Design, Access & Planning Statement

Proposal for New Build Residential Development at:
Land adjacent to 32 Godley Lane, Dilhorne, Staffordshire, ST10 2PF

May 2023 : Ref 23/1713

RTPI Chartered Town Planner

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Introduction and Terms of Reference

1.1 This statement has been prepared by Broad Planning and Architecture a RTPI registered practice, led by the Director Sheila Porter who is a Chartered Town Planner with over 30 years architectural design experience including working on projects on sensitive environments such as conservation areas and within the setting of listed buildings.

1.2 This statement is submitted in support of a planning application submitted by Karl Grace Design on behalf of the applicants, to Staffordshire Moorlands District Council for planning permission for a New Build Residential Development at Land adjacent to 32 Godley Lane, Dilhorne, Staffordshire, ST10 2PF

1.3 The purpose of this statement is to consider the application scheme in terms of the quality of design and its response to the context of the site conditions and character of the surrounding buildings and setting. It aims to assist decision makers and interested parties in understanding the design ethos and explains the scheme in detail.

1.5 The application scheme is illustrated in a pack of scheme drawings containing drawing no's:

22-044-01	Location Plan
22-044-02	Existing Site Plan
22-044-04 C	Proposed Site Plan
22-044-05 B	Proposed Plans and Elevations
22-044-06 C	Street View

2.0 Site Description and Characteristics

2.1 The site is located to the north east of 32 Godley Lane in Dilhorne, it is set at a lower level than its neighbouring property.

2.2 The site is a tapering rectangular shape which narrows to the north east end.

2.3 The site has a long frontage onto Godley Lane and currently benefits from a dropped kerb to the north west end.

2.4 The site amounts to an approximate area of 350m.sq with a depth of approximately 11m at the south west of the site and 5m at the north east.

2.5 The site currently contains a group of buildings located to the south west end of the site. These are built with brick, block timber sections and corrugated metal sheeting. It is understood that these buildings have been used previously for many years for a mechanical garage business and that this use has recently ceased.

2.6 It is also understood that this business use has been operated independently from the residential use of No. 32 and that this neighbouring dwelling has benefited from its own enclosed amenity space throughout the duration of the business use. The two properties are however in the same ownership. We note that the adjacent property is in a raised position above the highway and does not currently benefit from any parking provision.

2.7 The existing drop kerb serves to provide a gated access onto the site, leading to an area of concrete hardstanding giving access to the garage workshop. The remainder of the site to the north east is overgrown with a block wall marking the boundaries and an inspection pit located to the north east end.

2.8 The site is surrounded by residential properties to the south west, north east and on the opposite side of the road on the north west. The remainder of the boundaries have adjoining open fields.

3.0 Planning History

3.1 The land adjacent to 32 Godley Lane, Dilhorne, Staffordshire, ST10 2PF appears to have no formal planning history.

4.0 Planning Policy Context

4.1 The Revised Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan - Adopted (2020), Design Principles for Development in the Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide (2018) SPD and the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) is relevant national planning policy for this proposal and the following sections are particularly relevant:

4.2 **Policy SS1: Development Principles for Staffordshire Moorlands of the LP reads:**

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.*

All proposals for development will be considered in the context of the District-wide Spatial Strategy and with regard to both its direct and indirect cumulative impact over the longer term. New development will make effective use of land and the best use of previously developed land and buildings.

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4.3 **Policy SS9: Smaller Villages Area Strategy for Staffordshire Moorlands of the LP reads:**

The following are identified as smaller villages:

Bagnall, Blackshaw Moor, Boundary, Bradnop, Caverswall, Checkley, Consall, Cookshill, Cotton, Dilhorne, Draycott, Foxt, Froghall, Heaton, Hollington, Hulme, Kingsley Holt, Leekbrook, Longsdon, Lower Tean, Meerbrook, Oakamoor, Rudyard, Rushton Spencer, Stanley, Stockton Brook, Swinscoe, Whiston and Winkhill

These settlements shall provide only for appropriate development which enhances community vitality or meets a social or economic need of the settlement and its hinterland. The Council and its partners will achieve this through the following actions:

1. Enhance community vitality by:

- *Protecting and enabling services and facilities which are essential to sustain rural living;*
- *Improving connections by public transport and other transport measures to neighbouring larger villages and market towns;*
- *Supporting the provision of local, mobile and electronic services which increases the range and quality of services*
- *Supporting the implementation of the Green Infrastructure Strategy and Local Green Spaces*

2. Meet community, social or economic need by:

- *Enabling limited new housing development, including small infill schemes in accordance with Policy H 1*
- *Allowing for rural exceptions housing in appropriate locations (in accordance with Policy H 1). This will be additional to the housing provision for the rural areas.*
- *Enabling small-scale new employment development including 'live-work' developments which are for a rural enterprise or an existing authorised business use;*
- *Supporting the diversification of existing farm enterprises*
- *Supporting the development of appropriate ICT and new means of communications to enable homeworking and small businesses reliant on e-technology*

Ensure that new development reflects and enhances each village's special character and heritage by protecting and enhancing the setting and historic character of the village, including heritage assets.

Any development proposal that might have the potential to affect a European or Ramsar Site must itself be subject to appropriate assessment.

4.4 **Policy H1: New Housing Development for Staffordshire Moorlands of the LP reads:**

1) New housing development should provide for a mix of housing sizes, types and tenure including a proportion of affordable housing as set out in Policy H 3, and where appropriate housing for special groups, to meet the needs and aspirations of the current and future population having regard to the Area Strategies.

2) In line with Government legislation the Council will maintain and update a register of those interested in acquiring self-build / custom-build housing plots across the District. Where a demand exists, residential developments of 10 dwellings (or 0.5ha) or more will make an appropriate contribution towards this need in agreement with the Council. This will be negotiated on a case by case basis.

3) All development will be assessed according to the extent to which it provides for high quality, sustainable housing and to which it meets identified housing needs, having regard to the location of the development, the characteristics of the site and the economics of provision.

In addition:

a) Housing for special groups, particularly for older people and others as identified in the SHMA or successor document should be of a scale and in a location which is appropriate to its needs.

b) Housing proposals of 10 dwellings (or 0.5ha) or more will be required to provide a mix of housing in terms of size, type, and tenure on the site unless viability or other circumstances exist. The final mix will be negotiated with the

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developer based on housing needs as informed by the SHMA or successor document and other relevant factors such as available supply and market demand.

c) All housing development should be at the most appropriate density compatible with the site and its location, and with the character of the surrounding area. Higher densities will generally be appropriate in locations which are more accessible by public transport, and which have good access to services.

d) All new dwellings should aim to provide flexible accommodation which is capable of future adaptation by seeking to achieve adequate internal space for the intended number of occupants in accordance with the Nationally Described Space standard and delivered to meet accessibility standards set out in the Optional Requirement M4(2) of Part M of the Building Regulations. This will be determined on a site-by-site basis subject to considerations such as viability and design.

e) All new dwellings must be of sufficient size to provide satisfactory levels of amenity for future occupiers of the dwellings whilst respecting the privacy and amenity of occupiers of existing dwellings.

4) Housing development on sites not allocated for such purposes in Policy H 2 will be supported as follows:

a) Within the development boundaries of the towns and larger villages, residential development and development on unidentified (windfall) sites will be permitted, subject to compliance with the Spatial Strategy and wider Local Plan policies

b) Outside of the development boundaries, limited infill residential development of an appropriate scale and character for the Spatial Strategy will be supported, provided that:

The development will adjoin the boundary of a larger village and be well related to the existing pattern of development and surrounding land uses, or;

The development is well related to the existing pattern of development of a smaller village and will not create or extend ribbon development or lead to sporadic pattern of development; and

c) In all cases the development will not lead to a prominent intrusion into the countryside or have a significant adverse impact on the character and appearance of the countryside.

5) In the other rural areas in the open countryside, only the following forms of housing development will be permitted;

a) Affordable housing which cannot be met elsewhere, in accordance with Policy H 3.

b) A new dwelling that meets an essential local need, such as accommodation for an agricultural, forestry or other rural enterprise worker, where the need for such accommodation has been satisfactorily demonstrated and that need cannot be met elsewhere.

c) Proposals for replacement dwellings, provided they do not have a significantly greater detrimental impact on the existing character of the rural area than the original dwelling or result in the loss of a building which is intrinsic to the character of the area.

d) The conversion of rural buildings for residential use where the building is suitable and worthy in physical, architectural and character terms for conversion; or where such development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets.

e) Proposals to redevelop previously developed land provided it is not of high environmental value.

f) The subdivision of an existing residential dwelling provided it is not in an isolated location.

6) When development is located in the Green Belt, national Green Belt Policy will apply.

The Council will closely monitor the delivery of residential windfall sites and affordable housing to ensure that it is meeting expected levels.

4.5 **Policy DC1: Design Considerations for Staffordshire Moorlands of the LP reads:**

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;*

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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, visual impact, 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.*

4.6 **Policy DC3: Landscape and Settlement Setting for Staffordshire Moorlands of the LP reads:**

The Council will protect and, where possible, enhance local landscape and the setting of settlements in the Staffordshire Moorlands by:

1. Resisting development which would lead to prominent intrusion into the countryside or have a significant adverse impact on the character or the setting of a settlement or important views into and out of the settlement as identified in the Landscape and Settlement Character evidence;

2. Supporting development which respects and enhances local landscape character and which reinforces and enhances the setting of the settlement as identified in the Landscape and Settlement Character evidence;

3. Supporting developments which conserve or enhance the biodiversity qualities of any natural or man-made features within the landscape, such as trees, woodlands, hedgerows, walls, watercourses or ponds;

4. Supporting opportunities to positively manage the landscape and use sustainable building techniques and materials which are sympathetic to the landscape;

5. Ensuring that development does not adversely affect the wider setting of the Peak District National Park.

4.7 **Policy C1: Creating Sustainable Communities for Staffordshire Moorlands of the LP reads:**

In order to create sustainable communities at a local level the Council will:
1. Support proposals which protect, retain or enhance existing community facilities (including multi use and shared schemes) or provide new facilities. New facilities should preferably be located within defined built up areas where they are most accessible. In exceptional cases facilities may be located adjacent to these areas where it can be demonstrated that this is the only practical option and where a site is well related to the existing settlement.

2. Safeguard land required for the provision of facilities to meet existing and future community needs, as identified by service providers.

3. Resist proposals involving the loss of community facilities unless:

a) an alternative facility of the same type and quality that meets the needs of the community is available in the locality or can be provided in an accessible location in the same locality; or

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b) a viability appraisal including a marketing exercise by a qualified professional demonstrates that there are no options for continued or shared use as any type of community facility which are financially viable and it can be demonstrated that loss of the facility would not disadvantage local residents.

c) In the case of proposals to change use from one type of community facility to another, the Council will consider the respective benefits of both the existing and proposed uses in terms of their contribution to the community's ability to meet its day to day needs.

4. *Only permit new development where the utility, transport and community infrastructure necessary to serve it is either available, or will be made available by the time it is needed. All development proposals must therefore either incorporate the infrastructure required as a result of the scheme, or make provision for financial contributions and/or land to secure such infrastructure or service provision at the time it is needed, by means of conditions or a planning obligation in line with the Developer Contributions SPD, or any subsequently adopted Community Infrastructure Levy.*

5. *Support the relocation of uses which are no longer compatible with their surroundings due to negative amenity issues such as noise or accessibility where an alternative suitable site can be secured, subject to the requirements set out in Policy E 2 in order to facilitate regeneration.*

This policy will only apply insofar as it is consistent with any permanent or temporary provisions for changes of use permissible under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order (as amended).

4.8 **Policy T1: Development and Sustainable Transport for Staffordshire Moorlands of the LP reads:**

The Council will promote and support development which reduces reliance on the private car for travel journeys, reduces the need to travel generally and accommodates residual development traffic in line with the Integrated Transport Strategy. This will be achieved by:

1. *Ensuring that all new development is located where the highway network can satisfactorily accommodate traffic generated by the development or can be improved as part of the development.*

2. *Ensuring that major development is located in areas that are accessible by sustainable travel modes or can be made accessible as part of the proposal.*

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

4. *Where appropriate all new development shall facilitate walking and cycling within neighbourhoods and town centres, and link with or extend identified walking or cycling routes. In addition applicants should also consider how their schemes can enhance the existing path network in line with the Staffordshire County Council Rights of Way Improvement Plan and also give consideration to the protection of non-definitive public footpath routes in addition to definitive routes.*

Development which generates significant demand for travel or is likely to have significant transport implications (as identified within a Transport Assessment) will, where appropriate:

Contribute to improved public transport provision

Contribute to junction improvements, traffic management and highway infrastructure

Provide proactive facilities and measures to support sustainable transport modes including on-site features to encourage sustainable travel methods e.g. cycle path links, cycle storage facilities, bus stops etc

Provide and actively promote travel plans.

4.9 **Policy NE1: Biodiversity and Geological Resources for Staffordshire Moorlands of the LP reads:**

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:

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.*

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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.*

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.*

4.10 **Policy Design Principles for Development in the Staffordshire Moorlands of the SPD and the Policy Space about Dwellings (Appendix 3) in the Staffordshire Moorlands of the SPD are also relevant.**

4.11 **Chapter 8 'Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities' of the NPPF reads:**

92. Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which:

a) promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages;

b) are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example through the use of attractive, well-designed, clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas; and

c) enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local

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shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.

93. To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:

a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;

b) take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community;

c) guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs;

d) ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community; and e) ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.

94. Planning policies and decisions should consider the social, economic, and environmental benefits of estate regeneration. Local planning authorities should use their planning powers to help deliver estate regeneration to a high standard.

95. It is important that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive, and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. They should:

a) give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools through the preparation of plans and decisions on applications; and

b) work with school promoters, delivery partners and statutory bodies to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted.

96.To ensure faster delivery of other public service infrastructure such as further education colleges, hospitals and criminal justice accommodation, local planning authorities should also work proactively and positively with promoters, delivery partners and statutory bodies to plan for required facilities and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted.

97. Planning policies and decisions should promote public safety and take into account wider security and defence requirements by:

a) anticipating and addressing possible malicious threats and natural hazards, especially in locations where large numbers of people are expected to congregate 43. Policies for relevant areas (such as town centre and regeneration frameworks), and the layout and design of developments, should be informed by the most up-to-date information available from the police and other agencies about the nature of potential threats and their implications. This includes appropriate and proportionate steps that can be taken to reduce vulnerability, increase resilience and ensure public safety and security; and

b) recognising and supporting development required for operational defence and security purposes, and ensuring that operational sites are not affected adversely by the impact of other development proposed in the area.

Open space and recreation

98. Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport, and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate.

99. Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings, or land to be surplus to requirements; or

b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or

c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.

100. Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for

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users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails.

101. The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them. Designating land as Local Green Space should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or updated, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.

102. The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:

a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;

b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and

c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

103. Policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for Green Belts.

4.12 **Chapter 12 'Achieving Well-Designed Spaces' of the NPPF reads:**

126. The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.

127. Plans should, at the most appropriate level, set out a clear design vision and expectations, so that applicants have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable. Design policies should be developed with local communities so they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics. Neighbourhood planning groups can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development, both through their own plans and by engaging in the production of design policy, guidance and codes by local planning authorities and developers.

128. To provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage, all local planning authorities should prepare design guides or codes consistent with the principles set out in the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code, and which reflect local character and design preferences. Design guides and codes provide a local framework for creating beautiful and distinctive places with a consistent and high quality standard of design. Their geographic coverage, level of detail and degree of prescription should be tailored to the circumstances and scale of change in each place, and should allow a suitable degree of variety.

129. Design guides and codes can be prepared at an area-wide, neighbourhood or site specific scale, and to carry weight in decision-making should be produced either as part of a plan or as supplementary planning documents. Landowners and developers may contribute to these exercises, but may also choose to prepare design codes in support of a planning application for sites they wish to develop. Whoever prepares them, all guides and codes should be based on effective community engagement and reflect local aspirations for the development of their area, taking into account the guidance contained in the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code. These national documents should be used to guide decisions on applications in the absence of locally produced design guides or design codes.

130. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

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e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

131. Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments, and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible. Applicants and local planning authorities should work with highways officers and tree officers to ensure that the right trees are planted in the right places, and solutions are found that are compatible with highways standards and the needs of different users.

132. Design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals. Early discussion between applicants, the local planning authority and local community about the design and style of emerging schemes is important for clarifying expectations and reconciling local and commercial interests. Applicants should work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot.

133. Local planning authorities should ensure that they have access to, and make appropriate use of, tools and processes for assessing and improving the design of development. These include workshops to engage the local community, design advice and review arrangements, and assessment frameworks such as Building for a Healthy Life. These are of most benefit if used as early as possible in the evolution of schemes, and are particularly important for significant projects such as large scale housing and mixed use developments. In assessing applications, local planning authorities should have regard to the outcome from these processes, including any recommendations made by design review panels.

134. Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design52, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:

a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or

b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.

135. Local planning authorities should seek to ensure that the quality of approved development is not materially diminished between permission and completion, as a result of changes being made to the permitted scheme (for example through changes to approved details such as the materials used).

136. The quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed. A separate consent process within the planning system controls the display of advertisements, which should be operated in a way which is simple, efficient and effective. Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts.

4.14 **Chapter 13 'Protecting Green Belt Land' of the NPPF reads:**

137. The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

138. Green Belt serves five purposes:

a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;

b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;

c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;

d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

139. The general extent of Green Belts across the country is already established. New Green Belts should only be established in exceptional circumstances, for example when planning for larger scale development such as new settlements or

major urban extensions. Any proposals for new Green Belts should be set out in strategic policies, which should:
a) demonstrate why normal planning and development management policies would not be adequate;

b) set out whether any major changes in circumstances have made the adoption of this exceptional measure necessary;

c) show what the consequences of the proposal would be for sustainable development;

d) demonstrate the necessity for the Green Belt and its consistency with strategic policies for adjoining areas; and

e) show how the Green Belt would meet the other objectives of the Framework.

140. Once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified, through the preparation or updating of plans. Strategic policies should establish the need for any changes to Green Belt boundaries, having regard to their intended permanence in the long term, so they can endure beyond the plan period. Where a need for changes to Green Belt boundaries has been established through strategic policies, detailed amendments to those boundaries may be made through non-strategic policies, including neighbourhood plans.

141. Before concluding that exceptional circumstances exist to justify changes to Green Belt boundaries, the strategic policy-making authority should be able to demonstrate that it has examined fully all other reasonable options for meeting its identified need for development. This will be assessed through the examination of its strategic policies, which will take into account the preceding paragraph, and whether the strategy:

a) makes as much use as possible of suitable brownfield sites and underutilised land;

b) optimises the density of development in line with the policies in chapter 11 of this Framework, including whether policies promote a significant uplift in minimum density standards in town and city centres and other locations well served by public transport; and

c) has been informed by discussions with neighbouring authorities about whether they could accommodate some of the identified need for development, as demonstrated through the statement of common ground.

142. When drawing up or reviewing Green Belt boundaries, the need to promote sustainable patterns of development should be taken into account. Strategic policymaking authorities should consider the consequences for sustainable development of channelling development towards urban areas inside the Green Belt boundary, towards towns and villages inset within the Green Belt or towards locations beyond the outer Green Belt boundary. Where it has been concluded that it is necessary to release Green Belt land for development, plans should give first consideration to land which has been previously-developed and/or is well-served by public transport. They should also set out ways in which the impact of removing land from the Green Belt can be offset through compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land.

143. When defining Green Belt boundaries, plans should:

a) ensure consistency with the development plan's strategy for meeting identified requirements for sustainable development;

b) not include land which it is unnecessary to keep permanently open;

c) where necessary, identify areas of safeguarded land between the urban area and the Green Belt, in order to meet longer-term development needs stretching well beyond the plan period;

d) make clear that the safeguarded land is not allocated for development at the present time. Planning permission for the permanent development of safeguarded land should only be granted following an update to a plan which proposes the development;

e) be able to demonstrate that Green Belt boundaries will not need to be altered at the end of the plan period; and

f) define boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent.

144. If it is necessary to restrict development in a village primarily because of the important contribution which the open character of the village makes to the openness of the Green Belt, the village should be included in the Green Belt. If, however, the character of the village needs to be protected for other reasons, other means should be used, such as conservation area or normal development management policies, and the village should be excluded from the Green Belt.

145. Once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance their beneficial use, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and

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enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land.

146. The National Forest and Community Forests offer valuable opportunities for improving the environment around towns and cities, by upgrading the landscape and providing for recreation and wildlife. The National Forest Strategy and an approved Community Forest Plan may be a material consideration in preparing development plans and in deciding planning applications. Any development proposals within the National Forest and Community Forests in the Green Belt should be subject to the normal policies for controlling development in Green Belts.

Proposals affecting the Green Belt

147. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

148. When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

149. A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:

a) buildings for agriculture and forestry;

b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;

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

d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;

e) limited infilling in villages;

f) limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); and

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

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

– not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority.

150. Certain other forms of development are also not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These are:

a) mineral extraction;

b) engineering operations;

c) local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location;

d) the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction;

e) material changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds); and

f) development, including buildings, brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.

151. When located in the Green Belt, elements of many renewable energy projects will comprise inappropriate development. In such cases developers will need to demonstrate very special circumstances if projects are to proceed. Such very special circumstances may include the wider environmental benefits associated with increased production of energy from renewable sources.

4.15 **Chapter 15 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment' of the NPPF reads:**

174. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

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a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);

b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;

c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;

d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;

e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

175. Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.

176. Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.

177. When considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, permission should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:

a) the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;

b) the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and

c) any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.

178. Within areas defined as Heritage Coast (and that do not already fall within one of the designated areas mentioned in paragraph 176), planning policies and decisions should be consistent with the special character of the area and the importance of its conservation. Major development within a Heritage Coast is unlikely to be appropriate, unless it is compatible with its special character.

Habitats and biodiversity

179. To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and

b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

180. When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;

b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh

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both its likely impact 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;

c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons63 and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and

d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.

181. The following should be given the same protection as habitats sites:

a) potential Special Protection Areas and possible Special Areas of Conservation;

b) listed or proposed Ramsar sites; and

c) sites identified, or required, as compensatory measures for adverse effects on habitats sites, potential Special Protection Areas, possible Special Areas of Conservation, and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.

182. The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site.

Ground conditions and pollution

183. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that:

a) a site is suitable for its proposed use taking account of ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability and contamination. This includes risks arising from natural hazards or former activities such as mining, and any proposals for mitigation including land remediation (as well as potential impacts on the natural environment arising from that remediation);

b) after remediation, as a minimum, land should not be capable of being determined as contaminated land under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990; and

c) adequate site investigation information, prepared by a competent person, is available to inform these assessments.

184. Where a site is affected by contamination or land stability issues, responsibility for securing a safe development rests with the developer and/or landowner.

185. Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should:

a) mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life;

b) identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason; and

c) limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.

186. Planning policies and decisions should sustain and contribute towards compliance with relevant limit values or national objectives for pollutants, taking into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones, and the cumulative impacts from individual sites in local areas. Opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts should be identified, such as through traffic and travel management, and green infrastructure provision and enhancement. So far as possible these opportunities should be considered at the plan-making stage, to ensure a strategic approach and limit the need for issues to be reconsidered when determining individual applications. Planning decisions should ensure that any new development in Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones is consistent with the local air quality action plan.

187. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development can be integrated effectively with existing businesses and community facilities (such as places of worship, pubs, music venues and sports clubs). Existing businesses and facilities should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them as a result of development permitted after they were established. Where the operation of an existing business or community facility could have a significant adverse effect on new development (including changes of use) in its vicinity, the applicant (or 'agent of change') should be required to provide suitable mitigation before the development has been completed.

188. The focus of planning policies and decisions should be on whether proposed development is an acceptable use of land, rather than the control of processes or emissions (where these are subject to separate pollution control regimes). Planning decisions should assume that these regimes will operate effectively. Equally, where a planning decision has been made on a particular development, the planning issues should not be revisited through the permitting regimes operated by pollution control authorities.

5.0 Considerations & Constraints

5.1 The site is located within the Green Belt where Para 149, chapter 13 of the NPPF states that "a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are; (g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings) which would

- not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development or
- not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the Local Authority.

5.2 The site is previously developed land as it has been used as a garage/workshop for many years. The existing buildings on the site are of substantial construction and the site boundaries are marked with blockwork walls. The existing buildings are not of any architectural merit and the existing boundary walls are an intrusive feature in this rural location. The existing workshop incorporates an inspection pit with a further open inspection pit located to the north west end of the site.

5.3 There is further evidence to support the previous commercial use of the site in that there is a separate 'wc' room at the end of the garages and a brick chimney to provide a fireplace for working in the winter. There are also several items such as desk, filing cabinet etc found within the building along with commercial flood lights to the front hard standing. All these features are considered evidence of previous commercial use on the site.

5.4 The site is surrounded on three sides by residential properties and therefore the re-use of this previously developed land would be inkeeping if it were used to provide an additional dwelling, provided it would not be any larger than the existing buildings within the site.

5.5 As the existing buildings are single storey and limited in footprint and bulk. We have proposed a single storey dwelling that would be less in footprint and overall bulk. The proposed dwelling would also meet current space about dwelling standards and would benefit from adequate amenity space and parking provision.

5.6 The application is supported by full calculations which confirm the footprint of the existing building to be 102.25sqm and the overall cubic content to be 301.63 cu m in contrast the proposed dwelling would have a footprint of 97.23 sqm and a cubic content of 307.68cu m.

5.7 We also note that the existing buildings have a greater presence in the streetscene as they have a longer frontage. This together with the boundary blockwork wall has a significant impact on the openness of the site.

5.8 The proposal to limit the footprint of the proposed dwelling and replace the boundary walls with a post and rail fence to the north east and south east boundaries along with a timber fence to the highway boundary with planting in front, softens the impact of the proposed development and makes a welcomed positive impact on the streetscene in comparison to the existing site layout.

6.0 Design Response and Philosophy

6.1 The site is located adjacent to a residential property with residential opposite and further to the east. There are open fields to the rear of the site and to the north east.

6.2 The site is located in the Green Belt where the construction of new buildings is inappropriate unless if falls within a limited criteria.

6.3 The application site has been used for a commercial garage for many years and therefore is considered previously developed land. There are existing buildings of substantial construction on the site which are therefore a material consideration for the redevelopment of the site. The site is also enclosed by a block wall which is unsightly and doesn't make a positive contribution to the street scene or the openness of the Green Belt.

6.4 The existing buildings are of a single storey with a combination of flat and pitched roofs.

6.5 The proposal is to demolish the existing buildings and provide a single storey dwelling with rooms in the roof space.

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6.6 The proposed dwelling would be located in a similar position close to the boundary with the adjacent residential property.

6.7 The remainder of the site would be open as amenity for the proposed dwelling with parking provision being provided close to the north east elevation and includes turning provision within the site.

6.8 The proposed dwelling is modest in size and would result in a reduction in footprint and bulk on the site.

6.9 The proposed dwelling would result in a much-improved feature within the street scene and would be more in keeping with its context.

6.10 The removal of the harsh concrete block boundary walls would also make a welcomed contribution to the street scene along with its replacement with a more sympathetic treatment.

6.11 The proposed property would be located within a sustainable location within the village of Dilhorne.

7.0 Summary

7.1 The site is currently considered to be previously developed land as evidence has been provided to show it has been used as a commercial mechanical garage and that these buildings have been in place for many years. Therefore, the site may be considered for an appropriate level of redevelopment.

7.2 The proposed redevelopment of the site would have a lesser impact on the openness and character of the Green Belt and is therefore considered appropriate. The design of the proposed dwelling would be inkeeping with its surroundings and would make a positive contribution to the street scene.

7.3 For the above reasons we consider the proposal is acceptable for this site and therefore respectfully request that the application receives a positive response from the planning authority.

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