PLANNING STATEMENT

Including Design and Access Issues

Client: Mr R Clowes

Location: Ivy Cottage, 72 High Lane, Brown Edge, Stoke-on-Trent, ST6 8RU.

Proposal:

The demolition of the existing house and outbuilding and the construction of a replacement house and garage.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This application is for the demolition of the existing house and outbuilding and the construction of a replacement house and the construction of a new garage. The present house is Victorian in age and is outdated and average in character.

2. APPLICATION SITE AND ITS SETTING

2.1 The application site lies on the east side of High Lane in the south of the village and is within the Green Belt. The Council is still using the Village Development Boundary for Brown Edge and the site lies outside this boundary. There is a public footpath bordering the north-eastern side of the site.

2.2 The present house is situated towards the front of the application site forward of the majority of neighbouring houses on the east side of the road and the front of the house faces towards the road. The immediate dwellings at either side of the site are bungalows. The house on the application site is two-storeys high with a series of outriggers at the rear. It is built of brick with a clay tile roof and consists of what is probably the original house at the front and outriggers on the south-eastern side (rear) of the house. One of the outriggers is taller than the front part of the house; the others are single story. The southern wall of the house is rendered. There is a small brick outhouse in the garden in the north east of the site.

3. HISTORY

3.1 There have been no previous applications on the site.

4. DESIGN ISSUES

1. **Access** – the existing access in the south-west of the site is to be re-positioned slightly and a turning head provided within the application site to enable vehicles to enter and exit the site in a forward direction.

2. **Appearance** – Please see the submitted drawing no. "Planning 1". Materials to be to the Council's satisfaction.

3. **Scale** – The existing building and the proposed house are shown on the submitted plans.

    - The volume of the existing house is 431.5m^3 and the existing outbuilding is 25m^3; a total of 456.8m^3.
    - The volume of the proposed house would be 516.4m^3, the proposed garage 49m^3 making a total volume of 575.4m^3.
    - The increase in total volume would be 118.6m^3; a percentage increase of 26%.
    - The issue of the increase in size is addressed later in this statement in the section "Key Planning Issues".

    Other important dimensions are the height to the ridge, the frontage length and the footprint of the existing houses and the proposed house. These dimensions are:

    - *Ridge Height:*
        - *Existing house – 6.633 m.*
        - *Proposed house – 7.105m.*

    - *Frontage length:*
        - *Existing house –8.857 m.*
        - *Proposed house – 10.806 m.*

    - *Footprint:*
        - *Existing house - 72 sq. M.*
        - *Proposed house – 90 sq. M.*
        - *Increase – 18 sq. M (25%)*

4. **Layout** – as shown on drawing no. SK2. Three car parking spaces (including the proposed garage) and a turning space are proposed.

5. **Landscaping** – None proposed.

5. PLANNINGPOLICY

5.1. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004 requires proposals to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan taking into consideration any material considerations relevant to the determination of the application. This guidance is re-iterated in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which is a material consideration in addition to the Development Plan which in the Moorlands consists of the Core Strategy (2014).

5.2 At the heart of the guidance in the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (para 14) and that for decision making this means approving development proposals that accord with the Development Plan without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Core Strategy (2014) for the Moorlands contains the following presumption (Policy SS1a) in favour of sustainable development.

"When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible,
and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.

Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Core Strategy ... ... be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:

- *Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or*

- *Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted."*

5.3 The Core Strategy does not have a specific overarching Green Belt policy relying upon the Green Belt policies in the National Planning Policy Framework. Relevant Core Strategy (2014) policies are considered to be policies DC1 (*Design Considerations)*; SS6a *(Larger Villages Area Strategy);* R1 *(Rural Diversification);* R2 *(Rural Housing), and* SD1 *(Sustainable Use of Resources)*.

5.4 These policies will be described in detail, as appropriate, in the next section.

6. KEY PLANNING ISSUES

6.1 The key issues for consideration are considered to whether the proposed scheme is appropriate development in the Green Belt; the design of the proposed house; and whether the proposal accords with the other policies in the Core Strategy.

The Principle of Development

6.2 Paragraph 89 of the NPPF requires that local planning authorities should regard the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt as inappropriate in the Green Belt apart from certain listed exceptions. One of these exceptions is the replacement of a building provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces.

6.3 The proposed house will be larger in terms of footprint, ridge height and volume. It is contended, however, that the proposed house would not be materially larger than the existing house and that it is in accord with the guidance in Paragraph 89 of the NPPF. The land use would be the same as at present and the percentage increase in the total building footprint and volume would be 25% and 26% respectively (see section 4(3) above).

6.4 Under the previous local plan (replaced by the Core Strategy in 2014) a 30% increase in size was regarded as acceptable rule-of-thumb figure. In recent years changes to the General Permitted Development Order relating to residential development mean that in practice a two storey extension 4m deep could be built at the rear of the main part of the house; an increase in volume of about

14.7 m (4.9m x 3) making a total footprint with the outbuilding of about 86.7 sq. M. This would be slightly smaller than the proposed house and garage but it would also be possible without the need for planning permission to add further extensions to the outriggers, as well as part of the sides of the house as they would appear to pre-date 1948 and as such count as part of the original building.

6.5 Whilst the proposed house would be larger than the existing house it would appear to be more compact. It is essentially rectangular in shape with a outrigger at the rear whereas the existing house is a reverse "L-shape" and when viewed from the south it looks particularly large and dominant (see photograph below).

Photograph No. 1 – view from High Lane to the south.



6.6 Whilst the proposed house would be larger than the existing house the gap, and the view to the countryside beyond, between the proposed house and the bungalow to the north would remain the same.

6.7 The proposed house would extend further south than the existing house but there would still be reasonable gap between the house and the bungalow to the south

through which the Green Belt would be clearly visible.

6.8 Core Strategy Policy R1 states that:

"Within the Green Belt, inappropriate development which is otherwise acceptable within the terms of this policy will still need to be justified by very special circumstances."

The proposed development is appropriate development and as such does not conflict with this policy.

6.9 Core Strategy Policy R2 states that the following form of housing development will be permitted in the rural areas outside the settlement and infill boundaries of the town and the villages:
"Proposals for replacement dwellings provided they do not have a significantly greater detrimental impact on the existing character of the rural area than the original dwelling or result in the loss of a building which is intrinsic to the character of the area."

This is such a proposal. The type, design, scale, position and form of the houses on High Lane varies including on the part of the road where the application site is located. Although there are bungalows on either side of the site there are also houses of different types and ages. The proposed house would not have a detrimental effect on the character of the locality and the countryside.

Design

6.10 The proposal would replace an existing two-storey house with a new two-storey house. The materials would be essentially the same as at present; brick walls with a tile roof. Although the dwellings on either side of the site are bungalows the present house does not appear incongruous nor, it is contended, would the proposed house.

6.11 Core Strategy policy DC1 (*Design Considerations*) requires, amongst other things, that proposed development:

- Is of a high quality design;
- Promotes a positive sense of place;
- Protects amenity;
- Provide a safe and satisfactory access and meets parking requirements.

The proposed development meets all these criteria and would replace a building which looks its age with a modern attractive house.

Other material considerations.

6.12 Core Strategy policy NE1 (*Biological and Geological Resources)* seeks to protect species of principal importance in national legislation. Bats are such a species and a bat survey report accompanies the application. This latter report concludes that whilst a small number of droppings was found in the building these were old and that, whilst it may be occasionally used as a satellite roost, the overall impact of the proposal on bats would be LOW and that it would have a negligible impact on foraging and commuting. The bat survey report recommends the provision of two external bat boxes as a positive conservation measure.

6.13 The public footpath to the immediate north of the site would not be affected and could remain open during building work.

7. CONCLUSION

The proposed development is in accord with national Green Belt policy and the Council's replacement house policy and rural and design policies; and would not harm the character or appearance of the village countryside.

It is contended that the proposed development is in accord with the Core Strategy and the NPPF and it istherefore sustainable development which should be approved.