

**PLANNING, D&A
& HERITAGE STATEMENT**

**THE OLD PARLOUR
CASTLE HILL ROAD, ALTON**

SEPTEMBER 2025

Site Address:

The Old Parlour, Castle Hill Road, Alton, Staffordshire, ST10 4AJ

Applicant:

Mr. M. Tellwright

Proposal:

Demolition of existing outbuilding and erection of replacement building
for use as holiday accommodation

Planning, D&A and Heritage Statement:

Date Issued: 3rd September 2025

Job Reference: RDP/2025/077

Report Prepared By:

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Rob Duncan Planning Consultancy Ltd. has been instructed by Mr. M. Tellwright to seek full planning permission for the demolition of a former agricultural outbuilding located to the west of The Old Parlour, Castle Hill Road, Alton, and the erection of a replacement building which is to be used as holiday accommodation.
- 1.2 The existing building comprises a single storey structure with a rectangular plan form, which is constructed from coursed natural stone to its south and western elevations, rendered concrete blockwork to its eastern elevation, and a timber extension at its northern end. The building has a mono-pitched roof, finished in corrugated metal sheeting.
- 1.3 The application proposes the demolition of the existing building and the erection of a replacement building in its place. The proposed building will have a similarly rectangular plan form and occupy a floor area of 58.1 square metres. It will comprise of a single storey structure constructed from coursed natural stone, with a dual pitched Staffordshire Blue tiled roof atop.
- 1.4 The building is to be used as short stay holiday accommodation whose accommodation will comprise of an open plan lounge / kitchen / diner, with two ensuite bedrooms, and associated entrance hall and cloakroom / storage.
- 1.5 The site will be accessed off Castle Hill Road to the south, via the existing vehicular access that also serves The Old Parlour. There is a large concrete yard area that surrounds the building to its east where space for the parking of two vehicles is to be provided to serve the holiday accommodation. The remaining yard area is to be retained for use by the occupants of The Old Parlour and for turning space.

2. Site & Surroundings

- 2.1 The application site is located within the defined settlement boundary of Alton and comprises a single storey building constructed from a mixed palette of materials that is located on the northern side of Castle Hill Road. The building has a rectangular plan form and a mono-pitched roof. It is considered to contribute little to the character and appearance of the area.
- 2.2 To the east of the site lies The Old Parlour which comprises a one-and-a-half storey building finished in coursed natural stone with a Staffordshire Blue tiled roof atop. The vehicular access to The Old Parlour and the application site lies in between the two building. A concrete yard area lies to the east / northeast of the existing building and provides an extensive area of parking and turning space that is used by The Old Parlour. A garden area extends to the north, northwest and northeast.
- 2.3 To the west of the site lies the domestic curtilage of no.6 Castle Hill Road, which comprises one half of a pair of semi-detached, two storey cottages that front towards Castle Hill Road. To the south of the site on the opposite side of the road lies The Bungalow, whilst to the southeast lies the three storey form of Town Head Farmhouse (Grade II Listed). Additional listed buildings lie further to the southwest.
- 2.4 The site occupies a sustainable location that is within walking and cycling distance of the facilities on offer within the centre of Alton village. The site is also located within the Churnet Valley Master Plan Area.

3. Planning Policy

3.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the Development Plan taking into account any relevant material considerations.

3.2 The Development Plan for this area comprises the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (2020) of which the following policies are of relevance to the determination of the application:

3.3 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.

3.4 Policy SS8 of the Local Plan relates to the 'Larger Villages Area Strategy' and states that these settlements (which includes Alton) shall retain and enhance their role as rural service centres, providing for the bulk of the housing requirement of the rural areas and also for employment needs of a scale and type appropriate to each settlement having regard to infrastructure capacity and character. The Council and its partners will achieve this through a number of actions, including:

- Giving priority to the reuse and regeneration of existing redundant, underused or surplus sites and premises for new development
- Ensuring that development is of a suitable scale in relation to the role and function of the villages as set out in the Spatial Strategy

- Protecting and enhancing the setting and historic character of the village, including heritage assets

3.5 Policy SS11 of the Local Plan relates to the 'Churnet Valley Strategy' and states that within this area particular support will be given to the following forms of development and measures:

- Short stay and long stay visitor accommodation;
- The expansion of existing tourist attractions and facilities and the provision of compatible new tourist attractions and facilities;
- Measures to enhance, protect and interpret the landscape character and heritage assets of the Churnet Valley;
- Measures to remediate and restore derelict land, buildings and features including the appropriate redevelopment of sites;
- Actions to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the valley, including the maintenance, buffering and connection of designated sites and actions to mitigate climate change.
- Measures that support and integrate the heritage transport infrastructure of the valley, sympathetically with enhancing and developing links to strategic footpaths, cycle and horse riding routes.
- Measures to improve connectivity and accessibility to and within the Churnet Valley by sustainable transport means having regard to the Green Infrastructure Strategy.

- 3.6 Policy SS11 goes on to state that any development should be of a scale and nature and of a high standard of design which conserves and enhances the heritage, landscape and biodiversity of the area. Strong sustainable development and environmental management principles should also be demonstrated. The consideration of landscape character will be paramount in all development proposals in order to protect and conserve locally distinctive qualities and sense of place and to maximise opportunities for restoring, strengthening and enhancing distinctive landscape features.
- 3.7 Policy E4 of the Local Plan relates to 'Tourism and Cultural Development' and states that new tourism and cultural development which complements the distinctive character and quality of the District will be supported having regard to the Area Strategies in Policies SS5 to SS10. In addition:
1. New tourist, visitor and cultural accommodation, attractions and facilities should be developed in locations that offer, or are capable of offering either:
 - A) good connectivity with other tourist destinations and amenities, particularly by public transport, walking and cycling; or
 - B) in locations in or close to settlements where local services, facilities and public transport are available; or
 - C) in areas specifically identified for tourism development in the Churnet Valley Masterplan or other relevant documents.
- 3.8 Policy E4 goes on to state that new accommodation, attractions and facilities should support the provision and expansion of tourist, visitor and cultural facilities in the rural areas where needs are not met by existing facilities, and
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that all development shall be of an appropriate quality, scale and character compatible with the local area, protect the residential amenity of the area, enhance the heritage, landscape and biodiversity of the area and shall not harm interests of acknowledged importance

3.9 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;
- 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;

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

1. The Council will conserve and where possible enhance heritage assets, including their setting in a manner appropriate to their significance. This will take into account the desirability of maintaining and enhancing their significance and will ensure that development proposals contribute positively to the character of the built and historic environment.

2. Protection will be given to designated heritage assets and their settings and non-designated heritage assets as set out in the NPPF.
 3. All applications likely to affect heritage assets will require the submission of a heritage statement, including a qualitative visual assessment where appropriate.
 4. Where development is likely to affect archaeology, both designated and undesignated, the Council requires the submission of a desk based assessment, and where appropriate, field surveys and trench evaluation by a qualified professional.
 5. Where the loss of significance is unavoidable, recording should take place and this should be added to the Historic Environment Record as a minimum, held by Staffordshire County Council.
 6. The Council will continue its proactive approach to heritage assets at risk and welcomes development proposals which would result in the sympathetic reuse of these assets in line with NPPF policy.
 7. The Council will promote development which sustains, respects or enhances buildings and features which contribute to the character or heritage of an area and those interests of acknowledged importance through the use of Conservation Area Appraisals, Design Guidance and Statements, Archaeological Assessments, Characterisation Studies and Masterplanning.
- 3.11 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
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travel generally and accommodates residual development traffic in line with the Integrated Transport Strategy. This will be achieved by (amongst other measures):

- 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.
- Considering appropriate parking provision on a case by case basis with recourse to the parking guidance set out in Appendix 2.

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 boosting the rural economy, safeguarding heritage assets, and ensuring highway safety. The content of the NPPF has been taken into account in the preparation of this application.

SMDC Tourism Strategy (2022-2027)

- 4.2 The adopted Tourism Strategy places an emphasis on raising the profile of the Staffordshire Moorlands so that it becomes a stronger destination as a place for both day visits and longer holidays, improving the current offer and unlocking the District's potential and boost the local economy. The content of this document has been taken into consideration in the preparation of this application.

Churnet Valley Master Plan (2014)

- 4.3 The Churnet Valley Master Plan Supplementary Planning Document sets out guidance aimed at promoting and enhancing the Churnet Valley as a tourist destination within the Moorlands. The content of the Master Plan has been taken into consideration in the preparation of this application.

Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide SPD

- 4.4 The adopted Design Guide SPD sets out guidance aimed at securing high quality design within the Moorlands, including considerations such as form, detailed design and materials. The content of the Design Guide has been taken into consideration in the preparation of this application.

5 Planning Assessment

Principle of Development

- 5.1 The application proposes the demolition of the existing agricultural outbuilding on the site, and its replacement with a new building that is to be used for short-stay holiday accommodation. The site is located within the defined settlement boundary of Alton village, wherein support is afforded to the provision of small-scale tourism developments by policies SS8, SS11 and E4 of the Local Plan.
- 5.2 Specifically, this site has good connectivity with other tourist destinations and amenities, by both public transport, walking and cycling. The site is also located within an existing settlement where local services, facilities and public transport options are available. The principle of development is consequently held to be acceptable.
- 5.3 Support for the proposal is also afforded by the Local Authority's adopted Tourism Strategy and Churnet Valley Master Plan. The Tourism Strategy sets out a series of aims and objectives aimed at growing the tourism economy in the Moorlands, including the following:
- Get visitors to stay longer in the area by developing itineraries that combine Alton Towers with other experiences especially 'Activities' and 'Attractions', moving from a day visit to an overnight, or a 1 night to a 2 night visit.
 - Encourage accommodation development – small scale, quality, catered & self-catered that keeps visitors in the local area.

- Expand, improve and encourage the development of accommodation to attract visitors to stay overnight and keep their spending in the local area rather than losing it to neighbouring regions.
- Encourage accommodation development in the towns/villages, at existing sites where services are already in place.

2.5 The submitted proposal firmly accords with these aims and objectives, and will provide one small-scale unit of self-catered holiday accommodation, in a sustainable location within the built up area of Alton village, that is within easy reach of existing services and facilities, and which will help to facilitate additional overnight stays within the District.

2.6 The benefits of this proposal to the tourism economy carries significant weight in favour of permission being granted and reinforces the overall conclusion that the proposal is consistent with the requirements of policies SS8, SS11 and E4 of the Local Plan.

Heritage – Assessment of Significance

5.4 The application site is located to the north side of Castle Hill Road at the northeast boundary of Alton village. The Old Parlour is a one-and-a-half storey barn conversion sitting parallel along the roadside. The barn was originally part of the Town Head Farmstead before permission for conversion was granted in the early 2000s. The outbuilding to be demolished lies to the west of The Old Parlour, perpendicular to the road.

5.5 Consultation of the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record returns 3 records within a 100m radius of the site. These are Town Head Farm (MST14099), Town Head Farmhouse (MST9736), and Cow House at Town Head Farm (MST9737). Both the farmhouse and cow house are also Grade II listed.

- 5.6 The site also lies within the boundary of Alton & Farley Conservation Area, designated in 1971. The Conservation Area covers Alton Towers and its park together with both Alton and Farley villages. The Conservation Area Appraisal (adopted 2008) describes the area known as Town Head as occupying “a substantial plateau above the village centre.” Town Head was the standard name for one end of a planned medieval settlement.
- 5.7 An Historic Character Assessment (HCA) was carried out by Staffordshire County Council in 2013 as part of the Staffordshire Extensive Urban Survey (EUS). This locates the area around The Old Parlour and Town Head Farm within Historic Urban Character Area (HUCA) 3: Town Head.
- 5.8 The HCA states that the origins of this area are uncertain due to a lack of archaeological work, but surmises it once comprised the earliest settlement at Alton. The street layout suggests it formed part of the medieval planned town, with Town Head forming the principal street, flanked by two back lanes to the north (Castle Hill Road) and south (Back Lane).
- 5.9 The HCA provides an assessment of significance for this portion of Alton’s Conservation Area, utilising the set of values (evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal), outlined within Historic England’s ‘Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance’ (2008).
- 5.10 Evidential value is high due to the potential for surviving below ground archaeological remains, which may provide evidence for early medieval settlement. It also describes the potential for historic buildings to yield earlier origins.
- 5.11 Historic value is high due to the number of legible heritage assets and medieval street pattern within the area. Aesthetic value is also high due to the historic character and relationship between “the buildings, their plots and the street

pattern". However, communal value is low due to the area being mostly comprised of private housing.

- 5.12 Town Head Farm is situated approximately 20m to the southeast of the development site. The HER describes Town Head Farm as:

"a farmstead of probable 17th century origin. The farm has a dispersed multi-yard plan with a surviving 17th century farmhouse and separate cowhouse (giving a relative date for the farm. The farm has suffered partial alteration over time."

- 5.13 The 1851 census shown Town Head farm as one of only two farmsteads in Alton, covering some 200 acres. The farmhouse is described as:

"a listed farmhouse of 17th century origin, remodelled in the late 18th century. The farmhouse is of ashlar construction with herringbone tooling and a plain tile roof. The farmhouse has a date stone inscribed W.B. 1626 as well as a circular sundial dated 1787."

- 5.14 The HE listing description (HE Ref 275057), expands on this...

"Late C18 remodelling of a C17 house, with later alterations. Ashlar with herringbone tooling; plain tile roof with coped verges; brick integral end stacks. Main house aligned east-west facing south, 2 rear wings aligned north-south, linked by a central outshut. 3 storeys with coved eaves; 3 bays, 3-light flat face mullioned windows to second floor left and right, single-light casement to second floor centre in original surround, otherwise C20 casements; semi-circular step to central door with reeded pilasters and open pediment over a fanlight; circular sundial

dated 1787 to first floor left of centre. The single-bay rear wings have 3-light flat face mullioned windows. Interior: Date stone inscribed W.B. 1626 over the arch to a former stone staircase."

- 5.15 However, the house was previously inspected in 2023 by heritage consultant, Mr Philip Heath, as part of an application for listed building consent for repairs to the external envelope of the building (SMD/2023/0370). On inspection of the property, Mr Heath found that "it appears to date wholly from the late 18th century". He surmises that much of the building, including the 1626 date stone, may have been repurposed from elsewhere.
- 5.16 From the Tithe Map (1843), it seems the farm originally belonged to the Earl of Shrewsbury (of Alton Towers). Tenant farmers lived and worked on the farm, and it appears to have remained in the estate's ownership until its sale in 1918, when it was described as a farm of 156 acres (Heath, 2023).
- 5.17 Mr Heath describes the farmhouse as "built on formal Georgian principles." It is symmetrical in elevation, with diminishing proportions to each of the upper storeys. He states that the casement windows and mullions acknowledge the local vernacular, while the fine stone doorcase "could be straight from the pattern book of a [national] architect."
- 5.18 The plan form contains one good room either side of a central staircase within the front range, while the two rear ranges also contain singular rooms (with later subdivisions) stacked on top of one another and linked by a single storey outshut. The interior décor is apparently modest and sparing, as would be expected within an estate farmhouse.
- 5.19 Mr Heath goes on to state that, though the exterior of the farmhouse is in generally good repair, it has been severely disfigured by unsympathetic

alterations, particularly to the windows and doors. The property, currently divided into flats, has also been under-maintained and is in need of repair.

5.20 From this description, it's clear that the farmhouse retains a moderate level of evidential value and historic value. There is clearly potential for earlier pieces, such as beams and panelling, to have been repurposed. However, it would require further investigation to establish whether this provides evidence of an earlier property on the site, or whether they are likely to have come from elsewhere. Nevertheless, the property is clearly a strong example of an 18th century estate farmhouse, with a legible Georgian plan form and some original internal features.

5.21 Aesthetic value, whilst often subjective, is also moderate. The Georgian symmetry and the fine stone doorcase are particularly pleasing, but the appearance has been significantly impacted by modern interventions, particularly alterations to the windows. As a private residence, communal value remains relatively low.

5.22 The Cow House is situated approximately 25m southwest of the development site. The HER describes it as *"a stone built barn of probable 17th century date. The barn measures 102ft by 21ft externally and has five bays (with an external buttress at the division of each bay). The tiled roof is gabled at both ends and has a stable with living quarters above."*

5.23 The barn is also Grade II listed (LEN 1191400), with the following description:

"Cowhouse. C17 with later addition. Ashlar with herringbone tooling; plain tile roof. 5-bay range aligned east-west with a single bay extension to the west. North side: one storey and attic, main range to left, extension to the right. Main range: buttresses at the bay divisions, door to right of centre; casement to left of

centre, square window opening to left with boarded door, square loft openings to left and right. Extension: chamfered eaves band and coped verges. Left hand gable: central loft door with pigeon holes over. Right hand gable: 2 ground floor doors and central loft door. South side: main range to right, extension to left. Main range: buttresses at the bay divisions, doors to right, left and centre; 3 windows, one to the left of each door, square loft opening to the right. Extension: large inserted cart entrance to the right, rectangular loft opening to the left”.

- 5.24 The barn’s location in relation to the farmhouse, running parallel to the road, with a further barn (The Old Parlour) to the opposite side of the land, reflects a “separated parallel farmstead” arrangement (Brunskill, 2000). The building is typical of a 17th/18th century cow byre, with hayloft above. Additional openings were likely added during the 19th century due to changing laws on ventilation and hygiene within agricultural buildings. The two storey stable building is also a later extension. The cow house, now known as Castle Barns, was converted into 3 residential units following planning and listed building consent in the mid-1990s, which also resulted in the addition of new windows and rooflights.
- 5.25 Most surviving agricultural buildings date from the late 18th or early 19th century, so the age of the cow house, likely contemporary with the 18th century farmhouse, lends weight to its historical significance. Without internal inspection it is difficult to determine potential for archaeological remnants, but it may be that, like the farmhouse, some elements have been repurposed. Together with the farmhouse and The Old Parlour, the building provides clear evidence of a typical North Staffordshire farmstead, and historic value is increased by the relative rarity of such examples within the village of Alton.

- 5.26 Conversion of the barn, with its associated modern interventions, does limit significance, particularly as such interventions can impact legibility. However, it also ensures continued maintenance and survival of this historic building which, in turn, also adds positive aesthetic and communal value to the area.

Heritage – Assessment of Impact

- 5.27 Having regard to the considerations set out above, it is clear that both the Town Head farmstead and the Alton & Farley Conservation Area retain moderate to high levels of significance. The Old Parlour also makes a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area and the setting of the listed buildings, having been originally part of the Town Head farmstead, adding to the historic legibility of both the farm and the wider area.
- 5.28 The development site currently comprises a modern agricultural outbuilding sitting perpendicular to the road. A parapet wall to the roadside elevation is constructed in ashlar stone, behind which the monopitch building is constructed primarily of modern rendered blockwork. The building contains large timber double doors and white uPVC windows. Historic mapping through the 19th century shows no outbuilding sited here, so it is unlikely to have been constructed on any historic footprint or utilising any repurposed materials beyond the small amount of ashlar stonework.
- 5.29 It is proposed to demolish the outbuilding and replace it with a single storey holiday let with a similar orientation and rectangular plan form. The walls will be constructed in stone, reutilising the existing cut stone where possible, with a Staffordshire blue tile pitched roof. Windows and doors are to be double glazed timber casements to match the adjacent barn conversion. A very similar scheme for the site was previously approved in 2006 (SMD/2005/1388) though not implemented.

- 5.30 The outbuilding as it currently stands has very limited visibility within the Conservation Area and the setting of the listed buildings, as it sits relatively hidden behind the parapet wall and other boundary treatments along Castle Hill Road. As such, its contribution is largely neutral, though glimpses of its modern monopitch roof and rendered blockwork are at odds with the local vernacular.
- 5.31 Its replacement with a single storey building constructed in stone, with a tiled roof and agricultural detailing, is largely in keeping with the surrounding character and represents a marked improvement over the current building. As such, the proposal will make a positive contribution to the area by replacing a somewhat negative/neutral modern outbuilding with a traditionally detailed single storey 'barn' similar to The Old Parlour and Castle Barns.
- 5.32 Having regard to the considerations set out above, the proposal will not give rise to any harm to the significance of the Alton & Farley Conservation Area, nor that of nearby heritage assets. Indeed, it can be considered to represent a modest enhancement to the area. The proposal is consequently held to meet the requirements of policy DC2 of the Local Plan and guidance set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Design & Layout

- 5.33 The proposed building has been designed to reflect the character and appearance of traditional vernacular buildings located within the surrounding area, adopting a simple rectangular plan form that respects the character of the existing building, whilst taking the opportunity to enhance its appearance by utilising a more appropriate palette of materials and introducing a dual pitched Staffordshire Blue tiled roof.

- 5.34 The resultant development is considered to be in accordance with the design recommendations set out within the adopted Design Guide SPD, in particular its low ground hugging form, strong dominant ridgeline emphasised by gables and the use of vernacular materials. In doing so the proposal will serve to enhance the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
- 5.35 There are no principal windows that face directly towards the building, and no contravention of the Local Authority's minimum interface distances will arise. The use of the building as a holiday let will furthermore not derive any greater impact to neighbouring amenity than that which would otherwise be expected from the continued residential use of the wider site. A previous application for the conversion of the existing building to holiday accommodation was furthermore approved on this site, with no such concerns being raised.
- 5.36 The proposed development is consequently held to represent a high quality design that will be in keeping with the character and appearance of the area and which will not detract from the amenity of neighbouring occupiers, in accordance with the requirements of policies SS1, SS8 and DC1 of the Local Plan, and guidance set out within the National Planning Policy Framework and the adopted Design Guide SPD.

Highway Safety

- 5.37 The site benefits from an existing means of vehicular access off Castle Hill Road, which serves a large area of existing hardstanding. The existing hardstanding provides an extensive area for the parking of vehicles, including two spaces that are to be provided for users of the holiday accommodation. Associated manouvering space is also available so that vehicles exiting the site may do so in a forward gear.

- 5.38 The access egresses out onto Castle Hill Road, which is not a busy road, and one where vehicles travel slowly. The modest intensification in the use of the existing vehicular access will consequently not give rise to any significant adverse impact to highway safety within the locality. The proposed development is duly held to meet the requirements of policy T2 of the Local Plan in this regard.

Ecology / Biodiversity Net Gain

- 5.39 The existing building on the site is noted to have a metal roof, which is not conducive to supporting roosting bats, and consequently no bat survey has been undertaken to accompany the application.
- 5.40 The proposal is furthermore exempt from statutory biodiversity net gain requirements, as it will not result in the loss of any habitat from the site.
- 5.41 The applicant is nevertheless agreeable to installing a new bird box onto the building in order to achieve a net gain to biodiversity in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 192 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

6 Conclusion

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

- The site is located within the defined settlement boundary of Alton and entails the re-development of an existing site. The principle of development is therefore acceptable.
- The proposal will support the objectives of the Tourism Strategy by facilitating more overnight stays within the District.
- The proposal will not give rise to any harm to the significance of the Conservation Area or to nearby heritage assets.
- The design and layout of the development will enhance the character and appearance of the area, and will not give rise to harm to neighbouring amenity.
- The proposed development will not detract from highway safety within the locality and will provide adequate off-street parking to meet the needs of the development.
- The development will deliver a net gain to biodiversity, despite being exempt from statutory biodiversity net gain requirements.

6.2 The proposed development is consequently held to meet the requirements of policies SS1, SS8, SS11, DC1, DC2 and T1 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan, and guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework, the Staffordshire Moorlands Design SPD and the Space about Dwellings SPG.

7 Sources

Historic England

Staffordshire HER

National Heritage Gateway

National Library of Scotland Historic Maps

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council

Alton & Farley Conservation Area Appraisal (Adopted February 2008)

Alton Historic Character Assessment (Staffordshire County Council, 2013)

Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (Historic England, 2008)

Vernacular Architecture: An Illustrated Handbook (R.W. Brunskill, 2000)

Design, Access and Heritage Statement to accompany proposals for repair and restoration of the exterior of the Grade II listed farmhouse (Philip Heath, 2023)