

PLANNING STATEMENT

**HOLLINS FARM
KINGSLEY**

NOVEMBER 2024

Site Address:

Hollins Farm, Hollins Lane, Kingsley, Staffordshire, ST10 2EW

Applicant:

S. & L. Kirkham

Proposal:

Refurbishment of farmhouse; conversion of shippon to provide additional accommodation to serve the farmhouse; erection of residential annex, erection of detached garage and associated works

Planning Statement:

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Report Prepared By:

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1 Introduction

1.1 Rob Duncan Planning Consultancy Ltd. has been instructed by S. & L. Kirkham to seek planning permission for land at Hollins Farm, Hollins Lane, Kingsley.

1.2 The site is currently occupied by a two storey farmhouse with attached agricultural shippon, with a cluster of agricultural and equestrian buildings along with a static caravan located to the south and southeast. All of the buildings are served via an existing vehicular access located to the north of the dwellinghouse, off Hollins Lane.

1.3 The application encompasses the following proposals:

- Refurbishment of existing farmhouse, including the provision of replacement sash windows, new front door and associated internal alterations.
- Conversion and change of use of attached agricultural shippon and storage area to provide an open plan kitchen / dining room, utility and separate lounge to serve the existing farmhouse, along with associated remodelling of the internal accommodation. The works of conversion will include some modest rebuilding work, including repairs to the roof, alterations to an existing lean-to extension at the eastern end of the building to provide a gabled extension finished in timber boarding with a profiled metal sheet roof, the insertion of new windows / doors into existing openings and the provision of 3no. conservation style rooflights.
- Demolition of Buildings B (outhouse) and C (portal framed agricultural building) along with the removal of the existing static caravan and erection of detached double garage in their place. The detached garage will have a

floor area of 33m² and stand to a height of 4.1 metres. It is to be constructed from red facing brickwork with a corrugated metal sheet roof.

- Demolition of Building E, which occupies a footprint of 311m² and which extends eastwards from the site by some 46.5 metres. The land where the building is currently located will be reinstated to agricultural use.
- Demolition of existing equestrian building (Building D) and its replacement with a new build residential annex. The annex will have a floor area of 137m² and stand to a maximum ridge height of 6.38 metres. Its accommodation will comprise of an open plan lounge / kitchen, two bedrooms, utility and bathroom. It will be occupied by a dependant family member and share the same means of access, service connections and amenity space as the main farmhouse, and will remain in the same ownership. The building is to be constructed from red facing brickwork and vertical timber cladding with a corrugated metal sheet roof.

- 1.4 The site benefits from an established means of vehicular access off Hollins Lane to the immediate north of the farmhouse which is to be unaltered.

2 Site & Surroundings

- 2.1 The application site is located within the North Staffordshire Green Belt and comprises a detached, two storey farmhouse, with attached agricultural shippin and lean-to storage extension. The property is currently vacant, with the agricultural shippin part of the building having been subject to some structural deterioration.
- 2.2 To the north of the site lies the existing vehicular access serving the farm, which connects with the carriageway of Hollins Lane to the west. The carriageway of Hollins Lane encloses the western site boundary. Agricultural fields extend northwards from the site.
- 2.3 To the south of the farmhouse lies a small brick built outhouse (Building B) beyond which lies a tall, portal framed Dutch barn style structure (Building C) under which there is located a static caravan that has been in situ on the site since approximately 2014.
- 2.4 To the southeast of the farmhouse, and east of Buildings B and C, lies a part single storey / part two storey equestrian building constructed from brickwork to its lower elevations, timber cladding to its upper elevations, and a metal sheet roof above (Building D).
- 2.5 To the south and southeast of Building D lies a somewhat dilapidated former agricultural building that extends for 46.5 metres along the field boundary in an easterly direction (Building E). Agricultural fields extend beyond those buildings to the east and also to the south.
- 2.6 The site is not within a Conservation Area, nor does the existing dwelling comprise a statutorily Listed Building. The site is located within Flood Zone 1 (low-probability of flooding).

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 recently adopted Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (2020) of which the following policies are of relevance 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, including starter 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 SS10 of the Local Plan relates to the 'Other Rural Areas Strategy' and states that these areas will provide only for development which has an essential need to be located in the countryside, supports the rural diversification and sustainability of the rural areas, promotes sustainable tourism, or enhances the countryside. The policy confirms that the Council will meet housing requirements by allowing the conversion or replacement of an existing rural building in accordance with policy H1. It also states that strict control will continue to be exercised over inappropriate development in the Green Belt, allowing only for exceptions as defined by Government policy.

3.4 Policy H1 of the Local Plan relates to 'New Housing Development' and states that 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. It goes on to state that 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. It also requires that new dwellings must be of sufficient size to provide satisfactory levels of amenity for future occupiers of the dwellings whilst respecting the privacy and amenity of occupiers of existing dwellings.

3.5 Policy H1 also states that in the rural areas, 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.

3.6 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, overbearing development, sunlight, outlook, privacy, soft landscaping as well as noise, odour and light pollution.
6. promote the maintenance, enhancement, restoration and re-creation of biodiversity and geological heritage, where appropriate.
7. provide for safe and satisfactory access and make a contribution to meeting the parking requirement arising from necessary car use.
8. require new developments to be well integrated for car, pedestrian and cycle use as well as other sustainable transport links.
9. ensure that existing drainage, waste water and sewerage infrastructure capacity is available, and where necessary enhanced, to enable the development to proceed.
10. ensure, where appropriate, equality of access and use for all sections of the community.
11. be served by high speed broadband (>30mbps) unless it can be demonstrated through consultation with Next Generation Access Network providers that this would not be possible, practical or economically viable. In all circumstances during construction of the site sufficient and suitable ducting should be provided within the site and to the property to facilitate ease of installation at a future date.

3.7 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.

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 and neighbouring areas will be conserved and enhanced by positive management and strict control of development (and having regard to relevant ecological evidence) by (amongst other measures):

- Conserving, and enhancing regional and locally designated sites. The Council will not permit 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.

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 seeks to secure the delivery of sustainable development and sets out policies, *inter-alia*, in respect of safeguarding the Green Belt, securing the sustainable reuse of buildings, delivering rural housing, securing high quality design, ensuring highway safety and achieving a net gain to biodiversity. The content of the NPPF has been taken into consideration in the preparation of this application.

SMDC Design Guide SPD

- 4.2 The adopted Design Guide SPD provides advice aimed at securing the delivery of high-quality built development within the District, and provides specific guidance in respect of conversion schemes. The content of the NPPF has been taken into consideration in the preparation of this application.

5 Planning Assessment

Green Belt

- 5.1 The application proposes the conversion and alteration of an existing building, along with the erection of residential annex in lieu of existing equestrian buildings, and the erection of a detached garage, on a site that is located within the North Staffordshire Green Belt.
- 5.2 Policy SS10 of the Local Plan confirms that strict control will be exercised over inappropriate development in the Green Belt allowing only for exceptions as defined by government policy. Paragraph 154 of the National Planning Policy Framework confirms that a local authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate within the Green Belt. It nevertheless goes on to list a number of specific exceptions which includes:

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

And

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

– not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development”

- 5.3 In addition, paragraph 155 of the National Planning Policy Framework allows for the reuse of buildings provided that the building is of a permanent and substantial construction and that the development does not give rise to harm

to the openness of the Green Belt or conflict with the purposes of including land within it (paragraph 155(d) refers).

- 5.4 The accompanying Structural Survey prepared by Fairclough Consulting Engineers serves to demonstrate that the existing shippon is capable of conversion without substantial rebuilding works. The shippon is noted to have existed on site as long as the farmhouse, and thus can be held to constitute a building that is of a permanent and substantial construction. The conversion and change of use of the shippon will furthermore not result in any loss of openness to the Green Belt nor conflict with the five purposes of including land within it. The change of use of the shippon to provide additional accommodation for the farmhouse consequently amounts to an appropriate form of development within the Green Belt in accordance with paragraph 155(d) of the NPPF.
- 5.5 The proposed re-construction of the existing lean-to building at the eastern end of the dwelling will not materially increase the size of the building over and above that which already exists, and therefore will not result in disproportionate additions to the original building. The other refurbishment works to the farmhouse will likewise not result in disproportionate additions. These works are consequently held to be appropriate forms of development in the Green Belt, in accordance with paragraph 154(c) of the NPPF.
- 5.6 The proposed residential annex involves the reuse of a previously developed site. Building D comprises of a former equestrian building which qualifies as previously developed land. It has a rectangular plan form and comprises a part single storey / part two storey structure. The proposed annex will be sited in the same general position within the site as the existing equestrian building, and likewise adopts a rectangular plan form with a part single storey / part two storey scale. In doing so the development will not have any materially greater

impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development. The proposed annex consequently amounts to an appropriate form of development within the Green Belt in accordance with paragraph 154(g) of the NPPF.

5.7 The proposed detached garage is to be sited to the south of the existing farmhouse and will replace an existing portal framed building and static caravan that are currently in situ. There is no planning history for either of these structures, but both have been in situ for a considerable period of time to the point that they can now be considered lawful. Both structures contribute little to the character and appearance of the area.

5.8 The proposed garage can be assessed as an 'extension' to the original farmhouse/shippon building, as it comprises a normal domestic adjunct, and one which will not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. The garage will comprise a modest structure and be located to the west of the proposed annex building and south of the farmhouse, and is also concluded to constitute an appropriate form of development within the Green Belt in accordance with paragraph 154(g) of the NPPF.

Rural Housing

5.9 Policies SS10 and H1 of the Local Plan provide support for the conversion of existing buildings to residential use, provided that the building is worthy in physical, architectural and character terms for conversion. The submitted Structural Survey serves to demonstrate that the existing shippon building is worthy in physical terms for conversion.

5.10 The high quality vernacular appearance of the building, its age, and use of traditional materials furthermore renders the shippon entirely appropriate in architectural and character terms for conversion to provide additional

accommodation to serve the farmhouse. The proposed development is consequently in full accordance with policies SS10 and H1 of the Local Plan.

- 5.11 The proposed residential annex is likewise acceptable in planning terms. The annex is to be located on the eastern side of the domestic curtilage of the farmhouse and will provide accommodation for occupancy by a dependant relative. The occupiers of the annex will share the existing amenity space of the farmhouse to its west, along with its vehicular access and parking area / garage. The annex will also share its service connections with the farmhouse and remain in the same ownership. No conflict with the objectives of policies SS1, SS10 or H1 of the Local Plan will arise as a consequence.

Design and Layout

- 5.12 The adopted Design Guide SPD states that:

“The guiding principle behind the design of any conversion should be that the character of the original building and its setting should be respected and retained. This means that that in most cases the barn, mill or chapel should afterwards look like a converted barn, mill or chapel, and not like a new house or a new block of flats. When converting traditional buildings, new uses should not normally require the construction of extensions or ancillary buildings. However, if alterations are necessary and approached carefully, it may be possible to bring about a new understanding of historic buildings by making a clear distinction between what is old and what is new”.

- 5.13 The submitted proposal embraces the above philosophy and adopts a highly sensitive approach to the conversion and alteration of the existing building, taking the opportunity to rebuild the partially collapsed section of the rear

elevation. The proposal also makes beneficial reuse of all the existing openings within the building, proposing the introduction of one full height opening in lieu of an existing window, and the insertion of three conservation style rooflights. By adopting this approach, the pleasant agrarian character of the existing building will be preserved.

- 5.14 The replacement of the existing lean to extension at the eastern end of the building adopts a simple, gabled style of design and deliberately uses contrasting, lightweight materials, akin to the existing extension, such that it appears as an obvious addition to the original building. The extension will not have a strident impact on the character and appearance of the area and will appear wholly subservient to the host building.
- 5.15 The proposed annex building takes its design cues from the existing building on the site, and from the adopted Design Guide. It adopts a rectangular plan form akin to that of the existing building, as well as replicating its part single storey / part two storey scale. It is to be constructed principally from red facing brickwork, with a corrugated roof to reinforce the subservient nature of the building to the farmhouse. The proposal incorporates the provision of timber cladding to the upper elevations, but this is a deliberate design choice in order to replicate the appearance of the existing building which exhibits such features. As a consequence, the proposal will not result in any material harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Its dominant ridge line, emphasised by gables, is very much in keeping with the design objectives set out within the adopted Design Guide SPD.
- 5.16 The detached garage is simple in form, with matching palette of materials to the proposed annex, and is to be sited within the existing courtyard area, replacing the poor quality portal framed building and static caravan that are currently in situ. In doing so the application takes the opportunity to remove

the poor quality elements of the site and replace them with high quality design. Such benefits carry significant weight.

5.17 Further enhancements to the character and appearance of the area will also arise as a consequence of removing the existing poor quality agricultural building on the site (Building E) which is clearly visible from the public highway, and which has a poor physical condition that detracts somewhat from the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

5.18 Having regard to the considerations set out above it is concluded that the design and layout of the development will not detract from the character and appearance of the surrounding area; rather they will serve to enhance it. The proposed development is consequently held to meet the requirements of policies SS1, H1, DC1 and DC3 of the Local Plan.

Highway Safety

5.19 The application site is served by an existing vehicular access to the north of the farmhouse that serves the existing property and the wider farmyard. No alterations are proposed to that access, other than resurfacing of the driveway leading around to the parking area which will be located within the existing farmyard. The proposal will not result in the intensification in the use of that access over and above that which already occurs.

5.20 The parking area and garage will provide space for the parking of at least four vehicles and consequently exceed the minimum requirements laid out in the adopted Car Parking Standards. The proposed development is therefore held to meet the requirements of policy T1 of the Local Plan and guidance contained within paragraph 111 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Ecology

- 5.21 The application is accompanied by a Bat Survey prepared by Evolution Ecology. The bat survey identified evidence of the farmhouse being used by a brown long eared bat, with a total of four observed during bat activity surveys. A bat licence from Natural England will consequently be required if works to re-roof the building are to be undertaken.
- 5.22 The Bat Survey also recommends the retention of the existing roost access point and a number of precautionary measures that should be adopted. The recommendations of the Bat Survey can be secured via an appropriately worded planning condition.
- 5.23 The proposed development is exempt from Biodiversity Net Gain requirements on account of the proposal not involving the loss of more than 25 square metres of habitat. The annex and garage buildings are both to be located on existing areas of hardstanding and thus no loss of habitat will be involved in the construction of the detached garage or the new build annex.
- 5.24 A net gain to biodiversity can nevertheless be secured by implementing the recommendations set out within the Bat Survey, and through proposed landscaping of the site. Such measures can be secured via planning condition and in doing so will ensure that the development meets the requirements of policy NE1 of the Local Plan and guidance contained within the NPPF.

6 Conclusion

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

- The proposal entails the change of use of an existing building that is of a permanent and substantial construction, and which is worthy in physical, architectural and character terms for conversion. These works are therefore appropriate in the Green Belt.
- The proposed extension and alteration of the existing building will not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. These works are therefore appropriate in the Green Belt.
- The proposed annex involves the redevelopment of a previously developed site within the Green Belt, which will not have any materially greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development. These works are therefore appropriate in the Green Belt.
- The garage constitutes a normal domestic adjunct to the farmhouse and will not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. It is therefore appropriate in the Green Belt.
- The design and layout of the development will safeguard the agrarian character of the building and not give rise to any harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
- The proposed development will not give rise to any severe residual impacts to highway safety.

- The proposed development will safeguard protected species on the site and provide appropriate mitigation and enhancement.

6.2 The proposed development is consequently held to meet the requirements of policies SS1, SS10, H1, DC1, DC3, NE1 and T1 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (2020), the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework, and guidance contained within the Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide SPD.