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PLANNING / DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT



PROPOSAL : **OUTLINE APPLICATION FOR THE ERECTION OF UP TO 8NO. DWELLINGS WITH SOME MATTERS RESERVED EXCEPT FOR ACCESS.**

ADDRESS : **LAND OFF CLEWLOWS BANK, BAGNALL STAFFORDSHIRE**

APPLICANT : **FIRST PROPERTY LTD**

DATE : **AUGUST 2017** **JOB No. : 2017-2223**

Registered in England No 3775545 V.A.T. Reg. No. 646 9246 05

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Sammons Architectural Ltd have been appointed by First Property Ltd to prepare and submit an outline planning application to Staffordshire Moorlands District Council for the erection of up to 8no. dwellings on land off Clewlows Bank, Bagnall. The existing site comprises of an agricultural field that is sited between two residential properties. Access to the site is to be taken via an existing access on Clewlows Bank and then using a private access road to serve the dwellings.

2.0 USE

The application proposes a residential use.

3.0 AMOUNT

The area of the site measures approximately 0.27ha in area and up to 8no dwellings are proposed.

4.0 LAYOUT

Layout is not a consideration of this application. However, the indicative site plan provided demonstrates that 8no. dwellings could be comfortably accommodated on the site.

5.0 SCALE

It is anticipated that the properties will be two storeys in form and appearance, although this matter is not a consideration under this application.

6.0 LANDSCAPING

This is not a consideration on this application, but it is envisaged that sympathetic schemes will be put forward in a future Reserved Matters application to complement the surrounding area.

7.0 APPEARANCE

This is not a consideration on this application, but it is envisaged that the design of the properties to be submitted would complement the surrounding area.

8.0 ACCESS

The site already has an established access onto Clewlows Bank, but this will be formalised and improved as shown on the submitted drawings.

9.0 PLANNING POLICY

As you will be aware Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that when determining a planning application, the decision maker must make their determination in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Given this obligation, this chapter therefore considers national guidance relevant to the application as well as the Core Strategy Development Plan Document (March 2014). The following is considered relevant:

Core Strategy,

SS1 – Development Principles
SS1a – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

SS4 - Managing the Release of Housing Land
SS6c - Other Rural Areas Area Strategy
SD1 – Sustainable Use of Resources
H1 – New Housing Development
DC3 - Landscape and Settlement Setting
R2 - Rural Housing
T1 - Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework

There is considerable planning policy and guidance relevant to the planning application proposal at both local and national levels. The NPPF is significant as it sets out the Government's commitment for a positive response to planning proposals that would deliver sustainable development in order to assist growth to the economy. It has been made clear that the planning system has a key role in facilitating growth and development should be supported with a presumption in favour of granting planning permission. This change of emphasis provides an important background to the application proposal.

National Planning Policy Framework places a strong emphasis on promoting economic growth and sets out policies for the control of development. The Development Plan represents the starting point for the determination of this application, which in this instance is the Core Strategy. The guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework is also relevant, in particular the following Chapters:

1. Building a strong, competitive economy
6. Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes
9. Protecting Green Belt land

Within the NPPF it is also worth noting the following relevant paragraphs:

- Planning decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise (para 2).
- Plans and decisions need to take local circumstances into account, so that they respond to the different opportunities for achieving sustainable development in different areas, (para 10)
- Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, (para 11).
- At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. LPA's should approve proposals which accord with the development plan without delay (para 14).
- The Government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth. Planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth. Therefore, significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system (para 19)
- Local Authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years' worth of housing against their housing requirements, with an additional buffer of 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land (para 47).
- The NPPF goes on to state that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. 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 (para 49).
- A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in Green Belt. One of the exceptions listed to this is: limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brownfield land), whether redundant or in

continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development (para 89).

10.0 SUMMARY

The application site is located within the North Staffordshire Green Belt and comprises of a small agricultural field that is located between two established residential properties. The site lies to the east of Clewlows Bank, Bagnall, and is bordered to the north and south by residential properties and open fields to the east, Clewlows Bank itself to the west and open fields beyond.

The introduction of the NPPF and the requirement for all Local Planning Authorities to demonstrate a 5-year housing supply is a material consideration on this application. The latest figures for housing in Staffordshire Moorlands in the Delivery Schedule 31st March 2016. The current figures show that there is currently a supply of 1276 units, which gives a shortfall in the 5-year housing supply of 3407 units. This equates to the Council only having a housing supply of 1.87 years. It is therefore clear that the Local Authority is unable to demonstrate a 5-year deliverable supply of housing, and as a consequence paragraph 49 of the NPPF states that the relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date.

The site is located within the Green Belt where there is a presumption against inappropriate development. The construction of new buildings is inappropriate unless it falls within one of several categories. Within point no.5 & 6 of paragraph 89 of the NPPF, 'limited infilling in villages and limited infilling' is an exception when considering new buildings in the Green Belt. Clearly in this instance the site does involve infilling a gap in an otherwise built up frontage between two properties. Whilst the proposal is for 8no dwellings, the extent of development is clearly limited.

The question then is whether the site is located within a "village". The site is considered as being located in an area defined as being in a 'Small Village' in the Council's Core Strategy Development Plan Document (adopted March 2014) but policy SS6b of the Core Strategy does not allow new housing in such areas unless it is 'Local Needs' or 'Rural Exceptions' housing and the proposal would not provide for either of these types of housing. Therefore, technically it is considered that the proposal does not comply with this policy.

However, currently and on previous applications less weight given to the policies in the Council's Core Strategy regarding the location of future housing provision. This is because the Council has a significantly low supply of housing land (at approximately 1.87 years supply of land) and as it states in the NPPF that where there is a less than a five-year land supply, and therefore more weight needs to be given to allowing new housing in sustainable locations. It is considered that the site is located within a sustainable location as it is a small village with some services. More weight is now being given by the Council in allowing new housing proposals due to the greater need for housing in the District. Limited infilling in villages is allowed under the Green Belt policies in NPPF and as Policy SS6b (Small Villages Strategy) is deemed to hold less weight than it would have done previously due to the very low housing land supply situation. The proposal is therefore fully consistent with the provisions of paragraph 89 of the NPPF and the principle of eight new houses on this particular infill should now be welcomed. Whilst this proposal is for more dwellings, the same principle has been applied, as previously accepted by the Council in the assessment of SMD/2016/0822 that was for two dwellings and subsequently approved on 24th February 2017.

11.0 CONCLUSION

The Government has a strong commitment to growth and provides a strong presumption in favour of development and is committed to increasing levels of growth. 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. It also states in the NPPF that where proposals accord with the development plan they should be approved without delay, and where policies are out-of-date permission should only be refused where there is significant and demonstrable harm to outweigh the benefits of the development.

The proposed development is therefore considered to constitute a sustainable form of development when considered against the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework as a whole, furthermore the proposal is in accordance with the provisions of the policies listed above in the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy. It is with due respect that the Local Planning Authority is politely requested to support this planning application to allow the construction of 8no. residential properties on this infill site and grant planning permission accordingly.