Design & Access Statement.

Proposed Detached dwelling

on land adjacent at

Greenacres,
Gun Battery Lane,
Biddulph Moor,
Stoke On Trent,
ST8 7NU

for

Mr Mr & Mrs M Hall

Nov 2018

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Design & Access statement has been prepared in response to the Government's changes to the planning application process outlines in circular: *Guidance on Changes to the Development Control System*, which came into effect on 10 August 2006.

1.2 The statement provides an analysis and narrative of the proposals and is in line with guidance produced by CABE entitled *Design and Access Statements; how to write, read and use them.*

1.3 This statement relates to an application for the construction of single 3bed detached dwelling on land at the rear of Greenacres Gun Battery Lane Biddulph Moor with the demolition of a redundant fromer agricultural building ,

1.4 Pre application discussions have taken place and the policy context comments were :

As outlines at policies SS1 and SS1a, the Council will expect the development and use of land to contribute positively to the social, economic and environmental improvements of the Staffordshire Moorlands. When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF. The Council will work pro-actively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible. Planning applications that accord with the policies of the Core Strategy will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The enquiry site does not fall within the defined development and infill boundaries as outlined in the Site Allocations DPD; accordingly the site is regarded to fall within an 'Other Rural Area'. In accordance with policy SS6c, the other rural 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.

In terms of meeting an essential local need, policy SS6c allows for restricted new build housing development. In accordance with policy R1, appropriate development should not harm the rural characteristic and environmental quality of the area. Wherever possible development should be within suitably located buildings which are appropriate for conversion. where new or replacement buildings are involved, development should have minimal impact on the countryside and be in close proximity to an existing settlement.

The site falls within the Green Belt, where the construction of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Exceptions to this are outlined at paragraphs 89 and 90 of the NPPF and includes, amongst others, 'the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites, which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green belt and the purposes of including land within it than the existing development.

The definition of previously developed land provided at Annex 2 of the NPPF is as follows: Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land

that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.

It is considered that the proposed development would be considered to the first element of this exception. In order to fully meet this exception, the proposed development should have no greater harm on openness of the Green Belt than the existing structures. As such careful consideration needs to be given to matters of scale, massing and siting when you reach the detailed design stages of your project.

The principle of development is therefore considered to be acceptable.

2.0 Uses / Planning Policy

2.1 The existing use of the site is a well established dwelling and garden situated on Gun Battery Lane incorporating a number of former agricultural buildings,
The use of the land at the rear as domestic garden was established by a certificate of lawfulness application ref SMD/2016/0013

The site sits just outside the village development boundary as defined in the local plan where Biddulph Moor is defined as a larger village The existing dwelling sits within a larger than average plot whereas the village as a whole has a mixture of detached, semi-detached and terraced properties of differing styles and designs.

2.2 The site is steeply sloping up to the East and is bounded by tall mature hedges to the West and North and sits behind the main dwelling known as Greenacres.

2.3 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the determination of development proposals must be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The adopted Core Strategy (March 2014) is the key development plan document for the purposes of decision-making.

2.4 There are a number of adopted Core Strategy policies which are relevant to this application. These comprise;
The following CS (Core Strategy) policies are relevant to the application:-

- SS1 Development Principles
- SS1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- SS6c Other Rural Areas Area Strategy
- R1 Rural Diversification
- DC1 Design Considerations
- DC3 Landscape and Settlement Setting

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)
- Space about Dwellings (September 1998 – Appendix 3 Local Plan)
- Design SPG

National Planning Policy NPPF
- Chapter 6 Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes
- Chapter 7 Requiring good design
- Chapter 9 Protecting Green Belt land
- Chapter 11 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

2.5 The general application of these policies, and their status, is considered at paras 8-10 below but there are specific points regarding the relationship between the application proposal and these policies which are worthy of note. Policy SS2 states that *'sufficient deliverable land will be identified to provide at least 5 years of development at all times'.* Reference to the Housing Land Supply Schedule (March 2017) indicates that there is insufficient supply of housing land to meet the aspirations of this policy

2.6 Policies SS4 and SD1 both promote a preference for the development of brownfield sites; the application proposal utilises brownfield land within the curtilage of an existing dwelling and will have an overall footprint similar to an existing former agricultural building which is to be demolished.

2.7 The actual relevance of specific housing policies, and the housing elements of the more general development policies referenced above, must be considered in the context of the Council's inability to demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites. The supply position as at March 2017 with a published deliverable supply of only 1.99 years and the situation is worsening. In 2012 a supply position of 4.3 years was claimed, whilst in March 2014 a supply of 2.17 years was identified. The under-supply position is therefore acute and deteriorating.

2.8 National planning advice and guidance is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which re-affirms that development proposals which accord with the development plan should be approved without delay and where the development plan is absent, silent or its policies are out of date permission should be granted unless, inter alia, the proposal's adverse impacts would significantly outweigh the benefits.

2.9 In relation to housing proposals, the NPPF seeks, at para.47, to boost significantly the supply of housing by a number of means, including the need for local planning authorities to identify and update annually a supply of specific, deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years worth of housing against their housing requirements. Paragraph 49 of the NPPF states that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Importantly, it adds that relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up to date where a five year supply of deliverable housing sites cannot be demonstrated. In this case, the absence of a five year supply is clear and as such, policies relating to the provision and distribution of housing must be considered as either out of date or attract little weight in the decision making process.

2.10 In terms of the spatial distribution of new housing, policies which seek to restrict new housing to defined settlements must also be considered to be out of date. In this case, the application site is located outside a defined settlement but little or no weight can be attached to those Core Strategy policies which limit new housing to such locations. These include policies SS3, SS4 and SS6/6a.Recent appeal decisions confirm this position and the conclusions of these appeals, in the context of the status of development policies, represent important material considerations

2.11 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 an 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

2.12 Policy SS2 of the Core Strategy relates to the 'Future Provision of Development' and 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

2.13 Policy SS3 of the Core Strategy relates to the 'Distribution of Development' and states that housing will be located in accordance with the Spatial Strategy and will be distributed between the towns and rural areas. It identifies that some 28% of new housing over the plan period will be delivered within the rural areas

2.14 Policy SS6A of the Core Strategy relates to the 'Larger Villages Area Strategy' and states that these settlements (of which Biddulph Moor is one) shall retain and enhance their role as rural service centres, providing for the bulk of the local housing needs of the rural areas. The policy goes on to state that their role as rural service centres will be enhanced by protecting services and facilities which are essential to sustain rural living, and that local housing needs will be met by increasing the range of available and affordable housing types and allocating a range of deliverable housing types primarily within the urban area in location across the village with good accessibility to local services and facilities.

2.15 Policy SS6c of the 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):

- Restricting new build housing development in the countryside to that which is essential to local needs.

2.16 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.

2.17 A recent appeal at a rural site at Baldwins Gate (Ref. APP/P3420/A/14/2218530) for 100 houses was upheld, inter alia, on the grounds that a five year supply could not be demonstrated and little or no weight could be attached to those development plan policies which had a spatial housing dimension. In the Baldwins Gate case, Saved Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan policy H1resists new housing outside development boundaries; Newcastle- under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Core Strategy policy SP1 directs new housing to the urban core and Core Strategy policy ASP6 defines quantums of new housing as between urban and rural areas. In refusing the application, the Local Planning Authority had relied on these policies. The Inspector concluded that;

" …the Council cannot demonstrate a 5 year housing supply and, therefore, the relevant policies for the supply of housing (LP Policy H1 and CSS Policies SP1 and

ASP6) should not be considered up-to-date. The weight given to them, and to the defined village envelope, should therefore be significantly reduced"

2.18 A recent appeal at Garston, Watford (Ref; APP/B1930/A/13/2207696), relating to a housing proposal for 100 dwellings, was upheld with the Inspector noting that;

"*Whilst a lack of a five year land supply of deliverable housing land does not provide an automatic 'green light' to planning permission a balance must be struck. The deficiency in land supply would carry substantial weight in that decision balancing exercise"*

2.19 Although these decisions apply to large scale housing proposals, the principles and approach to decision making taken in those cases have been successfully applied in relation to other housing development proposals and are relevant and applicable in relation to the application proposal which is made against a background of not only an absence of a five year housing land supply but also a deteriorating supply position as confirmed by the Council's own evidence. Against this background there can be no reasonable planning policy objection to this application which will allow for the provision of new housing in Biddulph Moor

2.20 As the relevant development plan policies are clearly out of date in relation to housing supply and distribution, the application proposal must be determined in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 14 of the NPPF which supports sustainable development and requires, where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, as is the case in this instance, that such development be granted permission unless,

"— any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or

— specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted"

2.21 SUSTAINABLITY

The site is situated within just outside an established village structure. Paragraph 49 of the Framework advises 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, where the council has confirmed it is unable to do so. Policies which require housing development to be focused in certain areas are policies for the supply of housing and are therefore not up to date.
The site is situated within walking distance to the village centre and primary school and close to bus routes serving Biddulph High school and Biddulph Town centre

Paragraph 4 of the Framework confirms that for a decision taking the presumption in favour of sustainable development means granting planning permission if unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies of the Framework when taken or where specific framework policies indicate development should be restricted.
There are three dimensions to sustainability; economic, social and environmental. These roles are mutually dependant and should be jointly sought to achieve sustainable development.

The proposal through the construction of new dwelling and the expenditure

associated with an additional household in the area would provide economic benefits. The dwelling will also contribute to the shortfall in the housing supply of the area.

2.22 Although the application proposal is relatively modest in scale, it does deliver significant benefits and satisfies the roles of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF (para 7). In economic terms it will provide employment during the construction phase. A social role will be satisfied through the provision of a new dwelling which will help to meet unmet housing need in the District where the availability of suitable land to meet housing needs is severely deficient. In environmental terms, the application involves the use of a brownfield site and the removal of an unattractive former agricultural building which would not be practical to re use . The site's redevelopment will not result in the loss of trees or habitats.

2.23 Overall, it is considered that the proposal is not in conflict with adopted policy on the basis that the relevant policies of the development plan, including those relating to the spatial distribution of new housing, are out of date. In contrast, the proposal derives general and specific support from the NPPF, notably paras 47 and 49. The proposal delivers tangible benefits and any harmful impacts arising from this scheme, which in any event are difficult to identify, do not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. As such the application should be approved.

3.0 Amount

3.1 The application seeks permission for the construction of a single detached 3 bed family dwelling having approximate footprint areas of 112.5sq m which has been determined in response to the building to be demolished which has a footprint of 122 sqm. It is proposed to use the roof void to provide 2 of the bedrooms and so it is considered that the net impact on the openness of the Green Belt would be neutral,

3.2 The private domestic curtilage of the proposal would be 1840sq m whilst the overall site area of Greenacres including the outbuildings is currently 4442 sqm

3.3 It is considered that the site can easily accommodate the proposed dwelling whilst achieving a sufficient private amenity garden area to both the new dwelling and the existing retained dwelling which exceed the minimum Space About Dwellings Standards and due to existing mature tree/hedge screening between the plot the existing dwelling and the industrial premises to the West sufficient levels of privacy can easily be maintained.

4.0 Layout

4.1 The layout, has been determined to make the most efficient use of the site whilst also ensuring that the character and amenity of the locality is not compromised. Furthermore, it ensures that appropriate separation distances can be achieved between the new and existing properties and industrial premises adjoining the site.

The layout has been further influenced by the requirement to provide suitable car parking facility within the curtilage of the site for the new dwelling.
Account has been taken of the need to avoid impacting on the visual intrusion into the locality together with the amenity and privacy of the adjacent dwelling.

The layout has been designed to make the most efficient use of the site whilst ensuring that the character and amenity of the locality is not compromised.

4.2 The layout of the proposal has been influenced by the site constraints and character of similar dwellings found elsewhere in the vicinity with the aim being to provide a property which will sit comfortably within the rural location.

5.0 Landscape

5.1 It is intended to provide a detailed landscaping scheme as a condition of any planning consent and so only the general principles are described in this statement.

5.2 The site presently comprises a mature hedge boundary which will be retained with additional native shrub planting proposed to the edge of the existing driveway which will serve the new dwelling but also still be utilised by Greenacres to access the buildings to the rear
The present site is predominantly lawned which will be retained albeit with a path and patio area provided adjacent to the dwelling.

6.0 Appearance/Scale

6.1 In the immediate vicinity of the site the dwellings are very much a mixture of styles and designs varying from traditional two storey Stone or brick built cottages to more modern dwellings and Bungalows again of a traditional style comprising a palette of different materials ie Stone, brick or render all set below a pitched tiled roof.

The proposal seeks replicate the simple traditional style of a single storey scale albeit with rooms in the roof incorporating dormer windows in the roof slopes of a slightly more modern design, The proposal incorporates large glazed areas which with the large open plan room layout is intended to encourage a flowing interaction between the internal space and large garden area all around the proposal,
The dwelling will be dug into the sloping site to integrate the building into the site contours which will also be set against a steeply sloping backcloth to the east and so as a consequence will be set at a substantially lower level than both Greenacres and Gun battery Lane therefore minimising the visual impact of the proposal,

7.0 Access

7.1 For the purpose of this statement compliance with the current edition of the Building Regulation part M is assumed to be covered with the detailed design and proposals, as this is mandatory. It is not intended to therefore provide exhaustive coverage of all means taken to secure such compliance.

7.2 For the purposes of the statement of the definition of ‘disability’ is taken as that in Part 1 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
All entrances into the building will be fully compliant with Part ‘M’ of the Building Regulations having a level approach and entrance door threshold.
A ground floor WC is provided to the property and all internal doors will be of a sufficient width to suit all users.

7.3 The proposal will be served off the existing hardcored access which will be retained to also serve the retained outbuildings to Greenacres which also has its own access and parking area adjacent to the dwelling directly accessed off Gun Battery Lane.

7.4 The proposal will provide 2 no. car parking spaces off the access drive with an area provided of a sufficient turning facility within the curtilage of the site to exit in a forward direction.