

PLANNING STATEMENT

**OVERTON FARM
HOLLINGTON**

NOVEMBER 2025

Site Address:

Overton Farm, Fole Lane, Hollington, Staffordshire, ST10 4HW

Applicant:

Mr. & Mrs. Bloor

Proposal:

Retention of existing outbuilding and change of use to form holiday accommodation

Planning Statement:

Date Issued: 21st November 2025

Job Reference: RDP/2025/094

Report Prepared By:

Rob Duncan BSc(Hons) MA MRTPI
Rob Duncan Planning Consultancy Ltd

Contact Details:

Rob Duncan Planning Consultancy Ltd.
St. Mary's Old School, Minster Pool Walk, Lichfield, WS13 6QT
Email: rob78duncan@gmail.com
Tel. 07779 783521

1. Introduction & Background

- 1.1 Rob Duncan Planning Consultancy has been instructed by Mr. & Mrs. Bloor to seek full planning permission for the retention of an existing outbuilding at Overton Farm, Fole Lane, Hollington, to form a holiday cottage.
- 1.2 By way of background, a single storey outbuilding has existed on this site for a considerable period of time, appearing on aerial photographs as far back as 2003. Historically this building was used as kennels. The building at that time had an 'L' shaped footprint and occupied a floor area of approximately 37 square metres.
- 1.3 At some point between 2010 and 2013, the building has been replaced and enlarged at its eastern end by way of a single storey extension, and by a rear extension sometime between 2017 and 2020. The building as it now exists comprises of a 'T' shaped structure occupying a footprint of 70.8. It is constructed from a mixture of natural stone and facing brickwork to its elevations, with a Staffordshire Blue tiled roof atop.
- 1.4 During the determination of a previously withdrawn application for the change of use of the outbuilding to a dwellinghouse (SMD/2025/0296) the Local Authority concluded that the works to the building have not been substantially completed and that consequently they do not benefit from an amenity from enforcement action.
- 1.5 This application has been submitted to regularise the situation and to secure planning permission for the change of use of that building to a holiday cottage. The accommodation of the cottage will comprise of a kitchen / dining room, snug/living room, with double bedroom and bathroom. External alterations are proposed in the form of the insertion of new windows and doors into existing openings. No new openings are proposed.

- 1.6 An area of amenity space is to be provided to serve the holiday cottage which will wrap around its southern, eastern and northern flanks of the building and also extend eastwards away from it. The southern flank of the amenity space will be enclosed by an existing brick wall that separates the site from the farmhouse beyond.
- 1.7 The site will be accessed via the existing driveway serving Overton Farm, with off-street parking for two vehicles to be provided alongside the western flank of the building on an existing area of hardstanding. The applicant is furthermore proposing to install an EV charging point to serve one of those parking spaces.

2 Site Description

- 2.1 The application site is located within the rural area, and comprises an aesthetically pleasing, single storey former kennel building of vernacular design that is constructed from a mixture of natural stone and facing brickwork, with a Staffordshire Blue tiled roof atop.
- 2.2 The building is located to the north/northwest of the existing farmhouse, and is separated from it by a brick wall. An area of hardstanding lies to the south, west and east of the building, and which also connects with the existing vehicular access to the site which runs up from the south.
- 2.3 To the west of the building lies a detached triple garage and beyond that a stable block. To the north of the building lies a cluster of agricultural buildings. To the east lies a former agricultural building that has been in commercial use since 2005.
- 2.4 The building on the site is not statutorily listed, nor does it lie within a Conservation Area. The site as a whole is located within Flood Zone 1 (low-probability of flooding).
- 2.5 The site benefits from close proximity to the extensive footpath and bridleway network that provides direct access to the surrounding countryside as well as local facilities in Hollington.

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 following documents:

- Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (Adopted 2020)
- Checkley Neighbourhood Plan (Made 2024)

3.2 The following policies of the Development Plan are of relevance to the determination of this application.

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan

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 SS10 of the Local Plan relates to the 'Other Rural Areas Strategy' and confirms that the other rural areas comprise the countryside and the green belt outside of the development boundaries of the towns and larger villages and the open countryside surrounding the smaller villages. The policy goes on to state that these areas will provide only for development which has an essential need to be located in the countryside, supports the rural diversification and sustainability of the rural areas, promotes sustainable tourism or enhances the countryside. This will be achieved via a number of actions, including enhancing tourist opportunities by:

- Allowing for small-scale tourism developments in other areas

3.5 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.

3.6 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 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

3.7 Policy DC1 of the Local Plan relates to 'Design Considerations' and states that all development shall be well designed and reinforce local distinctiveness by positively contributing to and complementing the special character and

heritage of the area in line with the Council's Design Guide SPD. In particular, new development should (amongst other requirements):

- be of a high quality and add value to the local area, incorporating creativity, detailing and materials appropriate to the character of the area
- be designed to respect the site and its surroundings and promote a positive sense of place and identity through its scale, height, density, layout, siting, landscaping, character and appearance
- protect the amenity of the area, including creation of healthy active environments and residential amenity, in terms of satisfactory daylight, visual impact, sunlight, outlook, privacy, soft landscaping as well as noise, odour and light pollution
- provide for safe and satisfactory access and make a contribution to meeting the parking requirement arising from necessary car use

3.8 Policy 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 (amongst other requirements):

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.

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2. Considering appropriate parking provision on a case by case basis with recourse to the parking guidance set out in Appendix 2.
 3. 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.
- 3.9 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
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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.

Checkley Neighbourhood Plan

3.10 Policy EMP2 of the Neighbourhood Plan relates to 'Rural Business Diversity and Growth' and states that:

1. Development proposals that will result in a growth of rural enterprise and tourism will be supported where:
 - there is no significant adverse impact on the amenities of nearby residential properties or landscape character;
 - they demonstrate consideration of any opportunities for sustainable travel; and
 - the scale of development is appropriate in accordance with Local Plan policies

3.11 Policy DES1 of the Neighbourhood Plan relates to 'Design and states that:

1. Development must be well designed and sustainable, comprising distinctive and site-specific design, and meeting the following requirements of this policy, proportionate to the scale and nature of the scheme.
2. Development must complement the surrounding townscape in terms of scale, height, massing, spacing, and degree of set-back from streets.
3. Development must support active travel and create attractive, safe and convenient environments for pedestrians and cyclists, including:
 - a) Streets and spaces overlooked by active building frontages, to create natural surveillance:
 - b) Safe and accessible routes on foot, by wheelchair and bicycle to local services, facilities, green spaces and public transport.
4. Parking should be well designed, as an integral part of development, including:
 - a) Providing for parking of vehicles as an integral part of the layout, so that it does not dominate the streets and spaces.
 - b) Ensuring parking provision within the curtilage of each dwelling should be proportionate to the size of the property.
5. Use of local or recycled materials, where available.
6. Innovative architectural and building design will be particularly welcomed, especially where it involves superior environmental performance.

7. Development proposals should identify views into and out of the site, and local landmarks, considered to be of merit, and demonstrate how the layout and design of the proposal responds to views and landmarks identified.
8. Development should have no adverse impact from drainage of surface water and should:
 - a) Provide permeable hard surfaces, to allow water to drain away;
 - b) Take opportunities to incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage into landscape design of all major developments

4 Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) seeks to secure the delivery of sustainable development and sets out policies, *inter-alia*, in respect of significantly boosting the supply of housing, securing high quality design, and ensuring highway safety. The content of the NPPF has been taken into consideration 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.

Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide SPD

- 4.3 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

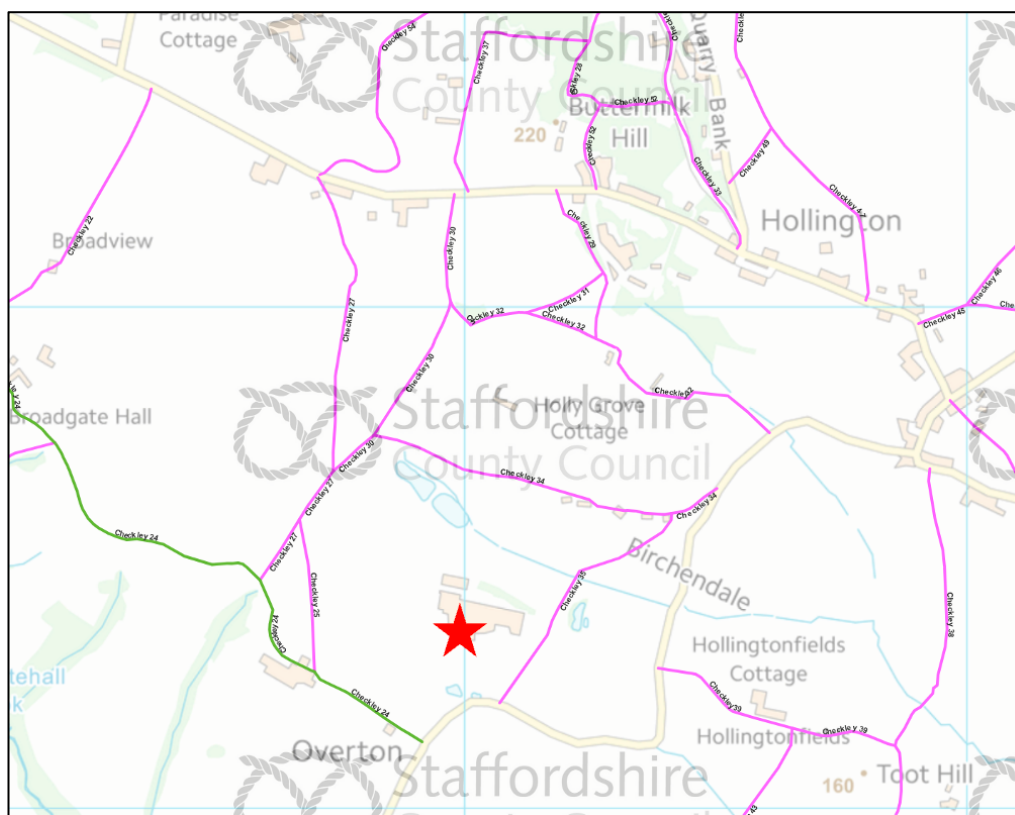
5.1 The application site is located within the rural area, wherein policies SS10 and E4 of the Local Plan give support to small-scale tourism developments, with the latter policy stating that new tourist and visitor accommodation should be developed in locations that offer either:

- 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.

5.2 The application site benefits from close proximity to the main attraction of the Staffordshire Moorlands, that being its rural landscape. The Checkley Neighbourhood Plan elaborates on this, confirming that the parish offers tourism and leisure activities commensurate with access to “an attractive and diverse rural landscape, walking, outdoor pursuits, adventure pursuits, horse riding, fishing, cycling and play” (paragraph 3.36).

5.3 The site is located in close proximity to an extensive range of public footpaths and bridleways (see Figure 1 overleaf) which provide ease of access to the surrounding countryside, as well as good connectivity to tourist attractions within Hollington village (The Raddle Inn, St. John The Evangelist Church and the Star inn Restaurant – currently closed) which lie circa 1.5km away. Compliance with policies SS10 and E4 of the Local Plan is therefore achieved.

Figure 1 – Public Footpath / Bridleway Map



- 5.4 Support for the proposal is also afforded by policy EMP2 of the Neighbourhood Plan which states that development proposals that will result in a growth of rural enterprise and tourism will be supported where there is no significant adverse impact on the amenities of nearby residential properties or landscape character, they demonstrate consideration of any opportunities for sustainable travel and the scale of development is appropriate in accordance with Local Plan policies. The explanatory text confirms that this is:

“an enabling policy, to encourage expansion of visitor accommodation and facilities” (our emphasis)

- 5.5 The proposed holiday accommodation will support rural tourism within the area, and will not have any adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers, the owners of the site living in the farmhouse next door. The

proposed development furthermore does not have an adverse impact on landscape character. The building is discreetly positioned to the northwest of the farmhouse and adjacent to a large three bay garage and stable blocks. To the rear of the building lie a number of agricultural buildings, and former agricultural buildings that have been used for commercial purposes since 2005. The single storey form of the building, coupled with its discreet location, means no harm to landscape character arises.

- 5.6 There are no public transport options available directly adjacent to the site, but connections do exist a short walk from the site on the Uttoxeter Road (1.2km). The site also offers connectivity with local attractions on foot and by bicycle. The location of the site within the rural area, itself one of, if not the main attraction of the Staffordshire Moorlands, also means that visitors will be staying within the attraction itself. The proposal is also a small-scale facility, providing accommodation for just two people. Compliance with policy EMP2 of the Neighbourhood Plan is therefore achieved.
- 5.7 Two local Airbnb facilities are very popular and are understood to operate at a high capacity, which provides encouragement that there is a demand for people to visit this area. The accommodation will also provide opportunities for workers or corporate visitors to JCB Headquarters a short distance away to stay over, as well as attracting guests attending the LivGolf tournament and JCB Rocester, and those visiting Alton Towers.
- 5.8 The provisions of paragraph 88 of the National Planning Policy Framework also weigh in favour of planning permission being granted. It states that planning decisions should enable:

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

and

*“sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which
respect the character of the countryside”*

- 5.9 Paragraph 89 of the NPPF adds that planning decisions should recognise that sites to meet needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to, or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads, and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable.
- 5.10 The proposal represents a diversification of the applicant’s existing agricultural business and will provide it with an additional revenue stream to help sustain the business into the future. The proposal also respects the character and appearance of the countryside and will provide a sustainable form of tourism accommodation that is located within the rural landscape which constitutes the main attraction of the Moorlands, and which has access to the extensive public footpath and bridleway network. The applicant is agreeable to providing space within the site for the secure storage of cycles so as encourage exploration of the surrounding area by such means, and will also be providing an EV charging point to encourage the use of electric vehicles. The provisions of paragraphs 88 and 89 of the NPPF are consequently held to weigh in favour of planning permission being granted.
- 5.11 The provisions of the Local Authority’s adopted Tourism Strategy are also of direct relevance to this proposal. Facilitating more overnight stays is a key objective of the Tourism Strategy, which identifies a lack of accommodation

investment and a dominance of day visitors as being a weaknesses of the tourism economy in the Staffordshire Moorlands. The Tourism Strategy goes on to set out a series of aims and objectives aimed at growing the tourism economy, 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.

5.12 The submitted proposal firmly accords with these aims and objectives, and will provide one small-scale unit of self-catered accommodation that will help to support additional overnight stays within the District, and which affords direct access to the surrounding landscape via the public footpath / bridleway network and is within walking distance of the local public house.

5.13 Having regard to the above considerations it is submitted that the proposed development is in accordance with the requirements of policies SS10 and E4 of the Local Plan and policy EMP2 of the Neighbourhood Plan, as well as meeting the objectives of paragraphs 88 and 89 of the NPPF and the provisions of the Tourism Strategy. The proposed development is therefore acceptable in principle.

Design & Layout

- 5.14 The building constructed on site has an aesthetically pleasing appearance that respects local vernacular, and which is constructed from vernacular materials, including red facing brickwork and stone, with a Staffordshire blue tiled roof atop. It is an attractive building and one which complements the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
- 5.15 The submitted proposal works constructively with the constraints of the existing building, making beneficial reuse of existing openings, without the requiring the insertion of any new ones. No extensions are proposed, nor are any outbuildings.
- 5.16 The existing area of hardstanding around the building is to be retained as patio area, with an area of amenity space also extending further eastwards away from the building, providing an area of seclusion for guests using the accommodation.
- 5.17 As discussed in paragraph 5.5 above, the building is discreetly positioned to the northwest of the farmhouse and adjacent to a large three bay garage and stable blocks. The building also lies in close proximity to a range of existing agricultural buildings and former agricultural buildings that have been used for commercial purposes since 2005, which lie to the north and east.
- 5.18 The proposed development will consequently derive no harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area and will provide an acceptable level of residential amenity for future occupiers of the dwelling, in accordance with the objectives of policies SS1 and DC1 of the Local Plan and policy DES1 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Highway Safety

- 5.19 The application site benefits from an existing means of access off Fole Lane that serves the existing farmhouse and the adjacent agricultural and commercial buildings associated with Overton Farm. That access will also be used to serve the holiday cottage, and is one which benefits from good visibility in both directions on egress from the site onto Fole Lane.
- 5.20 The application also makes provision for the parking of two vehicles alongside the building which is more than sufficient to meet the needs of the proposed development. An EV charging point is also to be provided. The submitted proposal will therefore not lead to any severe residual impacts to highway safety and meets the requirements of policy T1 of the Local Plan and guidance within the NPPF.

Protected Species

- 5.21 The application is accompanied by a Bat and Bird Survey prepared by Tamworth Property Services which has assessed the building for evidence of bats and/or potential roosting opportunities for bats. The preliminary survey of the building revealed some evidence of potential use by bats (discarded butterfly wings), and consequently bat emergence surveys were recommended to determine if the building was in actual use by bats.
- 5.22 Emergence surveys were subsequently undertaken and served to confirm that there was no evidence of the building being used by bats. The Bat and Bird survey concludes that the butterfly wing fragments are likely to be from the swallows that were observed nesting in the building. Other potential roosting opportunities were identified, but those will not be affected by the proposed conversion works. The development may therefore proceed without the need for a bat licence from Natural England.

- 5.23 The Bat and Bird Survey goes on to recommend some bat enhancement measures that should be incorporated into the building, and these can be secured via an appropriately worded condition. Likewise, the precautionary measures set out within the report can also be secured via condition. In doing so no conflict with policy NE1 of the Local Plan will arise.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 5.24 The proposal is exempt from the statutory requirement to achieve a 10% net gain to biodiversity, as the area in and around the building is laid as hardstanding. No loss of habitat will therefore ensue as a consequence of the development. The proposal therefore benefits from the de-minimis exemption.

6 Conclusion

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

- The proposal constitutes an appropriate form of tourism development that will help to facilitate more overnight stays within the District.
- The proposed development will not derive any material adverse impacts to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
- The proposal will not result in any severe residual impacts to highway safety.
- The proposal will not impact upon protected species.
- The proposal is exempt from statutory biodiversity net gain requirements.

6.2 The proposed development is consequently held to meet the requirements of policies SS1, SS10, E4, DC1, T1 and NE1 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan, policies EMP2 and DES1 of the Checkley Neighbourhood Plan, guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework and accords with the objectives of the adopted Tourism Strategy.