



Planning, Design & Access Statement
5th August 2022

Client: Mr & Mrs Kavanagh
Project: P296 – 35 Hot Lane, Biddulph Moor, Staffordshire, ST8 7HP
CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

2 SITE & CONTEXT

- a) Location
- b) Site Characteristics
- c) Planning History
- d) Character of the Surrounding Area
- e) Access Generally, Movement & Local Facilities
- f) Site Access

3 PLANNING POLICY REVIEW

4 DESIGN PARAMETERS

- a) Amount
- b) Layout
- c) Scale
- d) Appearance
- e) Landscape

5 SUSTAINABILITY SUMMARY

- a) Building Fabric
- b) Orientation
- c) Accessibility
- d) Drainage Principles

6 CONCLUSION

1 INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

This planning, design and access statement has been prepared by Epoch Architecture Ltd to support a full planning application for the conversion of building under the ownership of the applicants that own and reside at 35 Hot Lane, Biddulph Moor, Staffordshire, ST8 7HP.

The full planning application is for the following form of development:

“Conversion of existing attached pool room (C3 Use Class) to holiday accommodation (C3 Use Class) and new parking area for guests.”

The purpose of this statement is to inform and support the proposals within the application, ensuring that the design is considerate of the site, its context and history, whilst providing an inclusive environment wherever possible.

The statement has been prepared to present the following information;

- Site Location and Analysis
- History and Character of the Site
- The Design Principles behind the Proposals
- The Positive Impact that the Proposals will have on the Surroundings
- Scale, Massing, Density and Orientation of the Development

2 SITE AND CONTEXT

a) Location

The site is located in Biddulph Moor however it is located outside of the development boundary and around 0.2km from it at the nearest point. The site is around 0.6km North-East of the village of Biddulph Moor, 2.4km East of the town of Biddulph, 7km South-East of Congleton and 7km North-West of Leek. The nearest junction of the M6 can be found at Radway Green - around 18km away.

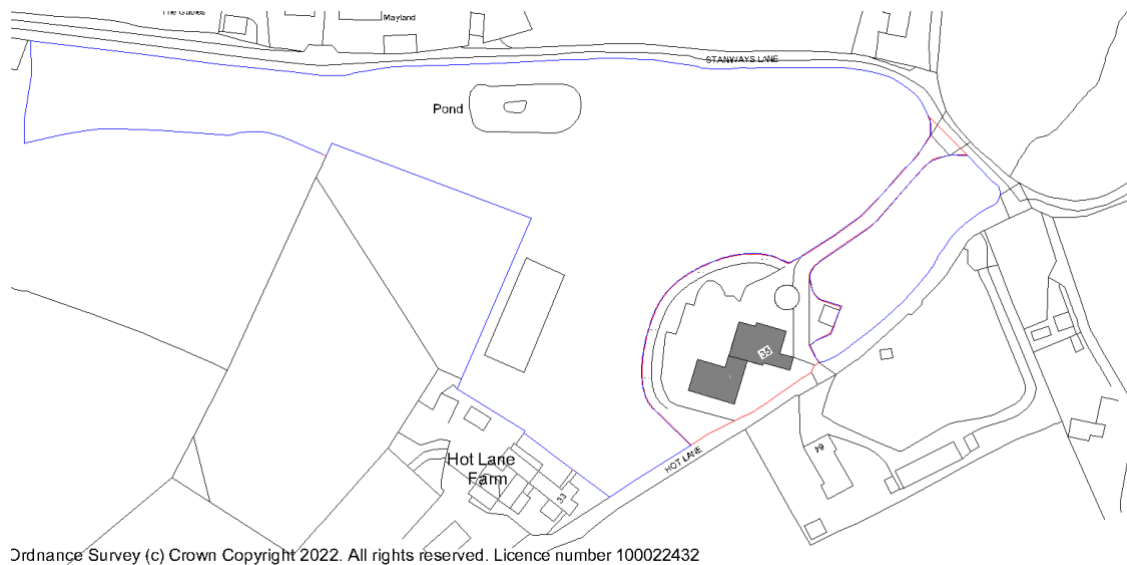


Image 1 – Location Plan

b) Site Characteristics

The application site consists a portion of land containing a single residential dwelling with detached garage. The property is of natural stone construction with a pitched tiled roof over. The property is part two-storey and part single storey with room in the roof accommodation. The application site area is 3000sqm (red edge) with a total site area of 21,170 sqm or 5.2 acres in size (red and blue areas combined). Attached to the main dwelling is an ancillary pool room with w.c. and solarium. The proposals within this application are focused within the ancillary building.



Image 2 – Main dwelling as viewed from Stanways Lane access point

The site has two entrance points, one off Hot Lane and a second primary access point off Stanways Lane. To the South-West along Hot Lane is Biddulph Moor Village. In all other directions is open green belt land with farm house dwellings sporadically positioned across the landscape. The site is bound by mature hedgerows and timber post and rail agricultural fencing to both Hot Lane & Stanways Lane.



Image 3 – Open farm land & animal shelters looking North-West from application site.



Image 4 – Front elevation of building to Hot Lane.



Image 5 – Rear elevation Facing North-West.

c) Planning History

We have conducted a review of Staffordshire Moorlands on-line planning history records for 35 Hot Lane and note that there are two historical planning approvals at the site. Namely:

- SMD/1987/0902 – Extension to form swimming pool. Approved on 3rd September 1987
- SMD/1986/0193 - Extension to form games room, lounge, dining room, kitchen, hall and porch with three bedrooms on first floor. Approved on 25th November 1986

This planning application proposes to re-use the building constructed as part of the swimming pool planning consent.

d) Character of the Surrounding Area

The site is located 200m outside of the settlement boundary of Biddulph Moor which is defined as a large village. Biddulph Moor is made up of a mixture of dwellings and small business's/facilities. A considerable amount of the local buildings are constructed of locally sourced stone with pitched tiled roof similar to the host dwelling and dating back to the mid-1800's.



Image 6 – Biddulph Moor Village

e) Access Generally, Movement Local Facilities

The site is accessed directly off Stanways Lane which is an un-classified road. Access is good and provides excellent links to nearby classified road linking to the wider Staffordshire Moorlands and Cheshire. A number of nearby local facilities means the proposal will provide economic benefit to the following;

- Biddulph Moor Post Office & Shop (0.6km)
- The Beauty Retreat Salon (0.6km)
- Butterlands Equestrian Centre (1km)
- Biddulph Grange Gardens National Trust Property (1.3km)
- The Fox Hound Public House (<0.1km)
- The Rose & Crown Public House (0.6km)
- The Talbot Public House (3.8km)
- Biddulph Valley Leisure Centre (3.5km)
- The Shippon Tea Rooms (2.2km)
- Alton Towers Theme Park (29km)

f) Site Access

The proposal will utilise the existing access off Stanways Lane. It is proposed to create new parking area alongside the existing property to accommodate 4 vehicles for guests. Further details can be found on the proposed site/block plan that accompanies this application.

3 PLANNING POLICY REVIEW

Paragraph 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) identifies that decisions on planning applications *“must be made in accordance with the [development] plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.”*

The ‘Development Plan’ for Staffordshire Moorlands is the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan adopted in September 2020.

We have enclosed a Local Plan Proposals Map Extract below that illustrates that the site is located only a short distance north west of Biddulph Moor’s settlement boundary and lies within the Green Belt.

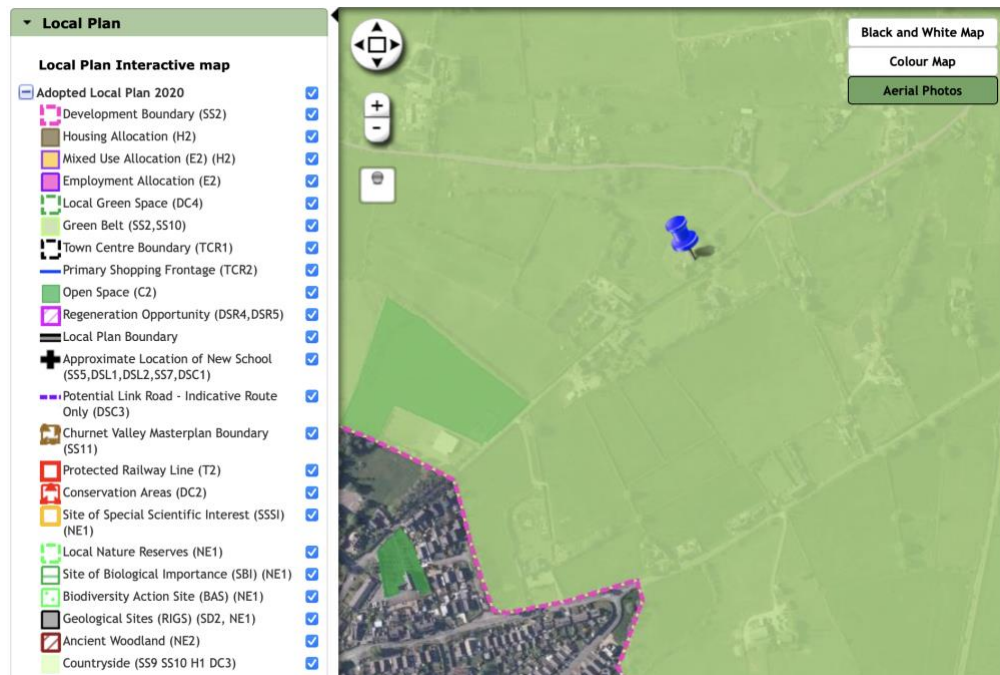


Image 7 – Local Plan Proposals Map Extract

The National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021) is also a strong material consideration in this instance given that it is the most up-to-date Government guidance on planning policy and post-dates the adoption of the Local Plan.

National Planning Policy

Paragraph 38 of the NPPF identifies that:

“Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way...Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.”

Paragraph 81 of the NPPF identifies that:

“Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken

should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future.”

Paragraph 84 outlines the Government's planning policy aims for supporting a prosperous rural economy and identifies that:

“Planning policies and decisions should enable:

*a) **the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings** and well-designed new buildings;*

b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;

*c) **sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside;** and*

d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.”

(Note: Bolded text is our emphasis)

Paragraph 85 of the NPPF recognises that:

“Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable.”

Paragraph 130 of the NPPF identifies that:

“Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.”

Paragraph 145 of the NPPF is of particular relevance the proposed holiday accommodation. This clarifies that:

*“**Once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance their beneficial use, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation;** to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land.”*

(Note: Bolded text is our emphasis)

Paragraph 149 of the NPPF is also of particular relevance to the proposals. This clarifies that:

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

Paragraph 150 of the NPPF also further clarifies that:

*"Certain other forms of development are also not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These are...d) **the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction.**"*

Local Planning Policy

The Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (September 2020) is consistent with the NPPF in supporting sustainable tourism facilities in rural Countryside and Green Belt locations.

Policy SS 2 and SS 8 clarify that Biddulph Moor is clarified as a 'Rural Area Larger Village.' Policy SS2 clarifies that these Larger Villages are the most sustainable settlements in the rural areas which generally have a good local social infrastructure, some local employment opportunities and good accessibility to the towns and larger centres, with these villages having an important role in terms of serving and supporting their immediate surrounding rural areas and smaller villages.

Policy SS 8 clarifies that new development should reflect and enhance each village's special character and heritage by reusing and regenerating of existing redundant, underused or surplus sites and premises for new development.

Policy SS 10 clarifies that in rural areas comprising of the countryside and the green belt outside of the development boundaries of the towns and larger villages, 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."*

Policy SS 10 clarifies that the Council will enhance tourism opportunities by enhance tourist opportunities by *"Allowing for small-scale tourism developments in other areas (in accordance with policy E 4)"* and within the Green Belt will allow for exceptions as defined by Government policy - i.e. in accordance with Paragraphs 149 and 150 of the NPPF, as highlighted above.

Policy E 4 clarifies that in relation to 'Tourism and Cultural Development', new tourism and cultural development which complements the distinctive character and quality of the District will be supported having regard to Policy SS 10 and developed in locations that offer, or are capable of offering *"good connectivity with other tourist destinations and amenities, particularly by public transport, walking and cycling; or in locations in or close to settlements where local services, facilities and public transport are available."*

Policy E 4 clarifies that:

"New accommodation, attractions and facilities should; A) support the provision and expansion of tourist, visitor and cultural facilities in the rural areas where needs are not met by existing facilities; and B) all development shall be of an appropriate quality, scale and character compatible with the local area, protect the residential amenity of the area, enhance the heritage, landscape and biodiversity of the area and shall not harm interests of acknowledged importance."

Analysis of Planning Policy

Paragraphs 218 and 219 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) clarify that in instances where the Local Plan pre-dates the NPPF (July 2021), due weight should be given to the Local Plan policies depending on their degree of consistency with the NPPF in decision making on planning applications.

The above review of the NPPF planning policy clarifies that the Government's aims for supporting a prosperous rural economy and identifies that planning policies and decisions should enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings.

With regards to development in Green Belt locations, Paragraphs 149 and 150 of the NPPF are clear that the Council's should be supportive towards *"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"* and should allow for *"the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction."*

The Existing Floor Plan (Drawing No. P296-200) and Existing Elevations (Drawing No. P296-200) illustrate that the existing building is of permanent and substantial construction and accommodates a Pool Room that is in continuing use but are surplus to the Applicant's day-to-day requirements. The pool is expensive to heat and is an unsustainable form of development both in terms of its impact upon the environment and increasing energy costs.

The Proposed Floor Plan (Drawing No. P296-203) and Proposed Elevation Plans (Drawing No. P296-204 & 205) illustrate that the proposed conversion of the dwelling into 2 holiday let properties will utilise the existing building without the need for any additional built form, thus preserving the openness of the Green Belt in this location.

Paragraph 149 of the NPPF is clear that local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt and should look for opportunities to provide access to Green Belts and opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation. The provision of two small scale holiday let units in the manner proposed achieves these planning policy objectives.

Policies SS 2, SS 8 and SS 10 of the Local Plan are consistent with national planning policy in supporting the provision of new small-scale tourism development in accordance with Paragraphs 149 and 150 of the NPPF that have good connectivity with other tourist destinations and amenities in locations in or close to settlements where local services, facilities and public transport are available.

Section 2.0 of this Statement clarifies that the application site is located in Biddulph Moor, a Rural Area Larger Village, and is approximately 200 metres from the development boundary. The review of nearby facilities clarifies that there is a wide range of tourism facilities and local services within easy reach, that will benefit from spend from tourists and visitors utilising the proposed small-scale accommodation.

Policy E 4 reinforces the Council's for the provision of new tourism and visitor accommodation in rural areas but identifies that the accommodation should be of an appropriate quality, scale and character compatible with the local area, protect the residential amenity of the area, enhance the heritage, landscape and biodiversity of the area and shall not harm interests of acknowledged importance.

The Proposed Site Plan (Drawing No. P296-207) illustrates that the location of 35 Hot Lane and the proposed access and parking areas are positioned appropriate distances away from the nearest residence to the south and the pool building is appropriately screened from third party views. The proposals will result in very minor external alterations that will not have a discernible and/or quantifiable impact upon the heritage, landscape and biodiversity or interests of acknowledged importance, with the benefits of the new tourism accommodation clearly outweighing any perceived harm.

In conclusion, the above review of the adopted Development Plan and National Planning Policy clarifies that there is both National and Local planning policy support for the proposed conversion of the pool room. The provision of the new tourism accommodation represents a more sustainable form of development than the existing use; the small-scale holiday lets will provide an enhanced tourism offer in a sustainable location that can be accommodated without impacting upon the amenities of the area; and will provide an improved building design that will not have a discernible impact upon residential amenities and/or the landscape given the site context.

4 DESIGN PARAMETERS

(a) Amount

The scheme within this application proposes the conversion of an existing ancillary building attached to the main dwelling into two holiday cottages. The building has an internal floor area of 137sqm – providing an adequate floor area for sub-division into two 2 bedroom units accommodating 3-4 persons per unit. Individual room sizes comply with the technical housing standards – nationally described space standards.

(b) Layout

The proposed accommodation is located within the footprint of the existing building. No additional openings have been provided however it is proposed to reduce the cill height of three of the existing floor – ceiling openings to improve privacy for guests. It is proposed to extend the existing raised patio area to enable guests to enjoy the outdoor space when visiting. An additional 25sqm of patio area is proposed to the elevation facing North-West. Further details of this can be found on the drawings that form this application.

(c) Scale

The proposals within this application fully detail the scale of the proposals, however as advised previously the accommodation is contained within the existing building volume.

(d) Appearance

The appearance of the proposed building shall remain largely as existing. Three of the existing full-height openings are proposed to be built up to conventional window cill height. Areas of new masonry are proposed to be clad with a horizontal timber cladding board left to naturally weather and harmonise with the adjacent weathered stonework.

(e) Landscaping

It is proposed to create a new access to the new parking area for guests. It is proposed to lay Core Landscape Products grass reinforcement grid to the extent shown on the enclosed site/block plan. An extension to the existing patio area outside the rear of the building to provide an outdoor patio area for guests.

5 SUSTAINABILITY SUMMARY

(a) Building Fabric

The building fabric shall be upgraded as required to meet the updated standards of Approved Document L 2022.

(b) Orientation

The orientation of the building lends itself well to the benefits of providing solar photovoltaic panels. The applicant is awaiting the installation of a solar PV array to the South-West facing roof slope to provide a low carbon, sustainable form of energy production. The electricity generated shall be used to power the holiday lets and the main dwelling.

(c) Accessibility

The properties will be accessible to those with mobility issues and be compliant with Building Regulations Approved Document M4(1) as a minimum. Unit 2 provides ramped access for wheelchair users and the proposed parking area adjacent the building shall provide a good level point to negotiate the unit entrance from. All accommodation within the unit shall be suited for wheelchair users and those who may have other impairments. This is a facility that we believe no other local accommodation provides.

(d) Drainage Principles

All new foul drainage shall connect into the mains drainage run which discharges into the mains in Hot Lane.

Surface water shall discharge into the existing surface water drains which we understand run to soakaways on site. There shall be no greater surface run-off created by the proposal than the existing.

6 CONCLUSION

6.1 The proposals within this design and access statement and the planning application as a whole present a well thought through scheme.

6.2 From a design perspective the proposals do not greatly affect the existing appearance of the building. New windows and doors are proposed to the building however these will be sympathetic to the existing dwelling in proportions and appearance however will offer greater thermal efficiency. Small areas of timber cladding are proposed below three of the new windows to lift the cill heights. Timber cladding can be found in the immediate setting on agricultural buildings and is therefore sympathetic.

6.3 The separation of the proposed building and surrounding properties is in accordance with the local authority's requirements. The site is well accessed by car and bicycle and is well linked to local recreational activities such as walking routes, cycling routes, fishing and shooting.

6.4. The building provides an inclusive environment for guests of all physical abilities, allowing them to enjoy a holiday/ break within close proximity to attractions of Staffordshire and Cheshire and the surrounding counties. The proposed conversion offers tourism, economic, social and environmental improvements that are intended to complement the area.

Accordingly, we urge the Planning Authority to approve the development in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development outlined in both the Local and National Planning Policy.