation.

His care extends to the animals he keeps. I have personally observed the time and patience he has invested in nurturing chickens, sheep, and goats. When the goats first arrived, they were notably timid; through consistent care and gentle handling, they have become calm and well-socialised. I have also received recordings of the woodland filled with birdsong—an indicator of a flourishing habitat—and have seen firsthand the positive transformation of the land.

Importantly, this space has also served a wider community benefit. Mr Moss has enabled me to bring neurodiverse children to the woodland, where they are given opportunities to interact with the animals—holding chickens and feeding sheep and goats. These experiences are not merely recreational; they provide meaningful therapeutic value, supporting emotional regulation, calm, and a sense of connection with the natural world. Such opportunities are rare and deeply valuable, particularly within a conservation setting.

Within the context of the Church of England, this work resonates strongly with the Fifth Mark of Mission: “to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.” Mr Moss’s ongoing care, and indeed the modest developments proposed, embody this principle. His plans are not extractive or disruptive; rather, they seek to sustain, protect, and responsibly manage the land and the life within it.

The planning application itself is modest and practical in scope. The proposed small barn would provide essential shelter for the animals, particularly during vulnerable periods such as lambing

season, and allow for the safe and dry storage of feed. This is not an expansion of activity, but a necessary support for existing, well-managed practices.

Similarly, the proposal for a small gravel access track addresses a genuine logistical issue. At present, there is no direct access to the woodland, nor any designated parking. On the occasions I have visited, I have had to park within the limited shared spaces of the hamlet, which inevitably adds to congestion in what is a small and sensitive residential area. A discreet access track would allow Mr Moss to manage the land responsibly—transporting feed, tools, and materials—without causing inconvenience to local residents.

I am aware that there are a number of objections to this proposal. However, I would respectfully suggest that this application be considered in light of the clear environmental gains already achieved, the continued commitment to sustainable land management, and the tangible community benefit it provides. The proposals are proportionate, sensitive to their setting, and aligned with the broader aims of conservation within the Peak District.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my submission, particularly given the difficulties encountered with the online consultation system. I trust that this letter will be included as part of the formal consultation record.

Yours faithfully,

Mel Hartley

Pioneer Priest

Priest in charge of Chapel en le Frith, Chinley with Buxworth & Brownside and Hayfield
Lecturer in Mission