Planning Statement incorporating Design and Access Matters

PROPOSED ERECTION OF DWELLING AT GREENACRES, ASH BANK ROAD, WERRINGTON, STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS, ST9 0TD

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This is an outline application with details of access and siting for the erection of a detached dwelling on land at the side of Greenacres, Ash Bank Road, Werrington.

2.0 Context

2.1 The application site is the side garden of a detached bungalow and an agricultural access that is located on the South side of Ash Bank Road (the A52) within a pocket of detached and one semi-detached houses to the East of The Red Cow PH. The application represents the erection of a detached, two-storey dwelling. The site is located in a predominantly residential group of buildings outside the settlement boundary of Werrington village. The character of that residential development is one of a mix of modest and substantial semi-detached and detached late 19th and 20th Century housing. Dwellings are mainly two storeys (there is one bungalow on the South side of the A52 and bungalows opposite) and constructed mainly of brick (there is some rendering) with mainly gabled tiled roofs. They have generous front and rear gardens with low front boundary walls, many of which include substantial planting.

3.0 Planning Policy

3.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory 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.

3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in February 2019. It is the Government's clear intention that the document should be considered to be a material consideration and as such carries particular weight where development is not addressed by planning policies in the existing Development Plan.

3.3 The NPPF confirms that at the heart of the guidance is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (para 11) and that for decision making this means approving development proposals that accord with the Development Plan without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for the Staffordshire Moorlands comprises of the Local Plan submission version (Feb 2018) and the Saved Local Plan Proposals Map (Adopted 1998).

3.4 The Local Plan shows the application site to be in the North Staffordshire Green Belt. The NPPF states in para 133 that the Government attaches great importance to Green Belts and its fundamental aim of preventing urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. Para 145 sets out the exceptions where the construction of new buildings would not be regarded as inappropriate development.

3.5 The most relevant policies of the adopted Core Strategy are considered to be SS1 (Development Principles); SS1a (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development); SS2 (Future provision of Development); SS3 (Distribution of Development); SS4 (Managing the Release of Housing Land); SS6 (Development in Rural Areas); SS6a (Larger Villages Areas Strategy); Policy SS 10 (Other Rural Areas Strategy); SD1 (Sustainable Use of Resources); SD3 (Carbon saving Measures in Development); SD4 (Pollution and Flood Risk); H1 (New Housing); R2 (Rural Housing); DC3 (Landscape and Settlement Setting); T1 Development and Sustainable

Transport and T2 (Other Sustainable Transport Measures). For the sake of brevity these policies are not quoted in full but they are referred to where appropriate in the following section.

3.6 In terms of Supplementary Planning Guidance, the Space About Dwellings (September 1998 - Appendix 3 of the Local Plan) is important in the consideration of this application.

3.7 Also of particular relevance to this application is the Staffordshire Moorlands Housing Land Supply Statement (March 2018) which sets out the Local Authority's performance in respect of housing land supply and housing delivery.

4.0 Key Planning Issues

4.1 The key issues for consideration in the determination of this application are considered to be:-

- the principle of development
- impact on the character and appearance of the area
- impact on residential amenity and neighbouring land uses
- impact on highway safety

Principle of development

4.2 The application site is located in the Green Belt. At this point the boundary between the Green Belt and the settlement boundary of Cheddleton Village is in the centre of the road in front of the application site. Whilst outside Werrington village boundary, the application site is clearly very close to the services and facilities that are locally available. The Core Strategy identifies Werrington as a “Larger Village”. Policy SS6a (Larger Villages) of the Core Strategy states that in addition to the three market towns of Leek, Cheadle and Biddulph the bulk of local housing needs for the rural areas will be met within the larger villages. There is a general presumption in favour of development within settlement boundaries. The application site comprises a sustainable location for new housing that is within easy walking and cycling distance of the numerous local services, facilities and employment opportunities on offer within the village. The site fronts the A52 where public transport services offer regular links with the neighbouring towns of Leek and Cheadle and other parts of the Moorlands. There is a bus shelter in front of the application site. The proposed development will assist in delivering the Council's commitment for housing.

4.3 Paragraph 143 of the NPPF states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. At para 145 it states that the construction of new buildings is inappropriate in the Green Belt. There are, however, exceptions to this, and “limited infilling in villages” is one of these.

4.4 Policy SS 10 of the Local Plan (Other Rural Areas Strategy) explains that in the other rural areas (the countryside and the green belt outside of the development boundaries of the towns and larger villages and the open countryside surrounding the smaller villages) new housing will be restricted to where it meets housing requirements and specific needs by….”restricting new build housing development in the countryside to that which has an essential need to be located in the countryside in accordance with Policy H1” and “allowing rural exceptions housing (in accordance with Policies H1 and H3).

4.5 Policy H 1 New Housing Development supports new outside of the development boundaries for “limited infill residential development of an appropriate scale and character” provided that “the development will adjoin the boundary of a larger village and be well related to the existing pattern of development and surrounding land uses and will not “lead to a prominent intrusion into the countryside or have an adverse impact of significance to the character of the countryside” and Policy H3 relates to Affordable Housing and is therefore not relevant to this proposal.

4.6 The proposal is considered to represent limited infill. The application site has a width of about 24m and the width of the retained plot of Greenacres is about 29m. The developed plot to the East of Greenacres has a width of about 22m and the one to the West of the application site, 23m. By virtue of this being an application for one dwelling, the proposal is considered to be “limited” in nature and given these measurements, it is considered to be of an “appropriate scale and character”. The application site adjoins the settlement boundary of Werrington which is a “Larger Village”. It therefore benefits from the proximity of local services and facilities. It also relates well to the pattern of housing nearby- it follows a similar line and is in character with the scale of nearby dwellings. Whilst the proposal will be seen from the open countryside to the rear, it will be seen in conjunction with other buildings and therefore will not be intrusive. The proposal therefore meets the requirements of Policy H1 in full. In doing so, it meets the requirements of Policy SS10.

Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area and the Amenity of Neighbours
4.7 SS1a Housing Development states that "all development will be assessed according to the extent to which it provides for high quality, sustainable housing ...and the strategy for the area having regard to the location of the development, the characteristics of the site... All housing should be the most appropriate density compatible with the site and its location, with the character of the surrounding area." The specific design policies of the Core Strategy also seek to promote local distinctiveness and positively contribute to the area as is similarly reflected in the NPPF which confirms that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. It furthermore states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development; is indivisible from good planning; and should contribute positively to making places better for people. Developments should function well and establish a strong sense of place creating attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit. Proposals should also optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development and respond to local character and history including local materials and the use of good architecture and appropriate landscaping. Developments should also create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder and the fear of crime do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion. Policy DC1 states that new development should protect residential amenity in terms of satisfactory daylight, sunlight, outlook, privacy and soft landscaping.

4.7 Whilst this is an outline application, it is considered that the proposal is capable of delivering a design which would respect the character and appearance of the surrounding development and help it assimilate with the semi-rural area beyond. The proposal can meet the Council's adopted Space About Dwellings Standards in terms of its relationship with neighbouring dwellings and boundaries and in terms of the size of gardens. The application includes siting as a matter to be determined so that this is illustrated in the application. There would, therefore, be no adverse impact on neighbouring properties or future occupiers of the proposed dwelling. The proposed dwelling would benefit from a suitably sized area of private amenity space thus ensuring that future occupiers will benefit from an appropriate level of residential amenity. The proposed development would be seen as a continuation of this ribbon of development when viewed from short and longer distance views.

Highways
4.8 Paragraph 32 of the NPPF states: Plans and decisions should take account of whether the opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up depending on the nature and location of the site, to reduce the need for major transport infrastructure; safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people and improvements can be undertaken within the transport network that cost effectively limit the significant impacts of the development. Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual

cumulative impacts of development are severe is reflected in CS Policy T1 Development and Sustainable Transport.

4.9 The application proposes the use of the existing access serving 401 Cheadle Road. This would become a joint access to the existing and proposed properties. The access has good highway visibility and will provide car parking at a ratio of two spaces per dwelling. There would therefore be no significant conflict with CS Policy T1 or guidance contained in the NPPF.

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 For the reasons given above it is considered that the erection of a single dwelling on the application site would provide clear social, economic and environmental benefits in relation to the provision of new housing within an accessible and sustainable location. The proposal would also make a modest contribution to housing land supply in accordance with policy SS2 and SS3 of the Core Strategy and the Framework. Cheddleton village is a "Larger Village" and, consequently, a principal target for significant housing growth up to 2026. Moreover, the proposal would support a local service centre in accordance with Policy SS6a of the Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework which states that housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. The proposal is acceptable in relation to the character and appearance of the area, highway safety and residential amenity. In addition the economic and social benefits which the development would bring in terms of its contribution to housing land supply, new homes bonus, jobs in construction and the construction industry supply chain and spending in local shops would also attract considerable weight in favour of the proposal The proposed development therefore accords with the provisions of policies SS1, SS1a, SS2, SS3, SS6a, DC1, DC2, DC3, H1 and H2 and NE1 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy and guidance contained within the NPPF. For these reasons it is therefore considered that the proposal is capable of being supported by the Council.

6.0 Design and Access Matters

Use

The application proposes the development of the site for residential purposes. The application site is located in a predominantly residential area and reflects the nature and character of existing development which surrounds the site.

Amount

The application proposes the erection of a single dwelling.

Scale

The application proposes the erection of a two storey, three bedroom house.

Landscaping

There is tree and shrub planting on the site which is likely to be retained.

Appearance

The proposed design will deliver a traditional design using traditional materials.

Access

The proposed development would be served by the existing vehicular access point off the A520 with adequate off-road parking to the existing and proposed dwellings. The site is within easy walking and cycling distance of the centre of the village which has a wide range of services and

facilities. Public transport links are easily accessible to Leek and other parts of the Staffordshire Moorlands as well as the neighbouring city of Stoke on Trent.