

Rob Duncan  
Planning  
Consultancy



# **PLANNING STATEMENT**

**LAND OFF BELLE VUE ROAD, LEEK**

**FEBRUARY 2017**

**Site Address:**

Land off Belle Vue Road, Leek, Staffordshire, ST13 8EP

**Applicant:**

Mr. A. Pointon

**Proposal:**

Erection of Detached Dwelling (Outline)

**Planning Statement:**

**Date Issued:** 1<sup>st</sup> February 2017

**Job Reference:** RDP/2017/029

**Report Prepared By:**

Rob Duncan BSc(Hons) MA MRTPI

Rob Duncan Planning Consultancy Ltd

**Contact Details:**

Rob Duncan Planning Consultancy Ltd.

70 Ferndale Road, Lichfield, Staffordshire, WS13 7DL

Email: [rob@robduncanplanning.co.uk](mailto:rob@robduncanplanning.co.uk)

Tel. 07779 783521

## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 Rob Duncan Planning Consultancy Ltd. has been instructed by Mr. A. Pointon to seek planning permission for the erection of a detached dwelling on a parcel of land to the east of Belle Vue Road, Leek. The application is submitted in outline and seeks approval of means of access and layout. Matters of scale, appearance and landscaping are reserved for subsequent approval.
- 1.2 The accompanying plan shows the provision of a detached dwelling with a footprint of 46sq.m. It is anticipated that the dwelling will be two storeys in height and encompass an open plan lounge/dining room, kitchen, w.c. and hallway at ground floor, with three bedrooms and bathroom at first floor. Access to the site is to be taken off the existing vehicular access that runs at a lower level to the main highway between Shade Mill to the southeast, and adjacent to no.120 Belle Vue Road to the northwest. A total of two off-street parking spaces will be provided, alongside an area of private residential amenity space.

## **2 Site & Surroundings**

- 2.1 The application site lies within the built up area of Leek and comprises an irregular shaped parcel of land that extends to approximately 0.02 hectares. It occupies a sustainable location within easy walking and cycling distance of the numerous services and facilities on offer within Leek, and is considered to constitute previously developed land. The northern portion of the site is currently occupied by a poor quality garage structure and attached storage building, which detract somewhat from the appearance of the area. A pedestrian footpath runs along the southernmost boundary of the site, providing access down to Mill Street to the east. A partially derelict and

vacant, two storey brick and corrugated steel industrial building lies beyond this footpath to the south. The western boundary of the site comprises the existing vehicular access road that runs parallel with Belle Vue Road, which lies at a higher level to the application site at this point.

### **3 Planning Policy**

- 3.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase 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. The Development Plan for this area comprises the Stafford Moorlands Core Strategy DPD (2014) of which the following policies are of relevance:
- 3.2 Policy SS1 of the Core Strategy relates to Development Principles and states that the Council will expect development to contribute positively to the social, economic and environmental improvement of the Staffordshire Moorlands in terms of delivering, amongst others, easy access to jobs, shops and transport services by all sections of the community; development which maintains the distinctive character of the Staffordshire Moorlands, its individual towns and villages and their settings, and development that secures high quality, sustainable environments.
- 3.3 Policy SS1a of the Core Strategy states that 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 pro-actively 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 the Core Strategy will 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.*

3.4 Policy SS2 of the Core Strategy states that provision will be made for 6000 additional dwellings (net of demolitions) to be completed in Staffordshire Moorlands (excluding the Peak District National Park) during the period 2006 to 2026.

3.5 Policy SS3 of the Core Strategy states that development will be located in accordance with the Spatial Strategy and will be distributed between the towns and rural areas. It identifies that some 30% of the total residential provision outlined in policy SS2 will be allocated within Leek.

3.6 Policy SS5a of the Core Strategy states that the Council will seek to consolidate the role of Leek as the principal service centre and a market town through a number of actions. These include, allocating a range of deliverable housing sites both within the urban area and, on land adjacent to the urban area. Sites within the urban areas shall be in locations across the town which

have good accessibility to serves and facilities with encouragement given to previously developed sites.

3.7 Policy SD1 of the Core Strategy states that the Council will require all development to make sustainable use of resources and adapt to climate change. This will be achieved by, amongst others, giving encouragement to development on previously developed land in sustainable locations.

3.8 Policy DC1 of the Core Strategy states that new development should be of a high quality and add value to the local area, incorporating creativity, detailing and materials appropriate to the character of the area. Proposals should be designed to respect the site and its surroundings and promote a positive sense of place and identity through its scale, density, layout, siting, landscaping, character and appearance. Development should also protect the amenity of the area, including residential amenity in terms of satisfactory daylight, sunlight, outlook, privacy and soft landscaping.

#### **4 Other Material Considerations**

##### ***National Planning Policy Framework***

4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework places a strong emphasis on promoting sustainable development and seeks to significantly boost the supply of housing nationally. It furthermore states that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development, and seeks to promote high quality design. The content of the National Planning Policy Framework is discussed in more detail within the Planning Assessment below.

---

***Staffordshire Moorlands Housing Land Supply Statement (March 2016)***

- 4.2 This document sets out the Local Authority's performance in respect of housing land supply and housing delivery. It confirms that the Local Authority has a deliverable supply of housing land equivalent to 1.87 years supply.

**5 Planning Assessment**

Principle of Development

- 5.1 Policies SS1, SS2, SS3 and SS6a of the adopted Core Strategy set out the Council's preferences for the delivery of new housing and confirm that some 1800 new dwellings will need to be built within Leek between 2006-2026. The application site constitutes a parcel of previously developed land, having been previously occupied by some poor quality storage structures, and is located within easy walking and cycling distance of local services and facilities on offer within the town. Regular public transport connections are also available a short walk away on Mill Street to the east. Future occupiers of the dwelling will therefore have a choice of means of transport to access local services, facilities and employment opportunities. The principle of development is therefore considered to be acceptable and in full accordance with the provisions of policies SS1, SS2, SS3, and SS5a of the adopted Core Strategy.
- 5.2 There are also other material considerations that weigh in favour of the proposed development, notably the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Paragraph 49 of the NPPF states that:

*"Housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development".*

5.3 Paragraph 49 of the NPPF goes on to state that:

*“Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites”*

5.4 The latest housing land supply figures for Staffordshire Moorlands, as set out in the Local Authority’s Housing Land Supply Statement (March 2016), confirm that the Local Planning Authority is only able to demonstrate a 1.87 year supply of deliverable housing. This falls significantly short of the 5-year supply required by paragraph 49 of the NPPF. As a consequence planning permission should be granted for the proposed development in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the development when assessed against the Framework as a whole (paragraph 14 of the NPPF refers).

#### Impact on the Character of the Area

5.5 The surrounding area exhibits a mixed character, with residential properties located along the western side of Belle Vue Road. These properties are typically two and three storey in nature, and embrace a variety of architectural styles and designs. On the eastern side of Belle Vue Road, the character is more varied, encompassing a mixture of two storey residential dwellings, vacant and partially derelict commercial buildings, and grand former mill buildings. Developments in the locality exhibit varying plot sizes, with a mixture of large dwellings and smaller dwellings located close to one another. There is furthermore no strong prevailing vernacular along Belle Vue Road for the proposed development to respond to.



- 5.6 The proposed dwelling is likely to take the form of a two storey dwelling and the submitted layout plan shows the dwelling positioned adjacent to its southernmost boundary, with its long axis orientated broadly at 45 degrees to Belle Vue Road. By resultant effect the dwelling will present a narrow gable to the highway, in a manner which reflects the adjacent partially derelict commercial building. Its proposed two storey form will furthermore be in keeping with the wider character of the area which exhibits numerous developments of such scale.
- 5.7 The footprint of the development is also considered to be consistent with developments in the surrounding area, in particular those exhibited by nos. 120-124 Belle Vue Road to the north, which also have small footprints. To the north of the dwelling an area of residential amenity space is to be provided in the order of 60sq.m. (excluding car parking area). This is considered to be an appropriate level of provision having regard to the size of the proposed dwelling and the size of residential plots in the surrounding area, of which a number are of commensurate size.
- 5.8 On approach to the site along Belle Vue Road from the south, the proposed dwelling will be screened to some extent by the existing commercial building to the south, and by existing vegetation. Views in this direction will furthermore see the proposed dwelling in the context of the residential developments beyond, including those on the east side of Belle Vue Road, and the new residential development currently under construction adjacent to Wesleyan Court (SMD/2015/0119). Similarly, on approach from the north along Belle Vue Road, the proposed dwelling will read as a continuation of the built development that is currently under construction adjacent to Wesleyan Court, with the existing commercial buildings and larger, more distant Mill buildings in the background. As a consequence, the dwelling will not appear as an isolated or intrusive form of development, and this leads me

to conclude overall that the proposed development will not give rise to harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

#### Residential Amenity

- 5.9 The proposed dwelling will be located some 18 metres at its closest point to the neighbouring property opposite (no. 99), but will be orientated away from its principal elevation, looking towards its existing detached garage. Whilst the final layout and external appearance of the dwelling is not known at this stage, it is considered that the provision of a principal window(s) in the southwest and northwest facing elevations of the proposed dwelling will not give rise to any demonstrable harm to neighbouring residential amenity. There are no other neighbouring residential properties which are likely to be affected by the proposed development, and this leads me to conclude that the proposed development will not give rise to harm to residential amenity.

#### Highway Safety

- 5.10 The proposed dwelling is to be accessed via the existing vehicular access road that runs parallel to Belle Vue Road, and which provides access to a number of sites to the south of the site. Whilst this access is narrow, it is infrequently used by traffic, and it is submitted that the proposed creation of a revised access point and provision of two off-street parking spaces will not give rise to severe highway safety concerns, that being the test to be applied under paragraph 32 of the NPPF. In reaching this conclusion I have had regard to the fact that the site already has an access point onto this road, and appears to have been previously used for commercial storage purposes. The proposed development is therefore considered to be acceptable from a highway safety perspective.

#### Other Benefits

- 5.11 In addition to the above planning issues, there are also other material considerations relevant to this proposal which lend weight in its favour. Paragraph 7 of the NPPF identifies three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These roles are mutually dependant and should be jointly sought to achieve sustainable development.
- 5.12 In terms of the economic and social dimensions of sustainable development it is considered that the proposal will derive benefits to the local economy, both to local tradesmen during the construction phase, and though the expenditure associated with one additional household. The proposal will also secure the delivery of a new dwelling that would contribute to the supply of housing within the District and in turn help the Local Authority to meet its significant shortfall in housing delivery. Such benefits are considered to be worthy of significant weight.
- 5.13 The proposal will also derive environmental benefits in terms of delivering a new dwelling in a sustainable location, where future occupiers will be able to access local services and facilities by sustainable modes of transport. The proposal will also derive a positive enhancement to the area by removing the existing poor quality structures on the site, and replacing them with a design that is in keeping with the varied character of the area.
- 5.14 Such collective benefits lend further weight in favour of the proposed development and I consider overall that the proposed development will not give rise to any adverse impacts to significantly and demonstrably outweigh these benefits when assessed against the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework as a whole.

## 6 Conclusion

6.1 Paragraph 186 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should approach decision taking in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development. It goes on to state in paragraph 187 that local planning authorities should look for solutions rather than problems, and decision-takers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

6.2 This proposal is considered to constitute a sustainable form of development that is acceptable in planning terms having regard to the following conclusions:

- *The application site lies within the built-up area of Leek;*
- *Leek is a target for significant housing growth up to 2026;*
- *The provisions of the NPPF mean that the proposal should be determined in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development;*
- *The site lies within easy walking and cycling distance of local services and facilities and benefits from regular public transport connections nearby;*
- *The proposed development will relate well to its surroundings and derive an enhancement to the appearance of the site;*
- *The proposed development will not appear intrusive on approach to the site along Belle Vue;*

- *The proposed development will not result in harm to neighbouring residential amenity, and will furthermore provide an adequate level of private amenity space for future occupiers of the dwelling;*
- *The proposed development will not give rise to severe impacts to highway safety in the locality.*

6.3 For these reasons the proposed development is considered to accord with the provisions of policies SS1, SS2, SS3, SS5a, SD1 and DC1 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy and guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

6.4 It is furthermore submitted, having regard to the provisions of paragraphs 49 and 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework and policy SS1a of the Core Strategy, that this proposal should be determined in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development. In this respect it is considered that the proposal amounts to a sustainable form of development and no adverse impacts will arise to *significantly and demonstrably* outweigh the benefits of the development.

6.5 The Local Planning Authority is therefore respectfully requested to grant outline planning permission for the proposed development.