Rob Duncan
Planning
Consultancy

PLANNING STATEMENT

AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS AT HARVEYS LANE, KINGSLEY MOOR

JUNE 2018

Site Address:
Agricultural buildings at Harveys Lane, Kingsley Moor, ST10 2EN

Applicant:
Mr. & Mrs. Chadwick

Proposal:
Conversion and alteration of former agricultural buildings to form 1no. dwellinghouse with ancillary residential accommodation including recladding of outbuilding and erection of link extension

Planning Statement:
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1 Introduction

1.1 Rob Duncan Planning Consultancy Ltd. has been instructed by Mr. & Mrs. Chadwick to seek planning permission for the conversion and alteration of former agricultural buildings at Harveys Lane, Kingsley Moor to form a single dwellinghouse with associated ancillary accommodation, and represents a resubmission following the approval of application SMD/2017/0706.

1.2 Application SMD/2017/0706 granted consent for the conversion of the existing brick and corrugated roofed agricultural building on the site to be converted into a dwelling, encompassing an open plan kitchen / living room, three bedrooms, bathroom and w.c. As part of the approved scheme, consent was granted to upgrade an existing flat roof to a pitched roof, with the existing cement fibre roof replaced with blue/grey tiles. Opposite the brick building lies a blockwork building, which was granted consent under the same application to be used for ancillary residential purposes, including a home gym, utility room, changing room, storage area and hobby room. As with the brick building, permission was granted to replace the existing cement fibre roof with blue/grey coloured tiles.

1.3 This revised application proposes the same conversion and alteration of the agricultural buildings as that approved under application SMD/2017/0706, along with the following alterations:

- Introduction of brick cladding to external elevation of the existing blockwork outbuilding;

- Introduction of link extension to connect the dwelling to the ancillary outbuilding;

1.4 Vehicular access to the site will be taken direct off Harveys Lane via the existing vehicular access serving the farmyard, as per the previous permission, and the existing building adjacent to the site access (north side) along with two large portal framed agricultural buildings attached to the existing brick and tile building will be demolished and removed from site, also as per the previous application.

1.5 The application is accompanied by the following documentation which should be read in conjunction with this Planning Statement:

- Structural Survey (Jonathan Cornes Associates)
- Bat Survey (Fauna Forest Ecology Ltd)

2 Site Location

2.1 The application site lies is located within the North Staffordshire Green Belt and comprises a range of former agricultural buildings that are located on the eastern side of Harveys Lane, approximately 65m south of Beehive Farm to the north. Harveys Lane runs along the western boundary of the site, with open agricultural fields enclosing the northern, eastern and western boundaries. The site comprises of a portal framed, blockwork former agricultural building located adjacent to the roadside boundary which is proposed for retention. To the east of that building lies a building constructed from masonry that is proposed for conversion to form the dwellinghouse. Beyond that brick building to the east lies a double bay portal framed agricultural building, with a single storey mono-pitched outbuilding located to its north.

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 Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy (2014) of which the following policies are considered to be of relevance:

3.1 Policy SS1a of the Core Strategy relates to the 'Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development' and 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.*

3.2 Policy SS6c of the adopted Core Strategy relates to the 'Other Rural Areas Area Strategy' and states that these areas will provide only for development which meets an essential local need, supports the rural diversification and sustainability of the rural areas, promotes sustainable tourism or enhances the countryside. The policy goes on to state that the Council will meet essential local needs by (amongst others):

- *Allowing the conversion, extension or replacement of an existing rural building in accordance with policies R1 and R2.*

3.3 Policy SS6c goes on to state that strict control will continue to be exercised over inappropriate development within the Green Belt allowing only for exceptions as defined by Government policy.

3.2 Policy R2 of the Core Strategy relates to 'Rural Housing' and states that the conversion of non-residential rural buildings for residential use will be acceptable where the building is suitable and worthy in physical, architectural and character terms for conversion and it can be demonstrated that agricultural or commercial use is not viable or suitable through a marketing exercise, *or* its conversion to residential use would enable a building of particular merit to be safeguarded.

3.3 Policy DC1 of the Core Strategy relates to 'Design Considerations' and 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.

3.4 Policy NE1 of the Core Strategy relates to 'Biodiversity and Geological Resources' and states that development should ensure that it produces a net gain in biodiversity, and ensure that any unavoidable impacts are appropriately mitigated for. Proposals should also protect and enhance habitats and species of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity.

4 Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework

4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework sets out policies, *inter alia*, in respect of safeguarding the Green Belt and securing the delivery of new housing. It also sets out guidance in respect of design and seeks to secure a net gain in biodiversity wherever possible. The content of the NPPF is considered in more detail within the Planning Assessment below.

SMDC Housing Land Supply Statement (March 2017)

4.2 This document assesses the Local Authority's performance in respect of housing delivery and the availability of deliverable sites. It confirms that the Local Authority has a deliverable supply of housing land equivalent to 1.99 years. The content of this document is considered in more detail within the Planning Assessment below.

5 Planning Assessment

Principle of Development

5.1 As with the previously approved application on the site (SMD/2017/0706), it is proposed to alter and convert the existing brick built former agricultural building, and adjacent blockwork former agricultural building, to create a single dwellinghouse and associated ancillary residential accommodation.

The principle of converting these buildings to residential use has already been established under the recently approved application, and aside from the recladding of the existing outbuilding and the introduction of the link block, the application is otherwise identical to that previous approval and as a consequence is considered to be acceptable in principle in the context of policies SS6c and R2 of the Core Strategy.

Impact on the Green Belt

5.2 The conversion of the existing buildings to residential use has previously been found to be acceptable under application SMD/2017/0706) where it was concluded that the reuse of the buildings was an appropriate form of development in the Green Belt that would not detract from its openness, or purposes of including land in the Green Belt. The building was furthermore found to be of a permanent and substantial construction, evidenced by the accompanying Structural Survey.

5.3 The principle changes between this current application and the previous approval are the proposed recladding of the exterior of the existing blockwork building, and the introduction of a link extension to connect the two buildings.

5.4 The proposed recladding of the existing blockwork outbuilding and link extension are considered to constitute appropriate forms of development in the Green Belt in the context of paragraph 89 of the NPPF, which allows for:

> *"the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building"*

5.5 The proposed recladding will not materially increase the size of the existing building, representing an overall increase in footprint of 11m^2, whilst the link extension will encompass a footprint of 12m^2. The collective increase in footprint proposed represents an increase of some 27% over and above the size of the original brick building, and 18% over and above the size of the original blockwork outbuilding. The increase in floorspace is some 14% over and above the size of the original brick building, and just 9% over and above the size of the original blockwork building. As a consequence, the proposal will not result in a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original buildings and is thus considered to accord with the provisions of policies SS6c and R2 of the Core Strategy, and paragraphs 89 and 90 of the NPPF.

Design & Layout

5.6 The application adopts a sympathetic approach to the conversion of the existing buildings, making beneficial reuse of existing openings in order to avoid any undue loss of its original agrarian character. No new openings are proposed and the openings retained will preserve their existing proportions and style of windows. The proposal will also derive a material enhancement to the appearance of the building associated with replacing the existing flat roofed section of the existing brick building with a pitched roof, and replacing the existing fibre cement roofs on both buildings with standard roof tiles. There is no difference between these aspects of the scheme and that which was previously approved under application SMD/2017/0706. Similarly, the proposed extent of domestic curtilage, means of access and enclosure of the site with indigenous hedgerow will remain as per the previous approval.

5.7 The proposed recladding of the blockwork outbuilding will serve to enhance its external appearance, helping to assimilate the structure with the red brick outbuilding behind and removing the poor quality blockwork appearance

that it currently has. In doing so the proposal takes opportunities to improve the character and quality of the area, and replaces poor design with better design (paragraphs 64 and 9 of the NPPF refer).

5.8 The proposed link extension is a modest structure, and has been designed to have a wholly subservient relationship to the buildings to which it is to be attached. It will be constructed from a complimentary palette of materials to that of the adjacent building (timber frame to match the proposed timber windows, and a tiled roof to match the proposed replacement roof). The link extension will facilitate access between the two buildings and owing to the presence of the blockwork building, will not have a materially harmful impact on the character and appearance of the streetscene. The existing building, whilst of a relatively pleasing character, is not a traditional agricultural building of vernacular character, and the introduction of the proposed link extension will not derive any significant adverse harm to its character and appearance. Such considerations lead me to conclude that the proposal accords with the provisions of policy DC1 of the Core Strategy.

Biodiversity

5.9 The previous application was accompanied by a bat survey which concluded that there was no evidence of bats using the building. The previous approval remains extant, and having regard to the conclusions of the bat survey (a duplicate of which has been submitted to accompany this application) it is concluded that the proposed development will not give rise to any material loss of biodiversity. The recommended mitigation measures set out within the bat survey can be secured by way of an appropriately worded planning condition, and in doing so the proposal will accord with the provisions of policy NE1 of the Core Strategy and paragraph 109 of the NPPF.

Highway Safety

5.10 The proposed means of vehicular access will be the same as that approved under application SMD/2017/0706 and the changes proposed in this application do not raise any material issues in respect of highway safety. The proposal will therefore not derive any severe residual impacts to highway safety, that being the test to be applied under paragraph 32 of the NPPF.

Other Considerations

5.11 The submitted proposal also has to be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in policy SS1a of the Core Strategy, and paragraph 14 of the NPPF. This is owing to the Local Authority's continued inability to demonstrate a five year deliverable supply of housing as required by the NPPF (paragraphs 47 and 49 refer). The Local Authority's Housing Land Supply Statement (March 2017) confirms that a supply of just 1.99 years can be demonstrated. As a consequence, the tilted balance in favour of approval, as set out in paragraph 14 of the NPPF, is engaged and permission should only be refused if any adverse impacts of doing so would *significantly and demonstrably* outweigh the benefits of the development when assessed against the NPPF taken as a whole.

5.12 The proposed development will derive a number of social and economic benefits when assessed against the three dimensions of sustainable development set out in paragraph 7 of the NPPF. Economic and social benefits will be derived as a consequence of creating one additional household to contribute towards the Local Authority's substantial shortfall in housing land supply. Further economic benefits will ensue as a consequence of generating additional household expenditure within the District. Environmental benefits will also ensue as a consequence of the improvement to the openness of the Green Belt associated with the removal of the existing

agricultural buildings, and by deriving an appropriate reuse of otherwise redundant buildings.

5.13 It is furthermore considered that the changes proposed in this application e.g. the recladding of the existing outbuilding and the creation of the link extension, will not derive any adverse impacts to *significantly and demonstrably* outweigh these benefits, and that as a consequence the proposal should be approved in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

6 Conclusion

6.1 The submitted proposal is considered to constitute an appropriate form of development within the Green Belt, and is an appropriate location for residential conversion, as established by the previous approval of permission on the site. The proposal adopts a sympathetic approach to the conversion of the building, and will enhance its appearance by incorporating a new tiled roof and pitched roof to the existing flat roof. The proposed recladding of the existing blockwork outbuilding will also derive an enhancement to the character and appearance of the area. The proposed link extension and recladding will furthermore not give rise to any significant and demonstrable adverse impacts to the character and appearance of the area, or to highway safety or local ecological interests.

6.2 The application is therefore considered to meet the requirements of policies SS6c, R2, DC1 and NE1 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy, and policies contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

6.3 The Local Authority is therefore respectfully requested to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable

development set out in policy SS1a of the Core Strategy and paragraph 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework.