Supporting Statement

Proposed Detached House and Detached Garage/Log Store and Associated Access and Parking Arrangements

Blacksmiths Farm House
High Street
Kingsley
ST10 2AE

For Mr and Mrs G Ekin



SUPPORTING STATEMENT

1. Introduction

1.1 This Statement has been produced to accompany an application seeking full planning permission for a detached house and detached garage/log store and associated access arrangements to be constructed at Blacksmiths Farm House, High Street, Kingsley.

1.2 The application site is within the administrative area covered by Staffordshire Moorlands District Council and by Staffordshire County Council.

This supporting statement sets out the site context and relevant site history, the planning status of the site and the latest policy context relevant to the consideration of the application, it assesses the principle of the development and explains the design approach which was used in formulating the proposals so as to ensure that the proposed dwelling achieves a satisfactory visual and functional relationship with the neighbouring dwellings and the locality, and the reasons why it is considered that the scheme represents an acceptable, sustainable and suitable form of development.

2. The Application

2.1 In addition to this supporting statement the planning application which is now submitted comprises the following documentation:-

Plans of the proposed development:

- R-51-1 Block and Location Plan
- R-51-2 Proposed House Plans and Elevations
- R-51-3 Proposed Garage Plans and Elevations

Arboricultural Reports

- Arboricultural Impact Assessment
- Appendix A Tree Survey Schedule
- Tree Protection Plan

Completed Planning Application Forms

Residential/Dwelling Units – Supplementary Information Template

The application fees (£462 plus £20 Planning Portal Service Charge).

3. The Site and Proposed Development

3.1 The application site, edged in red on Drawing R-51-1 attached to this submission, comprises the curtilage to Blacksmiths Farm House, Kingsley and includes the access drive taken from High Street and associated land. This private driveway also gives access to other domestic properties situated to the north-east of the application site which enjoy rights over it. The total area of the site amounts to 0.18 ha.

3.2 The proposals involve the demolition of the existing detached double garage presently situated within the garden area of Blacksmiths Farm House and its replacement by a combined detached double garage and log store situated at the western margin of the site. This would serve the existing dwelling (Blacksmiths Farm House). Within the garden area of the present house at the lower part of the site, towards the south-east corner, a detached 3 bedroom dwelling with an integral garage is proposed. A new driveway would be provided to serve the proposed house. The existing shared driveway leading from High Street would be widened as shown on Drawing R-51-1 to allow the passage of two cars, a vehicular turning area would be installed and the area resurfaced using porous tarmac. As required, the private garden areas between the existing and proposed dwellings would be separated, again as shown on Drawing R-51-1.

3.3 As can be seen from Photograph 1 below, the garden land serving Blacksmith Farm House is mainly laid to lawn.



Photograph 1. Blacksmiths Farm House and garden land with the detached garage to be demolished just in shot on the left hand side of the photograph.

3.4 The application site is situated behind the Bulls Head Public House (presently closed) and other properties which front onto or adjoin High Street so that, combined with existing boundary screening the proposed house would not be at all prominent in the street scene. The application site is well screened by existing hedges and trees, which will be retained, and the application is accompanied by an arboricultural survey and impact assessment which demonstrates that the proposals will not have an adverse impact upon any trees of significant amenity value subject to appropriate protection being provided during construction work by temporary fencing measures (as indicated in the consultant's report).



Photograph 2. The existing detached garage which is to be demolished and replaced as part of the proposed development scheme.

3.5 The proposed site plan which is set out on Drawing R-51-1 includes levels taken as part of the topographical survey of the site carried out preparatory to the submission of this application. It demonstrates that the garden land falls away gently from the host dwelling to the site of the proposed house by around 0.4 metre.

3.6 There are a range of types and ages of properties in the vicinity of the application site, and a variation in the materials used in their external finishes. The siting of new properties behind the frontages of dwellings on High Street is not without precedent in the locality and indeed, as may be noted from the site history in Section 4 overleaf, planning permision has been granted for a dwelling on the application site previously.

4. Site History

4.1 An on-line interrogation of the Authority's planning applications search facility lists the following applications relating to Black Smiths Farm (all reference numbers prefixed by "SMD") :-

1992/0226	Three Detached Dwellings	Refused 20/10/92
1993/0006	Residential Development (Outline)	Refused 01/09/93
1993/0214	Residential Development (Outline)	Approved 01/09/93
1995/0061	1 Detached Dwelling (Res. Matters)	Approved 15/11/95
1995/0240	1 Dwelling	Approved 15/11/95
1996/0502	1 Dwelling (Outline)	Withdrawn 05/02/97
1997/1132	1 Bungalow (Outline)	Approved 05/03/98
1999/1029	Utility Room & Detached Garage	Approved 25/05/99

5. Planning Policy

5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) states that all applications for planning permission shall be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy 2014

5.2 The Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy Development Plan Document was adopted by the Council in March 2014. It sets out the overall vision and planning strategy for development throughout the District (outside the Peak District National Park) and contains all of the planning policies required to control development to ensure that it addresses the economic, environmental and social needs of the area.

5.3 The policies of the Core Strategy considered to be the most directly relevant to the consideration of the application now submitted are :-

SS1	Development Principles
SS1a	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
SS6a	Larger Villages Area Strategy
SD1	Sustainable Use of Resources
H1	New Housing Development
DC1	Design Considerations
T1	Development and Sustainable Transport

5.4 Policy SS1 "Development Principles", inasmuch as it relates to the present proposals, in summary seeks to ensure that new development achieves a healthy, safe, attractive and well-maintained environment which protects the distinctive character of the District's individual

towns and villages and their settings. Development also should secure high quality, sustainable environments, efficient and effective use of resources and contribute to tackling climate change and reduced carbon emissions.

5.5 Policy SS1a "Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development" reflects the same positive presumption set out in the National Planning Policy Framework NPPF) referred to later in this Statement. This Policy confirms that the Council 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. The policy goes on to say that 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 planning 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 NPPF taken as a whole, or whether any specific policies in the Framework indicate that development should be restricted. The Council explains that to achieve sustainable development, new development should be located in sustainable locations and contribute positively to the social, economic and environmental improvement of the area, in accordance with Policy SS1 (referred to above).

5.6 Policy SS6a of the Core Strategy sets out the Council's approach to new development in "Larger Villages" and identifies Kingsley as one such village. The policy explains that the "Larger Villages" are intended to retain and enhance their role as rural service centres, inter-alia providing for the bulk of the local housing needs of the rural areas.

5.7 In order to retain and enhance their role as rural centres, appropriate development will be enabled within these villages which supports and increases the range and quality of services and facilities available to the rural areas, protects services and facilities available to the rural areas, and improves connections by public transport to surrounding smaller villages and market towns.

5.8 Additionally, local housing needs will be met by increasing the range of available and affordable house types, especially for first time buyers and families, and new development will reflect and enhance each village's special character and heritage by measures including giving priority to the re-use of existing redundant, underused or surplus sites for new development.

5.9 Policy SD1 of the Core Strategy concerns the "Sustainable Use of Resources". It requires all development to make sustainable use of resources, and adapt to climate change by, inter-alia and as relevant to the application site, requiring that development is located and

designed to minimise energy needs and to take advantage of maximised orientation to achieve energy savings, re-using construction waste materials, especially those sourced locally, and promoting water conservation standards which exceed those set out in the Building Regulations.

5.10 Policy H1 "New Housing Development" states that all development will be assessed according to the extent to which it provides for high quality, sustainable housing and to which it meets identified local housing market needs and the strategy for the area having regard to the location of the development , the characteristics of the site and the economics of provision. Also, housing development should be at the most appropriate density compatible with the site and its location, and with the character of the surrounding area. Residential development on unidentified (windfall) sites will be permitted within the Development Boundaries of the identified Larger Villages up to an indicative maximum scheme size of 9 dwellings.

5.11 Policy H1 goes on to state that all new dwellings must be of sufficient size to provide satisfactory levels of amenity for future occupiers whilst respecting the privacy and amenity of existing occupiers.

5.12 Policy DC1 of the Core Strategy requires all development to be well designed and reinforce local distinctiveness by positively contributing to and complementing the special character and heritage of the area in line with the Council's SPD. 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. It should also 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. Sustainable construction techniques and layouts should be used in order to reduce the global impact of the development and to adapt to climate change. The amenity of the area should be protected, including residential amenity, in terms of satisfactory daylight, sunlight, outlook, privacy and soft landscaping, and provision should be made for safe and satisfactory access and parking requirements arising from necessary car use.

5.13 Policy T1 of the Core Strategy advises that the Council will promote and support development which reduces reliance on the private car for travel journeys, and reduces the need to travel generally. This is to be achieved, inter-alia by ensuring that new development is located where the highway network can satisfactorily accommodate the traffic generated by the development or can be improved to do so as part of the proposals, and by ensuring that appropriate parking standard are met. Where appropriate all new development should facilitate walking and cycling within neighbourhoods.

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan 2016-2031

5.14 The Council has produced a Local Plan which sets out the development strategy, strategic and development management

policies and land designations for the District for the period 2016 to 2031. The new Local Plan, once adopted will replace the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy. The Council submitted its Local Plan Submission Version (LPSV) to the Secretary of State for examination in June 2018 and this was subsequently held. A schedule of main modifications was published in September 2018 and further work will be undertaken before the examining Inspector produces a final report and the Plan may be adopted by the Council. Having regard to the present status of the Local Plan, full weight cannot at present be attached to its emerging policies in decision making.

5.15 In respect of the proposals now to be determined it may be noted that the policies of the emergent Local Plan which are considered to be of most relevance are :-

SS1	Development Principles
SS1a	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
SS8	Larger Villages Area Strategy
SD1	Sustainable Use of Resources
H1	New Housing Development
DC1	Design Considerations
T1	Development and Sustainable Transport

5.16 Generally speaking, insofar as they are relevant to the consideration of the application now submitted, the above-listed emergent Local Plan policies, though clearly updated and revised, are consistent with their equivalent adopted Core Strategy policies. They do not introduce any material changes that would affect the determination of the application in a negative manner. Indeed, the contrary appears to be the case because :-

- Policy SS1 now has an added reference to making effective use of land to more closely reflect guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF);
- Policy SS1a retains the presumption in favour of sustainable development;
- Policy SS8 carries forward Core Strategy Policy SS6a but does remove references to meeting local housing needs;
- Policy SD1 removes the reference to water conservation standards (now referred to elsewhere);
- Policy H1 removes any reference to particular density standards so as to enable greater discretion and capacity to consider local character and also removes the threshold figure of 9 dwellings;
- Policy DC1 is not materially amended in terms of the consideration of the application submitted;
- Policy T1 is not materially amended in terms of the consideration of the application submitted.

6. Other Material Planning Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019

6.1 The policies contained in the NPPF are material considerations which local planning authorities should take into account (paragraphs 2 and 212 of the NPPF refer).

6.2 The NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making; proposed development that conflicts with a up-to-date development plan should not usually be granted, and decisions that depart from such a plan should only be taken where material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed (paragraph 12).

6.3 Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework, inter-alia, explains that decision taking should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This means:

- approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
- where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date*, granting permission unless:
  i. the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed**; or
  ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.

* This includes, for applications involving the provision of housing, situations where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year (with buffer) supply of deliverable housing sites,

** The policies referred to are those in the Framework (rather than those in development plans) relating to: habitats sites (and those sites listed in paragraph 176) and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a National Park (or within the Broads Authority) or defined as Heritage Coast; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in footnote 63 of the NPPF); and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.

6.4 The NPPF explains (paragraph 8), that there are three objectives of sustainable development; economic, social and environmental and that these roles are interdependent. The social role, for example,

concerns supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well being.

6.5 Paragraph 9 explains that "*these objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in this Framework; they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area."*

6.6 Paragraph 68 of the NPPF notes that small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, and are often built out relatively quickly. Local planning authorities are urged to support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes.

6.7 Paragraph 78 of the NPPF states that in order to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. The example is given that where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby. The NPPF advises against permitting isolated homes in the countryside.

6.8 Paragraph 124 of the NPPF reiterates the point that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment and states that "*Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities".*

6.9 In so far as meeting the challenge of climate change and flooding, the NPPF advises that in determining planning applications local planning authorities should take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption (paragraph 153) and that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (paragraph 155).

Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide SPD 2018

6.10 This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) does not form part of the Development Plan but is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. It was adopted by the District Council in Feb 2018. The SPD sets out the overarching principles of securing good design and in relation to new buildings in particular it contains guidance on building styles and form, the importance of the

setting and context, scale, materials, proportion, form, architectural detailing, solid to void ratios, sustainable design, and hard and soft landscaping.

Space About Dwellings SPG 1996

6.11 This Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) was adopted by the District Council in December 1996 and sets out standards for minimum private garden sizes and the separation distances to be achieved between buildings to avoid overshadowing/loss of daylight or overlooking and loss of privacy between facing windows.

Design Principles for Development in Staffordshire Moorlands - New Dwellings and Extensions to Dwellings SPG 1996

6.12 This Supplementary Planning Guidance, or SPG, was prepared to illustrate basic design principles applicable to development primarily in the rural areas of the District. It provides advice concerning siting and the relationship between new and existing buildings and landform, roof design, elevational design, and the correct use of materials.

7. Assessment of the Principle of the Development

7.1 As has been noted above, the provisions of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004, explain that planning applications and appeals must be determined in accordance with the development plan "unless material considerations indicate otherwise".

7.2 As far as the consideration of the application now submitted is concerned, the relevant and governing part of the development plan is the adopted Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy 2014, though it is considered that the proposals are also in accordance with the relevant policies of the emergent Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan 2016-2031.

7.3 The proposed development is considered in principle to be in accordance with the provisions of the development plan for the reasons set out below.

7.4 The development would be carried out within the KIngsley Settlement Boundary which is identified as a "Larger Village" where residential development is normally acceptable (Core Strategy Policy SS1a refers).

7.5 The development is sustainable in economic, social and environmental terms, as this Statement establishes, and the NPPF (revised in February this year) sets out a strong presumption in favour of allowing such development which accords with an up-to date development plan without delay (paragraph 11 of the NPPF refers).

7.6 Notwithstanding this, it is understood that the Council is unable to demonstrate that it has a robust 5 year (plus buffer) supply of deliverable housing sites. In these circumstances the NPPF explains

(at paragraph 11) that a "tilted balance" evaluation is triggered and that planning permission should be granted unless:-

- The application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a clear reason for refusing permision – these polices refer to special habitat sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, land designated as Green Belt or Local Green Space, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a National Park, a Heritage Coast, irreplaceable habitats, designated heritage assets and other heritage assets of archaeological interest, and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.
- Any adverse impacts of granting planning permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.

7.7 Because the application site is not covered by any of the designations referred to in bullet point one above, and in respect of bullet point two it will be demonstrated that there are no significantly adverse impacts arising from the proposals, but conversely that there are benefits to be derived, then the NPPF is clear that the presumption in favour of granting planning permission for this sustainable form of development should prevail.

7.8 Overall, in terms of assessment of the acceptability of the proposals in principle, this Statement establishes that the development would :-

- be sustainable in terms of economic, social and environmental considerations;
- not be contrary to the relevant provisions of the development plan;
- accord with the guidance provided within the National Planning Policy Framework;
- provide a high quality well-designed dwelling;
- not visually harm the open countryside;
- make effective use of land which otherwise would be of no practical utility;
- increase the choice and range of the dwelling stock available locally;
- not harm the residential amenity of any nearby or adjoining dwellings;
- not be in an area at significant risk of flooding or land contamination;
- have a safe means of vehicular and pedestrian access;
- be completed within the next twelve months and therefore would very quickly contribute to the housing completion numbers achieved for the village and for the District.

8. Sustainability and Climate Change Issues

Dwelling Design

8.1 The capacity and capability of individual developments to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and adaptability to climate change as required by the NPPF will depend of course upon the nature and complexity of the development proposed.

8.2 The footprint of the living accommodation of the house has a regular-shape and this helps to minimise heat loss through unnecessary lengths of external walls and wall areas. The disposition of rooms within the house is such that maximum passive solar gain is achieved for the principal habitable and working areas of the house - the through lounge/dining area, kitchen and two main bedrooms have french doors and windows respectively all facing south-east.

8.3 The window sizing and disposition in relation to each of the rooms of the house is designed to ensure that a good level of natural daylight reaches all the principal rooms and thus the requirement to use artificial (and energy consuming) light sources is reduced.

8.4 Having regard to the construction of the house, wherever possible sustainable sources of materials, particularly for timber and joinery products, will be used and waste materials from the construction process will be recycled. The structure (walls, floor and roof) will be insulated to be at least in accordance with the requirements of Part L of the current Building Regulations and all new windows will be double glazed using low E Glass.

8.5 Water use will be inhibited by the installation of aerated taps so as to reduce flow rates; typically 2 litres per minute for a bathroom hand-basin and 6 litres per minute for the kitchen sink. Also installed will be dual flush toilets with reduced capacity storage cisterns. The water supply will of course be metered and this in itself discourages excessive consumption as will the use of water efficient appliances; washing machines and dishwashers particularly.

8.6 It will be noted that garden area serving the proposed house will be mainly grass for amenity use, and that the proposed driveway in front of it will be surfaced in a permeable form of construction (chippings). This will ensure that any surface water run off from the site will be minimised even during periods of heavy rain.

8.7 Energy efficient light fittings will be used and a high efficiency heating system will be installed and provided with a digital programmer to aid economy of energy use.

8.8 Overall the new dwelling will be constructed to exceed the insulation and energy saving requirements incorporated in the currently applicable Building Regulations and it is considered that the proposals satisfy the relevant climate change and sustainability requirements of Policies SS1 and SD1 of the Council's Core Strategy.

Sustainability and Location of the Site

8.9 The application site lies within a cluster of residential properties along and behind High Street within this part of the KIngsley Village Development Boundary. The village has a linear but compact form and most parts of the settlement therefore can be reached readily by foot or cycle. Whilst there are limited facilities within the village itself, there are bus stops within easy walking distance of the application site so that public transport can easily be accessed. Service 32 operated by First Potteries runs through Kingsley on its route from Hanley to Uttoxeter via Werrington, Cheadle and Tean and return. The service provided is half hourly throughout the day and hourly in the evening and on Sundays. Service 30, operated by Aimee's runs between Leek, Cheadle and Tean via Kingsley and provides two services per day on weekdays.

8.10 National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 103 acknowledges that opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas and this should be taken into account in decision making. Some of the journeys to and from the site could be made by electric vehicles, which are a recognised sustainable transport mode, given the growing market share they enjoy and the wider network of electric vehicle charging points capable of sustaining their use across the country. The proposed development incorporates a fast charge electric vehicle charging point which will encourage the use of an electrically powered vehicle by future occupants of the proposed house. This encouragement is in accordance with the thrust of the Core Strategy and emerging Local Plan Policy T2 and Framework paragraph 110e.

8.11 The availability of some choice of mode of travel in the locality of the application site does offer the prospect of some journeys being undertaken by means other than the private motor car, and hence a commensurate reduction in vehicle exhaust pollution could be achievable.

8.12 The site is located within the Village Development Boundary where the addition of an extra house has the potential to assist in the retention or expansion of the existing level of service provision, including contributing to the maintenance of the public transport service and the local primary school roll. This is very much in accordance with the thrust of paragraph 78 of the NPPF (paragraph 6.7 above refers).

8.13 The site is therefore considered to be sustainably located.

Economic, Social and Environmental Sustainability

8.14 For the reasons set out in the immediately preceding paragraphs of this Statement, the development is considered to be sustainable in terms of its location and climate change impact. The NPPF, however, explains (in paragraph 8) that there are three overarching objectives for achieving sustainable development; economic, social and

environmental objectives. In relation to economic matters, the development of the site would bring jobs during the construction phase and generate income for local builder's merchants supplying materials to the developer. The New Homes Bonus would also bring some resources to the Council. Additionally, the residents of the proposed house would generate expenditure some of which would benefit local businesses. There are no economic disbenefits identified in relation to the proposed scheme and so it must be concluded that the proposals would be economically sustainable.

8.15 The provision of an additional home within the village would add choice in the local housing market and ultimately may offer an opportunity for local people to find accommodation more suited to their changing needs and requirements; thus the development would clearly fulfil a social role and the proposals are socially sustainable.

8.16 Finally, as will be demonstrated, the development would not impact detrimentally upon the character or appearance of the locality or upon the natural environment and as explained in paragraphs 8.1 to 8.8 above the proposals are sensitive and reactive to the need to adapt to climate change issues. It may also be concluded therefore that the development proposed is environmentally sustainable too. Overall therefore the development satisfies the requirements of Policies SS1, SS6a, SD1 and DC1 of the Core Strategy (see paragraphs 5.2 to 5.13 of this Statement).

9. Design and Access Issues

The Street Scene

9.1 The application seeks full planning permission for a detached dwelling and a detached garage/log store to be constructed on land within the Village Development Boundary.

9.2 The site of the proposed dwelling does not feature prominently in the street scene and its development would have little visual impact when viewed from that direction. The scheme also involves the construction of a detached garage and log store of a suitably rustic appearance which, though in an elevated position in relation to High Street, would be screened by appropriate landscaping, the design and implementation of which could be secured by planning condition. Additionally, the widening of the access off High Street to 4.5 metres would involve the construction of a low retaining wall on its north-westerly side of a design and materials to be agreed with the planning authority.

9.3 Photograph 3 overleaf shows the shared access to the application site taken from High Street with Blacksmiths Farm House seen in the middle distance. The low retaining wall would be constructed on the left hand side of the widened access as seen in the photograph. The proposed detached garage and log store would be located on the left hand side of the access largely hidden from view.



Photograph 3. The existing shared access into the site seen from High Street

9.4 The proposed development would not interrupt any public vistas of importance or create an unfortunate form of skyline development.

9.5 It is considered that overall the proposed development would not have any detrimental impact on the street scene and would not appear incongruous or intrusive.

Use

9.6 The character of High Street in the locality of the application site is predominantly residential (the adjoining Public House has been closed for some considerable time) is almost entirely residential and there would not appear any reason why in principle a residential use of the site should not be considered suitable and appropriate in this locality. The proposal will utilise effectively and appropriately a large garden area which is under-used and of no public amenity value.

Amount

9.7 The proposed dwelling would have a gross internal floor space of approximately 142 square metres; 80 square metres at ground floor level (including the floor area of the integral garage) and 62 square metres at first floor. The internal floor area of the detached double garage would be 38 square metres and that of the log store 11 square metres. The accommodation provided in the house would comprise 3 bedrooms (one en-suite), a bathroom, landing, kitchen and dining area, utility, cloakroom, lounge, hall and open porch.

9.8 The private garden space of the new dwelling would amount to some 230 square metres, and that remaining to the host dwelling would be approximately 360 square metres; both areas being well in excess of the 65 square metres minimum prescribed by the Council's Space About Dwellings SPG1996. Both garden area calculations exclude the significant open areas to the front of the proposed new dwelling and that to the side of the existing house. In the case of both the new and existing homes, the private garden areas would not be fragmented and would be of a usable shape, being enclosed by fencing and hedging (existing and proposed) so as to ensure privacy. The gardens would be suitably private therefore and would be available to meet all the usual domestic requirements including clothes drying, a sitting out area, appropriate bin storage space, play space for children, and an area to cultivate.

9.9 It is considered that the amount of built form proposed for the plot is appropriate and of a density which is not out of character with the surrounding developments in the locality.

Layout

9.10 The siting of the proposed dwelling is essentially dictated by the position of the access into the site and by the need to ensure a satisfactory visual and functional relationship between the proposed dwelling, the host dwelling and other residences in the locality, and by the need to provide suitably private garden areas and adequate parking arrangements for both the existing and proposed dwellings.

9.11 Care has been taken to ensure that no loss of residential amenity is occasioned to adjoining properties by the new development because of a loss of privacy, overshadowing, or mutual overlooking. The proposed development site is well screened by existing vegetation and fencing situated around the boundaries of the site; in particular by a 3 metre high Laurel hedge along the north-easterly boundary (see photograph 4) and by established trees and vegetation which will be retained along the south-easterly boundary (photograph 5). Additional boundary hedges and fences are proposed to be provided between the host and the proposed dwelling to provide appropriate levels of privacy.

9.12 Overall it is considered that the purpose-designed dwelling, and its siting on the plot, satisfies the requirements of the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) concerning Space about Dwellings and the relevant parts of the SPG concerning Design Principles for Development.

Scale and Appearance

9.13 As has been noted already, there is a range of different sizes, ages and styles of dwellings in the locality and a spectrum of different types of external facing materials may be seen to have been employed in

constructing them. There is no consistent architectural theme or vernacular which can be identified and respected therefore in the design of the new house.



Photograph 4. View from the site of the proposed dwelling towards the north-eastern boundary featuring a 3m high Laurel hedge. There are no habitable room windows proposed in the side elevation of the proposed house facing towards the boundary concerned.



Photograph 5. View towards the south westerly site boundary showing the masking effect of existing tree and vegetation cover.

9.14 The design of the new property has taken into account the guidance set out in the Council's Design Principles SPG 1996 and the Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2018 (SPD). Thus, the roof design features a main roof spanning across the shortest dimension of the plan form of the house (i.e. front to back in this case), with a pitched roof of 35 degrees (the design guidance advises roof pitches of between 30 and 40 degrees) Subordinate elements of the house, i.e. the front projection of the garage and the utility room and front porch all have roofs pitched to match the degree of pitch of the main house roof. The roofs are all gable ended rather than hip ended as recommended and no non-traditional flat roofs, roof lights or dormers are introduced. The height to the ridge line of the proposed house is approx. 8 metres which. notwithstanding the lower ground level that it will stand on, is significantly lower than the ridge line of the host dwelling.

9.15 The house design displays a relatively strong solid to void relationship and the windows are of a simple design with no transom lights or small pane details since the design guidance advises that such window styles are not a traditional feature of the Moorlands. The window pane sub divisions utilised lend an appropriate vertical emphasis to the appearance of the fenestration. Stone cills are a traditional method of detailing beneath windows and are a feature of the proposed house design. The garage door design uses a vertical ribbed appearance as recommended.

9.16 The details of the proposed materials will be the subject of local planning authority approval but will be a facing brick of appropriate colour and texture with either a slate or a tiled roof.

9.17 Overall, the proposed house is considered of an appropriate scale and massing for its position, and its design and appearance will be congruous with the character of the locality. The dwelling is therefore considered to satisfy the requirements of Policy DC 1 of the adopted Core Strategy concerning design and is generally in accordance with the guidance contained in the Council's relevant SPGs and the more recent Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide SPD.

9.18 The proposals are also considered to satisfy the guidance set out in Section 12 of the NPPF "Achieving well-designed places". This refers to the desire to achieve good standards of design by encouraging visually attractive developments displaying good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping, and developments which are sympathetic to the local character and built environment, creating places that are safe, inclusive and accessible. In relation to safety and reducing the fear of crime, it may be noted that the addition of another dwelling to the neighbourhood as proposed will also enhance natural surveillance in the locality because of incidental passive observations by the occupants of the dwelling.

Amenity

9.19 The Council's Space about Dwellings SPG specifies a minimum separation distance between the front elevations of dwellings containing principal windows as 22 metres and between rear elevations of houses with 3 or more bedrooms it is the same. There are no principal windows in either of the side elevations of the proposed dwelling and the principal windows in its front elevation do not directly face onto those of the host dwelling; even so the separation distance between the nearest principal windows, taking into account the obstruction to inter-visibility created by the projection of the garage to the front of the new dwelling will satisfy the requisite standard. There are no houses situated directly behind the proposed dwelling. The four cottages situated to the east of it have a number of bathroom windows in their rear elevations facing towards the site, but the view from any bedroom windows to the nearest principal window in the rear elevation of the proposed dwelling would only be at an acute angle and considerable tree and vegetation screening exists along the boundary between the properties (see photograph 5) This landscaping could be supplemented as required should the local planning authority consider that to be necessary.

9.20 Having regard to the separation distances involved and the relative positions of the new and the nearest existing dwellings it is not considered that the proposals will result in an unacceptable loss of residential amenity or loss of sunlight or daylight reaching those properties.

9.21 The proposals will not be visually intrusive in the street scene, and nor will they create environmental disturbance or pollution. The traffic likely to be generated by the modest sized three bedroom house is unlikely to create problems of congestion or unsafe road conditions in the locality and the development accommodates its own parking requirements including appropriate provision to serve the host property. It is considered that the foregoing demonstrates that the relevant requirements of Policies SS1 and DC1 of the Core Strategy and of the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance are satisfied by the proposed development.

Landscaping

9.22 It is intended to retain all the existing hedgerow screening around the boundaries of the site and care will be taken to ensure that any scaffolding and storage of building materials, plant, equipment or waste and construction work takes into account the need to avoid damage to the roots of any such vegetation. The accompanying Tree Protection Plan shows the positions of root protection barriers (fences) to be provided and maintained throughout the construction period.

9.23 The Tree Schedule prepared by the applicant's arboricultural consultants and submitted with this planning application establishes

that no trees need to be removed to accommodate any part of the proposed development. A number of trees are recommended for felling on safety or other grounds, but this work is not required a result of the development proposals now submitted.

9.24 New timber fencing and hedgerows of native species are proposed in order to provide appropriate levels of privacy and security between the rear garden of the host property and that of the new house, as shown on Drawing R-51-1 Proposed Site Plan. This will also improve the biodiversity of the site.

9.25 A simple timber picket fence is proposed to separate the front garden spaces of the two properties where privacy is much less of an issue and it is desirable on landscape grounds to maintain a more open aspect to the development.

9.26 Given the significant amount of existing mature boundary hedging and tree cover around the boundaries of the application site (which is generally intended to remain), the lack of prominence when viewed from High Street and the modest changes proposed to the site frontage at the access point onto High Street it is considered that the landscape character and quality of the locality is maintained by the proposals as required by policies SS1 and DC1 of the adopted Core Strategy. Any trees removed for safety or arboricultural reasons as shown on the submitted Tree Schedule will be replaced within the application site within the first available planting season after the new dwelling has been completed or occupied, whichever is the sooner. Bearing in mind that the new occupants will also wish to plant up their own domestic gardens it is not considered that further landscaping than that proposed would be necessary or justified.

Access and Parking

9.27 The access and parking arrangements proposed to serve the development are detailed on Drawing R-51-1 – Proposed Site Plan.

9.28 The existing detached garage which is located within the application site will be demolished and the present access to it will be adopted to serve the new house and integral garage as shown on the drawing. The parking provision required for the proposed 3 bedroom house would be 2 spaces according to the Council's current parking standards and these spaces also are shown on the submitted drawing. The proposed integral garage within the new house is designed to accommodate a car should the occupants wish to use it for this purpose and is a minimum of 3 metres wide by 6 metres long internally to meet the Council's requirements. A vehicular turning area is proposed to be provided within the front garden area of the new house as shown on the submitted drawing.

9.29 In order to serve the requirements of Blacksmiths Farm House a replacement detached double garage is proposed in the position

shown on Drawing R-51-1 and this too will be provided with a vehicular turning area as shown.

9.30 The existing access on to High Street is shared with other properties and is proposed to be widened to 4.5 metres as shown on Drawing R-51-1. This is an improvement upon the present situation and will allow two cars to pass each other safely as they enter and leave the shared drive. The driveway and turning area will be surfaced using porous tarmac which will provide a bound surface (as opposed to a loose surface such as gravel which would not be stable on the sloping driveway and would spill out onto High Street).

9.31 Visibility from the access onto High Street is considered satisfactory in the primary direction (looking right/southwards on exit from the drive) subject to the removal of any obstruction above 800m in height which is situated within the applicant's ownership along the site frontage and which may impede visibility for car drivers leaving the site. Visibility to the left (northwards) on driving onto High Street from the shared drive is restricted by the corner of the existing building, number 30 High Street. This view is however in the non-leading direction and the velocity of traffic approaching from this direction in practice is likely to be below the 30 mph speed limit imposed on the length of highway in question because of the existence of the nearby right angle bend in the alignment of High Street. In such circumstances a visibility splay reduced below that prescribed for a 30 mph speed restricted road may be acceptable without compromising road safety. The visibility splay deficiency is a pre-existing condition which affects current vehicular movements out of the drive. The proposed improvements to the access will not worsen this situation but will in fact improve highway safety overall.

9.32 As has been noted, the provision of turning areas as proposed will obviate the need for any vehicle to have to reverse out onto High Street.

9.33 The National Planning Policy Framework, at paragraph 109, advises that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. The addition of the traffic likely to be generated by the modest sized three bedroom house proposed will not perceptibly worsen the safety situation at the junction; on the contrary the improvements offered by way of the widening associated with the scheme will improve the safety of the access for all users. It is not apparent from readily available accident records that that the present arrangements have a poor safety record.

9.34 The new house will be fully disability compliant and will have a ramped approach to its front door and any other points of access from outside; the ramps to have a no greater than 1 in 20 slope and cross falls less than 1 in 40. Paths around the outside of the house will be of a firm and even surface and a minimum width of 900mm. The principal doorways into and within the house will be of adequate width to permit

wheelchair access and the external doors will be fitted with level thresholds. Accessible cloakroom and WC facilities are incorporated within the proposed ground floor layout.

10. Conclusion

10.1 The proposal makes effective use of surplus garden land for the provision of a dwelling and this approach is supported by the NPPF (Section 11 – Making Effective Use of Land) especially where this would help to meet identified housing needs and where land supply is constrained.

10.2 The dwelling will be of a design quality which would enhance the character and appearance of the locality and is appropriate in terms of the scale and relationship of the new dwelling to those in the vicinity. As the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) notes (paragraph 124 refers), good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. The visual impact of the proposals upon the street scene will be very limited.

10.3 Improvements will be made to the existing shared driveway and its junction with High Street and adequate provision will be made for vehicular turning movements within the site so that cars may manoeuvre and avoid any need to reverse out on to High Street. Appropriate levels of car parking will be provided in accordance with the Council's adopted standards. It is not therefore considered that the proposals will compromise the interests of highway safety; instead the improvements made to the access arrangements for users of the shared drive will reduce the risk of accidents occurring.

10.4 New hedgerow planting is proposed within the site using native plant species and further landscaping may be secured as appropriate by way of planting conditions should this be deemed appropriate. It is intended that the existing mature boundary screening should be retained and maintained and this will assist in assimilating the new development and ensuring that the appearance of the locality is suitably respected and enhanced. The application is accompanied by an arboricultural impact assessment and recommendations for protecting existing mature trees during construction work, which will be followed. The additional landscaping and that which will be carried out by the new house occupiers themselves undoubtedly will add to the biodiversity of the application site, much of which at present is covered by regularly mown grass and has little ecological value. There would thus be a net biodiversity gain; a situation encouraged by Section15 of the NPPF – Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment.

10.5 The proposed dwelling will widen the choice of high quality houses available in the locality, and contribute to the provision of new housing in the District at a time when the Council is unable to demonstrate a robust 5 year (plus buffer) supply of deliverable housing sites in the Staffordshire Moorlands.

10.6 The development is within a sustainable village location and the proposed house will be sustainable in terms of its design, materials and high level of energy efficiency. It is not located within in an area of high flood risk and suitable arrangements are proposed for foul and surface water drainage.

10.7 From the content of this Statement it will be clear that the proposals meet the economic, environmental and social roles of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF (revised 2019) and accord with the relevant policies of the Council's adopted Core Strategy. The proposals also adequately reflect the guidance set out in the Council's relevant SPGs and the Design SPD.

10.8 The NPPF contains a strong presumption in favour of approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan.

10.9 The Framework also states that where the policies of the development plan that are most important in determining a planning application are out of date, planning permision should be granted unless the adverse impacts of doing so would "significantly and demonstrably" outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole, or the application site is located where specific protection policies in the Framework would provide a clear reason for refusal. Since neither of these circumstances exist in relation to the application now submitted, the presumption in favour of allowing the proposed development to proceed should prevail.

10.10 The Planning Authority is therefore respectfully requested to grant planning permission for the proposed development subject to the imposition of such planning conditions as may be considered "necessary, relevant to planning and to the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects" (paragraph 55 of the NPPF 2019 refers).

10.11 Should any points of clarification or the need for further information arise during the assessment of the application now submitted, they should be referred to the planning agents who will be pleased to deal with them promptly.

Geoff Allen Associates
April 2019