

PLANNING STATEMENT

**HAREGATE HALL
LEEK**

JANUARY 2022

Site Address:

Haregate Hall, Haregate Road, Leek, Staffordshire, ST13 6PX

Applicant:

Stone Oak Holdings Ltd.

Proposal:

Restoration and repairs to Haregate Hall, conversion and alteration of existing outbuildings to form 3no. dwellings, erection of 2no. dwellings and associated works

Planning Statement:

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Report Prepared By:

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1. Introduction

1.1 Rob Duncan Planning Consultancy Ltd. has been instructed by Stone Oak Holdings Ltd. to prepare a Planning Statement to accompany applications for planning and listed building consent for development to be undertaken at Haregate Hall, Haregate Road, Leek, with the objective of securing the full restoration and repair of the main Grade II Listed Building which is at risk of falling into the “Buildings at Risk” register.

1.2 The application encompasses the following components:

- Repairs to fabric of main Hall, including demolition of link between the hall and The Kitchen House as detailed in the Schedule of Works accompanying the application). The building is to be retained as three individual dwellings, which are known as The West Wing (Old Hall), The East Wing (New Hall) and the Kitchen Cottage.
- Conversion and alteration of existing two storey outbuilding adjacent to Osprey Close to form 2no. dwellings – referred to as West Barn 1 and West Barn 2. The barns will have a gross internal floor area of 99 square metres and 91.5 square metres respectively, and will each comprise of three bedrooms, bathroom and hallway at ground floor, with an open plan kitchen / dining / living area and w.c. at first floor. Externally it is proposed to create an area of private amenity space to the west of the buildings, enclosed by a new brick wall for privacy, with a shared courtyard in front. Parking is to be provided in a shared parking area to the southeast of the barns.
- Conversion and alteration of existing two storey outbuilding adjacent to the walled garden of the Hall to form 1no. dwelling. The dwelling will have

a gross internal floor area of 133 square metres and will comprise of an open plan lounge / kitchen / dining room, utility, entrance hall and two bedrooms served by a 'jack and jill' ensuite at ground floor with a master bedroom and ensuite at first floor. Externally it is proposed to create an area of private amenity space to the east of the buildings, with parking incorporated to the south of the building as part of a shared parking area.

- Erection of 1no. dwelling to the south of the existing outbuildings adjacent to Osprey Close. The dwelling will have a gross internal floor area of 95 square metres and will comprise of an open plan lounge / kitchen / dining room, two bedrooms, bathroom, w.c. and hallway at ground floor with a master bedroom and ensuite at first floor. Externally it is proposed to create an area of private amenity space to the east of the buildings, with parking incorporated into the shared car parking area to the east.
- Erection of 1no. dwelling to northeast of existing Hall within part of its garden area. The dwelling will have a gross internal floor area of 133 square metres and will comprise of an open plan lounge / kitchen / dining room, two bedrooms, bathroom and hallway at ground floor with a master bedroom and ensuite located at first floor. The dwelling will sit within its own area of private amenity space, with an area of car parking located to its southwest, served by a new vehicular access off Haregate Road, which will also provide access for parking for one of the existing dwellings within the Hall.
- Construction of detached garage to the rear of the Hall to provide parking for occupants of the Old Hall, served via a shared access off Osprey Close in the northwest corner of the site.

- Formation of new vehicular access off Haregate Road to serve the four dwellings comprised within the two redundant outbuildings, and the new build dwelling at the corner of Osprey Close with Haregate Road.

1.3 The application has been subject to pre-application discussions with the Local Authority. During those discussions the following key matters were raised:

- There would be some harm to significance arising from the creation of separate gardens and fragmentation of the property into separate ownerships. It was recommended that the main focus should be on keeping the Hall in single ownership and avoid fragmentation wherever possible (NB: the Hall is already subdivided into 3 flats).
- It was felt that there was potential to separate the former detached kitchen as a separate dwelling and some potential to sensitively extend.
- No objection in principle to the conversion of the barns to dwellings. The key issues will be working with the existing openings, retaining rural character and ensuring an agricultural feel to the setting of the buildings.
- The land around the Hall plays a significant role in giving the site breathing space and allowing views of the building group. Concerned that a dwelling next to the barns would impact on the setting of the Listed Building. Also concerned about the impact of the new build dwelling to the east of the site.
- Harm to significance will need to be balanced against any public benefits arising from the development. This could include sustaining and enhancing the heritage asset. However, this will be a complex argument as you will need to demonstrate that this is the minimal level of harm to preserve the

heritage asset and you will effectively be making a case for Enabling Development.

- It is disappointing that the building remains in a deteriorated state with incomplete rainwater goods, decaying joinery and lack of maintenance to stone walling. The condition of the building will have to be monitored to ensure that it does not slip back to being a Building at Risk

1.4 This Planning Statement should be read in conjunction with the following documentation that also accompanies the application:

- Heritage Statement (CTD Architects)
- Design & Access Statement (CTD Architects)
- Structural Surveys (Fairclough Consulting Engineers)
- Bat Survey Report (Anser Ecology)
- Financial Appraisal (Mounsey Surveyors)

2 Site & Surroundings

- 2.1 The application site lies within the defined settlement boundary of Leek and extends to approximately 0.44 hectares in area. The site is dominated by the Grade II Listed Haregate Hall which dates back to the 17th / 18th Century, and which has been occupied as three individual dwellings since the early 1960s. A garden and remains of an enclosing wall are located to the immediate west/southwest of the Hall, with a more extensive area of garden extending to its north and east, wrapping behind an existing terrace of four bungalows (nos.87 – 93 Haregate Road).
- 2.2 To the west of the Hall lie two brick and stone barns of two storey scale which date from the 18th / 19th century and which form a group with the house. A vacant and partially overgrown area of hardstanding is located to the south of those buildings, and which is enclosed to its west and south by Osprey Close and Haregate Road respectively. To the northwest of the Hall lie a cluster of 19no. dwellings constructed in 2015 by Ascent Housing, of which some wrap along the northern / northwestern perimeters of the site. Those dwellings are modern in appearance, two storey in scale, and have their rear elevations and rear gardens facing towards the site. A right of access exists along Osprey Close to enter the application site in its northernmost corner.
- 2.3 To the west of the site, on the opposite side of Osprey Close, lies an area of public open space beyond which extends further residential development. Residential development also lies to the southwest, south, southeast and east of the site. A triangular parcel of land in the far eastern corner of the site appears to have been erroneously allocated as part of the Thorncliffe View public open space within the adopted Local Plan. This land is not public open space, nor visual open space; not does it have any form of public accessibility. It forms part of the original established garden surrounding the Hall.

3 Planning Policy

3.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires proposals to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan taking into consideration any material considerations relevant to the determination of the application. The Development Plan for this area comprises the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan 2020 of which the following policies are considered to be of relevance:

3.2 Policy SS1 of the Local Plan relates to 'Development Principles' and states that the Council will expect the development and use of land to contribute positively to the social, economic and environmental improvement of the Staffordshire Moorlands in terms of delivering, in partnership with other agencies and services:

- a mix of types and tenures of quality, affordable homes, to meet the needs and aspirations of the existing and future communities
- quality local services, including provision for education, healthcare, leisure, community, cultural and tourist facilities in response to anticipated population change and visitor numbers;
- easy access to jobs, shops and transport services by all sections of the community;
- increased economic prosperity and opportunities for employment and greater local capacity with an educated, skilled and flexible workforce;

- a healthy, safe, attractive, active, well-designed and well-maintained environment;
- development which maintains the locally distinctive character of the Staffordshire Moorlands, its individual towns and villages and their settings;
- development that is undertaken in a way that protects and enhances the natural and historic environment of the District and its surrounding areas, including the Peak District National Park, both now and for future generations.
- support development which secures high quality, sustainable environments, efficient and effective use of resources and contributes effectively to tackling climate change and reduced carbon emissions.

3.3 Policy SS3 of the Local Plan relates to the 'Future Provision and Distribution of Development' and states that provision will be made for at least 6080 additional dwellings (net of demolitions) to be completed in Staffordshire Moorlands during the period 2014 to 2033 - an annual average of 320 homes per year. Sufficient deliverable land will be identified to provide at least 5 years of development at all times. Development will be located in accordance with the Spatial Strategy and will be distributed between the towns and villages, with Leek identified to receive 30% of the total housing allocation (equivalent to 1,824 dwellings).

3.4 Policy SS5 of the Local Plan relates to the 'Leek Area Strategy' and confirms that the Council and its partners will seek to consolidate the role of Leek as the

principal service centre and a market town and support its regeneration. This will be achieved through a number of actions, including:

- Increasing the range of available and affordable house types, including for first time buyers and older people.
- Supporting the development of new housing on sustainable sites within the Development Boundary.
- Conserving and enhancing buildings, sites and areas of heritage and cultural importance, including heritage assets, complemented by new distinctive, sensitively designed, high quality, sustainable buildings.

3.5 Policy H1 of the Local Plan relates to 'New Housing Development' and states that development should provide for a mix of housing sizes, types and tenure including a proportion of affordable housing as set out in Policy H3, and where appropriate housing for special groups, to meet the needs and aspirations of the current and future population having regard to the Area Strategies. All development will be assessed according to the extent to which it provides for high quality, sustainable housing and to which it meets identified housing needs, having regard to the location of the development, the characteristics of the site and the economics of provision. In addition:

- a) Housing for special groups, particularly for older people and others as identified in the SHMA or successor document should be of a scale and in a location which is appropriate to its needs.
- b) Housing proposals of 10 dwellings (or 0.5ha) or more will be required to provide a mix of housing in terms of size, type and tenure on the site unless viability or other circumstances exist. The final mix will be negotiated with

the developer based on housing needs as informed by the SHMA or successor document and other relevant factors such as available supply and market demand.

- c) All housing development should be at the most appropriate density compatible with the site and its location, and with the character of the surrounding area. Higher densities will generally be appropriate in locations which are more accessible by public transport and which have good access to services.
- d) All new dwellings should aim to provide flexible accommodation which is capable of future adaptation by seeking to achieve adequate internal space for the intended number of occupants in accordance with the Nationally Described Space standard and delivered to meet accessibility standards set out in the Optional Requirement M4(2) of Part M of the Building Regulations. This will be determined on a site-by-site basis subject to considerations such as viability and design.
- e) All new dwellings must be of sufficient size to provide satisfactory levels of amenity for future occupiers of the dwellings whilst respecting the privacy and amenity of occupiers of existing dwellings.

3.6 Policy H1 goes on to state that housing development on sites not allocated for such purposes in Policy H2 will be supported within the development boundaries of the towns and larger villages on unidentified (windfall) sites subject to compliance with the Spatial Strategy and wider Local Plan policies. In all cases the development will not lead to a prominent intrusion into the countryside or have a significant adverse impact on the character and appearance of the countryside.

3.7 Policy C2 of the Local Plan relates to 'Sport, Recreation and Open Space' and states that the Council will promote the provision of high quality recreational open space by implementing and supporting schemes that will protect, provide and improve the quantity, quality and accessibility of open space, indoor and outdoor sports and children's play facilities throughout the district, in accordance with the updated Open Space Study, Playing Pitch Strategy and Indoor Sports Facility Assessment (2017) and successor documents. The policy goes on to state that existing areas of open space, recreational land and buildings including school playing fields and amenity open space will be protected from development, unless:

- a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
- b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
- c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

3.8 Policy DC1 of the Local Plan relates to 'Design Considerations' and states that all development shall 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 Design Guide SPD. In particular, new development should:

- 1. be of a high quality and add value to the local area, incorporating creativity, detailing and materials appropriate to the character of the area;

2. be designed to respect the site and its surroundings and promote a positive sense of place and identity through its scale, height, density, layout, siting, landscaping, character and appearance;
3. create, where appropriate, attractive, active, functional, accessible and safe public and private environments which incorporate public spaces, green infrastructure including making provision for networks of multi-functional new and existing green space (both public and private), landscaping, public art, 'designing out crime' initiatives and the principles of Active Design;
4. incorporate sustainable construction techniques and design concepts for buildings and their layouts to reduce the impact of the development;
5. protect the amenity of the area, including creation of healthy active environments and residential amenity, in terms of satisfactory daylight, visual impact, sunlight, outlook, privacy, soft landscaping as well as noise, odour and light pollution;
6. promote the maintenance, enhancement, restoration and re-creation of biodiversity and geological heritage, where appropriate;
7. provide for safe and satisfactory access and make a contribution to meeting the parking requirement arising from necessary car use;
8. require new developments to be well integrated for car, pedestrian and cycle use as well as other sustainable transport links;

9. ensure that existing drainage, waste water and sewerage infrastructure capacity is available, and where necessary enhanced, to enable the development to proceed;
10. ensure, where appropriate, equality of access and use for all sections of the community;
11. be served by high speed broadband (>30mbps) unless it can be demonstrated through consultation with Next Generation Access Network providers that this would not be possible, practical or economically viable. In all circumstances during construction of the site sufficient and suitable ducting should be provided within the site and to the property to facilitate ease of installation at a future date.

3.9 Policy DC2 of the Local Plan relates to 'The Historic Environment' and states that:

1. The Council will conserve and where possible enhance heritage assets, including their setting in a manner appropriate to their significance. This will take into account the desirability of maintaining and enhancing their significance and will ensure that development proposals contribute positively to the character of the built and historic environment.
2. Protection will be given to designated heritage assets and their settings and non-designated heritage assets as set out in the NPPF.
3. All applications likely to affect heritage assets will require the submission of a heritage statement, including a qualitative visual assessment where appropriate.

4. Where development is likely to affect archaeology, both designated and undesignated, the Council requires the submission of a desk based assessment, and where appropriate, field surveys and trench evaluation by a qualified professional.
 5. Where the loss of significance is unavoidable, recording should take place and this should be added to the Historic Environment Record as a minimum, held by Staffordshire County Council.
 6. The Council will continue its proactive approach to heritage assets at risk and welcomes development proposals which would result in the sympathetic reuse of these assets in line with NPPF policy.
 7. The Council will promote development which sustains, respects or enhances buildings and features which contribute to the character or heritage of an area and those interests of acknowledged importance through the use of Conservation Area Appraisals, Design Guidance and Statements, Archaeological Assessments, Characterisation Studies and Masterplanning.
- 3.10 Policy T1 of the Local Plan relates to 'Development and Sustainable Transport' and states that the Council will promote and support development which reduces reliance on the private car for travel journeys, reduces the need to travel generally and accommodates residual development traffic in line with the Integrated Transport Strategy. This will be achieved by:
1. Ensuring that all new development is located where the highway network can satisfactorily accommodate traffic generated by the development or can be improved as part of the development.

2. Ensuring that major development is located in areas that are accessible by sustainable travel modes or can be made accessible as part of the proposal
3. Considering appropriate parking provision on a case by case basis with recourse to the parking guidance set out in Appendix 2.
4. Where appropriate all new development shall facilitate walking and cycling within neighbourhoods and town centres, and link with or extend identified walking or cycling routes. In addition applicants should also consider how their schemes can enhance the existing path network in line with the Staffordshire County Council Rights of Way Improvement Plan and also give consideration to the protection of non-definitive public footpath routes in addition to definitive routes.

4 Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) seeks to secure the delivery of sustainable development and sets out guidance, *inter-alia*, in respect of significantly boosting the supply of housing, securing high quality design, safeguarding heritage assets, and ensuring highway safety. The content of this document has been taken into consideration in the preparation of this application.

SMDC Design Guide SPD

- 4.2 This document sets out guidance aimed at securing good quality design and confirms that the architectural style of new development should be guided through an assessment and understanding of the character and context of the area. The content of the SPD has been taken into consideration in the preparation of this application.

Historic England Planning Note 4 – Enabling Development & Heritage Assets

- 4.3 This good practice advice sets out guidance in respect of enabling development including core principles, determining whether enabling development might be appropriate and making the case for enabling development. The content of this document has been taken into consideration in the preparation of this application.

5 Planning Assessment

Principle of Development

- 5.1 The application proposes the restoration and repair of the existing Grade II Listed Haregate Hall – retaining its use as three individual dwellings – along with the conversion of two existing outbuildings to form an additional 3no. dwellings, and the erection of 2no new build dwellings. The application is brought forward as a form of enabling development to secure the much needed restoration of the main Listed Building.
- 5.2 The application site is located within the defined settlement boundary of Leek, as confirmed within the adopted Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan 2020. Within such areas the erection of new dwellings is supported, as is the extension and alteration of existing dwellings, in accordance with the provisions of policies SS3, SS5 and H1 of the Local Plan. The principle of erecting new dwellings on this site is therefore acceptable in principle.
- 5.3 The two buildings proposed for conversion within this application are shown to be worthy in physical terms for conversion by the accompanying Structural Surveys prepared by Fairclough Consulting Engineers and are also of a style and character that renders them worthy in architectural and character terms for conversion. The principle of converting these buildings to residential use is therefore also acceptable in principle in the context of policies SS3, SS5 and H1 of the Local Plan.
- 5.4 The site furthermore constitutes a sustainable location that is within comfortable walking and cycling distance of the numerous day-to-day services and facilities on offer within the Town. The site also lies adjacent to public transport connections that connect this part of Leek with the town centre. The proposed development will consequently contribute to the delivery of

sustainable communities by delivering new dwellings in a sustainable location, with future occupiers having a choice in their means of transportation.

Enabling Development

- 5.5 Haregate Hall is a Grade II Listed Building which dates back to the 17th / 18th Century and over the course of the last 20 years has suffered a general decline in its condition, with important features gone missing. The applicant has recently acquired the Hall along with the adjacent range of outbuildings, and is looking to full restore the Hall, to help give the site greater integrity and a sustainable future.
- 5.6 Policy DC2 of the Local Plan states that the Council will conserve and where possible enhance heritage assets, including their setting in a manner appropriate to their significance. This will take into account the desirability of maintaining and enhancing their significance and will ensure that development proposals contribute positively to the character of the built and historic environment. The policy goes on to state that protection will be given to designated heritage assets and their settings and non-designated heritage assets as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 5.7 The heritage impacts of the various components of this application are discussed in detail within the accompanying Heritage Statement. The document identifies a number of elements where harm to the significance of the heritage asset may arise, in particular with regards to harm to its setting arising from the two new build dwellings. The overall conclusion reached is that the proposal will result in 'less than substantial harm' to the setting of the Listed Building.

5.8 Paragraph 201 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that:

“Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use”.

5.9 This application proposes, in essence, a form of enabling development to secure the full restoration of the Hall. Enabling development is a recognised planning mechanism which permits departure from planning policies in appropriate cases, and so enables the conservation of the relevant heritage asset whose future would otherwise be at risk.

5.10 There have been numerous attempts to try and secure the repair of the building over the course of the last 20 years or so (please see pages 11-14 of the accompanying Heritage Statement for more detail) but none have been successful, and the building has continued to decline. It is now at risk of formally being added to the ‘Buildings at Risk Register’. Enabling development is therefore considered to be the most appropriate option to secure the full restoration of this Grade II Listed Building.

5.11 The National Planning Policy Framework states in paragraph 208 that:

Local planning authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies”

5.12 The Historic England Planning Note 4 confirms that the case for enabling development rests on there being a conservation deficit, which is defined within the document as:

“The amount by which the cost of repair (and conversion to optimum viable use if appropriate) of a heritage asset exceeds its market value on completion of repair and conversion, allowing for all development costs”

5.13 The extent of repair and restoration works required to the Hall is considerable and is set out in detail within the accompanying Schedule of Works. These works have been fully costed by a Chartered Surveyor and assessed within a Financial Appraisal (submitted as a private and confidential document): Three options have been appraised:

- **Option 1** – Fabric repairs to the East and West wings of the existing hall, the kitchen cottage and the adjacent barns (as curtilage listed buildings)
- **Option 2** – As per Option 1 above plus remodelling, internal alterations, fit out, extension and associated landscaping to the Hall and outbuildings along with demolition and replacement of the existing garage
- **Option 3** – As per Options 1 and 2 above, plus erection of 2no. new build houses and associated landscaping works.

5.14 The Financial Appraisal (Option 1) serves to conclusively demonstrate that to undertake just the repair works to the Hall (Option 1) would derive a significant conservation deficit of -7.69%.

5.15 The Financial Appraisal (Option 2) demonstrates that undertaking the repair works to the Hall, along with the conversion of the existing outbuildings to form 3no. dwellings, would derive a modest profit of 11.3%. The Historic England Planning Note 4 confirms that an appropriate margin of profit for the developer should be allowed for in the calculation of the enabling development, with the Planning Practice Guidance advocating profit margins of between 15% - 20%. Option 2 is therefore not considered to amount to a fair and reasonable level of profit given the inherent risks to profit margins associated with the restoration and repair of Listed Buildings.

5.16 The Financial Appraisal (Option 3) demonstrates that undertaking the works to the Hall, converting the existing outbuildings to 3no. dwellings and erecting the two new build dwellings within the site, would derive a profit of 16.4%. This level of profit falls within the 15-20% profit margins advocated within the Planning Practice Guidance and is considered by the developer to represent a fair and reasonable return on the investment he will be making into this site. In consideration of this matter, the Financial Appraisal comments that:

“There is a fine balance between cost and return and the viability of the development. Inflationary costs and increased interest rates could add greater risk to this development. The sensitivity analysis has identified an increase in costs and a reduction (or even static position) in house prices would bring the profitability of this scheme close to or below the return that we would consider to be viable”.

5.17 The overall conclusion reached within the Financial Appraisal is that without any supporting / enabling development, the restoration of the heritage asset would be unviable. It goes on to state that Option 3 supports the development and refurbishment of the listed asset whilst providing the developer with an

opportunity to give a commercially viable return, noting that Option 3 is the most viable in what is a marginal scheme in all outcomes.

- 5.18 The applicant is agreeable to entering into a legal obligation to ensure that the sums of money generated by the enabling development are utilised to secure the restoration of the Grade II Listed Building, in accordance with the submitted Schedule of Works. As part of the S106 Obligation it is also proposed to secure a Delivery Plan and a Conservation Management Plan for the buildings to ensure the delivery of the development.

Other Heritage Considerations

- 5.19 During pre-application discussions concerns were raised by the Conservation Officer about the prospect of converting the existing Hall from one dwelling into three dwellings, and the associated fragmentation of the site that would ensue. However, those concerns stemmed from a mistaken understanding of the history of the site. Whilst planning and listed building consent has previously been granted to convert the building into one dwelling (SMD/2014/0154 and SMD/2014/178) those consents have not been implemented, and the building remains in use as three separate dwellings. The submitted proposal will not change the status quo.
- 5.20 Concern was also raised about the subdivision of the garden to provide separate curtilages, but it is notable that the site already exhibits subdivision of this nature. The submitted proposal will replace the existing poor quality boundary treatments in situ with better quality treatments, and whilst the extent of the individual gardens to serve the three dwellings in the hall will change in terms of their size, these works will not have any greater material harm to the setting of the Listed Building than that which already occurs.

5.21 Some additional subdivision is nevertheless proposed to create a garden area for the new dwelling to the east of the Hall, but any harm arising from this would be limited, and is clearly outweighed by the wider need to ensure that the Grade II Listed Hall is appropriately restored and repaired having suffered years of neglect. There has already been harm caused to the setting of the Listed Building in this location from the incursion of the existing row of bungalows that abut up to the southern boundary of the site. The Hall will continue to benefit from a large garden reflecting its historic status, with the new modest dwelling tucked away in a discreet position to the rear of the existing bungalows.

5.22 Our overall conclusion is that the submitted thoughtfully and carefully considered proposal constitutes the minimum intervention necessary to secure the full repair and restoration of the Grade II Listed Building and that such benefits outweigh the less than substantial harm to the significance of the heritage asset that will ensue as a consequence of the development.

Design & Layout

5.23 The alterations to the main Listed Building are sympathetic to its architectural and historic significance and works positively with its existing features. The application takes the opportunity to remove a latter link between the Hall and the Kitchen Cottage at the rear, which will serve to reveal the rear elevation of the building and provide some breathing space around it. A modest, contemporary, single storey extension is proposed off the northern elevation of the Hall to provide a kitchen / dining area, and this has deliberately adopted a contemporary style of design so that it reads as an obvious latter addition to the Listed Building, rather than trying to adopt a more pastiche style of design.

5.24 A modest two storey extension is also proposed off the northern elevation off the Kitchen Cottage. The extension is subservient to the cottage, and like the

extension to the Hall, will have a contemporary design so that it is clearly distinguished as a latter addition. The original form of the cottage is otherwise preserved with the proposal making beneficial reuse of existing openings.

- 5.25 The conversion of the existing outbuildings to dwellings also adopts a sympathetic design approach, making beneficial use of existing openings and avoiding the need for new openings other than rooflights. Some contemporary elements are proposed to the south elevation of West Barn 2 and to the west elevation of the East Barn in the interests of enhancing their design and providing additional light, whilst safeguarding the privacy of their occupants.
- 5.26 The proposed new dwelling to the south of the outbuildings will complement the adjacent barns and has been designed that its two storey form is located adjacent to the existing two storey barns, with a single storey wrap around extension. The objective here has been to minimise the visual impact of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area, and to maintain a vista towards the main Hall when travelling along Haregate Road. Specific concerns were raised about this impact during pre-application discussions, which showed a full two storey dwelling in that location. The bespoke design advocated here strikes an appropriate balance between the need to provide sufficient development to fund the repair and restoration works, and the desire to protect the vista towards the Listed Building along Haregate Road.
- 5.27 The dwelling located to the rear of the existing bungalows on Haregate Road encompasses a single storey form with part two storey section and has been sited in a discreet position where it will not have a material adverse impact on views along Haregate Road. The dwelling encompasses a contemporary form of development which has been very deliberate in order that the development

has a clear visual distinction and contrast to the main Listed Building, and to limit its impact on views from the East Wing of the Hall. The proposal responds to the pre-application advice by creating a predominantly single storey building in this location, with the two storey element located furthest from the listed building.

- 5.28 Having regard to the considerations set out above it is concluded that the proposed development is of an appropriate scale, appearance and layout and will not materially detract from the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The proposed development is therefore in accordance with the provisions of policies SS1 and DC1 of the Local Plan in this regard.

Residential Amenity

- 5.29 The existing hall is already in use as three separate dwellings, and the status quo will not be changed by this proposal. Careful consideration has nevertheless been given to ensuring that the new development taking place elsewhere within the wider site will not have an adverse impact on the amenity of the existing dwellings within the Hall, or on the amenity of other existing neighbouring occupiers. The design and layout have also been carefully considered to ensure that future occupiers of the new dwellings will benefit from an acceptable level of residential amenity.
- 5.30 The alterations and restoration work to the Grade II Listed Hall will not give rise to any material residential amenity concerns over and above that which already exists, as the internal layout of the main part of the Hall will remain unaltered. The proposed demolition of the link to the Kitchen Cottage at the rear will serve to separate that dwelling from the main Hall, and in doing so will serve to improve the outlook and light received by the north facing windows of the Hall. There will be no consequential harm to residential amenity. Each of the dwellings will continue to benefit from its own area of

amenity space, with existing poor quality boundary treatments replaced where necessary to enhance the appearance of the site.

5.31 The internal layout of the outbuildings has taken into account the fact that the east and west barns lie in relatively close proximity to one another. The two dwellings in the West Barn are upside down houses, with their sleeping accommodation at ground floor, and their main living accommodation at first floor so as to minimise the impact on the historic roof trusses as well as the privacy of the inhabitants. The East Barn has a more traditional arrangement, but with two of its three bedrooms incorporated at ground floor owing to the part single storey nature of the building. The internal layouts have been designed to minimise the number of principal windows facing towards one another, so as to optimise the privacy of each unit. The provision of rooflights into the eastern roof slopes of the two barns will nevertheless serve to flood the accommodation with natural daylight, thereby minimising reliance upon artificial sources of light.

5.32 To the west of the West Barn, it is proposed to create areas of private amenity space enclosed by a new brick wall that extends to 51 square metres and 35 square metres respectively. These areas of amenity space are acknowledged to fall below the standards recommended within the Space about Dwelling Standards but are the best that can be realistically achieved with the constraints of the site as they are. The internal courtyard in between the East and West Barns is nevertheless to be subdivided by metal estate-style fencing with a simple treatment of pathways and landscaping to provide some additional areas of amenity space to serve those dwellings and to provide pedestrian access to the shared parking area to the south. The East Barn is to be served by an area of amenity space to its northeast which meets the standards set out within the informal Space about Dwellings Standards.

5.33 The new dwelling to the south of West Barn is sited such that it will not cause a loss of amenity to any existing neighbouring occupiers and will likewise not impact on the amenity of the occupiers of the dwellings formed in the East and West Barns. The dwelling will be served by an area of amenity space to its east / north that exceeds the standards set out within the informal Space About Dwellings Standards.

5.34 The detached single storey dwelling located to the rear of nos. 87 – 93 Haregate Road will be a single aspect unit, with all of its windows facing in a northerly direction, such that it will have no windows facing towards the rear elevations of those neighbouring bungalows. The dwelling will be sited some 11 metres distant from the rear elevation of the neighbouring bungalows, in accordance with the Local Authority's informal Space about Dwellings Standards and will not give rise to any material harm to neighbouring residential amenity. The dwelling will sit centrally within its own substantial area of amenity space, but as this land is already used as garden associated with the three dwellings in the Hall, no material adverse harm to residential amenity will arise as a consequence over and above that which already exists.

5.35 In terms of amenity provision for future occupants, it is confirmed that the new dwellings will each meets or exceeds the minimum standards set out within the DCLG Technical Housing Standards, as required by policy H1 of the Local Plan. The internal floor space of each unit is set out below with the required standard shown in brackets:

- West Barn 1 (3 bed / 4 person dwelling) = 99m² (84m²)
- West Barn 2 (3 bed / 4 person dwelling) = 91.5m² (84m²)
- East Barn (3 bed / 5 person dwelling) = 133m² (93m²)
- New Dwelling 1 (3 bed / 5 person dwelling) = 95m² (93m²)

- New House 2 (3 bed / 5 person dwelling) = 133m² (93m²)

5.36 Having regard to the considerations set out above it is concluded that the proposed development will not give rise to any material harm to the amenity of existing neighbouring occupiers and will provide a satisfactory level of residential amenity to meet the needs of future occupiers of the dwellings. The proposed development therefore accords with the provisions of policies DC1, SS1 and H1 of the Local Plan in this regard.

Highway Safety

5.37 The application site benefits from an existing vehicular access off Osprey Close which serves the existing outbuildings, and a gated access immediately to the south of the main Hall onto Haregate Road. There is also a separate pedestrian access onto Haregate Road which enters into the walled courtyard in front of the Hall. A right of access also exists at the rear of the site to gain access to the rear of the Hall via Osprey Close, which serves an existing garage / parking area.

5.38 As part of the re-development of the site it is proposed to revise the site access and parking arrangements. The three dwellings within the Hall will be provided with their own dedicated parking areas for two vehicles, with two of those dwellings being served via the right of access off Osprey Close, and the other served by a new vehicular access to be created at the southeastern end of the site off Haregate Road, which will also serve the new dwelling to the rear of the bungalows at nos. 87-93 Haregate Road. The dwellings to be formed via the conversion of the two existing outbuildings and the other new build dwelling are to be served by a new access directly south of those buildings onto Haregate Road, with a shared parking area for 6 vehicles to be provided.

- 5.39 The two new access points will each benefit from good visibility in both directions on egress from the site, and sufficient parking is to be provided for each plot to meet the adopted Parking Standards set out within the Local Plan which require the provision of two parking spaces for a three bedroomed dwelling. The proposed development consequently accords with the provisions of policy T1 of the Local Plan and paragraphs 110 and 111 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Loss of Open Space

- 5.40 The Local Authority's mapping database shows a part of the application of the application site to form part of the Thorncliffe View Amenity Greenspace. We submit that this is a mapping error as the parcel of land concerned is evidently physically and functionally separate from the remainder of the open space which extends eastwards away from the site, with the application site being enclosed by existing boundary treatments and some mature trees. There is furthermore no public accessibility to this particular parcel of land which forms part of the existing garden to the Hall. The above assertions are supported by historic and modern map evidence.
- 5.41 Policy C2 of the Local Plan states that existing areas of open space, recreational land and buildings including school playing fields and amenity open space will be protected from development, unless an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements.
- 5.42 Thorncliffe View is defined as amenity greenspace within the Local Authority's Open Space Study and is confirmed within that same document to serve an important function in terms of **access** (along with the nearby Haregate Recreation Ground and two other areas of open space). Without those open spaces there would be gaps in provision of publicly accessible open space.

- 5.43 The same study goes on to confirm that Leek has a surplus of amenity space provision in the order of 1 hectare per 1000 population, which exceeds the recommended quantity standard of 0.6 hectares per 1000 population. There is consequently a surplus of amenity greenspace within the Town and as such the submitted proposal does not derive any conflict with the provisions of policy C2 of the Local Plan.

6 Conclusion

6.1 It is considered that the proposed development is acceptable in planning terms having regard to the following conclusions:

- The principle of residential development is acceptable as the site occupies a sustainable location within the defined settlement boundary of Leek.
- The proposal amounts to an appropriate form of enabling development that will secure the full repair and restoration of the existing Grade II Listed Building and associated outbuildings
- The proposed scale, massing, design and layout of the development will be in keeping with the character and appearance of the area and will provide a satisfactory level of residential amenity for future occupants of the dwellings.
- The proposed development will not detract from the amenity of neighbouring residential occupiers.
- The proposed dwellings will benefit from an appropriate means of vehicular access and adequate off-street parking provision.

6.2 For these reasons the proposed development is in accordance with the requirements of policies SS1, SS3, SS5, H1, C2, DC1, DC2 and T1 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (2020), as well as the relevant provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework and SMDC Design Guide SPD.