

# **PLANNING STATEMENT**

**PROSPECT HOUSE  
CHEDDLETON**

**AUGUST 2022**

**Site Address:**

Prospect House, 334 Cheadle Road, Cheddleton, ST13 7BW

**Applicant:**

Mr. R. Griffiths

**Proposal:**

Proposed change of use from bed & breakfast to a dwellinghouse

**Planning Statement:**

**Date Issued:** 15<sup>th</sup> August 2022

**Job Reference:** RDP/2022/131

**Report Prepared By:**

Rob Duncan BSc(Hons) MA MRTPI

Rob Duncan Planning Consultancy Ltd

**Contact Details:**

Rob Duncan Planning Consultancy Ltd.

70 Ferndale Road, Lichfield, Staffordshire, WS13 7DL

Email: rob78duncan@gmail.com

Tel. 07779 783521

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Rob Duncan Planning Consultancy Ltd. has been instructed by Mr. R. Griffiths to seek planning permission for the change of use of an existing outbuilding at Prospect House, 334 Cheadle Road, Cheddleton from its lawful use as a bed and breakfast, to a dwellinghouse.
- 1.2 The existing bed and breakfast business was first granted under application SM/77.86 and ceased trading in December 2018. The building has lain vacant since then but remains its lawful use. The applicant proposes the change of use of the building to a dwellinghouse whose accommodation will comprise of a living room, kitchen, utility, hallway and bathroom at ground floor, with two ensuite bedrooms at first floor. The resultant dwellinghouse will have a gross internal floor area of 103 square metres.
- 1.3 To facilitate the proposed change of use it is proposed to demolish a poor quality lean-to structure on the northern elevation of the building and insert a new opening to serve the bathroom and a doorway to access the hallway. An enlarged porch is also proposed along with the insertion of a further new opening in the southern elevation to serve the bathroom. In the southern gable end of the building it is proposed to insert double doors at ground floor level to serve the living room, with a new obscure glazed window to be provided in the eastern elevation to replace an existing clear glazed door / window.
- 1.4 The building benefits from an area of existing parking to its north, which provides a total of 5 parking spaces to serve the existing dwelling and the proposed dwelling, with vehicular access to the site being taken via a shared access from the Cheadle Road.

## **2. Site & Surroundings**

- 2.1 The application site lies on the western side of the Cheadle Road and comprises a part two storey, part single storey stone and tile outbuilding whose lawful use is that of a bed and breakfast facility. The site is located within the North Staffordshire Green Belt and lies adjacent to the defined settlement boundary of Cheddleton, which is classified as a 'larger village' within the adopted Local Plan.
- 2.2 The building lies to the west of the applicant's existing two storey dwellinghouse, with a small courtyard located in between. To the south of the site lies the domestic curtilage of no.340 Cheadle Road, which also wraps around the western boundary of the site. Planning permission is currently being sought for the erection of a detached dwelling on land to the west of the site (LPA Reference: SMD/2022/0391).
- 2.3 Vehicular access to the site is taken via a shared driveway off the Cheadle Road located in the northeast corner of the site. The site occupies a sustainable location that is within easy walking and cycling distance of day-to-day services and facilities on offer within the village. Public transport connections to the wider area are also available nearby on the Cheadle Road.

### **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 relevant to the determination of the application:

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. The policy goes on to confirm that 25% of the total housing requirement will be delivered within the rural areas.

3.4 Policy SS10 of the Local Plan relates to the 'Other Rural Areas Strategy' and confirms that the other rural areas comprise 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. The policy goes on to state 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. This will be achieved via a number of actions, including:

- Allowing the conversion or replacement of an existing rural building in accordance with policy H1.

- Giving priority to the need to protect the quality and character of the area and requiring all development proposals to respect and respond sensitively to the distinctive qualities of the surrounding landscape
- Limiting uses which generate a substantial number of regular trips in areas that are not well served by public transport
- Maintain the Green Belt within the Staffordshire Moorlands. Strict control will continue to be exercised over inappropriate development within the Green Belt allowing only for exceptions as defined by Government policy.

3.5 Policy H1 of the Local Plan relates to 'New Housing Development' and states that, amongst other requirements:

- New housing 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.
- 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.

- 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.
- 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.
- 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 subject to compliance with the Spatial Strategy and wider Local Plan policies.

3.6 Policy H1 goes on to state that in the other rural areas in the open countryside, only the following forms of housing development will be permitted:

- a) Affordable housing which cannot be met elsewhere, in accordance with Policy H3
- b) A new dwelling that meets an essential local need, such as accommodation for an agricultural, forestry or other rural enterprise worker, where the need for such accommodation has been satisfactorily demonstrated and that need cannot be met elsewhere.



- c) Proposals for replacement dwellings, provided they do not have a significantly greater detrimental impact on the existing character of the rural area than the original dwelling or result in the loss of a building which is intrinsic to the character of the area.
- d) The conversion of rural buildings for residential use where the building is suitable and worthy in physical, architectural and character terms for conversion; or where such development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets.
- e) Proposals to redevelop previously developed land provided it is not of high environmental value.
- f) The subdivision of an existing residential dwelling provided it is not in an isolated location.

3.7 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 (amongst other requirements):

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

- 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
- provide for safe and satisfactory access and make a contribution to meeting the parking requirement arising from necessary car use

3.8 Policy NE1 of the Local Plan relates to ‘Biodiversity and Geological Resources’ and states that the biodiversity and geological resources of the District will be conserved and enhanced by position management and strict control of development including:

- Expecting all development where possible seeks to deliver a net gain in biodiversity proportionate to the size and scale of the development. In circumstances where adverse impacts are demonstrated to be unavoidable, developers will be required to ensure that impacts are appropriately mitigated, with suitable compensation measures towards loss of habitat used only as a last resort where there is no alternative. Where any mitigation and compensation measures are required, they should be appropriately scheduled and managed according to the nature, size and scale of the development so as to minimise impacts that may disturb protected or important habitats and species.
- Protecting and enhancing habitats and species of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity as identified in legislation, and recognising and implementing appropriate measures, including landscape-scale conservation management, to take account of the fact that the distribution of habitats and species will be affected by climate change.

3.9 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 policies, *inter-alia*, in respect of significantly boosting the supply of housing, securing high quality design, protecting the Green Belt, ensuring highway safety and securing a net gain to biodiversity. The content of the NPPF has been taken into consideration in the preparation of this application.

### **Staffordshire Moorlands Housing Land Supply Schedule (2022)**

- 4.2 The Housing Land Supply Statement covers the period up to April 2021 and confirms that the Local Authority has a housing land supply of 4.21 years against a target of 5 years. The content of this document has been taken into consideration in the preparation of this application.

### **Staffordshire Moorlands Space about Dwellings SPG**

- 4.3 This document provides a series of numerical standards that new development should seek to achieve in the interests of safeguarding residential amenity. The content of the SPG has been taken into consideration in the preparation of this application.

### **SMD/2022/0391 – Outlands, 340 Cheadle Road, Cheddleton**

- 4.4 The above application has recently been submitted on land to the immediate west of the application site and proposes the erection of a detached dwellinghouse. The proposed siting of that dwelling and its inter-relationship to the proposed development has been taken into consideration in the preparation of this application.

## 5 Planning Assessment

### **Green Belt**

- 5.1 The application proposes the change of use of an existing building from its current lawful use as a bed and breakfast, into a dwellinghouse. The site lies within the North Staffordshire Green Belt wherein there is a presumption against inappropriate development. Paragraph 150 of the National Planning Policy Framework nevertheless confirms that the reuse of buildings is *not inappropriate* in the Green Belt provided that the building is of a permanent and substantial construction and that the use preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the five purposes of including land within it.
- 5.2 The existing building is a robust stone and tile building that until recently has been used as a bed and breakfast. It exhibits no evidence of structural deterioration and is evidently of a permanent and substantial construction. The proposed change of use of this building can therefore be considered to amount to an appropriate form of development within the Green Belt, subject to the development not having an adverse impact on the openness of the Green Belt or deriving any conflict with the five purposes of including land within it.
- 5.3 The proposed reuse of the building as a dwellinghouse will not derive any adverse impact to the openness of the Green Belt, nor any conflict with the five purposes of including land within it, as the residential use of the site will be wholly confined within the existing curtilage and boundaries of Prospect House. There will therefore be no incursion of residential use beyond that which already exists.
- 5.4 The proposal will in fact derive a modest degree of betterment to the openness of the Green Belt by virtue of the proposed demolition of a poor quality lean-

to extension off the northern elevation of the building. The proposal consequently amounts to an appropriate form of development within the Green Belt in accordance with paragraph 150 of the National Planning Policy Framework, and the provisions of policy SS10 of the Local Plan.

### **Housing Delivery**

- 5.5 The application site is located within the rural area, wherein policies SS10 and H1 of the Local Plan make provision for the reuse of rural buildings for residential use provided that the building is worthy in structural, architectural and character terms for conversion.
- 5.6 As discussed in the preceding paragraphs the existing building is evidently in a sound structural condition, having until recently been occupied as a bed and breakfast facility. The building is therefore worthy for conversion in structural terms.
- 5.7 The building is also evidently of a character and appearance that renders it worthy in architectural and character terms for conversion, having a pleasing external appearance and being constructed from a traditional palette of materials (stone elevations with a slate tiled roof atop). The proposal consequently meets the requirements of policies SS10 and H1 of the Local Plan.
- 5.8 It is also noted that the Local Authority is currently unable to demonstrate a five year deliverable supply of housing (4.21 years). Paragraph 11 of the NPPF dictates that in such circumstances proposals should be determined in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development (the so-called tilted balance) and that planning permission should be granted 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*

5.9 For the reasons set out within the preceding paragraphs, the proposed development will not give rise to harm to assets of particular importance such that they provide a clear reason for refusing permission, as the proposal has been shown to constitute an appropriate form of development within the Green Belt. It is furthermore submitted that the proposed development will derive a number of material benefits that are not *significantly and demonstrably* outweighed by any adverse impacts.

5.10 This proposal will derive benefits of to the local economy, both to local tradesmen during the construction phase, and though the expenditure associated with the creation of three additional households. The Local Authority's 'Quantifying the Economic Impact of Development' Report confirms that each new house constructed in the District generates 4.3 jobs within construction or the associated supply chain. The same report also confirms that for each new dwelling constructed within the District, there will be a minimum initial one-off spend (in addition to the construction of the dwelling) of £5,000, with a subsequent annual spend of £9,388 per year. The proposed development will consequently help to support the local economy, with such benefits weighing in favour of the proposed development.

5.11 The proposal will also contribute towards meeting the Local Authority's shortfall in housing. The Local Authority has a long history of housing under-supply prior to the adoption of its Local Plan, as set out below:

- 2016 – 1.87 years supply
- 2017 – 1.99 years supply
- 2018 – 1.80 years supply
- 2019 – no figures published
- 2020 – 5.32 years supply (following adoption of the Local Plan)
- 2021 – 4.21 years supply

5.12 Whilst the adoption of the Local Plan in 2020 enabled the Local Authority to demonstrate a 5.32 year supply at the point of adoption, that lasted for a period of only 7 months, with the Local Authority's Housing Land Supply Statement (February 2022) confirming that for the period up to April 2021, a total of 201 dwellings (net) were delivered, against an annualised target of 422 – *less than half* of what it was required to provide. Consequently, the Local Authority's shortfall in housing land supply is likely to continue to worsen in the coming years, and as such the social and economic benefits of delivering a new dwelling on this site carries significant weight.

5.13 Environmental benefits will also ensue as a consequence of delivering the new dwelling within an existing building, thereby making beneficial reuse of an existing resource. The site also occupies a sustainable location that lies a short distance from the day-to-day services and facilities on offer within the village.

5.14 It is submitted that these collective benefits of the proposed development will not be *significantly and demonstrably* outweighed by any adverse impacts, and that planning permission should therefore be granted in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development.



### **Design & Layout**

- 5.15 The application proposes the sensitive reuse and alteration of the existing building in order to facilitate its conversion to residential use. No extensions are proposed to the building, with the application taking the opportunity to remove an existing poor quality lean-to extension from its northern elevation.
- 5.16 The application seeks to reuse existing openings wherever possible, with only minimal new openings proposed to serve the new bathroom at ground floor level, a doorway to the new hallway, and the introduction of double doors to the southern gable end of the building. These alterations are sensitive to the character of the building and owing to its location to the rear of Prospect House, the development will not have any appreciable impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
- 5.17 The inter-relationship of the proposed development to the occupiers of Prospect House (and vice versa) has been forefront in the project teams mind when preparing this application, as the two buildings lie close to one another across an existing courtyard. The application proposes to safeguard the residential amenity of the two properties by ensuring that the two existing openings in the eastern elevation of the building are fitted with obscure glazed windows such that no direct overlooking between the two properties can occur. In doing so the proposed development will not derive any conflict with the adopted Space About Dwellings SPG.
- 5.18 The inter-relationship of the proposed development to the prospective new dwelling on land to the west of the site (SMD/2022/0391) has also been taken into consideration. The existing building has two existing openings serving the ground floor accommodation of the B&B which face towards that site, but which are screened from it by the existing mature hedgerow. That hedgerow is to be retained, and consequently the repurposing of the ground floor

accommodation as a living room to serve the proposed dwellinghouse will not derive any overlooking of the prospective new dwelling to the west. The proposed double doors in the southern gable end of the building will furthermore not derive any harm to neighbouring residential amenity, as they will be located 13 metres away from the southern site boundary.

5.19 In terms of the amenity of future occupants of the dwellinghouse, it is proposed to create an area of private amenity space to the south of the dwelling that far exceeds the recommended minimum standard of 65m<sup>2</sup> (105 m<sup>2</sup> approximately), with the occupiers of Prospect House also retaining a large area of amenity space that exceed the minimum standard. The proposed dwelling will furthermore have a gross internal floor area of 103m<sup>2</sup> and thus exceeds the minimum floorspace requirement for a two bedroomed dwelling (79m<sup>2</sup>) as set out in the DCLG Technical Housing Standards.

5.20 Having regard to the above considerations it is concluded that the design and layout of the proposed development is acceptable and will not derive any adverse impact to the the character and appearance of the existing building or the surrounding area, and that both future occupiers of the dwelling, and neighbouring residential occupiers, will be afforded an acceptable level of residential amenity. The proposed development therefore meets the requirements of policies SS1, H1 and DC1 of the Local Plan.

### **Highway Safety**

5.21 The application site benefits from an existing means of vehicular access off the Cheadle Road, which serves the existing dwelling (Prospect House), the existing B&B, and nearby Shrubbery Cottage. The access has restricted geometry and poor visibility on egress onto the Cheadle Road. The access nevertheless already serves the existing B&B which provided 5 individual bedrooms for customers. As a consequence, the proposed reuse of this

building as a two-bedroomed dwellinghouse will derive a betterment to highway safety by reducing the number of vehicle movements along the existing access compared to the lawful use of the site as B&B.

- 5.22 There are five existing parking spaces on the site which serve Prospect House and the B&B. The proposed dwellinghouse, with its two bedrooms, commands a parking requirement of two spaces, which can be readily accommodated within the existing parking area, whilst retaining sufficient spaces to serve Prospect House. The proposal therefore meets the requirements of policy T2 of the Local Plan and will not derive any severe residual impacts to highway safety within the locality.

### **Biodiversity**

- 5.23 The application is accompanied by a Bat and Bird Survey which has assessed the building for evidence of roosting bats and nesting birds. The survey concludes that there is no evidence of bats using the building as a place of shelter, nor any evidence of nesting birds. An existing roosting opportunity is identified on one of the rear extensions of the building, but this will be unaffected by the proposed change of use. Similarly, an existing roof void access will also be unaffected by the proposed change of use, and as such no emergence surveys have been required.
- 5.24 The survey recommends the provision of a bat box on one of the trees along the site boundary in the interests of securing a net gain to biodiversity. The applicant is agreeable to providing a bat box on the site, which can be secured by condition, and in doing so the development will meet the requirements of policy NE2 of the Local Plan.

## **6 Conclusion**

6.1 The submitted proposal represents an appropriate form of sustainable development having regard to the following conclusions:

- The reuse of the existing building constitutes an appropriate form of development within the Green Belt.
- The reuse of the existing building complies with the Local Authority's adopted housing strategy for the District.
- The proposed development will not derive any material adverse impacts to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
- The proposed development will not derive any material adverse impacts to the amenity of neighbouring residential occupiers and will provide a good standard of amenity for its future occupants.
- The proposal will derive a betterment to highway safety by reducing the number of vehicles using the existing site access.
- The proposed development will safeguard protected species and secure a net gain to biodiversity.
- No adverse impacts will arise to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the development.

6.2 The proposed development is therefore in accordance with the requirements of policies SS1, SS3, SS10, H1, DC1, NE1 and T1 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan, and guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework, and the Staffordshire Moorlands Space about Dwellings SPG.