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PLANNING STATEMENT

Including Design, Access.

Client: Ms T. Tidmarsh and Mr A. Slack.

Location: THE STABLES, DOUSE LANE, BRADNOP, ST13 7NF.

PROPOSAL: REMOVE THE EXISTING CARAVAN, FORMERLY USED AS A MESS ROOM; REMOVE THE EXISTING CONCRETE PAD; CONSTRUCT A NEW CONCRETE PAD; AND ERECT A TIMBER HOLIDAY CHALET.

Date: August 2026.

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This application seeks full planning permission for the removal of the existing caravan, formerly used as a mess room, and the erection of a holiday chalet.
- 1.2. The following drawings are submitted with the application: Location Plan, Existing Elevations and Floor Plan, Proposed Elevations and Floor Plan, Tree Protection Plan including Arboricultural Method Statement, and this Planning Statement.

Background

- 1.3. The site is situated on the north side of Douse Lane in open countryside to the east of Leek. Relevant Local Plan Policies are SS9, S10, DC3, Churnet Valley Master Plan Boundary (SS 11), and the Staffordshire Moorlands Tourism Strategy.

2. THE SITE

- 2.1 The stables, the other buildings on the site, and the site of the proposed development lie behind a row of trees and bushes, on the wide frontage highway which hides the buildings.
- 2.2 The majority of the application site is surfaced with stone and includes part of a field.
- 2.3 The existing dilapidated caravan is on the site of the proposed Chalet. The caravan is on a concrete pad and is connected to a septic tank, water and electricity.
- 2.4 The site is in Flood Risk Zone 1. It is not on Coal Measures.

3. THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The proposal is to remove the existing caravan, formerly used as a mess room; remove the existing concrete pad; construct a new concrete pad; and erect a timber holiday chalet.
- 3.2 The existing caravan footprint is approximately 29 sq. metres, and the footprint of the proposed chalet would be approximately 36 sq. metres.

4. PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1. Pertinent applications: -
 1. SMD/1993/0474. Stable Block and Tack Room. Approved 18/08/1993.
 2. SMD/1999/1170. Construction of Stable Block. Approved 29/07/1999.

3. SMD/2007/0478. Certificate of lawfulness for siting of existing caravan. Approved 31/05/2007.
4. SMD/2008/1176. Construction of Storage Building. Approved 29/10/2008.

5. PLANNING POLICIES

5.1. Relevant Local Plan policies:

- Policy SS10 – Other Rural Areas.
- Policy DC3 – Landscape and Settlement Setting.
- Policy E4 – Tourism and Cultural Development.

This policy requires that new visitors' accommodation should be developed either in locations that offer, or are capable of offering, either good connectivity, or are in or near settlements, or areas designated for tourism development, such as the Churnet Valley.

- Policy NE 2 - Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows.

5.2. Also relevant is the Churnet Valley Master Plan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) dated 2014. This sets out the Vision for the Valley, the Masterplan Principles, the Spatial Strategy, Character Areas, Development and Management Principles, Implementation and Delivery, and Monitoring.

5.3. The Staffordshire Moorlands Tree Strategy is also pertinent.

5.4. The SPD identifies 8 Local Character Areas that reflect the distinctiveness of areas of the Churnet Valley and the role these individual character areas will play in achieving the vision. The application site is in the Leek Character Area and on the edge of the Peak District Character Area.

Tourism Strategy for Staffordshire Moorlands 2022-2027 SPD

5.5. This Strategy sets out the Vision for Tourism in the Staffordshire Moorlands, the Market Overview, Priorities for Growth, and the Evaluation of Progress. The chapter on Priorities for Growth identifies four Key Action Areas. These are Alton Towers, Towns and Villages, Cycling and Walking, Accommodation, and Underpinning. The latter sets out how the Strategy will be supported and delivered.

5.6. The aim of Action Area 4: "Accommodation" is to *"Expand, improve and encourage the development of accommodation to attract visitors to stay overnight and keep their spending in the local area....."*.

5.7. The Tourism Strategy, whilst not a planning policy, is still a material consideration.

5.8. The following policies in the 2026 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) are relevant: -

- **DM3:** Determining development proposals in Chapter 1 (Decision-making) in particular:-
 - Policy DM3 1(e) –
Consider whether otherwise unacceptable development proposals could be made acceptable through the use of planning conditions or planning obligations; and
 - Policy DM3, 1(f) –
Not refuse development applications which should clearly be approved, having regard to their accordence with the development plan, the policies in this Framework and any other material considerations.
- **Policy S3 -The presumption in favour of sustainable development:-**
 - Policy 1(b) –
Outside settlements, policy S5 should be applied.
 - Policy 1(c) -
In all locations, development proposals that accord with both an up-to-date development plan and the decision-making policies in this Framework should be approved without delay.
- **Policy S5 - Principle of development outside settlements: -**
In applying policy E2, the sustainable growth of businesses in rural areas should be supported, including through:
 - b. The development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based businesses;*
 - c. Facilities to support rural leisure and tourism and measures to retain and expand accessible local shops and services; and*
- **Policy E4 - Rural business development**
 - Policy 1(b) –
The development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based businesses.
 - Policy 1(c) –
Facilities to support rural leisure and tourism and measures to retain and expand accessible local shops and services.

○ Policy 2 –

Development proposals to meet business needs in rural areas may need to be located outside settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances:

- a. Development proposals should take opportunities, where they exist, to use previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing development; and*
- b. The siting and design of development should be appropriate having regard to the character of its surroundings.*

5.9. The above policies are discussed, as needed, in the Section, *The Case In Support*.

6. OTHER MATTERS

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 6.1. The total site area is 381 square metres. 340 square metres (89%) of which consists of stone hard surface. The remaining 11% (41 square metres) consists of part of a species-poor or modified grassland field.
- 6.2. From the 6th of August, a new 0.2 hectare exemption applies, which means that the smallest developments will not be required to do mandatory BNG (unless onsite priority habitat is negatively impacted).
- 6.3. Low-quality pastures—such as typical "modified grassland" or intensively managed, species-poor agricultural fields—are generally not considered priority habitats for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). The pasture is species-poor.
- 6.4. A "priority habitat" refers to a rare or threatened natural environment—such as a lowland meadow, ancient woodland, or reedbed—that is protected under UK law and given high "distinctiveness" scores in Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) calculations. Priority habitats are those which are identified in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and listed as being of principal importance for the purpose of conserving or enhancing biodiversity, under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006).

7. THE CASE IN SUPPORT

7.1. The following matters are discussed in this section: -

- o Planning policy.
- o The presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Planning policy: -

Local Plan Policy SS 10 (*Other Rural Areas*) 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 Council and its partners will achieve this through the following actions....”

Which includes: -

Policy SS10(2): “Sustain the rural economy by:

- o *“Enabling the limited expansion or development of business for employment uses where a rural location can be justified.*
- o *“Supporting the diversification of existing farm enterprises.*

Whilst this specifically mentions existing farm enterprises, it is also applicable to other rural enterprises needing a rural location.”

Policy SS10(5): “Enhance tourist opportunities by:”

- o *“Supporting sustainable tourism developments and measures in the Churnet Valley in accordance with Policy SS 11 and the Churnet Valley Masterplan SPD;*
- o *Allowing for small-scale tourism developments in other areas (in accordance with policy E 4);”.*
- o *“Recognising and developing the close linkages to the Peak District National Park.”*

The National Park is approximately 500 metres away.

7.2. The proposed development will help support the stables, support rural diversification, promote sustainable tourism, and enhance tourism provision in the Churnet Valley in accordance with Policy SS11 and the Churnet Valley Masterplan SPD, and the sustainability of the rural areas.

7.3. Local Plan Policy DC3 (*Landscape and Settlement Setting*) - This states that the Council will protect and, where possible, enhance local landscape the Staffordshire Moorlands by:

- *Resisting development which would lead to prominent intrusion into the countryside;*
- *Supporting development which respects and enhances local landscape character;*
- *Supporting developments which conserve or enhance the biodiversity within the landscape, such as trees;*
- *Supporting opportunities to use sustainable materials which are sympathetic to the landscape;*
- *Ensuring that development does not adversely affect the wider setting of the Peak District National Park.*

7.4. The proposed development would not harm the landscape or adversely affect the local landscape character or the wider setting of the Peak District National Park. The frontage trees will remain. The timber cladding would be sympathetic to the landscape.

7.5. Local Plan Policy E4 (1) (*Tourism and Cultural Development*) - “*New tourist, visitor and cultural accommodation, attractions and facilities should be developed in locations that offer, or are capable of offering, amongst other things, either:*

- A. Good connectivity with other tourist destinations and amenities, particularly by walking and cycling; or....*
- C. In areas specifically identified for tourism development.*

7.6. The location of the application site offers good connectivity to other tourist destinations and amenities, including the local countryside and the Peak District National Park, which is about 500 metres to the east. The site is 2.1 and 13.6 miles away from the shops, cafes and restaurants, and other attractions in the historic market towns of Leek and Buxton.

7.7. Attractions in and near Leek include Foxlowe Arts Centre, Swimming and Fitness Centre, Weekly Outdoor Market, Indoor Market, regular festivals and events, Peak Wildlife Park, Rudyard Lake miniature railway, paddleboarding, fishing and sailing, Tittesworth trout fishing, Churnet Valley Railway, two golf courses and climbing on the Roaches.

7.8. Attractions in and near Buxton include Buxton Crescent Spa, Poole’s Cavern Country Park, Buxton Visitors Centre, Buxton Swimming and Fitness Centre, Buxton Opera

House, The Crescent (iconic Grade 1 historic building), Buxton Pavilion and Gardens with boating lake and Go Ape High Ropes Experience.

- 7.9. Attractions in the Peak District include walking, hiking trails, cycling, biking trails, rock climbing, beautiful scenery, scenic hikes, water activities at reservoirs and rivers, Chatsworth House and Gardens, caverns and caves, six art galleries, historic sites, countryside pubs, cages and ice cream farms, and Bakewell, Castleton and Hathersage with its open-air swimming pool.
- 7.10. The nationally famous Alton Towers Resort and Fun Park is only about 9 miles away.
- 7.11. There are bridleways from the Mermaid to the Roaches bridleway (about 4.8 miles away); Mixon Mines, Onecote (about 2 miles away); Ashenhurst Bradnop about 2.3 miles away); Pethills Lane Winkhill (about 3 miles away); Sharpecliffe Ipstones (4.5 miles away); and the Manifold Way bridleway and cycleway at Waterhouses (About 5.6 miles away).
- 7.12. The application site is close to numerous public rights of way recognised as recreational routes in the Churnet Valley Masterplan, and many public footpaths in the Peak District National Park. The nearest public footpath is about 135 metres to the east along Douse Lane.
- 7.13. The nearest public houses, providing food, are the Jervis Arms at Onecote (about 1.9 miles away); the Reform at Thorncliffe; several in Waterhouses including a chip shop, and in Ipstones, which also has shops and a post office.
- 7.14. Policy NE2 (*Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows*).
- “This will be achieved by”, amongst other things....*
- “Resisting development that would directly or indirectly damage existing ancient woodland, veteran trees and ancient or species-rich hedgerows.”*

The Proposal would not harm the existing trees, outside the application boundary, on the highway verge at the front of the site for the reasons explained on the Tree Protection Plan Drawing, which includes the Arboricultural Method Statement.

2026 National Planning Policy Framework Policies

- 7.15. The proposed development is in accord with the national policies cited in paragraph 5.8.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1. In summary, the proposed development is in accord with all the above policies, both local and national. As such, the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies, and as stated in the 2026 NPPF, this means approving:

“In all locations, development proposals that accord with both an up-to-date development plan and the decision-making policies in this Framework should be approved without delay.”

8.2.

- 8.3. The proposal accords with Local Plan Policies and would be a good addition to the tourist accommodation in the Churnet Valley.
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