PLANNING STATEMENT

Full Planning Application for the Erection of Two Agricultural Buildings

St.James' Chapel, School Lane, Longsdon, Staffordshire Moorlands

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1. INRODUCTION

1.1 The Planning Application

1.1.1 This Planning Statement supports the full planning application for the following:

"Full planning application for the erection of two agricultural buildings."

1.1.2 The statement sets out the context for the development by providing the background to the proposals including a description of the site and its surroundings and the relevant up-to-date policy framework. It then assesses the proposals against the identified policy framework and the key material considerations and sets out the case in support of development.

1.2 The Site and Surroundings

1.2.1 The site (for both agricultural units) is 0.845 hectares and is located to the north of Longsdon. The site forms part of St. James Chapel, now a residential dwelling with associated agricultural business use. It is notable that the building is not listed.

1.2.2 The site comprises an enclosed agricultural field with two outbuildings (a stable block and garage) to the east with partial hardstanding from historical agricultural uses. The proposals will include the erection of two new agricultural storage outbuildings to enable the existing business to grow.

1.3 Planning History

1.3.1 The erection of a brick stable block (approved in 2004) and the erection of a double garage (approved in 2005) are the only relevant planning applications.

2. THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that the determination of a planning application must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

2.1.2 The Local Plan was adopted on 9th September 2020, which now supersedes the former Core Strategy. It is the overarching local policy document for the district and will guide the area's development until 2033.

2.1.3 The relevant polices are addressed below.

2.2 Accordance with the Development Plan

2.2.1 The Local Plan was adopted in September 2020. It is notable that the Local Plan was adopted in accordance with the old 2019 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2019) which has now been replaced with the 2021 National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework). It is therefore important to consider whether the policies within the Local Plan are in accordance with the Framework.

2.2.2 The Framework makes clear at paragraph 219 that existing policies should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted or made prior to the publication of this Framework. Due weight should be given to them, according to their degree of consistency with this Framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).

2.2.3 The policies relevant to this application are considered below.

STRATEGIC POLICIES

2.2.4 **Strategic Policy SS9 'Smaller Villages Area Strategy'** identifies Longsdon as a smaller village. Whilst the site is on the periphery of the village, this policy is considered for completeness. The policy states that:

> ***These settlements shall provide only for appropriate development which enhances community vitality or meets a social or economic need of the settlement and its hinterland. The Council and its partners will achieve this through the following actions….***

- ***Enabling small-scale new employment development including 'live-work' developments which are for a rural enterprise or an existing authorised business use;***

- ***Supporting the diversification of existing farm enterprises***

2.2.5 The proposals are in accordance with the relevant aspects of the policy, which will provide improved capacity for an existing agricultural business.

2.2.6 Policy SS10 'Other Rural Areas Strategy' covers rural areas within the countryside and the Green Belt outside of the development boundaries of the towns and larger villages and the open countryside. It states that:

> ***These areas will provide only for development which has an essential need to be located in the countryside, supports the rural diversification and sustainability of the rural areas, promotes sustainable tourism or enhances the countryside. The Council and its partners will achieve this through the following actions:***
>
> - ***Enabling the limited expansion or development of business for employment uses where a rural location can be justified***
>
> - ***Supporting the diversification of existing farm enterprises***

2.2.7 The proposals support the diversification of existing agriculture and can only be considered a limited expansion, commensurate with the scale of the existing business. The proposal accords with this policy.

2.2.8 The policy also makes reference to the Green Belt. The site is located within the Green Belt, which is demonstrated on the Local Plan Proposals Map. The supporting text states that:

> ***The Green Belt serves a number of purposes which are derived from Government policy in the NPPF and the former Staffordshire Structure Plan. The Green Belt keeps land open and free from development over a long period, which extends beyond the plan period, in order to give assurance that its boundaries will endure. National policy on Green Belts is set out in the NPPF and will apply to the whole of the Green Belt.***

2.2.9 The proposals are tested against the Framework below.

3. THE FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The revised National Planning Policy Framework was published in July 2021 and sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. This revised Framework replaces the previous National Planning Policy Framework published in 2019.

3.1.2 The section below addresses the key policies that are relevant to the planning application.

3.2 The Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

3.2.1 Paragraph 11 is clear that decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This means:

3.2.2 For decision-taking this means:

> **" c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or**
>
> **d) 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 this 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 this Framework taken as a whole."**

3.2.3 As set out in Section 2, the proposals accord with the development plan.

3.3 The Green Belt

3.3.1 Paragraph 147 states that:

> ***' Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances'.***

3.3.2 The new agricultural buildings will not lead to any harm to the Green Belt

3.3.3 Paragraph 148 states that:

'When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations'.

3.3.4 The design of the buildings ensure that there will be no harm to the Green Belt.

3.3.5 Paragraph 144 states that:

A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:

(a) buildings for agriculture and forestry;

(b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;

(c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;

(d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;

(e) limited infilling in villages;

(f) limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); and

(g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would:

- ***not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development; or***
- ***not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to***

meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority.

3.3.6 Point (a) allows for the provision of buildings for agriculture and forestry. The proposals accord with this policy.

3.4 Design

3.4.1 Framework paragraph 126 states that the creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. 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.

3.4.2 The accompanying design drawings confirm that the design of the buildings are in keeping with the surrounding area. The proposals accord with this element of the Framework.

4. CONCLUSION AND PLANNING BALANCE

4.1.1 The proposal for a new agricultural buildings have been tested against the relevant policies of the development plan. Paragraph 11 of the Framework calls for decision takers to approve development which is consistent with the development plan without delay and to grant planning permission unless the harm of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. The proposal accords with the development plan.

4.1.2 There is no material harm associated with the proposals. This development, as proposed, constitutes ‘sustainable development’. The proposals accord with the development plan and the Framework. In accordance with planning law and policy guidance the application should be approved.