Hewitt&CarrServices

Planning, Design & Access Statement

Full application for erection of 87no. dwellings
Land off Tenford Lane, Upper Tean
For Markden Homes North West Ltd.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1. Hewitt & Carr Services Ltd. has been instructed by Markden Homes North West Ltd. to prepare a Planning Statement to accompany a full planning application for the erection of up to 87no. dwellings on land off Tenford Lane, Upper Tean.

1.2. By way of background, outline planning permission and reserved matters consent has already been granted for the erection of 40no. dwellings on the site under applications SMD/2016/0811 and SMD/2021/0491. Those consents have subsequently been implemented.

1.3. The submitted proposal represents a net increase of 47no. dwellings over and above those which already been approved by the Local Authority under the previous consents, with the dwellings to be served via the same vehicular access as that approved under applications SMD/2016/0811 and SMD/2021/0491 in the westernmost corner of the site. An area of public open space is proposed on the southern side of the site access road, along with further open space to the north of the dwellings across the site.

1.4. The proposal encompasses a variety of house types, including a mixture of two bedroom, three bedroom and four bedrooms units. All of the houses have been designed to meet the requirements of the DCLG Technical Housing Standards. Each plot will be provided with a minimum of two off-street parking spaces, with the larger properties benefitting from three. A total of 29no. of the proposed dwellings will be provided as affordable housing, comprising a mixture of social rented, shared equity and first homes.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1. The application site comprises an irregular shaped parcel of land located on the northern side of Tenford Lane. The site comprises an undulating parcel of agricultural land that is enclosed along its southern boundary by a mature indigenous hedgerow, interspersed with occasional mature trees. There are further mature hedgerows within the site itself.

2.2. The land undulates along Tenford Lane and rises up in a northerly direction towards the upper bank of the quarry beyond, where there is a substantial bank of mature woodland. A cluster of farm buildings and farmhouse are located to the west of the site, of which some were previously utilised as kennels. That use has since ceased and SMDC's Public Register of Animal Licences confirms that the site no longer has a licence.

2.3. The land to the south of the site on the opposite side of Tenford Lane comprises of residential development that is arranged in a linear pattern along the southern side of the road. Dwellings in the locality are typically two storey in nature and either detached or semi-detached in character. The dwellings are typically set back from the carriageway behind frontage landscaping and parking.

2.4. The site as a whole is located within the rural area as defined by the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (2020). The site does not contain any statutory listed buildings, nor is it within, or close to a Conservation Area. The site comprises of Poor Quality agricultural land (Grade 4), as confirmed by the Natural England Agricultural Land Classification Maps.

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

3.1. The application site has been subject to a number of previous applications, the most pertinent being the following:

SMD/2016/0200

3.2. Outline application for residential development of up to 49 dwellings. Application refused (Decision Date: 3/11/16). The sole reason for refusal was on the grounds that future occupiers of the dwellings would be adversely affected by noise emanating from a nearby dog kennels.

SMD/2016/0811

3.3. Outline application for residential development of up to 40 dwellings. Application Approved (2/8/18).

SMD/2021/0491

3.4. Reserved matters consent for the erection of 40 dwellings, pursuant to outline application SMD/2016/0811.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY

4.1. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act require that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

4.2. The development plan for this area comprises the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Local Plan (Adopted 2020) of which the following policies are of relevance to the determination of this application.

4.3. 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

4.4. Policy SS3 of the Local Plan relates to '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 Council will monitor the annual development rate and manage supply to ensure that future provision will continue to adequately meet identified needs and reflect development potential. The policy goes on to confirm that 25% of the total housing requirement (equivalent to a net housing requirement of 1158 dwellings) will be provided within Cheadle, and 25% within the Rural Areas (equivalent to a net housing requirement of 698 dwellings).

4.5. Policy SS10 of the Local Plan relates to the 'Other Rural Areas Strategy' and states 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. These areas will provide only for development which has an essential need to be located in the countryside, supports the rural diversification and sustainability of the rural areas, promotes sustainable tourism or enhances the countryside. The Council and its partners will achieve this through a number of actions, including:

- Restricting new build housing development in the countryside to that which has an essential need to be located in the countryside in accordance with policy H1

- 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

- Encouraging measures which protect and enhance the biodiversity, geological resources and heritage of the District.

4.6. Policy SS12 of the Local Plan relates to 'Planning Obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy' and states that development proposals will be required to provide, or meet the reasonable costs of providing, the on-site and off-site infrastructure, facilities and/or mitigation necessary through the appropriate use of planning obligations and/or conditions. Planning obligations will only be sought where they met all of the following tests:

a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms
b) directly related to the development; and
c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

4.7. Policy SD5 of the Local Plan relates to 'Flood Risk' and states that the Council will follow a sequential approach to the management of flood risk. New development will be guided to the areas with the lowest risk of current and future flooding where this is viable and compatible with other polices aimed at achieving a sustainable pattern of development. The development of sites within areas at greater risk of flooding will only be considered where they are deemed acceptable due to national or other policies or material considerations. All applicable development must be subject to a site-specific flood risk assessment which demonstrates that the development has been designed to be flood resilient and resistant and safe for its users for the lifetime of the development; in accordance with NPPF Policy. In addition, schemes in flood risk areas should demonstrate how the sequential approach has been used to locate the most vulnerable parts of the development in the areas of lowest flood risk.

4.8. Policy SD5 goes on to state that where development sites are located in flood risk areas and/or affected by the presence of watercourses, the Council expects developers to undertake early discussions with the EA and the LLFA. All applicable developments should incorporate sustainable drainage measures (SuDS) to

reduce the risk of flooding from surface water runoff and contribute to on-site flood alleviation, as well as contributing to wider Council objectives such as its emerging Green infrastructure Network; to enhancing biodiversity and recreation opportunities; landscape character etc. Developers should undertake early discussions with the LLFA to ensure that SuDs can be fully integrated into the final development layout. Where appropriate suitable measures to deal with surface water arising from development proposals will be required to minimise the impact to and from new development. In such cases the Council will expect applicants to demonstrate how their proposals manage surface water run-off sustainably with discharge to the public sewer only being considered as a last resort, where, clear evidence must be demonstrated why alternative options are not available.

4.9. Policy SD5 also states that on greenfield sites developers should aim to not increase surface water runoff rates. On brownfield sites developers should aim to reduce surface water runoff to the greenfield rate wherever practical. Approved development proposals will be expected to be supplemented by appropriate maintenance and management regimes for surface water drainage. On larger sites involving phased development and/or involving multiple landowners the Council will where appropriate encourage applicants to engage in early discussion with utility providers and LLFA for the achievement of coordinated, holistic drainage strategies across the whole site over time.

4.10. Policy H1 of the Local Plan relates to 'New Housing Development' and states that:

1) 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 H 3, 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.

2) In line with Government legislation the Council will maintain and update a register of those interested in acquiring self-build / custom-build housing plots across the District. Where a demand exists, residential developments of 10 dwellings (or 0.5ha) or more will make an appropriate contribution towards this need in agreement with the Council. This will be negotiated on a case by case basis.

3) 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.

4.11. Policy H1 goes on to state that:

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.

4.12. Policy H1 also confirms 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.

4.13. Policy H3 of the Local Plan relates to 'Affordable Housing' and states that:

1) Residential developments of 10 dwellings (or 0.5ha) or more shall provide 33% affordable housing. Where justified, the Council will consider a lower level of provision taking into account the Local Plan and Site Allocations Viability Study, other up-to-date viability evidence and other contributions. Affordable housing should normally be provided on-site. Provision off-site or through a commuted sum payment in lieu will only be considered where it will be of broadly equivalent value to on-site provision and it can be robustly justified in delivering affordable homes through mixed and balanced communities

2) Unless circumstances dictate otherwise and in agreement with the Council, 60% of all affordable dwellings provided on each site will be social / affordable rented housing with the remaining 40% being intermediate / starter homes

3) In or on the edge of villages, affordable housing schemes that are of an appropriate scale for the spatial strategy will be permitted on suitable rural exceptions sites which are well related to services and facilities and where a demonstrable need exists within the local area which cannot otherwise be met by means of provision in the plan. Small numbers of market homes may be allowed at the Council's discretion where it would facilitate the provision of significant additional affordable housing to meet the needs of the local community.

4) Affordable housing should be designed as an integral part of developments and be 'tenure blind' in relation to other properties within the site.

4.14. 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

4.15. Policy DC3 of the Local Plan relates to 'Landscape and Settlement Setting' and states that the Council will protect and, where possible, enhance local landscape and the setting of settlements in the Staffordshire Moorlands by:

1. Resisting development which would lead to prominent intrusion into the countryside or have a significant adverse impact on the character or the setting of a settlement or important views into and out of the settlement as identified in the Landscape and Settlement Character evidence

2. Supporting development which respects and enhances local landscape character and which reinforces and enhances the setting of the settlement as identified in the Landscape and Settlement Character evidence

3. Supporting developments which conserve or enhance the biodiversity qualities of any natural or man-made features within the landscape, such as trees, woodlands, hedgerows, walls, watercourses or ponds

4. Supporting opportunities to positively manage the landscape and use sustainable building techniques and materials which are sympathetic to the landscape

5. Ensuring that development does not adversely affect the wider setting of the Peak District National Park.

4.16. Policy NE1 of the Local Plan relates to 'Biodiversity and Geological Resources' and states that these will be conserved and enhanced by positive management and strict control of development by (amongst other actions):

- Conserving and enhancing regional and locally designated sites by not permitting any development proposal which would directly or indirectly result in significant harm to geological and biodiversity conservation interests, unless it can be demonstrated that:

  a) there is no appropriate alternative site available; and

  b) all statutory and regulatory requirements relating to any such proposal have been satisfied; and

c) appropriate conservation and mitigation measures are provided; or if it is demonstrated that this is not possible

d) the need for, and benefit of, the development is demonstrated to clearly outweigh the need to safeguard the intrinsic nature conservation value of the site and compensatory measures are implemented

- 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.

- Ensuring development promotes the appropriate maintenance, enhancement, restoration and/or re-creation of biodiversity through its proposed nature, scale, location and design. The Staffordshire Moorlands Biodiversity Opportunity Map, in conjunction with the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan, will be used to guide biodiversity enhancement measures to be included in development proposals as appropriate to the nature and scale of development proposed and other environmental interest, in particular supporting opportunities to increase grassland and heathland habitats including supporting targets in the UK and Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan.

- 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.

4.17. Policy NE2 of the Local Plan relates to 'Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows' and states that the Council will protect existing trees, woodlands and hedgerows, in particular, ancient woodland, veteran trees and ancient or species-rich hedgerows from loss or deterioration. This will be achieved by:

- Requiring that existing woodlands, healthy trees and hedgerows are retained and integrated within a proposed development unless the need for, and benefits of, the development clearly outweigh their loss

- Requiring new developments to provide tree cover that secures a good level of sustainability through tree retention, planting and soft landscaping, including where possible the on site replacement of any trees that are removed with sufficient tree planting to replace or increase the canopy cover on-site as appropriate. Landscaping schemes will also be required to mitigate against negative landscape impact and complement the design of new development and make provision for future maintenance. Where it is not

possible to secure this new or replacement tree planting within the site, the Council will work with applicants to ascertain if a suitable site(s) can be found off-site for replacement planting in the locality

- Resisting development that would directly or indirectly damage existing ancient woodland, veteran trees and ancient or species-rich hedgerows.

4.18. 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

4.19. Policy T1 goes on to state that development which generates significant demand for travel or is likely to have significant transport implications (as identified within a Transport Assessment) will, where appropriate:

- Contribute to improved public transport provision
- Contribute to junction improvements, traffic management and highway infrastructure

- Provide proactive facilities and measures to support sustainable transport modes including on-site features to encourage sustainable travel methods e.g. cycle path links, cycle storage facilities, bus stops etc

- Provide and actively promote travel plans.

5.0 MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

National Planning Policy Framework

5.1. The National Planning Policy Framework seeks to secure the delivery of sustainable development, and sets out guidance in respect of various matters, including the delivery of new rural housing, securing high quality design, ensuring highway safety and ensuring a net gain to biodiversity. The content of the NPPF has been taken into consideration in the preparation of this application.

SMDC Housing Land Supply Statement (2022)

5.2. The Housing Land Supply Statement assesses the Local Authority's housing delivery against the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and confirms that the Local Authority has a deliverable housing land supply equivalent to 3.71 years. The content of this document is referenced within the Planning Assessment.

SMDC Quantifying the Economic Benefits of Growth Report

5.3. The above report serves to quantify the economic benefits of different kinds of development within the Staffordshire Moorlands. The content of this document is referenced within the Planning Assessment.

Planning Applications SMD/2016/0811 and SMD/2021/0491

5.4. The above applications granted outline planning and reserved matters consent for the erection of 40no. dwellings on the site. Those consents have since been implemented, and thus constitutes a material fall-back position in the assessment of this application.

6.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development

6.1. The Town and Country Planning Act requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The application proposes the erection of 87no. dwellings on land to the north of Tenford Lane, Upper Tean, which is designed as part of the rural area.

6.2. Policy SS10 of the Local Plan confirms that the rural 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 through a number of actions, including restricting new build housing to that which has an essential need to be located in the countryside in accordance with policy H1. The

submitted proposal does not fall into any of the categories of housing development listed within policy H1 as being acceptable within the rural area, and consequently the proposal is derives conflict with the Development Plan in this regard.

6.3. However, there are material considerations applicable in this situation which serve to clearly outweigh the conflict of the proposal with the Development Plan. First and foremost, the site benefits from an extant planning consent for the erection of 40no. dwellings as approved under applications SMD/2016/0811 and SMD/2021/0491. The proposed dwellings are, in the main, located on the same application site as those extant consents, so the principle of residential development on this parcel of land has already been established.

6.4. The second material consideration relates to the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework which states in paragraph 74 that local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement as set out in adopted strategic policies.

6.5. The Local Authority's Housing Land Supply Statement (up to April 2022) confirms that the Local Authority is unable to demonstrate a five-year deliverable supply of housing (3.71 years) and consequently the provisions of policies SS10 and H1 of the Local Plan have to be considered out-of-date. The presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out in paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework, is consequently engaged by this proposal. We return to this matter within the Planning Balance section below.

<u>Means of Access</u>

6.6. The application site is to be served by the vehicular access approved under applications SMD/2016/0811 and SMD/2021/0491 which is soon to be constructed. That access will comprise of a simple priority-controlled junction off Tenford Lane with a 5.5 metre wide carriageway. The access will also benefit from adequate visibility on egress. The proposed means of access is consequently held to be acceptable from a highway safety perspective.

6.7. The application is also accompanied by a Transport Statement prepared by SCP Transportation Consultants, who have assessed the impact of the proposed development on highway safety. It concludes that the proposed development will generate one additional vehicle movement every 2 – 3 minutes or so during the peak am and pm hours, which will not give rise to a material impact on the operation of Tenford Lane or the local highway network.

6.8. The Transport Statement also demonstrates that the site occupies a sustainable location, with local day-to-day services within walking and cycling distance. The Local Authority concluded likewise in its determination of the previously approved application on the site (SMD/2016/0811) stating in the Committee Report that:

> *"The site does offer opportunities for walking, cycling or using public transport instead of future occupiers being wholly reliant on the private*

car, with any such journeys being relatively short, given the location close to a sustainable settlement. As such, this site would not be considered to be located within an unacceptably remote location, with future occupiers having reasonable access to shops and services"

6.9. In addition, the site layout plan accompanying the application demonstrates that each dwelling will be provided with adequate off-street parking provision to meet the Local Authority's adopted Parking Standards. As a consequence, the proposed development meets the requirements of policy T1 of the Local Plan and will not give rise to any severe residual impacts to highway safety, in accordance with paragraph 111 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Design & Layout

6.10. The application site benefits from an extant consent for the erection of 40no. dwellings which consist of a mixture of two storey and two-and-a-half storey dwellings constructed from brickwork with grey tiled roofs atop. The wider surrounding area also comprises, principally, of two storey development. The proposed two storey and two-and-a half storey scale of the dwellings will consequently be firmly in keeping with the character and appearance of the surrounding area, as well as those dwellings already approved on the site.

6.11. The extant permission on the site encompasses a meandering vehicular access leading up from the western corner of the site, serving spurs that project off in a broadly northerly / north-easterly direction. The submitted proposal reflects that layout approach but remodels the layout of the development at the eastern end of the site with additional development located to the west of the previously approved dwellings, which present an active frontage to the site access road on entry from Tenford Lane. The proposed layout of the dwellings will not detract from the character and appearance of the surrounding area and will assimilate positively with the approved dwellings on the site.

6.12. The design of the proposed dwellings takes their cues from the approved dwellings on the site and the wider surrounding area, encompassing a mixture of house types which all exhibit features that are supported by the adopted Design Guide SPD. These include the provision of a dominant ridge line emphasised by gables, windows arranged in columns, high solid to void ratios, simple header and cill detailing and corbelled eaves and verges. The proposed appearance of the development will consequently be in keeping with the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The proposed design and layout of the development is consequently held to meet the requirements of policies SS1, SS10 and DC1 of the Local Plan.

Residential Amenity

6.13. The extant permission on the site encompasses the provision of dwellings whose rear gardens (Plots 31 – 40 inclusive) back onto the hedgerow that encloses the southern site boundary with Tenford Lane. The proposed development continues to reflect that general layout arrangement and consequently will not give rise to any greater impact to residential amenity compared to that which has already been approved.

6.14. The submitted proposal will alter the layout, and number of dwellings, at the eastern end of the site, but will not give rise to harm to neighbouring amenity. The closest plot to properties in Tenford Lane (no.61) will face side on to the carriageway and lie some 24 metres from the front elevation of the nearest neighbouring property. That distance far exceeds the 14 metre interface distance required by the adopted Space About Dwellings standards. The plots at the western end of the site will lie well in excess of the required 22 metres interface distance (circa 65 metres). The proposed development will consequently not give rise to any material harm to neighbouring residential amenity.

6.15. In terms of the amenity of future occupants, each dwelling will be provided with its own area of private amenity space which will exceed the minimum required standard of 65 square metres as set out within the adopted Space About Dwellings Standards. The proposed house types will also provide sufficient internal floor space to meet the National Described Space Standards for new development. The proposed development is consequently held to meet the requirements of policies H1 and DC1 of the Local Plan in this regard.

Developer Contributions

6.16. Policy H3 of the Local Plan requires schemes of 10 or more dwellings to provide 33% affordable housing. The proposed development will provide for 29 units of affordable housing on the site, encompassing 25% starter homes (7 units), the remainder being social rented (13 units) and shared equity (8 units). The proposed tenure mix accords with the Local Authority's emerging Developer's Contributions SPD. The affordable units are to be pepper potted throughout the site to ensure that they are 'tenure blind'.

6.17. The applicant is agreeable to entering into a S106 Obligation to secure the delivery of these affordable units, along any other associated financial contributions that may arise as a consequence of this development, such as education contributions and the provision and maintenance of the Public Open Space within the site. In doing so the proposal will meet the requirements of policy SS12 of the Local Plan.

Landscape Impact

6.18. The proposed development, whilst increasing the overall quantum of development across the site compared to that previously approved, will not materially affect the surrounding landscape. The site is undulating in nature, and rises up towards an existing band of mature of woodland to the north/northeast. The site also benefits from a strong degree of enclosure provided by the existing hedgerow along the roadside boundary with Tenford Lane. The Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment for Upper Tean does not identify this site as being important to the landscape setting of the village.

6.19. The most visually conspicuous, and sensitive part of the site is its southern portion where plots 31 – 40 are located. Consent has already been granted to construct dwellings on this part of the site, and consequently the proposal will not result in any greater harm than that already approved. The proposed dwellings on the site will be enclosed by the existing buildings to the west of the site, with the

landscape rising up behind towards the existing woodland. The dwellings at the eastern end of the site will work with the levels across the site and maintain the existing boundary hedgerow as the means of enclosure to the eastern site boundary. As a consequence, the proposed development is held to meet the requirements of policy DC3 of the Local Plan.

Ecology

6.20. The application is accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) prepared by Apex Ecology which has assessed the existing habitats upon the site. The PEA concludes that there are no designated sites within the site itself, and that there was no evidence of badgers using the site. The report nevertheless notes the potential presence of Great Crested Newts in ponds within 500m of the site and recommends eDNA testing of those ponds.

6.21. The applicant has subsequently commissioned eDNA testing of the ponds which serves to confirm that all of the waterbodies identified tested negative, indicating a high degree of certainty that Great Crested Newts have not been using the waterbodies. No harm to Great Crested Newts will consequently arise as a consequence of the proposed development.

6.22. A Bat Level Ground Assessment has also been carried out which confirms that the trees on the site have a mixture of negligible, low, moderate and high potential for roosting bats, and confirms that if any trees identified as having moderate to high potential for bats are to be felled, then further bat surveys would be required. The application does not propose the felling of any trees and consequently no further bat survey effort is required.

6.23. The PEA identifies a series of precautionary recommendations in order to safeguard important habitats / features on the site, and to secure a net gain to biodiversity. These measures can be secured via an appropriately worded planning condition. In doing so the proposal will meet the requirements of policy NE1 of the Local Plan and paragraph 180 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Planning Balance

6.24. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states that for decision-taking this means:

a) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

b) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

(i) the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

(ii) any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole

6.25. The proposal does not derive any conflict with policies that protect areas or assets of particular importance, and as such the proposal meets the requirements of paragraph 11(b)(i) of the National Planning Policy Framework.

6.26. The submitted proposal will furthermore derive a number of benefits that are not considered to be significantly and demonstrably outweighed by any adverse impacts. These will now be discussed.

6.27. The proposal will derive significant benefits of to the local economy. 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 proposed erection of up to 87no. dwellings on the site will consequently support up to 374 jobs within the construction industry and its associated supply chain. Such economic benefits lend significant weight in favour of the proposed development.

6.28. The Quantifying the Economic Impact of Development 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 erection of 87no. dwellings on this site will consequently generate a one-off spend of £435,000 within the locally economy, with a subsequent annual spend of £816,756. Such economic benefits lend further significant weight in favour of the proposed development.

6.29. The proposal will also make a valuable contribution towards meeting the Local Authority's shortfall in housing land supply. The Local Authority has a long history of housing under-supply, and whilst the Local Authority was able to demonstrate a five year deliverable supply of housing for a short period following the adoption of the Local Plan in September 2020, this lasted for only 7 months. The Housing Land Supply Statement for the period up to 30th March 2022 served to confirm that the housing land supply had dropped to 3.71 years.

6.30. Policy SS3 of the Local Plan confirms a requirement to deliver 320 dwellings per annum to meet its housing requirements. Table 4.1 of the Local Authority's Annual Monitoring Report (see Figure 1 below) demonstrates the total number of dwellings delivered within the District per annum from 2014 – 2021. The figures confirm that **at no point** over that period has the Local Authority delivered sufficient housing to meet its annualised housing requirement of 320 dwellings. The social benefits of delivering up to 87no. dwellings on this site to help meet the Local Authority's housing requirements consequently carries substantial weight in favour of the proposed development.

Figure 1 – SMDC Housing Delivery 2014 – 2021 (Source: SMDC Annual Monitoring)

Year	Leek	Biddulph	Cheadle	Rural	District Total
2014/15	149	60	31	38	278
2015/16	29	28	10	32	99
2016/17	44	40	4	40	128
2017/18	40	33	13	56	142
2018/19	14	6	87	58	165
2019/20	85	18	22	78	203
2020/21	79	15	41	66	201
Total	**440**	**200**	**208**	**368**	**1,216**

6.31. The submitted proposal will also derive further social benefits through the provision of affordable housing, with up to 29no. affordable dwellings to be provided on the site. The SMDC Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update 2007 (SHMA) confirms that there is a very significant demand for affordable housing throughout the District, and that between 86.3% and 90.5% of newly formed households within the Staffordshire Moorlands are unable to afford to purchase a new home.

6.32. The SHMA goes on to confirm that the annualised need for affordable housing within the District ranges between 224 and 432 dwellings per annum to meet its full affordable housing need. In the period 1st April 2021 – 30th March 2022 the Local Authority delivered a total of 20 affordable housing units. The year prior it delivered 14 affordable dwellings. The need for affordable housing within the District is therefore acute. The submitted proposal will deliver 29no. affordable dwellings on the site, and in doing so will make a significant and valuable contribution towards meeting affordable housing needs within the District. Such social benefits carry further significant weight in favour of the proposed development.

6.33. Environmental benefits will also ensue as a consequence of delivering up to 87no. new dwellings in a location where local day-to-day facilities can be accessed on foot, bicycle and via public transport, as demonstrated by the accompanying Transport Statement. Such environmental benefits also weigh in favour of the proposed development.

6.34. Having regard to the considerations set out within the preceding sections of this report it is concluded that no adverse impacts would arise as a consequence of this development to *significantly and demonstrably* outweigh the aforementioned benefits, and that consequently planning permission should be granted in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

7.0 CONCLUSION

7.1. The submitted proposal constitutes a sustainable form of development having regard to the following conclusions:

- The Local Authority is unable to demonstrate a five year deliverable supply of housing and consequently the presumption in favour of sustainable development is engaged.
- The site benefits from an extant consent for the construction of 40no. dwellings.
- The proposed means of access to the site is acceptable and will not derive any severe residual impacts to highway safety within the locality.
- The proposed design and layout of the development will not materially detract from the character and appearance of the surrounding area or landscape.
- The proposed development will not have an adverse impact on neighbouring residential amenity and will provide an acceptable level of amenity for future occupiers of the dwellings.
- The proposed development will safeguard important habitats within the site and secure a net gain to biodiversity.

- The proposed development will derive a number of material benefits which are not considered to be significantly and demonstrably outweighed by any adverse impacts.

7.2. The submitted proposal consequently meets the requirements of policies SS1, SS3, SS12, H1, H3, NE1, T1, DC1 and DC3 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan and policies set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

7.3. Whilst the proposal is acknowledged to derive conflict with the provisions of policies SS10 and H1 of the Local Plan in that it proposes the erection of dwellings on a site within the rural area, material considerations point firmly to this proposal being approved having regard to the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework and the presumption in favour of sustainable development.