

PLANNING STATEMENT

**THE COTTAGE, HILL TOP
BROWN EDGE**

FEBRUARY 2026

Site Address:

The Cottage, Hill Top, Brown Edge, Staffordshire, ST6 8TY

Appellant:

Mr. & Mrs. Corbett

Proposal:

Erection of replacement outbuilding to form residential annex

Planning Statement:

Date Issued: 9th February 2026

Job Reference: RDP/2026/007

Report Prepared By:

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Rob Duncan Planning Consultancy Ltd. has been instructed by Mr. & Mrs. Corbett to prepare a Planning Statement to accompany a householder planning application for the erection of a replacement outbuilding at The Cottage, Hill Top, Brown Edge.
- 1.2 The existing outbuilding comprises of a detached garage and store, with a volume of 263m³, and standing to a ridge height of 5.5 metres. It comprises of a double garage with storage area at ground floor, with stairs leading up to a hobby room at first floor within the roofspace.
- 1.3 The application proposes to demolish the existing outbuilding and erect a new residential annex in its place. The proposed annex will have a volume of 335m³ and stand to a ridge height of 6.0 metres. The building is to be finished in white/cream render to its elevations, with a Staffordshire Blue tiled roof atop.
- 1.4 The accommodation of the annex will comprise of a sitting room, kitchen / dining area, utility, shower room and entrance hall at ground floor with stairs leading up to an ensuite bedroom, bathroom and home office at first floor.
- 1.5 The annex is to be occupied by the applicants' daughter and will share the domestic curtilage of the existing dwelling, along with its parking area and means of access off Hill Top. The annex will remain in the same ownership as The Cottage and will also share its electricity and water connections with the main dwelling, as well as its postal address.

2 Site & Surroundings

- 2.1 The application site is located within the North Staffordshire Green Belt and comprises a substantial triangular shaped plot that extends to approximately 0.35 hectares in area. Located at the northernmost end of the site is a two storey detached cottage, with white render elevations and Staffordshire Blue plain clay tile roof. The dwelling exhibits a series of dormer windows on its southern elevation and has a large southerly projecting wing.
- 2.2 To the south of the cottage lies a large, detached outbuilding that comprises a two-storey garage and store with hobby room above. That outbuilding is proposed for removal as part of this application.
- 2.3 A further detached outbuilding is located in the far south-easternmost corner of the site, with the remainder of the site laid out as residential amenity space.
- 2.4 Vehicular access to the site is taken direct off Hill Top, which lies beyond the existing hedgerow that encloses the western site boundary. The access serves a large area of hardstanding to the front (west) and side (south) of the large existing outbuilding, where parking and manouvering space is accommodated.

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 account any material planning 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, 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.

3.4 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 goes on to state that the Council will allow extensions or additional domestic outbuildings to existing dwellings provided they are appropriate in scale and design and do not have a detrimental impact on the existing dwelling and the character of the rural area. The Council will assess schemes having regard to the original dwelling, in cases where cumulative change has occurred. The policy also states that strict control will be exercised over inappropriate development in the Green Belt, allowing only for exceptions as defined by Government policy.

3.5 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.

3.6 Policy NE1 of the Local Plan relates to 'Biodiversity and Geological Resources' and states that such resources shall be conserved and enhanced by positive management and strict control of development, by:

1. By ensuring all development schemes have regard to the surveys and actions recommended by the Council's Extended Phase 1 Habitat Surveys and Local Wildlife Assessment, and include measures for protection and enhancement of site biodiversity and protection of any geodiversity as appropriate.

2. Resisting any proposed development that could have an adverse effect on the integrity of an International site (or successor designation) alone or in combination with other plans or projects unless it can be demonstrated that the legislative provisions to protect such sites can be fully met. Any development with a potential to adversely affect a European site/s through construction activities should ensure that Ciria construction guidelines are followed including environmental good practice on control of dust and water pollution.
3. The Council will not normally permit any development proposal which would directly or indirectly (either individually or in combination with other developments) have an adverse effect on a Site of Special Scientific Interest. Where an adverse effect on the site's notified special interest features is likely, an exception should only be made where the benefits of the development, at this site, clearly outweigh both the impacts that it is likely to have on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. Supporting opportunities to improve site management and increase public access to wildlife sites including supporting the objectives of the Staffordshire County Council Rights of Way Improvement Plan.
7. Ensuring development promotes the appropriate maintenance, enhancement, restoration and/or re-creation of biodiversity through its proposed nature, scale, location and design. The Staffordshire Moorlands Biodiversity Opportunity Map, in conjunction with the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan, will be used to guide biodiversity enhancement measures to be included in development proposals as appropriate to the nature and scale of development proposed and other environmental interest, in particular supporting opportunities to increase grassland and heathland habitats including supporting targets in the UK and Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan.
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8. Protecting and enhancing habitats and species of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity as identified in legislation, and recognising and implementing appropriate measures, including landscape-scale conservation management, to take account of the fact that the distribution of habitats and species will be affected by climate change.
9. Recognising the value of the natural environment for sport and leisure activities and the need to manage such activities to ensure there is no conflict.
10. Ensuring the provision and protection of green infrastructure networks in line with Policy C 3.

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 guidance, *inter-alia*, in respect of securing high quality design and safeguarding the Green Belt. The content of the NPPF has been taken into consideration in the preparation of this application.

SMDC Design Guide SPD

- 4.2 This document sets out guidance aimed at securing good quality design within the District. The content of this document has been taken into consideration in the preparation of this application.

SMDC Space About Dwellings SPG

- 4.3 This document sets out minimum interface distances and amenity standards that new development should seek to achieve in the interests of securing an acceptable level of residential amenity for neighbouring residential occupiers. The content of this document has been taken into consideration in the preparation of the application.

5 Planning Assessment

Green Belt

- 5.1 The application site is located within the rural area and forms part of the North Staffordshire Green Belt. Policy SS10 allows for the erection of additional domestic outbuildings to existing dwellings provided they are appropriate in scale and design and do not have a detrimental impact on the existing dwelling and the character of the rural area. Policy SS10 of the Local Plan also confirms that strict control will continue to be exercised over inappropriate development, allowing only for exceptions as defined by government policy.
- 5.2 The exceptions are defined within paragraphs 154 and 155 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It is submitted that the proposed development would qualify as an appropriate form of development within the Green Belt on the basis of paragraph 154(d) of the NPPF, and also paragraph 155 of the NPPF. The assessment of the proposal in the context of each of these exceptions is set out below.
- 5.3 Paragraph 154(d) of the NPPF allows for the following type of development within the Green Belt:
- “the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces”
- 5.4 The existing outbuilding on the site is in use for ancillary residential purposes (double garage, storage and hobby room) and the proposed annex building will similarly be used for ancillary residential purposes. The proposed replacement building will therefore be in the same use as the one already in situ.
- 5.5 The proposed replacement building will furthermore not be materially larger than the one being replaced. The existing building has a volume of 263m³ and

stands to a ridge height of 5.5 metres. The proposed replacement building will have a volume of 335m³ and stand to a ridge height of 6.0 metres. These dimensions are summarised in Figure 1 below for ease of comparison.

Figure 1 – Comparison of Size of Existing vs Proposed Building

	Volume	Height
Existing Outbuilding =	263m ³	5.5m
Proposed Annex =	335m ³	6.0m
Difference =	27%	+ 0.5m

- 5.6 As evidenced by the dimensions in Figure 1 above, the proposed replacement building will not be materially larger than the building it will be replacing (27%), and as such amounts to an appropriate form of development within the Green belt in accordance with paragraph 154(d) of the NPPF and policy SS10 of the Local Plan.
- 5.7 Even if the Local Authority were to conclude differently on this point, it is submitted that the proposal would still amount to an appropriate form of development having regard to the provisions of paragraphs 154(g) and 155 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 5.8 Paragraph 154(g) of the NPPF allows for the following:

“limited infilling or the **partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land** (including a material change of use to residential or mixed use including residential), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not cause **substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt**”

- 5.9 The land upon which it is proposed to construct the residential annex constitutes previously-developed land, which is defined by the glossary to the NPPF as comprising:

“land which has been lawfully developed and is or was occupied by a permanent structure and any fixed surface infrastructure associated with it, **including the curtilage of the developed land** (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed)” (our emphasis)

- 5.10 The glossary goes on to exclude certain types of land, including:

“land in built up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments” (our emphasis)

- 5.11 The site meets the definition of previously-developed land as the land is currently occupied by an existing domestic outbuilding, along with associated hardstandings to its west and south, and the property cannot be said to occupy a built-up area. It is a semi-rural location on the edge of Brown Edge village.

- 5.12 The proposed erection of the detached annex, in place of the existing outbuilding, would not lead to ‘substantial harm’ to the openness of the Green Belt. The proposal would occupy a similar footprint to the existing building and be sited upon an existing area of hardstanding. There would be no encroachment of development beyond the existing domestic curtilage of the property, and the height of the development is not dissimilar to the existing structure. The proposal therefore constitutes an appropriate form of development within the Green Belt in accordance with paragraph 154(g) of the NPPF.

5.13 Paragraph 155 of the NPPF confirms that the development of homes, commercial and “other development” in the Green Belt should not be regarded as inappropriate where:

- a) The development would utilise grey-belt land and would not fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the Plan;
- b) There is a demonstrable unmet need for the type of development proposed;
- c) The development would be in a sustainable location, with particular reference to paragraphs 110 and 115 of the Framework.

5.14 The land upon which it is proposed to construct the residential annex constitutes grey-belt land. Grey Belt land is defined by the glossary to the NPPF as comprising land which is previously developed and / or land that does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b) or (d) of paragraph 143 of the Framework.

5.15 The site meets the definition of previously-developed land as discussed in the preceding paragraphs. Even if the Local Authority were to disagree on this point, the land would still amount to grey-belt land on account of it not making a significant contribution to the three identified purposes of the Green Belt, namely:

- Checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas (143(a) refers)
- Preventing neighbouring towns merging into one another (143(b) refers)
- Preserving the setting and special character of historic towns (143(d) refers)

- 5.16 The Local Authority's Green Belt Review confirms this site to form part of a wider area of land identified as Parcel N23. The Review confirms that this parcel of land makes only a 'contribution' to purpose 143(a), a 'limited contribution' to purpose 143(b) and a 'limited contribution' to purpose 143(d). The land is confirmed by the Green Belt Review to not make a 'significant contribution' to *any* of the purposes of the Green Belt. An extract of the Green Belt Review document is shown in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2 – Extract of SMDC Green Belt Review

N23 Land to the north of Endon, east of Brown Edge	Contribution	Limited Contribution	Contribution	Limited Contribution	Contribution	Contribution
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- 5.17 The proposal will furthermore occupy an existing built up part of the site, replacing the existing building and will not be materially larger than it. Consequently the development of this site in this manner cannot be said to fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the Plan. The proposal is therefore concluded to be consistent with the provisions of paragraph 155(a) of the NPPF.
- 5.18 There is furthermore a demonstrable unmet need for the type of development being proposed. The proposed annex is to be occupied by the applicants' daughter in order to provide her with additional space and some limited degree of independence, including a home office where she can conduct her studies.
- 5.19 As a younger person, the applicants' daughter is not able to afford her own home and there is a substantial shortage in the availability of affordable housing to enable her to do so. The Local Authority's Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2017) concluded that the net annual need for affordable housing

ranges between 224 and 432 homes per year. The Local Authority's Annual Monitoring Report (2024-2025) serves to confirm that the total affordable housing completions for the last 10 years total just 535, which represents a substantial shortfall against a minimum requirement of 2,240.

5.20 The provision of an annex on the site, whilst not providing a dwelling in its own right, will provide extra space for their daughters requirements, including a home office where she can conduct her studies. The close proximity of the annex to the main dwelling means she will be able to continue to take meals with the family and spend time with them, and in future years enable her to provide car for her parents should the need ever arise. There is consequently a demonstrable need for the type of development being proposed, and as such the proposal is in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 155(b) of the NPPF.

5.21 The proposal is also in a sustainable location as the annex will remain ancillary to the host dwelling and not amount to the creation of an independent dwellinghouse. Car journeys to and from the site will not be intensified as a consequence of this development. The proposal is therefore also in accordance with paragraph 155(c) of the NPPF, and thus amounts to an appropriate form of development within the Green Belt.

Green Belt Summary

5.22 Having regard to the considerations set out above it is concluded that the proposal would amount to an appropriate form of development within the Green Belt in accordance with paragraphs 154(d), 154(g) and 155 of the National Planning Policy Framework. In turn the proposal is consistent with the requirements of policy SS10 of the Local Plan.

Ancillary Relationship To Dwelling

- 5.23 The proposed annex will have a wholly ancillary relationship to the existing dwellinghouse on the site. Whilst the accommodation provides sufficient facilities to support independent day-to-day living, case law in *Uttlesford DC v SSE & White [1992] JPL 171* serves to confirm it would not necessarily become a separate planning unit from the main dwelling; it would be a matter of fact and degree in each case.
- 5.24 The annex in this case is to be occupied by the applicants' daughter. The annex will not be provided with its own area of amenity space; rather it will share the amenity space of the existing dwelling, as well as its parking area. It will also share its postal address, utility connections, with no subdivision of the site being proposed. The annex will also remain in the same ownership as the host dwelling. The proposal will therefore not result in the creation of a new planning unit / independent dwellinghouse.
- 5.25 The imposition of a suitably worded planning condition can be imposed to restrict the occupancy of the annex so that it remains ancillary to the host dwelling and in doing so the development will accord with the provisions of policy SS10 of the Local Plan.

Design & Layout

- 5.26 The proposed annex is to be located in the same general position as the existing outbuilding. It will have its principal elevation facing westwards towards the carriageway of Hill Top, and its fenestration will be arranged in columns and provide for a high solid-to-void ratio.
- 5.27 The building will also have a strongly defined eaves line, emphasised by gables, and be constructed from a palette of materials that is in keeping with the wider character and appearance of the surrounding area, including the materials of

the existing dwellinghouse. The development is therefore consistent with the guidance set out within the adopted Design Guide SPD.

5.28 In contrast, the existing outbuilding is not consistent with the Design Guide SPD and exhibits a somewhat sprawling, overly wide appearance that does not relate well to the existing surroundings. The submitted proposal takes the opportunity to remove this poor quality building and replace it with a high quality alternative.

5.29 The proposed development is therefore concluded to be appropriate in scale and design and will not have a detrimental impact on the existing dwelling and the character of the rural area. The proposal accordingly meets the requirements of policies SS1, SS10 and DC1 of the Local Plan.

Residential Amenity

5.30 There are no immediate neighbouring residential properties that would be affected by the proposed development, the closest being New Star Well Bungalow 26m to the west. No conflict with the Local Authority's Space About Dwellings standards will arise and consequently no harm to neighbouring residential amenity will ensue. The proposal is therefore held to meet the requirements of policy DC1 of the Local Plan in this regard.

Impact on Protected Species

5.31 Owing to the proposed demolition of the existing building, the application is accompanied by a Bat Survey prepared by Absolute Ecology. The bat survey has assessed the building for evidence of bats, or potential roosting opportunities. Following a number of bat activity surveys it was concluded that there was no evidence of bats using the building, and consequently protected species will not be adversely affected by the proposed development.

The proposed development is therefore consistent with the provisions of policy NE1 of the Local Plan.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 5.32 The proposed development is exempt from statutory biodiversity net gain requirements as the proposal comprises a householder application.

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 development within the Green Belt.
- The annex will have an ancillary relationship to the host dwelling and will not result in the creation of a new planning unit.
- The annex will be appropriate in scale and design and not have a detrimental impact on the existing dwelling and the character of the rural area.
- The proposal will not have any adverse impact on neighbouring residential amenity.
- The proposal will not have an adverse impact on protected species.

6.2 The submitted proposal is consequently held to meet the requirements of policies SS1, SS10, DC1 and NE1 of the 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 and Space About Dwellings SPG.