

Dear Members

Planning Committee

A meeting of the Planning Committee will be held on **Wednesday, 10 December 2025** at **6.30pm** in the **Craddock Room, Civic Centre, Riverside, Stafford** to deal with the business as set out on the agenda.

Please note that this meeting will be recorded.

Members are reminded that contact officers are shown in each report and members are welcome to raise questions etc in advance of the meeting with the appropriate officer.



Head of Law and Governance

PLANNING COMMITTEE - 10 DECEMBER 2025

Chairman - Councillor A Nixon

Vice-Chairman - Councillor S N Spencer

AGENDA

- 1 Minutes
- 2 Apologies
- 3 Declaration of Member's Interests/Lobbying
- 4 Delegated Applications

Details of Delegated applications will be circulated separately to Members.

| | Page Nos |
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| 5 Planning Applications | 3 - 63 |
| 6 Planning Appeals | 64 - 66 |
| 7 Enforcement Matters - CONFIDENTIAL | 67 - 88 |

The public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting because of the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1, 2 and 7, Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

Not for Publication Report of the Head of Economic Development and Planning.

The Report is confidential due to the inclusion of information:

- *Relating to any individual.*
- *Which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.*
- *Relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation, or prosecution of crime.*

MEMBERSHIP

Chairman - Councillor A Nixon

| | |
|--------------|----------------|
| B M Cross | A R McNaughton |
| P C Edgeller | A Nixon |
| A D Hobbs | M Phillips |
| J Hood | A J Sandiford |
| R A James | S N Spencer |
| R Kenney | |

ITEM NO 5

ITEM NO 5

 PLANNING COMMITTEE - 10 DECEMBER 2025

Ward Interest - Nil**Planning Applications***Report of Head of Economic Development and Planning***Purpose of Report**

To consider the following planning applications, the reports for which are set out in the attached **APPENDIX**:-

| | | Page Nos |
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| 24/39419/FUL | Land Off Sandyford Street, Stafford | 5 - 20 |
| | The application was called in by Councillor L Nixon | |
| | Officer Contact - Elaine Harvey, Planning Validation Officer Telephone 01785 619537 | |
| 24/39568/FUL | Land Adjacent To The Lakehouse, Butt Lane Ranton | 21 - 47 |
| | The application was called in by Councillor J Rose | |
| | Officer Contact - Richard Wood, Development Lead Telephone 01785 619324 | |
| 25/40389/OUT | Waste Transfer Station, Whitgreave Manor Holding, Whitgreave Lane | 48 - 58 |
| | The development raises unusual issues of planning policy | |
| | Officer Contact - Elaine Harvey, Planning Validation Officer Telephone 01785 619537 | |

25/40978/FUL

30 Greengate Street, Stafford

59 - 63

The Council has an interest in the application with owning the site

Officer Contact - Richard Wood, Development Lead
Telephone 01785 619324

Previous Consideration

Nil

Background Papers

Planning application files are available for Members to inspect, by prior arrangement, in the Development Management Section. The applications including the background papers, information and correspondence received during the consideration of the application, consultation replies, neighbour representations are scanned and are available to view on the Council website.

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Application: | 24/39419/FUL |
| Case Officer: | Hannah Cross |
| Date Registered: | 26 February 2025 |
| Target Decision Date: | 28 May 2025 |
| Extended To: | - |
| Address: | Land Off Sandyford Street, Stafford, ST16 3ES |
| Ward: | Coton |
| Parish: | - |
| Proposal: | Conversion of a former industrial unit into a place of worship and community centre, with a single-storey extension for entrances, an outbuilding for temporary deceased holding (mortuary), internal first-floor classroom and additional prayer facility, onsite parking, bin/bike stores, visitor and staff car parking, and external alterations |
| Applicant: | Stafford Muslim Community Centre Ltd |
| Recommendation: | Approve, subject to conditions |

REASON FOR CALL-IN TO PLANNING COMMITTEE

This application has been called-in to be determined at Planning Committee by Councillor L Nixon of Coton Ward for the following reasons:

- The residents are concerned re. flooding and parking

1.0 Context

The Application Site

- 1.1 The site comprises an existing disused industrial unit and an area of hardstanding, located approximately 1km from the Stafford town centre and accessed via Sandyford Street.
- 1.2 The surrounding area is suburban in character and made up of predominately residential uses with some commercial premises.
- 1.3 The site falls within Flood Zones 2 and 3.

Proposed Development

- 1.4 The proposal is for the conversion of a former industrial unit to a place of worship and community centre, with a single storey extension to form the entrances to the building, the erection of a single storey outbuilding to form a mortuary, alongside associated parking and landscaping.
- 1.5 Internally the centre would include multi-functional prayer halls, alongside classrooms, staff room, kitchen, office space etc ancillary to the proposed use as a place of worship.
- 1.6 External alterations include the erection of a single storey flat roof mortuary building to the south of the main building, a single storey extension to facilitate the entrance to the building, installation of first floor windows to the side south facing elevation, solar panels erected above the existing flat roof projection, replacement of garage door with bricks and feature glazing (opaque), and change to material palette of flat roof projection (grey timber vertical cladding).
- 1.7 Plans have been amended during the course of the application to reduce the site area following queries raised surrounding how vehicular access from the Sandon Road will be prohibited, and the impact upon access/parking provision to neighbouring sites.

Planning policy framework

- 1.8 Section 38(6) of the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act and section 70 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended, require decisions to be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 1.9 The Development Plan for the purposes of this application comprises The Plan for Stafford Borough 2011-2031 Parts 1 and 2 (TPSB).

OFFICER ASSESSMENT – KEY CONSIDERATIONS

2.0 Principle of Development

- 2.1 SP3 states that the majority of future development will be delivered through the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy. The application site is located within Stafford which falls at the top of the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy under Spatial Principle 3 of TPSB, and its defined settlement boundary under Policy SB1 and as shown on the associated Inset map for Stafford.

- 2.2 Policy SB2 of TPSB seeks to ensure that social and community uses which meet on-going local community needs are protected throughout the Borough, and this policy supports the provision of new facilities. The proposal would provide a community facility in what is currently a disused industrial building and is therefore welcomed in this regard.
- 2.3 The principle of development is therefore considered to be acceptable, but subject to other material considerations being satisfied, as assessed below.

Policies and Guidance:-

National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF)

Paragraphs 8 and 11

The Plan for Stafford Borough 2011-2031 (TPSB)

Part 1 – Spatial Principle 1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development, Spatial Principle 3 (Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy), Spatial Principle 7 (Supporting the Location of New Development), SB2 (Protected Social and Community Facilities)

Part 2 – SB1 (Settlement Boundaries)

3.0 Character and Appearance

- 3.1 Policy N1 of the TPSB sets out design criteria including the requirement for design and layout to take account of local context and to have high design standards which preserve and enhance the character of the area.
- 3.2 The proposed external alterations and extensions to the existing building are relatively modest in their nature, and, taking account of the existing tired condition of the building, are considered to enhance the appearance of the building. The alterations, would retain the overall form of the building and would make use of existing/historic openings, whilst providing a degree of modernisation through the installation of grey timber vertical cladding to some existing walls and feature opaque glazing to the front elevation.
- 3.3 The mortuary building would be single storey, set back from any public vantage points and would tie in with the material palette of the main building with the use of timber cladding is considered acceptable in terms of its appearance.
- 3.4 Some fencing and gateways are indicated on plans although full details of these have not been provided. It is recommended the boundary treatments of the site be secured by condition.
- 3.5 Overall the proposal is not considered to harm the appearance of the wider area.

Policies and Guidance:-

National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF)

Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places

The Plan for Stafford Borough 2011-2031 (TPSB)

N1 (Design)

Supplementary Planning Document – Design (SPD)

4.0 Residential Amenity

- 4.1 Criteria (e) of Policy N1 of the TPSB and the SPD require design and layout to take account of adjacent residential areas and existing activities.
- 4.2 Concerns surrounding the impact of the proposal upon privacy of neighbouring residents are noted. Existing bricked up openings along the south facing side elevation of the building are proposed to be filled with windows. These windows would look towards the redundant industrial units to the south of the site and are not considered to raise any significant privacy concerns. The levels of overlooking to neighbouring garden areas (eg. via first floor rear outlooks) would be unchanged by the proposal.
- 4.3 On ground floor level, existing site boundary treatment would prevent any significant overlooking from users of the car park. Further boundary treatment is indicated on plans although full details of this have not been provided. It is recommended the full details of proposed boundary treatments be secured by condition.
- 4.4 The building and proposed parking area sits immediately adjacent to residential properties on the Sandon Road and Sandyford Street and is therefore within close proximity to neighbouring residential occupiers. Concerns raised by neighbouring occupiers surrounding potential for noise and disturbance are noted.
- 4.5 It is stated within the application form that the operating hours of the building are unknown, however a typical prayer timetable was provided within the transport assessment submitted which suggested the use could operate for up to 24hrs a day.

- 4.6 Regulatory Services have since recommended a condition to ensure the use be restricted to between the hours of 08:00 and 23:00, with a 30 minute opening period at dawn for first prayers to safeguard the amenities of neighbouring residents. It is not considered the 30 minute opening period at 'dawn' is sufficiently precise or enforceable and as such it is recommended operating hours be restricted to 08:00 and 23:00. The agent for the application has agreed to this condition.
- 4.7 Regulatory Services have suggested a number of conditions, some of which are considered to meet the tests of a planning condition and would help to safeguard the amenities of surrounding occupiers. These conditions include those relating to construction hours, sound amplification equipment, air conditioning units/extraction systems and lighting. Other matters such as foul drainage, and chemical storage and disposal are considered to be better dealt with via separate legislation eg. Building Control Regulations and the Environmental Protection Act.
- 4.8 In all the proposal, subject to conditions, is considered acceptable in terms of its impact upon neighbouring occupiers.

Policies and Guidance:-

National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF)

Paragraph 135

The Plan for Stafford Borough 2011-2031 (TPSB)

N1 (Design)

Supplementary Planning Document – Design (SPD)

5.0 Access, Parking and Highway Safety

- 5.1 The site is proposed to be accessed via two existing access points off Sandyford Street. The plans as amended show 40 parking spaces for visitors, 2 x disabled parking spaces and 6 x staff parking spaces, a total of 48 parking spaces.
- 5.2 Appendix B of the TPSB suggests that for places of worship 1 space per resident member of clergy or staff plus 1 per 2 other clergy / staff, plus 1 per 10 seats.

- 5.3 The agent for the application has confirmed there will be 2 permanent staff and 4 voluntary/ part time staff members, and 6 x designated parking spaces for staff have been shown. The transport report states that the maximum capacity of the site for visitors will be 398 people, although it is stated that this number would only be expected at peak times of the year, during Ramadan and the Eid festivals. To accord with TPSB parking standards 40 parking spaces would need to be allocated for visitors, in addition to parking provision for staff.
- 5.4 The site sits just outside of the Stafford town centre and there are bus stops within close proximity to the site. Furthermore the site is within walking distance of a number of residential properties and sits approximately a 20 minute (1 mile) walk from Stafford railway station. The site is therefore arguably in a sustainable transport location. Nonetheless given the capacity of the building, that a proportion of visitors will be travelling to the site by car, and that there is limited on-road parking available in the surrounding area it is considered on-site parking provision will be necessary in this case.
- 5.5 The Highway Authority consider the on site parking provision shown on plans (48 parking spaces) to be sufficient in accordance with TPSB parking standards and raise no objection to the development, subject to conditions surrounding access, parking areas, visibility splays and construction management statement which have been agreed by the applicant. Furthermore a travel plan monitoring fee of £3000 has been requested to be secured via a legal agreement.
- 5.6 In all, the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of access, parking and highway safety.

Policies and Guidance:-

National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF)

Paragraphs 115 and 116

The Plan for Stafford Borough 2011-2031 (TPSB)

Policies T1 (Transport), T2 (Parking and Manoeuvring Facilities), Appendix B – Car Parking Standards

6.0 Flood Risk and Drainage

- 6.1 TPSB Policy N2 requires developments to provide sustainable drainage systems. Policy Stafford 1 reiterates this and also states that development should not harm but enhance watercourses in the town.

- 6.2 The site is located within Flood Zones 2 and 3. The existing and proposed use are considered to be 'less vulnerable' as per the flood risk vulnerability classification. The associated community facilities would be ancillary to the use as a place of worship, and as such do not alter the flood risk vulnerability classification.
- 6.3 The E/A raise no objection to the development and the LLFA note that the area is at risk of flooding, however acknowledge the proposed 'less vulnerable' use and that the submitted FRA and technical note provide mitigation measures to prevent water entry and for reducing the impact of flooding along with an evacuation plan. The LLFA recommend the proposal is acceptable in flood risk terms subject to a condition to secure these mitigation and resilience measures.
- 6.4 The proposal is considered to be acceptable with regards to flooding and drainage and adheres to the development plan and NPPF in this regard.

Policies and Guidance:-

National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024 (NPPF) Sections 14 and 15

The Plan for Stafford Borough

N2 (Climate Change), N4 (The Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure)

7.0 Cannock Chase SAC

- 7.1 Policy N6 states that development which has a direct or indirect adverse impact upon the integrity of the Cannock Chase SAC, and the effects cannot be mitigated, will not be supported.
- 7.2 Under the provisions of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, the Local Planning Authority as the competent authority, must have further consideration to the impact of this development, in this case, due to the relative proximity, on the Cannock Chase SAC.
- 7.3 The LPA have completed a Habitats Regulation Assessment which concludes that given the nature of the proposal the development is not considered have an adverse effect upon the integrity of the Cannock Chase SAC. On this basis, it is concluded that the LPA have met its requirements as the competent authority, as required by the Regulations and therefore the proposal will comply with the requirements of the Development Plan and the NPPF in this regard.

Policies and Guidance:

National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024 (NPPF)

Paragraphs 192-195

The Plan for Stafford Borough (TPSB) 2011-2031

N6 (Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

8.0 Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain

- 8.1 Given the nature of the existing building and surrounding area the proposal is not considered likely to impact upon protected species.
- 8.2 The Environment Act requires developments to provide a 10% uplift in biodiversity net gain (BNG), unless exempt. This scheme is considered to be subject to the de minimis exemption as the development would not impact upon priority habitat and impacts less than 25m² of onsite habitat.

Policies and Guidance:

National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024 (NPPF)

The Plan for Stafford Borough (TPSB) 2011-2031

9.0 Other Matters

- 9.1 The site falls within a Historic Environment Record (HER) which identifies a degree of historic interest within the area as a distinctive area of Victorian terraced housing and factories associated with the shoe industry in Stafford. The County Archaeologist however advises that given that the Victorian and subsequent development on the site is likely to have impacted on any earlier remains, and given the minimal scale of the below-ground impact of the proposed scheme, there are no archaeological concerns regarding the development.
- 9.2 The former Sandonia Cinema building, which is located directly to the south of the site was identified as a non-designated heritage asset under application 22/36444/OUT. This building falls outside of the site boundary and does not form part of the current planning application. Furthermore the proposal is for change of use of an existing building and is not considered to adversely impact the setting of this non-designated heritage asset.
- 9.3 The signage shown on the building is likely to require separate advertisement consent and any planning permission granted would not warrant grant of advertisement consent. The applicant's attention can be drawn to this via an informative.
- 9.4 The land contamination report submitted is acknowledged. The Environmental Protection Lead Officer advises that a Phase II investigation is not required and that any hazardous wastes could be dealt with through separate legislation. An informative can be attached to draw the applicant's attention to these comments.

- 9.5 The Police Liaison Officer has provided advice and comments surrounding the security of the site. The applicant's attention can be drawn to this via an informative should permission be granted.

Policies and Guidance:

National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024 (NPPF)

The Plan for Stafford Borough (TPSB) 2011-2031

10.0 Conclusion And Planning Balance

- 10.1 The proposal would occupy a currently disused building and would provide community facilities as a place of worship and community centre thereby resulting in public benefit which weighs significantly in favour of the proposal.
- 10.2 Subject to conditions the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of its impact upon residential amenity, highway safety and flood risk.
- 10.3 It is recommended planning permission be granted subject to conditions, and a S106 agreement to secure the travel plan monitoring fee.

Consultations (comments summarised)

Neighbours and public representations: (42 received in objection, 39 received in support 2 neutral raising the following material considerations):

- Noting existing parking and congestion issues in the area
- Concern surrounding impact upon highway network and parking
- Concerns surrounding noise and privacy to neighbouring residents
- Concerns surrounding flood risk
- Support for the community use proposed

Highway Authority: No objections subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until the access, parking, servicing and turning areas have been provided in accordance with the approved plans. Drawing P103 REV I
2. The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until the visibility splays shown on approved Plan have been provided. The visibility splay shall thereafter be kept free of all obstructions to visibility over a height of 600 mm above the adjacent carriageway level.

3. The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until the access to the site within the limits of the public highway has been completed.
4. Prior to the commencement of any construction, including demolition, a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) shall be submitted, to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The approved management plan shall include details relating to construction access, hours of construction, routing of HGV's, delivery times and the location of the contractors compounds , cabins, material storage areas and contractors parking and a scheme for the management and suppression of dust and mud from construction activities including the provision of a vehicle wheel wash. It shall also include a method of demolition and restoration of the site. All site operations shall then be undertaken strictly in accordance with the approved CEMP for the duration of the construction programme.

Section 106 Contribution

The Highway Authority would also recommend the following S.106 Contributions are secured to support the proposal:

1. A financial Contribution of £3000 towards Residential Travel Plan Monitoring to support the developer's Travel Plan Coordinator and audit annual monitoring reports to ensure the Travel Plan outcomes are being achieved

Regulatory Services: Initial response raising no objections subject to a number of conditions

Further comments surrounding operating hours recommending the following condition :

- 1 The opening hours of the premises shall be restricted to between 08:00 and 23:00 hours on Monday to Sunday, in addition to a 30 minute opening at dawn for first prayers.

Reason: To protect the amenity of occupiers of adjacent properties from noise and disturbance.

Lead Local Flood Authority:

Overall, the LLFA consider the Site to be at risk in terms of flooding; however, the intended proposals are for a conversion of the building to a proposal that is considered as being 'less vulnerable'.

Mitigation measures to prevent water entry and for reducing the impact of flooding have been included in the Technical Note along with a flood evacuation plan and an assessment of access and egress.

As such, the LLFA would recommend that the scheme be approved subject to inclusion of the following condition upon any planning decision notice.

Condition

The building shall be converted in line with the mitigation and resilience measures outlined in the Technical Note, ST21786, 11th June 2025.

Environmental Protection Lead Officer: The report IN22756 CL 001 is satisfactory for our purposes. A Phase II investigation is not required. I note that the report identifies the risk of potential hazardous wastes and demolition wastes present on the ground. As an informative, these risks could be addressed by building control.

SCC Archaeology Officer: The Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (SHER) identifies a degree of historic interest within the area; the proposals lie within a distinctive development area of Victorian terraced housing and factories associated with the shoe industry in Stafford. The Extensive Urban Survey (EUS) places the site within HUCA 7, which states that the historic buildings of the HUCA, especially within the area of 19th century industrial and housing development, have the potential to retain architectural and structural detailing which would inform our understanding of those aspects of Stafford's social and economic history.

However, historic mapping demonstrates that the building proposed for conversion is mid-late C20th in date and so is not associated with Victorian development of the area. The EUS also suggests that there is the potential for the remains of the medieval town defences to survive within HUCA 7, as has been shown during previous investigations. However, given that the Victorian and subsequent development on the site is likely to have impacted on any earlier remains, and the minimal scale of the below-ground impact of the proposed scheme, I can confirm that I would raise no archaeological concerns regarding the development in this instance.

Environment Agency: No objection

The site is located within Flood Zone 3, the high risk Zone, based on our 'indicative' Flood Map for Planning (Rivers and Sea). The proposed development is a change of use from 'less vulnerable' to 'less vulnerable' use as defined in Annex 3 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The application is for a change of use, which in line with the NPPF should not be subject to the flood risk Sequential or Exception Tests but will still have to meet the requirements of a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA).

Further advice given surrounding FRA requirements.

Ecology Officer: No comment

Conservation Officer: No response received

Police Liaison Officer: No objections, advice given surrounding security of the site

Publicity

Site Notice Expiry: 2 April 2025

Newsletter Expiry: 16 April 2025

Relevant Planning History

22/36444/OUT - Demolition of existing buildings. Redevelopment for affordable housing including parking, new access and associated works. (Access, scale and layout unreserved) - Withdrawn 7 September 2023

21/34713/FUL Demolition of existing building - Withdrawn 7 September 2023

94/3128/FUL Change of use from snooker club to entertainment complex - Refused 9 November 1994

86/18708/FUL Change of use from licensed bingo and social club to licensed snooker hall - Granted 14 May 1986

Recommendation

Approve subject to the following conditions:

- 1 The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date on which this permission is granted.
- 2 The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings and documents, except as required by another condition on this consent in which case the condition takes precedence:

Drawing No E100 Revision A

Drawing No P100 Revision H

Drawing No P101 Revision C

Drawing No P102 Revision C

Drawing No P103 Revision I

Transport Assessment Issue 02 by iRIS Sustainable Planning dated June 2025

Travel Plan by iRIS Sustainable Planning dated June 2025

- 3 The proposed use shall only operate between 08:00 and 23:00 hours Monday to Sunday inclusive.
- 4 The building shall be converted in line with the mitigation and resilience measures outlined in the Technical Note, ST21786, 11 June 2025.
- 5 The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until the access, parking, servicing and turning areas have been provided in accordance with the approved plans. Drawing P103 REV I.
- 6 The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until the access works within the limits of the public highway and visibility splays as shown on Appendix 3: Visibility Splays within the Transport Assessment Issue 02 have been provided. The visibility splays shall thereafter be kept free of all obstructions over a height of 600 mm above the adjacent carriageway level for the life of the development.
- 7 Prior to the commencement of any construction, including demolition, a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) shall be submitted, to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The approved management plan shall include details relating to construction access, hours of construction, routing of HGV's, delivery times and the location of the contractors compounds , cabins, material storage areas and contractors parking and a scheme for the management and suppression of dust and mud from construction activities including the provision of a vehicle wheel wash. All site operations shall then be undertaken strictly in accordance with the approved CEMP for the duration of the construction programme.
- 8 Prior to the development being brought into use, details of the positions, height, design, materials and type of boundary treatment to be erected shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. The boundary treatment shall be completed in accordance with the approved details before the use is commenced.
- 9 All construction works and deliveries to the site during the construction phase of the development shall be restricted to the following times:
 - Monday to Friday: 08:00 - 18:00
 - Saturday: 08:00 - 14:00
 - Not at all on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

10 Prior to the installation of any internal or external sound amplification equipment;

- (a) details of the proposed noise levels shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing by The Local Planning Authority.
- (b) a scheme shall be agreed with the local planning authority which specifies the provisions to be made for the control of noise emanating from the site.

The sound amplification equipment shall only be implemented in accordance with the agreed details, and no other sound amplification equipment installed without the prior approval of the Local Planning Authority.

11 Lighting to areas such as car parks, pathways, land, buildings, internal communal areas and stairways should be designed and positioned so as not to cause a light nuisance to any neighbouring properties. Glare from any lighting must be kept to a minimum and if floodlighting is to be used, full details shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with Regulatory Services, prior to its installation and the scheme thereafter installed and retained in accordance with the approved details.

12 No air conditioning, refrigeration units or extraction systems shall be installed to the exterior of the building, until the technical specifications of the proposed units have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The information submitted shall include the visual appearance of the units, their dimensions, data pertaining to their noise and vibration performance and a maintenance regime. Thereafter, the units shall be installed and retained in accordance with the approved details.

The reasons for the Council's decision to approve the development subject to the above conditions are:

- 1 To comply with the requirements of Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 2 To define the permission.
- 3 To protect the amenity of occupiers of adjacent properties from undue noise and disturbance (Policy N1 of The Plan for Stafford Borough).
- 4 In order to ensure sufficient mitigation in relation to flood risk (Policy N2 of The Plan for Stafford Borough).
- 5 In the interests of highway safety (Policy T2 of The Plan for Stafford Borough).
- 6 In the interests of highway safety (Policy T2 of The Plan for Stafford Borough).
- 7 In the interests of highway safety (Policy T2 of The Plan for Stafford Borough).

- 8 To ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development (Policy N1 of The Plan for Stafford Borough).
- 9 To protect the amenity of occupiers of adjacent properties from undue noise and disturbance (Policy N1 of The Plan for Stafford Borough).
- 10 To protect the amenity of occupiers of adjacent properties from undue noise and disturbance (Policy N1 of The Plan for Stafford Borough).
- 11 To protect surrounding occupiers from undue glare (Policy N1 of The Plan for Stafford Borough).
- 12 To safeguard neighbouring occupiers from undue noise and odours (Policy N1 of The Plan for Stafford Borough).

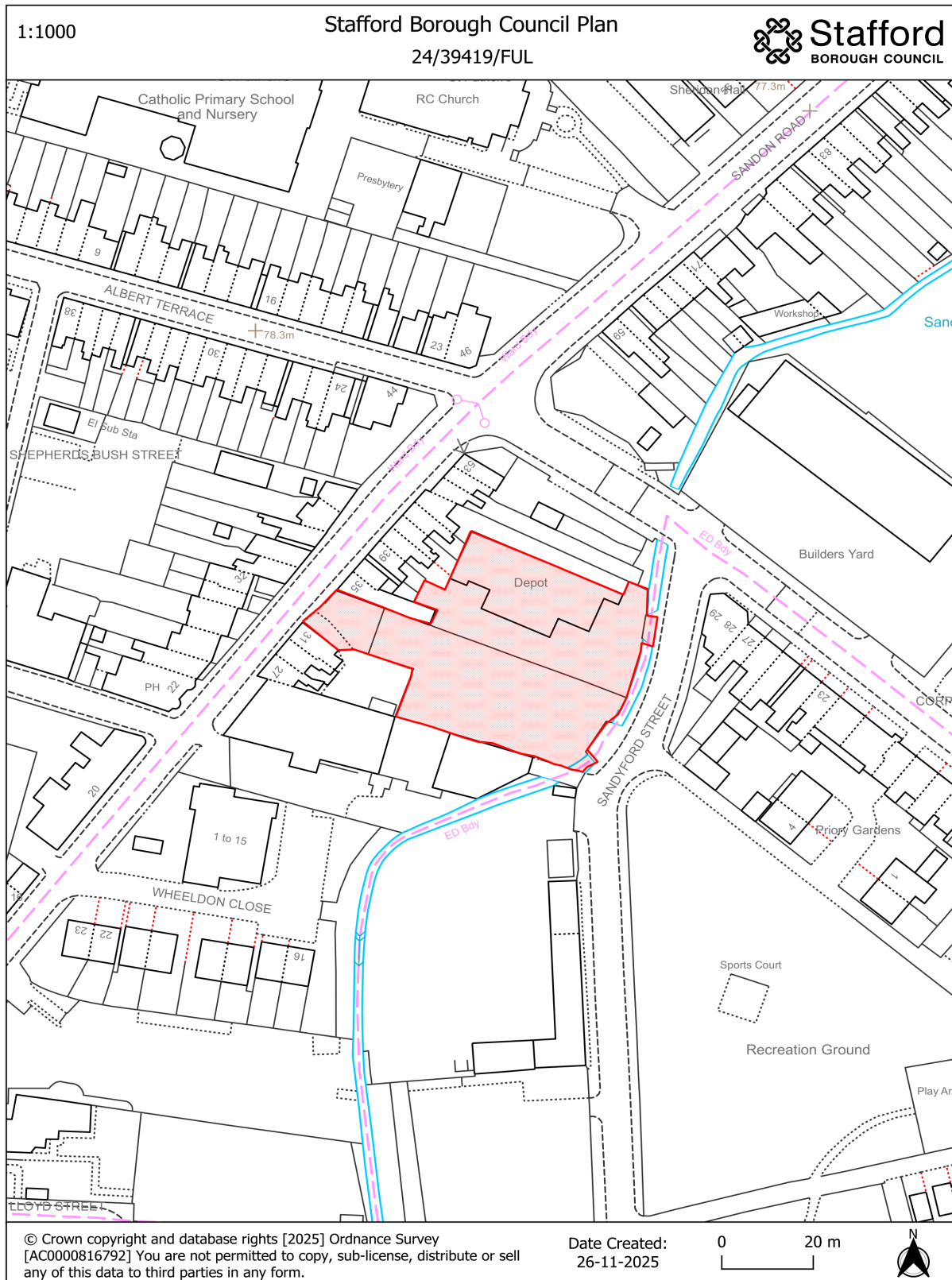
Informatives

- 1 In accordance with the requirements of Article 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Order) 2015, as amended, and the National Planning Policy Framework 2024, the Council has worked in a positive and proactive way in determining the application and has granted planning permission.
- 2 The applicant's attention is drawn to the comments and advice given by the Police Liaison Officer, the Environmental Protection Lead Officer, Regulatory Services and the local Highway Authority. These comments can be viewed in full on the following link: www.staffordbc.gov.uk/planning-public-access
- 3 The applicant is advised that advertisements are dealt with via separate legislation (The Town and Country Planning Control of Advertisements Regulations 2007). Signage may require express advertisement consent for which a separate advertisement consent application would be required.

24/39419/FUL

Land Off Sandyford Street

Stafford



| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Application: | 24/39568/FUL |
| Case Officer: | Tom Cannon |
| Date Registered: | 1 October 2024 |
| Target Decision Date: | 31 December 2024 |
| Extended To: | 12 December 2025 |
| Address: | Land adjacent to The Lakehouse, Butt Lane, Ranton, Stafford, Staffordshire |
| Ward: | Seighford and Church Eaton |
| Parish: | Ranton |
| Proposal: | The change of use of land to site holiday accommodation, the erection of a single timber and steel framed holiday unit and associated access track, package sewage treatment plant and landscaping scheme |
| Applicant: | Mr Nick Walker |
| Recommendation: | Approve, subject to conditions and a legal agreement to secure a financial contribution towards the Cannock Chase SAC mitigation. |

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

This application has been called-in to the Planning Committee by Councillor J T Rose (Ward Member for Seighford and Church Eaton) for the following reasons:

"Change of use potentially threatens the local community and atmosphere; Streetscene and highway issues related to new entrances to the site; and worries what permitted development will then allow the landowners to do on the site without further scrutiny"

Context

1.0 Site and surroundings

- 1.1 The application site comprises an area of primarily undeveloped land that is associated with the established Ranton Trout Fisheries business. The lake which forms part of the fisheries business is located to the west of the application site boundary, but the boundary does include the existing vehicular access, car parking and several buildings associated with the fisheries business.
- 1.2 The northern and eastern boundaries of the application site are bound by mature hedgerows with agricultural fields and Public Right of Way Ranton 13 (to the east) beyond. To the southern boundary of the site is 1.8m timber fencing, with Butt Lane beyond. An existing dwelling in C3(b) Use Class (by not more than 6 residents living together as a single household (including a household where care is provided for residents)), named Bullrush Cottage, is on the opposite side of Butt Lane to the south-east of the site. The west of the site is bound by the lake associated with the fisheries business and the Applicants home, The Lakehouse / Englands Hall, with its domestic curtilage, outbuildings, garaging and associated residential paraphernalia. The dwelling has been named Englands Hall for a long time but the new owner (the Applicant) has recently renamed it The Lakehouse.
- 1.3 A vehicular access, with gates, and an area of hardstanding are already present at the southern part of the site. There are 2 buildings sited adjacent to this area of hardstanding: a grounds maintenance machinery storage building and a storage and facilities building for the existing fisheries business. Further details of these buildings are provided within the planning history section of this report.
- 1.4 Several residential properties laid out in a linear form accessed from Brook Lane are sited to the west of the site, approximately 150m from the application site boundary.
- 1.5 The designations of the development include the following:
 - Red risk zone for Great Crested Newts;
 - Flood Zone 1;
 - Within 15km of Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC); and
 - In the open countryside.
- 1.6 The application site itself does not lie within a Conservation Area, nor is it subject to any other formal designations. There are no heritage assets in the vicinity of the application site.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 It is understood that the current trout fishing pool was constructed in circa 2008, and its lawful use was confirmed via permission 11/16497/FUL in June 2012. In recent years it is understood that the fisheries business has been run as a relatively low-key operation and is currently rented to a private local fishing syndicate. The Applicant plans to revive the trout fisheries business alongside the proposed development.

3.0 Proposal

- 3.1 The application proposes the change of use of the land to a holiday accommodation use with the construction of the following 7 buildings:
- 1 x detached 2-bedroom lakeside holiday lodge with a Gross Internal Area of 106m²;
 - 3 x detached 2-bedroom holiday lodges with a Gross Internal Area of 65m²; and
 - 3 x detached 1-bedroom holiday lodges with a Gross Internal Area of 38m²;
- 3.2 Associated with this is the construction of an access track, package sewage treatment plant and landscaping.
- 3.3 It is intended that the holiday accommodation will complement the existing trout fisheries business on site, but it is not intended that all holiday guests must use the fisheries, or that fisheries customers must use the holiday lodges. It is anticipated there will be some overlap with customers using both the fisheries and the holiday accommodation, but this is not essential.
- 3.4 The area of existing hardstanding at the vehicular access to the site will be extended, formalised and laid out to provide 15 car parking spaces for fisheries and holiday lodge customers. Each lodge will also have its own car parking area to be used by guests and staff (on changeover days). The 2-bedroom lodges would have 2 parking spaces, with the 1-bedroom lodges having 1 space each.
- 3.5 An extensive amount of landscaping is also proposed with the intention of enhancing the site's natural landscaped context and provide guests with a pleasant environment to stay.

4.0 Legislative framework

- 4.1 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) sets out that the determination of applications must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

- 4.2 The development plan comprises of The Plan for Stafford Borough Parts 1 and 2 2011-2031 (TPSB).

OFFICER ASSESSMENT – KEY CONSIDERATIONS

5.0 Principle of Development

- 5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), December 2024, sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how they should be applied. It advises the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Achieving sustainable development means the planning system has three overarching objectives (economic, social and environmental) which are interdependent and should be pursued in mutually supportive ways.
- 5.2 The NPPF advises in paragraph 88, that planning decisions should enable; a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of businesses in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings; b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses, and c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside. Further stating, at paragraph 89, that planning decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements.
- 5.3 Paragraph 187 of the NPPF requires planning decisions to recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.
- 5.4 Spatial Principle (SP) 3 of TPSB sets out the Borough's sustainable settlement hierarchy, the boundaries for which are defined in Policy SB1 insert maps. The site is in open countryside and outside any settlement boundary.
- 5.5 SP 6 states that priority will be given to supporting the rural sustainability of the Borough by protecting and enhancing its environmental assets and character whilst sustaining the social and economic fabric of its communities through promoting a sustainable rural economy.
- 5.6 SP 7 advises that development in the countryside will only be supported where it is consistent with national and local Green Belt policies, SP6 and E2, and does not conflict with environmental and nature conservation policies and provides suitable mitigation or compensatory measures to address any harm.
- 5.7 Policy E2 states that support will be given to the achievement of rural sustainability by encouraging (vii) facilities for tourism.

- 5.8 Policy E6 specifically seeks to promote opportunities for tourism in appropriate locations where it can be demonstrated through a business case that the use can be sustained in the long-term.
- 5.9 To this end, the Applicant has submitted a Business Plan. The submitted Business Plan identifies a local need for the facility and includes information on the following facets of the proposed business venture:
- Costings of the initial set up.
 - Expected occupancy rate.
 - Projected net profits after deducting overheads.
- 5.10 The submitted Business Plan shows that the business venture would be able to sustain a healthy profit 4 years after commencing works on site. After year 4 the income received from holiday lodge rentals will have covered the costs of the initial set up of the business, will cover the on-going costs and will deliver a profit. Officers do not dispute these findings.
- 5.11 The rental income proposed is based on comparable evidence from similar accommodation in Staffordshire and an annual average occupancy rate of 77%. Again, Officers do not dispute these figures given the comparable evidence and research within the Business Plan.
- 5.12 Whilst the settlement of Gnosall is within reasonable walking distance there are no pavements along the highway and given also that this road is relatively narrow and unlit it would not be an attractive proposition for most people. The NPPF acknowledges at paragraph 89 that sites to meet local business and community needs may have to be found beyond settlements and in locations not well served by public transport and in this instance, evidence has been provided through the Business Plan to demonstrate that accommodation at this site will meet local tourism needs and that the business can viably meet that need in the long-term.
- 5.13 The submitted Business Plan demonstrates that the financial viability of the proposed lodges can be sustained in the long term and accordingly the site could be an appropriate and sustainable location for the rural tourism proposal and would therefore comply with the advice at paragraph 88 of the NPPF and Policy E6 of TBSB, subject to assessment of all other material planning considerations. A condition is recommended restricting the use and length of stays at the units, to ensure that they are only occupied as holiday lets.

Policies and Guidance: -

National Planning Policy Framework

Sections 6 and 15

The Plan for Stafford Borough 2011-2031

SP3 (Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy)

SP6 (Supporting Rural Sustainability)

SP7 (Supporting the Location of New Development)

E2 (Sustainable Rural Development)

E6 (Tourism)

6.0 Character and Appearance of the Area

- 6.1 Policy N1 of TPSB sets out design criteria including the requirement for design and layout to take account of local context and have high design standards.
- 6.2 Policy N8 advises development proposals must be informed by, and be sympathetic to landscape character and quality, demonstrated through local site-specific assessments. Development should demonstrate that proposals with landscape and visual implications, should protect, conserve and, where appropriate, enhance:
 - (a) The elements of the landscape that contribute to the local distinctiveness of the area (including heritage assets, cultural character and biodiversity);
 - (b) Historic elements of the present-day landscape that contribute significantly to landscape character.
 - (c) The setting and views of or from heritage assets
 - (d) The locally distinctive pattern of landscape elements such as woodland, streams, hedgerows, trees, and field boundaries.
- 6.3 The NPPF further advises, in paragraph 131, the creation of high quality, beautiful, and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the design 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.

- 6.4 The proposal seeks to provide seven holiday lodges on the site. Six of these will be relatively low-level structures (3.8m in height) with timber-clad walls and would be largely screened from public vantage points by established hedging, trees and fencing along the site boundaries. The proposed lakeside lodge is a larger structure, comprising of a single-storey building with a varied roof height (5.8m at its highest point). This adds architectural interest to the unit and allows further light into the main living and dining room space.
- 6.5 Whilst this central element of the lodge at 5.8m does have the potential to look incongruous in the rural landscape it is still relatively small compared to residential properties and agricultural buildings in the area which are typically over 7m in height. Furthermore, the lakeside lodge benefits from the same screening as the rest of the site as mentioned above and is located deep into the north-west corner of the site. Only glimpsed views of the building could be seen from Butt Lane (approximately 120m to the south) and the dwellings on Brook Lane (approximately 150m to the west).
- 6.6 Given that the landscape is characterised by detached residential dwellings and agricultural buildings it is judged that the proposal development would not have an adverse impact, in visual terms, on the character and appearance of the area. The lodges would therefore assimilate into the landscape character of the area where it is typical to see a series of detached buildings and structures associated with the existing residential and agricultural uses in the area. The extensive landscaping proposed will, in time, also help with this.
- 6.7 Landscaping conditions can be attached to ensure the extensive landscaping is delivered and maintained in perpetuity. With the imposition of this condition and a compliance condition requiring the development to be constructed in accordance with the submitted materials, Officers are satisfied that the scheme is appropriate in terms of its design, character and appearance and would not result in visual harm.

Policies and Guidance: -

National Planning Policy Framework

Section 12

The Plan for Stafford Borough 2011-2031

N1 (Design),

N8 (Landscape Character)

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) - Design

7.0 Amenity

- 7.1 Policy N1 requires the design and layout of development to take account of noise and light implications and amenity of adjacent residential properties.
- 7.2 The NPPF advises, at paragraph 135, planning decisions should ensure that development creates places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.
- 7.3 The nearest residential property to the application site is The Lakehouse / Englands Hall, which is within the Applicant's ownership. They intend to manage the fisheries and holiday lodge business from this property. Within the submitted Business Plan the Applicants note that it is their intention to market the lodges for couples and typically those over 30. They are not planning to attract families or groups of young guests. Whilst it is impossible to limit exactly what age or type of guests will book to stay at the lodges it is an important consideration to note that the Applicants will be living near the lodges. It will therefore be in their own personal interest to ensure that guests behave appropriately and do not undertake any anti-social behaviour such as having parties, playing loud music or making noise at an inappropriate hour. Any such activities would affect the Applicant and their family more than any other resident in the area.
- 7.4 The proposed development does increase the potential for noise and disturbance over the current site conditions but aside from the Applicants home the other dwellings in the area are at least 100m away from the lodges. Officers are content that because of this distance and the nature of the business operation proposed there are no dwellings in the vicinity of the site that would be materially affected through noise and disturbance by the proposal. Other legislation also exists to ensure surrounding residents' amenity is protected from this type of use.
- 7.5 Concern has also been raised by residents in the surrounding area and the occupiers of Bullrush Cottage as to the impact the proposed development will have on this property. This property operates as a dwelling for up to 3 residents with an element of care provided by up to 3 individuals. Accordingly, it is defined as within Use Class C3(b). All uses that fall within Use Class C3 are judged to operate as dwellinghouses. Regardless of whether the property is Use Class C3(a), C3(b) or C3(c) it is ultimately a dwellinghouse and the impact of the proposed development has been assessed in this context. The fact that the property is within Use Class C3(b) does not, in the Officers view, have any potential to be any more materially impacted by the proposed development than a dwelling house and it has been assessed in this context.

Policies and Guidance:-

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph 135

The Plan for Stafford Borough 2011-2031

Policy N1 (Design)

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) – Design

8.0 Access and Parking

- 8.1 Policy T2 states that all new development must have a safe and adequate means of access and internal circulation; not have unacceptable highway safety impacts and provide sufficient parking provision. Paragraph 115 of the NPPF confirms that planning decisions should provide safe and suitable access to the site for all users, with paragraph 116 stating that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.
- 8.2 Access to the proposed lodges will be gained via an existing access onto Butt Lane and would be shared with the users of the trout fisheries business. Internally the proposed development would provide an area of hardstanding immediately to the north of the access which would be divided into 15 car parking spaces and a bin storage area. This car park would be used by trout fisheries customers, staff and visitors to the holiday lodges.

Parking arrangements

- 8.3 Each lodge would have its own dedicated car parking spaces – 1 space for each 1-bed lodge and 2 spaces for the 2-bed lodges. This would accord with the Council's Parking Standards. A turning area would be provided at the end of the access track as well as 3 areas which could be used as a passing place/temporary setting down point for staff or customers visiting a lodge if its own dedicated space is occupied. The flexible arrangement for these areas is acceptable given that this is a private access track and will not form adopted highway, nor would their use result in any impact to the adopted highway or cause any highways safety issues.

- 8.4 The approved plans for the fisheries business (Ref:11/16497/FUL) provided 14 parking spaces. Although the central car park layout submitted with the current application only provides 15 spaces, an uplift of 1 space, the lodges would have their own dedicated parking. Therefore, this additional 1 space would be available for staff/visitor parking. The staff that would be cleaning the lodges could either park in one of the 3 passing place style spaces or within the lodge's own spaces, whichever is available at the time. Whilst the cleaning staff are cleaning a lodge; the units will be empty and their associated parking spaces available for the cleaning staff to use. This arrangement is confirmed within the submitted Site Management Plan. Given the transient nature of the holiday lodges and the potential movements of staff, visitors and trout fisheries customers it is judged that the combination of the 15-space central car park, the 11 spaces located outside of the lodges and the informal passing place areas in total provides an adequate level of car parking for all the different types of visitors to this site. It is very unlikely that at any given time every space would be in use and there should be no instances of people needing to park on the highway.

Access arrangements

- 8.5 Turning to the detail of the proposed access arrangements and impact of the additional vehicle movements associated with the proposed holiday lodges, the Highway Authority (HA) initially objected to the application on the basis that the proposal fails to provide safe and suitable access and lead to conflict between pedestrians and vehicles, due to there not being segregated facilities (i.e. footway) or street lighting on this rural lane.
- 8.6 In terms of the main access, it is acknowledged that the existing access has not been completed in accordance with the approved plans for the fisheries business (Ref: 11/16497/FUL), in that it is not 4.2m wide, the required visibility splays have not been provided, nor the access surfaced in a bound material for the first 6m back from the highway. In addition, gates have also been installed contrary to the original approval which confirmed that the access should remain ungated. Whilst this is regrettable, the current application which has been submitted by the new owner of the site provides the opportunity to improve the access arrangements.
- 8.7 The HA note that the existing visibility splays are very poor, and that splays of 215m in each direction would be required for access on Butt Lane, which is an unlit C Class Road with a speed limit of 60mph. Clearly splays of 215m in each direction would be impossible and the HA therefore recommended that the Applicant undertake speed surveys to determine the 85% quartile speed of passing traffic which could reduce the splay requirements if speeds are below 60mph or may increase splay requirements if speeds are above 60mph.

- 8.8 The results of the speed surveys demonstrated that the average recorded speeds on Butt Lane at between 25.4mph and 26.0mph were significantly lower than the 60mph limit on the road. Therefore, the visibility slays could be reduced as follows:
- 2.4m x 42.3m in the leading/northwestern traffic direction
 - 2.4m x 43.9m in the trailing/southeastern traffic directions
- 8.9 A plan has been submitted which shows that the visibility splays can be provided across land the applicant controls and/or the adjacent adopted highway, with the existing trees/vegetation to be removed and kept free of all obstructions within these visibility splays for the lifetime of the development. The delivery of the visibility splays can be secured in perpetuity through an appropriately worded planning condition, as part of any planning approval. The Applicant has already agreed to provide these visibility splays first, prior to any other works on site, including the removal of the existing vegetation. As a consequence, the HA raise no objections to the proposed visibility splays, subject to the afore mentioned condition.
- 8.10 The HA also raised concern with the Applicants intention to provide a gated access, but the applicant has amended the gate position and design to ensure an appropriate setback distance from Butt Lane. The gate has been positioned to allow a refuse vehicle to pull clear of the lane and a sliding gate is proposed to avoid conflict when opening/closing. The site access arrangements have been modified to ensure a refuse vehicle can pull clear of the lane and access the development without risk of conflict with other highway users on Butt Lane. Officers are therefore content that the Applicant has submitted appropriate evidence and made amendments to ensure that a safe and appropriate vehicular access is achieved to facilitate the proposed developments alongside the existing users that also use the access.

Vehicle, pedestrian and cyclist conflict

- 8.11 Despite accepting the revised access arrangements, the HA have raised concerns that the additional vehicle movements associated with the occupation of the holiday lodges would adversely impact on highway safety on Butt Lane, leading to conflict between vehicles and pedestrians. Following a 7-day traffic survey recording traffic flows, the average number of vehicles travelling along Butt Lane each day over the 7-day survey period is 82 vehicles (41 eastbound and 41 westbound). This indicates that existing traffic flows along Butt Lane are very low.

- 8.12 The likely vehicle movements associated with the operation of the 7 holiday lodges amount to a single outbound and inbound trip for each visiting day (i.e. 7, 2 way movements). Such limited vehicle movements will have no measurable or adverse impact on the local highway network. Indeed, 14 holiday lodge movements will be well within the day-to-day variation of existing vehicle movements on Butt Lane (confirmed to be between 48 and 115 recorded movements over the survey period), demonstrating this level of traffic will have no effect on highway safety on this corridor, or have an adverse impact on pedestrians and cyclists using this rural lane, where existing 85th percentile vehicle speeds have been recorded as being very low. Due to the modest scale of the proposed development, pedestrian/cyclist movements associated with the development are also likely to be low, further reducing the potential between pedestrians/cyclists and vehicular traffic. This is further evidenced by the absences of any recorded personal Injury Collisions recorded on Butt Lane in the last five years. Thus, it is concluded that based on the submitted evidence, existing conditions on Butt Lane and the minor increase in vehicle movements associated with the scheme, the proposal would not adversely impact on highway safety.
- 8.13 Whilst the HA continues to raise concerns in this regard, the evidence which has been provided (i.e. traffic surveys, very low traffic flows and the modest number of vehicle movements associated with the proposal) demonstrates that the proposal would not lead to a significant conflict between vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. As such, it would not be reasonable to refuse the application on this basis, particularly given that paragraph 116 of the NPPF states that: *‘development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable scenarios’*.
- 8.14 Turning to construction works, officers are confident that the temporary impact of construction can be appropriately managed through the use of a Construction Management Plan which will build upon the already submitted Construction Management Plan and Traffic Management Plan and confirms that approximately 106 movements would be required for delivery materials and plant/machinery to undertake the groundwork and landscaping to get the site ready for the lodges. The lodges themselves would be delivered in 28 movements (4 movements for each lodge). The additional requirements can be secured through an appropriately worded planning condition, as part of any planning approval.

Sustainability/accessibility

- 8.15 The HA have raised concerns that the proposal does not constitute a sustainable development in that it is entirely reliant on the private car and does not enable future guests to reasonably choose sustainable modes of transport to access the site. This broad assertion relates to 'accessibility' rather than assessing sustainable development 'in the round'. By definition, all rural tourist development will be in less accessible locations, where potential visitors will be largely reliant of the private motor vehicle to access such locations/nearby facilities/attractions. Indeed, the NPPF acknowledges at paragraph 89 that sites to meet local business and community needs may have to be found beyond settlements and in locations not well served by public transport and in this instance, evidence has been provided through the Business Plan to demonstrate that accommodation at this site will meet local tourism needs and that the business can viably meet that need in the long-term. Thus, it is considered that the proposal would provide sustainable rural tourist related development and is therefore acceptable.

Summary - Access and parking

- 8.16 Overall, notwithstanding the concerns raised by the HA, Officers are satisfied that, subject to the afore mentioned conditions, safe and suitable access can be provided, and the modest increase in vehicle movements associated with the development would not have an adverse impact on highway safety in Butt Lane. Appropriate parking facilities would also be provided. As such, it would accord with Policy T2 of the TPSB and paragraphs 115 and 116 of the NPPF.

Policies and Guidance:-

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraphs 115 and 116

The Plan for Stafford Borough

T2 (Parking and Manoeuvring Facilities)

9.0 Ecology and Biodiversity

- 9.1 Policy N4 states that the natural environment will be protected and that new development where damage to the natural environment is unavoidable must provide appropriate mitigation. The policy further requires that natural habitats and species in the locality are protected.

- 9.2 Policy N1 requires development to retain significant biodiversity and landscaping features and create new biodiversity areas. To comply with the guidance contained within the Framework and the Council's biodiversity duty new development must demonstrate that it will not result in the loss of any biodiversity value of the site.
- 9.3 The Newt Officer has advised that the development falls within a red impact risk zone for Great Crested Newts (GCN). In the red impact zone, there is highly suitable habitat and a high likelihood of GCN presence. In this instance, however, due to the amount and type of built form proposed, the Newt Officer is satisfied that any impacts will be minimised if the measures described in the submitted ecological report are followed. A planning condition can be used to secure this.
- 9.4 With respect to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) the current biodiversity value of the site is relatively low given it is primarily mowed grassland. The proposed development will introduce new wildflower planting and areas of the grassland that will not be mowed as often and can be more wild. These factors coupled with tree planting will result in an uplift in biodiversity of 42%, well above the 10% increase required by legislation. The measures required to secure the necessary 10% uplift in BNG can be secured by condition.
- 9.5 Finally, in relation to protected species the submitted ecological reports show that there are no issues in this regard, either with the existing site context or borne through the delivery of the proposed development. The Council's Biodiversity Officer concurs with this.

Policies and Guidance:-

National Planning Policy Framework

Section 15

The Plan for Stafford Borough

N1 (Design)

N2 (Climate Change)

N4 (The Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure)

N5 (Sites of European, National and Local Nature Conservation Importance)

10.0 Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

- 10.1 Policy N6 states that development which has a direct or indirect adverse impact upon the integrity of the Cannock Chase SAC, and the effects cannot be mitigated, will not be supported. Policy N6 also sets out that any development leading to a net increase in dwellings within a 15km radius of the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC) will be deemed to have an adverse impact on the SAC unless or until satisfactorily avoidance and/or mitigation measures have been secured. The Council has adopted guidance acknowledging a 15km Zone of Influence and seeking financial contributions for the required mitigation from residential developments within the 0-15km zone. The proposal lies within the 15km buffer of the Cannock Chase SAC, as such a financial contribution is required.
- 10.2 Under the provisions of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, the Local Planning Authority as the competent authority, must have further consideration, beyond the above planning policy matters, to the impact of this development, in this case, due to the relative proximity, on the Cannock Chase SAC. Therefore, in accordance with Regulation 63 of the Regulations, the Local Planning Authority has undertaken an Appropriate Assessment. The Council's Appropriate Assessment (AA) concludes that the mitigation measures identified within the Council's Development Plan for windfall housing sites, will address any harm arising from this development to the SAC. The financial contribution would be secured through a Unilateral Undertaking (UU).
- 10.3 It is acknowledged that the proposal seeks permission for 7 holiday lodges, however the 'Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation Planning Evidence Base Review, Stage 2,' 12 July 2021 confirms that in terms of financial contribution one holiday lodge equates to one residential unit because the proposal is likely to have similar impacts in terms of recreational and visitor use as a dwelling house.
- 10.4 The Applicant has submitted a Business Plan that shows when fully operational the holiday lodges should have an average annual occupancy rate of 77%. This is comparable with similar holiday lodge developments. Accordingly, they have proposed to pay 77% of the required fee to mitigate against any potential impact to the Cannock Chase SAC. It would be unreasonable to pay the full fee given the units will only be occupied, on average, for 77% of the year. Officers concur with this approach which has also been accepted by Natural England. Accordingly, the Applicant has submitted the required Statement of Willingness. If Members are minded to approve this application, then the decision would be made subject to the completion of a UU to secure the necessary SAC mitigation payment. The development would then provide sufficient mitigation and avoidance measures to prevent an adverse combination effect on the integrity of the Cannock Chase SAC, in compliance with Policy N6 of TPSB.

Policies and Guidance:-

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraphs 179-182

The Plan for Stafford Borough (TPSB) 2011-2031

N6 (Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC))

11.0 Conclusion and Planning Balance

- 11.1 The site is situated in the countryside, beyond any settlement boundary. A Business Plan has been submitted which demonstrates that the financial viability of the proposed development can be sustained in the long-term and the site is an appropriate location for rural tourism and would constitute a sustainable rural tourism development, despite concerns raised by the HA regarding accessibility. In addition, traffic surveys have been undertaken which confirm that the number and speed of vehicles on the surrounding highway network is low, and the vehicle movements associated with the use and occupation of the 7 holiday lodges would be moderate, ensuring that the proposal would not result in significant conflict between vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists, despite the continued concerns raised by the HA. Moreover, the proposal would not adversely affect the character and appearance of the area. There are no amenity or biodiversity concerns associated with the proposal. Thus, overall planning permission is recommended, subject to conditions.

12.0 Other Matters

- 12.1 In addition, the HA have raised concerns regarding several vehicular and pedestrian accesses within the Applicants ownership which lie outside the boundary of this planning application. The Applicant is aware of the concerns raised and is actively working with the County Council to rectify the issues that have been identified. Nevertheless, these accesses are not part of the decision-making process for this development. There is another existing access within the application site boundary, to the east of the main vehicular access, which the HA have raised concerns with. On the submitted plans it is not the Applicant's intention to change this access in any way, and it does not connect with the proposed internal access road.

- 12.2 Concerns have been raised by interested parties regarding potential flooding and foul/surface water disposal. The site lies in flood zone 1, land with a low flood risk. To ensure that surface and foul water is disposed of in an appropriate manner, a condition is recommended, requiring details of sustainable drainage systems for surface water and details of the proposed packet treatment facility for the disposal of foul water.
- 12.3 A public right of way (Footpath No.13 Ranton Parish) is situated adjacent to the site. An informative note will be attached to any decision notice, advising the applicant of the presence of the public right of way and that the granting of planning permission does not constitute authority for any interference with the public right of way.

Consultations

(Latest comments summarised. All comments can be viewed on the Council's public access website)

Biodiversity Officer

Response dated 14 October 2025

No objections, the Ecological Survey did not find any significant protected species issues. The proposal provides the necessary Biodiversity Net Gain and the trading rules have therefore been met. Grassland enhancement work and the planting of 50 native trees, as set out in section 5 of the report, "Mitigation Measures" should be carried out as stated.

Environmental Protection Lead Officer

Response dated 7 October 2024

Foul drainage will be discharged to a packet treatment unit which should be conditioned. Clarification required as to whether the lodges will have mains water supply, have direct contact with the ground, or will they be constructed on a concrete base.

Highways Authority

Response dated 19 November 2025

The highway authority is satisfied that the visibility splays are acceptable, subject to a condition requiring that the approved visibility splays are provided before the commencement of development and kept free from any obstructions for the lifetime of the development.

Although the HA are satisfied with the proposed access arrangements, they still object to the application on the basis that the proposal would exacerbate the risk of conflict between vehicles/pedestrians and cyclists due to the design of the highway network with limited designated passing places within the highway and no street lighting, therefore unsuitable to cater for this proposed development leading to an increase in the likelihood of highway danger to highway users particularly those considered vulnerable. The HA also raise concerns that the proposal does not constitute sustainable development in that it is entirely reliant on the private car and does not enable future guests to reasonably choose sustainable modes of transport to access the site and therefore increases the likelihood of highway safety issues.

Natural England

Response dated 10 July 2025

No objection subject to securing appropriate mitigation

Newt Officer

Response dated 8 October 2024

No objection, subject to conditions ensuring that the development is implemented in accordance with the recommendations of the Ecological Appraisal and an informative note, advising the applicant of their obligations under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Definitive Map and Spatial Information Officer

Response dated 3 October 2024

No objections. The Definitive Map of Public Rights of Way for Staffordshire show a public right of way (Footpath No.13 Ranton Parish) runs adjacent to the application site. An informative note should be attached to any decision notice, advising the applicant of the presence of the public right of way and that the granting of planning permission does not constitute authority for any interference with the public right of way and associated items - or its obstruction (temporary or permanent).

Ranton Parish Council

Response dated 17 November 2024

Objection

1 Highway Safety and Infrastructure:

- **Narrow lanes and flooding:** The local roads are narrow, prone to flooding and debris (especially with runoff from fields), and difficult to navigate, especially when meeting oncoming traffic.
- **Limited Infrastructure:** The local infrastructure is not equipped to handle additional vehicles or traffic, which would negatively impact the entire village. There are also no pedestrian walkways, making it dangerous for both vehicles and pedestrians.

2 Child Safety:

- **Children's Home concerns:** The manager of a nearby children's home is concerned about the safety of vulnerable children due to the proposed development, citing the risk of noise, potential for absconders, and the difficulty of safeguarding in a rural area. There may also be long-term issues for the home with Ofsted registration relating to the potential of not being able to manage the risk associated with a near-by business attracting holiday makers to the area.

3 Tourism and Business Viability:

- **Lack of proven success:** The development appears to depend on a 365-day operation, but it lacks evidence that the business is thriving or sustainable. There are concerns that the business is being presented as established when it is not.
- **Rural location concerns:** The development is out of keeping with the rural area, which lacks amenities and requires car-based travel. There is also concern that the lodges could be used for permanent residency, despite the business model focusing on tourism.

4 Environmental and Social Impact:

- **Spoiling the environment:** There are fears that the development will spoil the rural environment, especially with the addition of lighting around the pond and the potential for further expansion into neighbouring fields.
- **Risk of becoming a leisure complex:** There is concern that the development could evolve into a larger leisure complex, which would escalate traffic, infrastructure strain, and environmental degradation.
- **Job creation and local employment:** While the project claims to generate local employment, there is little evidence and detail on staffing, and concerns are raised about whether it would provide additional meaningful local jobs.

5 Regulatory and Planning Concerns:

- Inadequate risk assessment: The development has not adequately addressed the risk assessments required for such a site, particularly for child safety and environmental impact along with safety concerns relating to the ponds themselves.
- Unclear long-term vision: The application does not sufficiently address potential long-term issues, such as the risk of the site becoming permanently inhabited or expanding beyond the original scope.

Overall, the main concerns centre on the impact the development could have on local safety, infrastructure, the environment, and the rural character of the area, with a strong emphasis on the lack of proven success and sustainability of the business model.

Neighbours (28 consulted):

13 responses received raising the following objection:

- An unnecessary intrusion into this rural area.
- Isolated sporadic development unrelated to any existing settlement.
- Highways safety issues due to increased volume in traffic.
- Surrounding road network is not appropriate for the increase in traffic.
- The location and type of development is unsustainable.
- Negative impact on wildlife on biodiversity.
- Concerns that the development has already commenced on site prior permission being granted.
- No improvement to local tourism.
- Visual impact of the proposed development in the landscape.
- Increased light pollution from the proposal.
- Excessive noise from the proposal.
- Increased flood risk from the proposal.
- The existing fisheries business is defunct and therefore the proposed development should be regarded as a new venture.

- Negative impact on the security and safeguarding of children and young people.

3 responses received raising the following support:

- We are in complete support of the Lakehouse with trying to grow a countryside business, which in our opinion has no impact on the local environment and offers potentially jobs for the local youngsters.
- What is being planned is reasonable and not damaging to the village or the community.
- The increase in traffic on Butt Lane will be minimal and cannot be a factor of concern to the council.
- The development brings much-needed employment into a rural community.
- The sewage scheme is thoughtfully and environmentally planned to ensure that waste management is enhanced from the site.
- The landscaping is designed to reduce the potential for noise or light effects on surrounding properties.

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 30 October 2024

Relevant Planning History

11/16497/FUL - Retention of fishing pool; office/store building – approved 25 June 2012

11/16498/FUL - Temporary Dwelling - refused 17 May 2012

21/35286/HOU - Proposed relocation of existing access – approved 12 April 2022

23/37445/FUL - The erection of a fishery storage and facilities building to be used in conjunction with Ranton Trout Fisheries Ltd - approved 5 December 2023

24/39348/FUL - The erection of grounds maintenance machinery storage building – Approved 2 October 2024

Recommendation

Approve subject to the following conditions:

- 1 The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date on which this permission is granted.

- 2 The development authorised by this permission shall be carried out in complete accordance with the following drawings and specifications, except where indicated otherwise by a condition attached to this consent, in which case the condition shall take precedence:-

Drawing No 101749/WALKER/002/PL02 Rev 8 'Site Plan' (received 8 July 2025)

Drawing No 101749/WALKER/002/PL03 Rev 10 'Site Plan- landscaping' (received 6 November 2025)

Drawing No 101749/WALKER/002/PL01 Rev 4 'Location Plan' (received 30 January 2025)

Drawing No 101749/WALKER/002/PL05 Rev 4 'Proposed Access' (received 19 November 2025)

Drawing No 101749/WALKER/002/PL04 Rev 1 'Park Homes' (received 30 January 2025)

Statutory Biodiversity Metric (received 7 April 2025)

Ecological Survey by (Chris Seabridge and Associates Ltd) dated June 2024.

Highways Technical Note by SK Transport Planning dated 19 March 2025

Flood Risk Assessment dated August 2024

ZinCo - Green Roof Systems and Specification received 27 August 2024

Planning, Design and Access Statement received 27 August 2024

- 3 The development hereby approved shall be implemented strictly in accordance with the recommendations/measures stated in Section 7.1 of the supporting Ecological Appraisal (Chris Seabridge and Associates Ltd June 2024).
- 4 The external facing, roofing, decking, hard surfacing and fencing materials shall be constructed in accordance with the approved Site Plan, Landscaping Plan, Lakeside Lodge, Park Homes Plans, ZinCo - Green Roof Systems and Specification, and the Planning and Design and Access Statement referred to in condition 2, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.
- 5 Users of the holiday lets shall not stay for more than 28 days at any one time, and a register of all users shall be maintained by the applicant which must be available for inspection by the local planning authority on request.

- 6 The holiday lets hereby permitted shall not be occupied until precise details of the species, mix, plant supply sizes and numbers of all trees, shrubs and wildflower mix as shown on the approved soft landscaping plan Ref: 101749/WALKER/002/PL03 Rev 10 have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority. The soft landscaping works shall be carried out as agreed in the first planting season following first occupation of the lodges/park homes or within 12 months of the commencement of development, whichever is sooner. Any planting, seeding or turfing which within a period of five years after implementation, is removed, dies or becomes seriously damaged or defected shall be replaced as soon as reasonably practicable with others of a similar species, size and number as originally agreed.
- 7 No development shall commence, including any demolition or site clearance works, until the approved access, visibility splays, driveway and parking and turning areas shown on approved Drawing Nos. 101749/WALKER/002/PL05 Rev 4, 101749/WALKER/002/PL03 Rev 10 and 101749/WALKER/002/PL02 Rev 8 have been provided. The approved visibility splays shall thereafter be maintained free from any obstruction for the lifetime of the development.
- 8 No external lighting shall be installed on site unless and until details of such lighting, including the intensity of illumination and predicted lighting contours, have been first submitted to, and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Any external lighting which is installed shall accord with the approved details.
- 9 No development shall commence until a detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) which builds on the Construction Management and Traffic Management Plan, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The CEMP shall include:
 - timing of delivery of holiday lodges, and delivery hours for construction vehicles;
 - the hours of operation and delivery times;
 - the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors;
 - loading and unloading of plant and materials;
 - storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development;
 - measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during the works;
 - a scheme for recycling/disposing of soil and waste resulting from the works.

- 10 No development shall commence until full details of both surface and foul water drainage, including the use of sustainable drainage systems (surface water) and the proposed packet treatment unit (foul) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved surface and foul water schemes shall be completed prior to the first occupation of the holiday lodges.

The reasons for the Council's decision to approve the development subject to the above conditions are:

- 1 To comply with the requirements of Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 2 To define the permission.
- 3 To minimise the impacts of development on biodiversity. (Policy N4 of the Plan for Stafford Borough).
- 4 To ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development. (Policies N1 g and h of The Plan for Stafford Borough).
- 5 To ensure that the units are used for their intended purpose and are not occupied as permanent residential dwellings which would conflict with the sustainability objectives set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 6 To ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development. (Policies N1 g and h of The Plan for Stafford Borough).
- 7 In the interests of the safety and convenience of users of the highway. (Policy T2 of The Plan for Stafford Borough).
- 8 In order to safeguard the visual amenities of the locality and to ensure the minimisation of light pollution and light spread. (Policy N1 (e) of the Plan for Stafford Borough).
- 9 In the interest of highway safety and to ensure that safe and suitable access to the site is provided during the construction phase. (Policy T2 of the Plan for Stafford Borough).
- 10 To ensure the provision of adequate drainage facilities and to prevent the pollution of any adjacent watercourses, wells and aquifers. (Policy N2 of The Plan for Stafford Borough).

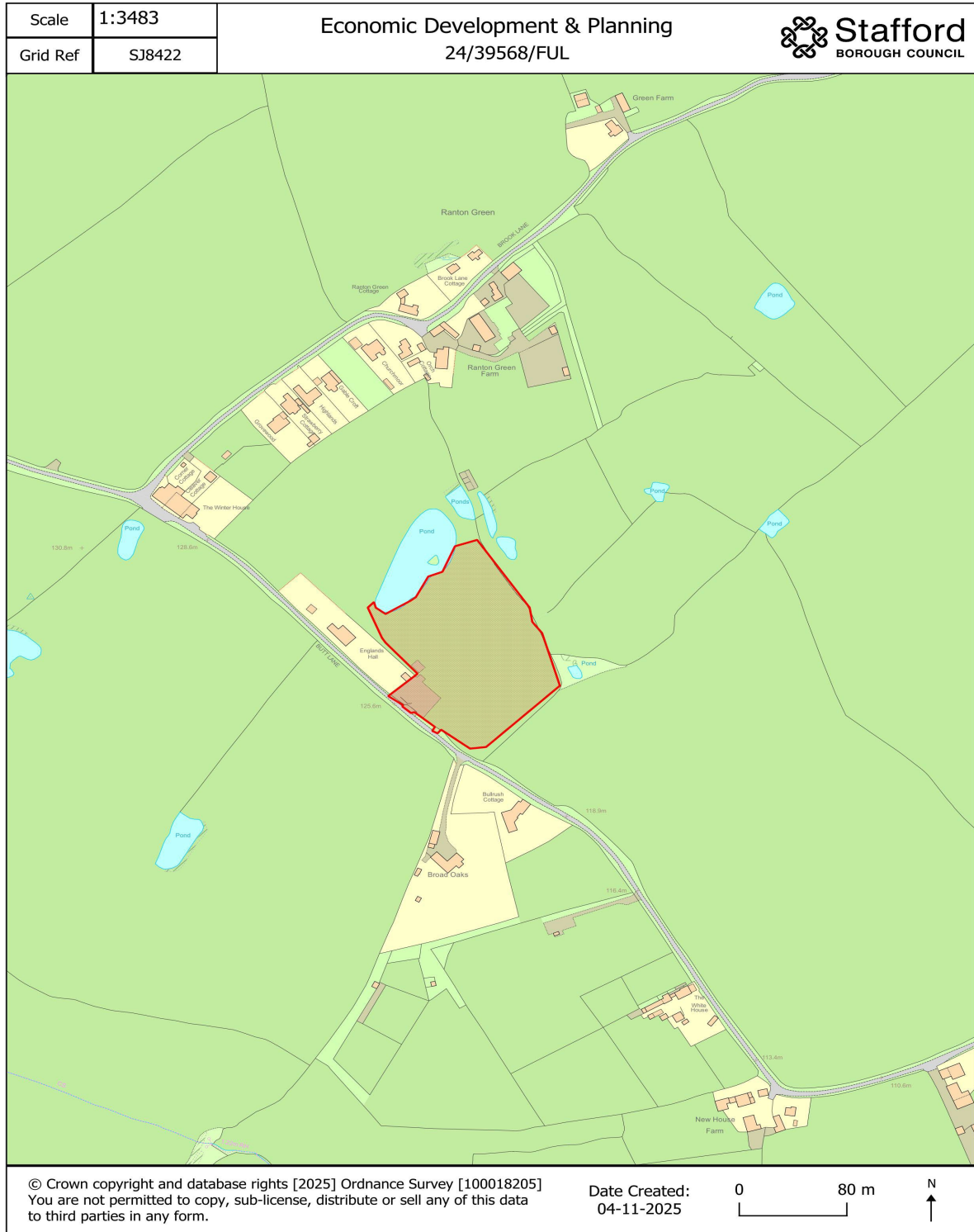
Informatives

- 1 In accordance with the requirements of Article 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Order) 2015, as amended, and the National Planning Policy Framework 2024, the Council has worked in a positive and proactive way in determining the application and has granted planning permission.
- 2 The applicant is reminded that, under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), it is an offence to (amongst other things): deliberately capture, disturb, injure, or kill great crested newts; damage or destroy a breeding or resting place; intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a resting or sheltering place. Planning permission for a development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this legislation. Should great crested newts be found at any stage of the development works, then all works should cease, and a professional and/or suitably qualified and experienced ecologist (or Natural England) should be contacted for advice on any special precautions before continuing, including the need for a licence.
- 3 If the application were to be approved the vehicle access will be required to be surfaced in tarmac to an agricultural standard for its full width for a minimum depth of 10m. These works would require a permit to dig and a Highway Works Agreement with Staffordshire County Council. The applicant is requested to contact Staffordshire County Council for advice in order to secure the Agreement. The link below is to the Highway Works Information Pack including an application form. Please complete and send to the address indicated on the application form or email to highway.agreements@staffordshire.gov.uk. The applicant is advised to begin this process well in advance of any works taking place in order to meet any potential timescales.
www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Highways/highwayscontrol/HighwaysWorkAgreements.aspx

The applicant would also be required to obtain a retrospective vehicle access crossing for the residential access to the west which will require a permit from our Traffic and Network Management Unit. Please note that you require a Section 184 Notice of Approval and a permit to dig from Staffordshire County Council to replace the current granite setts within highway land with tarmac. Please complete and send to the address indicated on the application form, which is Staffordshire County Council at Traffic and Network Management Unit, Staffordshire Place 1, Tipping Street, Stafford, Staffordshire, ST16 2DH. (or email to trafficandnetwork@staffordshire.gov.uk) Vehicle access crossing (dropped kerb) - Staffordshire County Council.

The applicant is required to remove the two planters and post/sign currently located within highway land.

- 4 The Applicants attention is drawn to the comments of the Staffordshire County Council Definitive Map and Spatial Information Officer dated 3 October 2024

24/39568/FUL**Land Adjacent To The Lakehouse****Butt Lane****Ranton**

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Application: | 25/40389/OUT |
| Case Officer: | Hannah Cross |
| Date Registered: | 22 July 2025 |
| Target Decision Date: | 16 September 2025 |
| Extended To: | - |
| Address: | Waste Transfer Station, Whitgreave Manor Holding, Whitgreave Lane, Whitgreave, Stafford, Staffordshire |
| Ward: | Seighford and Church Eaton |
| Parish: | Whitgreave |
| Proposal: | Proposed demolition of barn, loose box, pig pen and chicken runs to provide a plot for a self build detached dwelling (all matters reserved) |
| Applicant: | Mr M Stevens |
| Recommendation: | Refuse |

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

The development raises unusual issues of planning policy within the meaning of paragraph 3.7.1 (ii) of the Scheme of Delegation.

1.0 Context

Site and surroundings

- 1.1 The application site comprises a parcel of land off Whitgreave Lane, which appears to be in use as a small holding associated with Whitgreave Manor. There are two dwellings north of the site, Whitgreave Manor Cottage and Whitgreave Manor. The site is otherwise surrounded by open fields with the A34 dual carriageway located approx. 100m to its east.
- 1.2 The site falls outside of any settlement set out within The Plan for Stafford Borough (TPSB), and therefore in policy terms is located in open countryside.

Proposed development

- 1.3 This application seeks outline permission for the demolition of the existing small barn, pig pen etc on the site and the erection of a self-build detached dwelling with all matters reserved.

- 1.4 Plans appear to indicate the layout of the proposed dwelling however it has been advised that this is an indicative layout only. It was requested that the indicated layout be removed from the application as all matters are reserved however no amended plans were submitted.

Legislative framework

- 1.5 Section 38(6) of the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act and section 70 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended, require decisions to be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 1.6 The development plan for the purposes of this application comprises The Plan for Stafford Borough (TPSB) 2011-2031 Parts 1 and 2.

OFFICER ASSESSMENT – KEY CONSIDERATIONS

2.0 Principle of Development

Conflict with development plan

- 2.1 The Plan for Stafford Borough 2011-2031 (TPSB) establishes, in Policy Spatial Principle (SP) 3, the Council's approach to the distribution of housing across the borough. The TPSB seeks to focus housing within the settlement hierarchy of Stafford, Stone, and the Key Service Villages. The site is outside of the designated settlement hierarchy and is therefore within the 'open countryside' for planning purposes.
- 2.2 TPSB policies SP7 and C5A contain criteria that relate to new housing development. Policy SP7 on the location of new housing development recognises that outside of the identified settlement boundaries, development will be supported where it is consistent with the objectives of the Council's spatial principles in supporting rural sustainability. Furthermore Policy E2 deals with Sustainable Rural Development and supports residential development outside of designated settlements provided this is in accordance with Policy C5.
- 2.3 Policy C5A, where development sits outside of the identified settlements, states that proposals for new residential development will be required to meet the criteria in policy SP7 alongside three other criteria. These require demonstration that provision cannot be accommodated within the identified boundaries of settlements in the hierarchy; are supported by a parish based local housing needs assessment and appraisal showing that it meets the defined needs, and that the development is of high quality reflecting local character.

- 2.4 The submitted application does not provide information on whether the development can be provided within the settlement boundary and is not supported by a parish based local housing needs assessment and appraisal showing that it meets the defined needs.
- 2.5 Accordingly, the proposed development would conflict with Policy SP3, Policy E2, Policy C5A and Policy SP7, whose objectives have already been outlined above.

Housing land supply and the ‘tilted balance’

- 2.6 Stafford Borough does not currently have a 5-year housing land supply and policies in The Plan for Stafford Borough (TPSB) which relate to the supply of new market housing are more than 5 years old. Consequently, the aforementioned policies are not up to date and as such the ‘tilted balance’ is engaged where the National Planning Policy Framework’s (hereafter referred to as the ‘Framework’) ‘presumption in favour of sustainable development’ is applied for decision taking as set out in paragraph 11 of the Framework.
- 2.7 Paragraph 11 states that where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.
- 2.8 In respect of the directing development to sustainable locations, Paragraph 110 states that *significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes*. Paragraph 110 does however recognize that *opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making*.
- 2.9 Furthermore Paragraph 115 states that sustainable transport modes should be prioritised taking account of the vision for the site, the type of development and its location.

- 2.10 Whitgreave does not benefit from any key services such as a school, GP surgery or grocery store. The site falls approx. 600m from the Stafford settlement boundary, and the nearest schools, GP surgery and grocery stores are located approx. 1-3 miles from the site. Whilst arguably this could be considered to fall within walking distance, Whitgreave Lane is unlit with no pedestrian footway, and large sections of this side of the A34 do not benefit from a pedestrian footway. As such walking into Stafford is not a realistic or appealing option.
- 2.11 The site is within walking distance to a bus stop off the A34 where there are bus services running to Hanley via Stone, or on the other side of the A34 buses run to Stafford. However, to access these bus stops any resident would have to walk on an unlit C classified road with a speed limit of 60mph (Whitgreave Lane) and for services to Stafford, residents would need to cross a heavily trafficked A class dual carriageway with a speed limit of 60mph. In terms of access to rail services, the site is located approx. 3.5 miles to the nearest train station, Stafford railway station.
- 2.12 In all the site is not considered to be located in a sustainable location in that occupiers would not have a 'genuine choice' of transport modes, and occupiers would be reliant on a private car to meet their day-to-day needs. As such the site represents an unsustainable location for housing having regard to Paragraph 110 and 115 of the NPPF.
- 2.13 Consideration has been given to the advice received from the Strategic Planning and Placemaking team and its interpretation of paragraph 11 of the NPPF. However, the advice does not appear to consider the whole of paragraph 11 which in section ii) states development can also be refused if a development's adverse impact outweighs its benefits when assessed against the policies within the NPPF as a whole.
- 2.14 In this case, the contribution to housing supply would be limited to one dwelling and it is considered the adverse effects of allowing the development in terms of its unsustainable location would outweigh these benefits.

Policies and Guidance:-

National Planning Policy Framework 2024

Paragraphs 8, 11, 110, 115

The Plan for Stafford Borough - Part 1

Spatial Principle 1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development)

Spatial Principle 3 (Stafford Borough Sustainable Settlement)

Spatial Principle 7 (Supporting the Location of New Development)

Policy C5 (Residential Proposals outside the Settlement Hierarchy)

Policy E2 (Sustainable Rural Development)

The Plan for Stafford Borough - Part 2

3.0 Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain

- 3.1 The development falls within the red (ie. high risk) impact risk zone for great crested newts. The District Newt Officer has advised that should the development proceed, a licence would be required to appropriately mitigate the impacts on GCN and their habitats. Should permission be granted, a pre-commencement condition is recommended to require proof of a Nature Space Certificate indicating a Further Licence can be granted.
- 3.2 It is stated that the development is a self-build dwelling to be constructed by the applicant and occupied by an immediate family member. The self-build nature of the development would need to be secured by legal agreement should planning permission be granted to ensure the development is exempt from biodiversity net gain requirements.

Policies and Guidance:-

National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF)

The Plan for Stafford Borough 2011-2031 (TPSB) N4 The natural environment and green infrastructure

4.0 Access and Highway Safety

- 4.1 Notwithstanding the issues raised above in terms of the site's limited access to sustainable modes of transport, there is an existing vehicle access to the site, and it is considered that in principle a safe vehicular access could be provided, however this is not currently a matter for consideration.
- 4.2 The Highway Authority, although raising concern with the sustainability of the site's location, raise no objection to the proposal subject to conditions requiring details of visibility, access, parking areas etc. Should permission be granted, the applicant would be required to provide these details at reserved matters stage.

Policies and Guidance:-

National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF)

Paragraph 110, 115, 116

The Plan for Stafford Borough 2011-2031 (TPSB) (T2 Parking and Manoeuvring Facilities)

5.0 Cannock Chase SAC

- 5.1 TPSB policy N6 states that development which has a direct or indirect adverse impact upon the integrity of the Cannock Chase SAC, and the effects cannot be mitigated, will not be supported.
- 5.2 Policy N6 also sets out that any development leading to a net increase in dwellings within a 15km radius of the Cannock Chase SAC will be deemed to have an adverse impact on the SAC unless or until satisfactory avoidance and/or mitigation measures have been secured. The Council has adopted guidance acknowledging a 15km Zone of Influence and seeking financial contributions for the required mitigation from residential development within the 0-15km zone.
- 5.3 The proposal lies within the 15km buffer of the Cannock Chase SAC and seeks the provision of 1 dwelling and as such a financial contribution is required.
- 5.4 Under the provisions of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 the local planning authority, as the competent authority, must have further consideration beyond the above planning policy matters to the impact of this development. In this case, due to the relative proximity, of the Cannock Chase SAC. Therefore, in accordance with Regulation 63 of the Regulations, the local planning authority has undertaken a HRA (Habitat Regulations Assessment). Natural England offer no objections to the proposal subject to appropriate mitigation (financial contribution) being provided.
- 5.5 It is considered this financial contribution could be dealt with at appeal stage should permission be granted contrary to officer recommendation.

Policies and Guidance:-

National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF)

The Plan for Stafford Borough 2011-2031 (TPSB) N5 Sites of European, national and local nature conservation importance; N6 Cannock Chase special area of conservation;

6.0 Other Matters

- 6.1 It is considered the dwelling could be designed to avoid having a detrimental impact upon privacy and light/outlook at neighbouring dwellings. Furthermore working hours for construction works could be conditioned should permission be granted. The proposal therefore raises no significant concerns in respect of neighbour amenity.

- 6.2 The site appears to have been in use for agricultural purposes and occupied in part by livestock. No Phase 1 desktop assessment has been submitted to establish whether any part of the site could be contaminated or whether further ground investigation is necessary. It is considered a pre-commencement condition could be attached to ensure this matter is covered and any remediation of land is carried out as necessary should permission be granted contrary to officer recommendation.
- 6.3 The application site is in close proximity to a high pressure gas pipeline, however National Gas advise the proposed development appears to fall outside of the easement and necessary 'Building Proximity Distance' (BPD). As such no objection is raised, however an informative could be attached to any permission granted to draw the applicant's attention to the National Gas advice.
- 6.4 The site falls within Flood Zone 1, and is therefore considered at low risk of flooding. Appropriate surface water and foul drainage would nonetheless need to be provided, and it is considered this could be dealt with via condition.

7.0 Conclusion

- 7.1 The proposal, whilst making a small contribution to the delivery of housing in the Borough, would be located in an unsustainable location whereby occupiers would be wholly reliant on a private vehicle for accessing key services. In this case the unsustainable nature of the development is considered to outweigh the benefits brought about through the small contribution to housing supply having regard to Paragraph 11, 110 and 115 of the NPPF and it is recommended permission in principle be refused.

CONSULTATIONS (comments summarised)

Parish Council: No response received

Neighbours (2 consulted): No responses received

Highway Authority:

Concerns raised that the proposal does not represent sustainable development in that future occupants would be reliant on travel by car for day-to-day needs.

There are no objections on Highway grounds to the proposed development subject to the following conditions being included on any approval:-

- 1 Before the development hereby approved is commenced, full details of the following shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:

- Highways would require a plan showing the maximum visibility splay achievable from the centre of the vehicular access set back 2.4m rear of the edge of carriageway in each direction. All splays should be measured to the nearside kerb line/verge and be within land either under the control of the applicant or within highway land maintained by Staffordshire County Council. The visibility splay shall thereafter be kept free of all obstructions to visibility over a height of 900 mm above the adjacent carriageway level and be provided in accordance with the approved plan prior to the development being brought into use.
- Highways would require the full width of the site frontage including the areas which are being overrun either side of the existing access to be resurfaced to tarmac up to the existing access gate to prevent any loose material from being dragged onto the highway. Kerbs and setts will also be required on each side of the access rear of the radii to protect the highway grass verge.
- Any access gates shall be set back a minimum of 10m from the carriageway edge and only open inwards towards the site.
- Layout of site including disposition of the dwelling including a parking/turning arrangement, showing independent car parking spaces in respect of Stafford Borough Parking Standards whereby a car parking space consists of a minimum width of 2.4m and a minimum length of 4.8m per car. 6m rear of any car parking space to allow a vehicle to safely manoeuvre within the site to be able to egress in a forward gear.
- A bin collection point close to the highway.
- A Construction Method Statement which shall include details of parking of site operatives, site compound, loading and unloading of plant and materials, storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development and wheel wash facilities.

Biodiversity Officer:

Protected Species

ROAVR Group undertook a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal during June 2025. No significant ecological constraints were found.

Nesting birds

All wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected under Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. This means that works should not be undertaken in the nesting season (March to August), unless it can be demonstrated by the developer that breeding birds will not be affected. This can be done by requesting a method statement for protection / avoidance of nesting birds as a condition – this may include timing of work, pre-work checks, avoiding nesting areas etc,

Hedgehog

Precautionary working methods must be adopted for hedgehogs.

Biodiversity Net Gain/ Site Enhancement

The application is exempt from BNG, as it is a declared self/custom build.

External lighting should be downward facing and avoiding light spill on boundaries.

Additionally, wildlife friendly features should be incorporated within the development.

Each new build should have 2x swift bricks installed under the eaves, not facing south and away from windows.

New tree planting would be a welcomed addition to the development. Tree choice should be considered carefully, with consideration to species, location and future management. New trees should be robust and of high quality.

Natural England: No objection subject to mitigation being secured

District Newt Officer: We are satisfied with this ecological report and recommend a licence is secured to proceed with this development.

Regulatory Services: No response received

SBC Forward Planning: The proposed new housing development is classified as 'non-major' development at Whitgreave Manor Holding, Whitgreave Lane. Having assessed this application against paragraph 11 of NPPF and the 5 year housing land position it is considered that planning consent should be granted, subject to other material considerations.

National Gas: No objection, informative required

Publicity

Site Notice Expiry: 8 August 2025

Newsletter Advert Expiry: 22 October 2025

Relevant Planning History

None

Recommendation

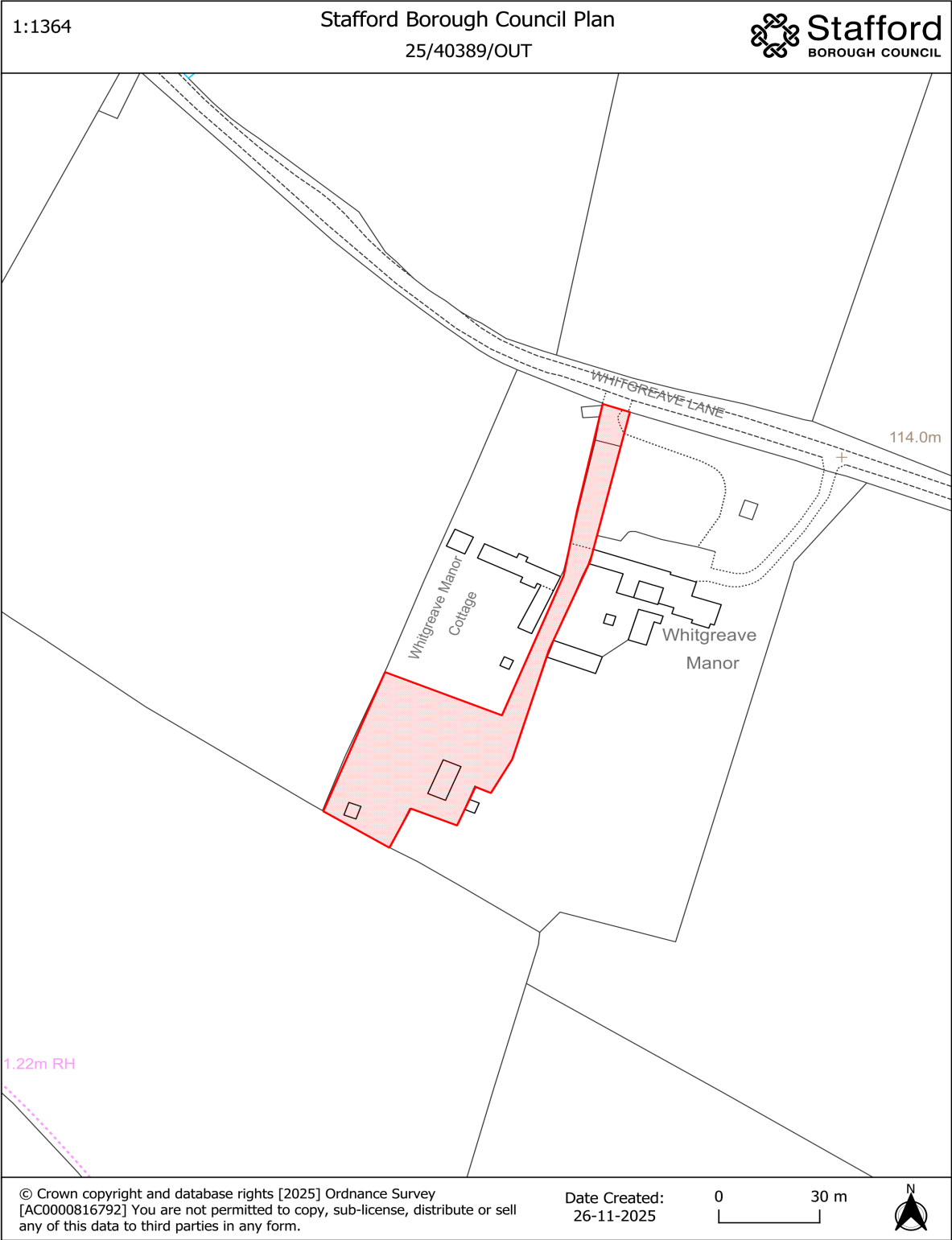
Refuse due to the following reasons:

- 1 The application site, given the limited transport choices and service provision, is considered an unsustainable location for the proposed residential development which would conflict with the objectives of the spatial strategy set out in Policies SP3, SP7, E2 and C5, of The Plan For Stafford Borough 2011-2031, as well as Paragraphs 110 and 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Furthermore the benefits in respect of the contribution of 1x dwellinghouse to the Borough's housing supply do not outweigh the harm caused by way of the site's inappropriate location. The proposal is therefore unacceptable having regard to the tilted balance set out in paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024.

Informatives

- 1 In dealing with this application, Stafford Borough Council has considered, in a positive and proactive manner, whether the planning objections to this proposal could be satisfactorily resolved within the period for determining the application, having regard to the policies of the development plan, paragraph 39 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 and other material planning considerations, and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. However, for the reasons set out in this decision notice, the proposal is not considered to achieve an acceptable and sustainable development.

25/40389/OUT
Waste Transfer Station
Whitgreave Manor Holding
Whitgreave Lane



| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Application: | 25/40978/FUL |
| Case Officer: | Jodie Harris |
| Target Decision Date: | 11 November 2025 |
| Extended To: | - |
| Address: | 30 Greengate Street, Stafford, Staffordshire, ST16 2HY |
| Proposal: | Wall mounted installation of AHU condensers to existing flat roof plant area above Jobcentre Stafford. |
| Recommendation: | Approve, subject to conditions |

REASON(S) FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

The Head of Economic Development and Planning has referred this to Committee as the Council has an interest in the application with owning the site.

Context

1.0 Site and surroundings

- 1.1 30 Greengate Street forms part of the larger Civic Centre building at the junction of Greengate Street, Bridge Street, South Walls and Mill Bank within Stafford town centre.
- 1.2 The Civic Centre has a modern appearance of red brick construction with the part of the building in question forming a single storey flat roof element with a parapet.
- 1.3 The site is outside but immediately adjacent to the Stafford Town Conservation Area and is within the wider setting of the grade II* listed Post House.

2.0 Proposed development

- 2.1 The proposal is for the installation of 6 external AHU condenser units on the roof and behind the parapet wall of 30 Greengate Street. Five of the units would be located on the northern elevation fronting South Walls, with the remaining one on the western elevation fronting Greengate Street.
- 2.2 Each unit would have the appearance of a typical external air condenser unit with a white colour finish and measuring 800mm x 550mm x 285mm.
- 2.3 The AHU units would serve the Jobcentre which occupies this part of the Civic Centre building

3.0 Legislative framework

- 3.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended, require decisions to be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 3.2 The development plan for the purposes of this application comprises The Plan for Stafford.

OFFICER ASSESSMENT – KEY CONSIDERATIONS

4.0 Character and appearance

- 4.1 The units would be designed for their function and be situated on the roof space of the building and behind the parapet wall amongst existing plant.
- 4.2 The units would not be visible from ground level of the surrounding street scene with views only being gained from the first and second floors of surrounding buildings. The units would also be seen in the context of existing plant on the building and would be adequately spaced to avoid appearing as a single mass.
- 4.3 The Council's Conservation Officer does not raise any objection to the proposal on heritage grounds given the context of the site to the setting of the adjacent conservation area and grade II* listed Post House building.

5.0 Impact on residential amenity

- 5.1 The nearest residential properties are located on the opposite side of Bridge Street.
- 5.2 The condenser units will generate maximum noise levels of between 59 and 61 dBA and given the building's location within the town centre in the context of ambient noise levels the condenser units are not expected to generate adverse noise levels.

6.0 Biodiversity net gain (BNG)

- 6.1 The submitted application form states that the development is exempt from BNG under the 'de-minimus' exemption.
- 6.2 Given that the proposal is for condenser units on an existing roof space, the development would impact less than 25sqm of on-site habitat that has biodiversity value greater than zero.

7.0 Conclusion and planning balance

- 7.1 The proposal is not considered to result in undue harm to the character and appearance of the Civic Centre building or the setting of the adjacent conservation area and nearby listed building. Noise levels are also expected to be appropriate for this town centre location.

CONSULTATIONS

SBC Conservation Officer:

Since the conservation surgery comments dated 02 October 2025, further clarification has been provided by the agent, and it is now clear that the proposed external condenser units will be located entirely behind the parapet and be completely screened by it in views from street level, the conservation area and adjacent listed Post House. There is no conservation objection to the proposed development, nor any requirement for additional conservation related conditions.

Neighbours:

No representations received

Publicity

Site notice expiry 30 October 2025

Press advert expiry 29 October 2025

Recommendation

Approve subject to the following conditions:

- 1 The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date on which this permission is granted.
- 2 The development authorised by this permission shall be carried out in complete accordance with the approved plans and specification listed below:

Location Plan Drawing No.DWPST-HLM-01-00-DR-A-00601 P02

Proposed Site Plan Drawing No. DWPST-HLM-01-00-DR-A-00601 P02

Proposed Elevations Drawing No. DWPST-HLM-01-XX-DR-A-00604 P02

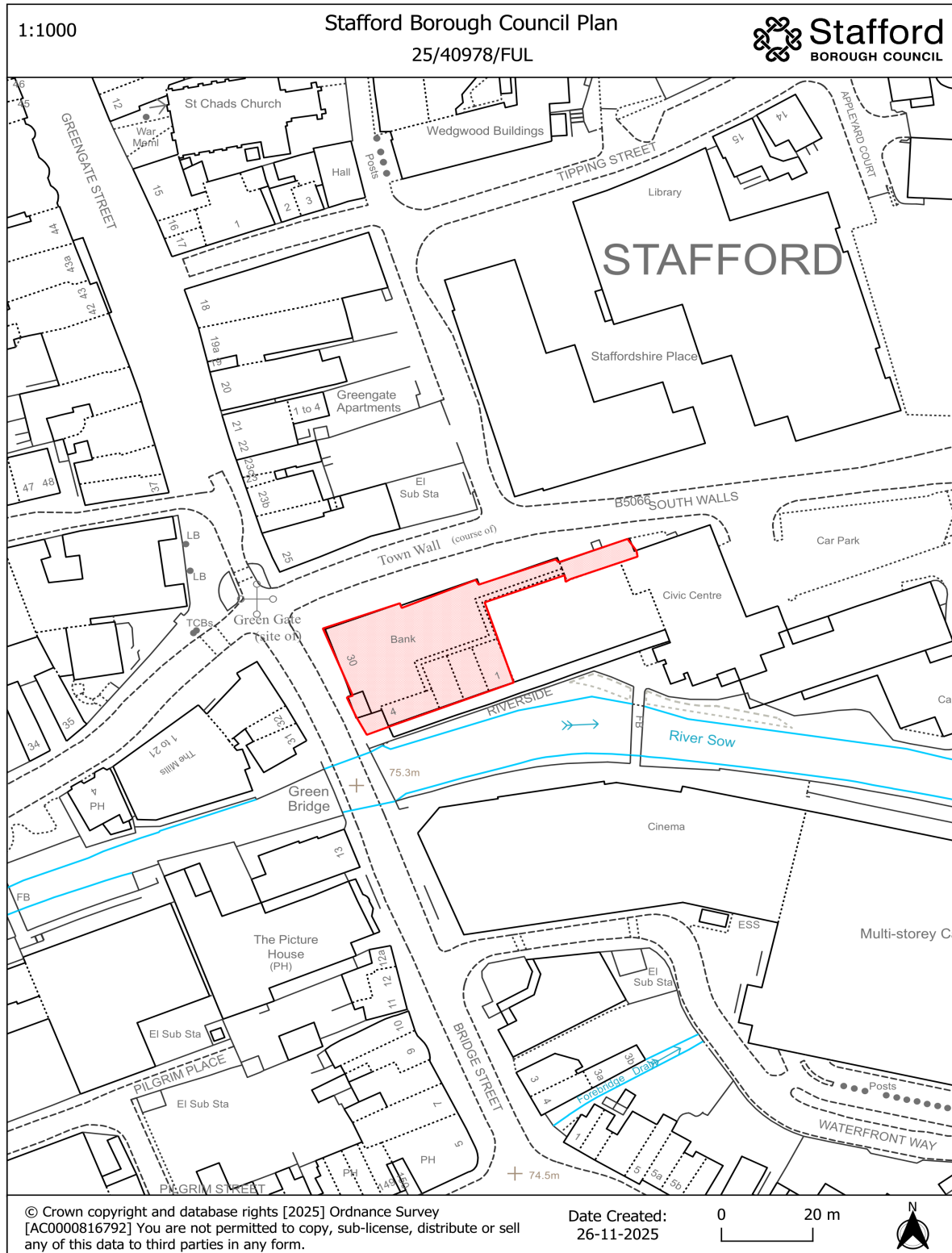
Mechanical Equipment Schedules

The reasons for the Council's decision to approve the development subject to the above conditions are:

- 1 To comply with the requirements of Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 2 To define the permission.

Informatives

- 1 In accordance with the requirements of Article 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Order) 2015, as amended, and the National Planning Policy Framework 2024, the Council has worked in a positive and proactive way in determining the application and has granted planning permission.

25/40978/FUL**30 Greengate Street****Stafford**

ITEM NO 6

ITEM NO 6

PLANNING COMMITTEE - 10 DECEMBER 2025

Ward Interest - Nil

Planning Appeals

Report of Head of Economic Development and Planning

Purpose of Report

Notification of new appeals and consideration of appeal decisions. Copies of any decision letters are attached as an **APPENDIX**.

Decided Appeals

| Application Reference | Location | Proposal |
|--|---------------------------------|---|
| 25/40650/FUL Non determination Appeal Allowed | George Hill Court Fancy Walk | To replace the fencing currently at 1m high to a 1.8m fence to Wright Street and the walkway around the court |

Previous Consideration

Nil

Background Papers

File available in the Development Management Section

Officer Contact

Sushil Birdi, Development and Policy Manager, 01543 464326

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 November 2025

by N Bromley BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3425/W/25/3371445

George Hill Court, Fancy Walk, Stafford, Staffordshire ST16 3BW

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr. Richard Coleman, of Housing 21 against Stafford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/40650/FUL.
 - The development proposed is to replace the fencing currently at 1m high to a 1.8m fence to Wright Street and the walkway around the court.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted to replace the fencing currently at 1m high to a 1.8m fence to Wright Street and the walkway around the court at George Hill Court, Fancy Walk, Stafford, Staffordshire ST16 3BW in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 25/40650/FUL, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with drawings numbered, and / or titled: Location Plan; Site Plan; Drawing No 1 – Proposed Elevations; and Drawing No 2 – Proposed Elevations.

Procedural Matters

2. In the banner heading above and my formal decision, I have used the description of development taken from the Council's acknowledgement letter, as opposed to the application form, as it more accurately and succinctly describes that for which permission is sought. However, in doing this I have also had full regard in my reasoning to the description on the application form.
3. The appeal is made against the failure of the Council to reach a decision on the planning application within the relevant statutory timeframe. The Council has submitted an appeal statement which confirms that, had it been in a position to do so, it would have approved the application subject to planning conditions.
4. On this basis, the Council request that I allow the appeal as there would be no conflict with Policies N1 and N8 of The Plan for Stafford Borough 2011-2031, which seek to strengthen the continuity of street frontages and be sympathetic, and take into account the amenity of adjacent residential areas, be safe, secure and crime resistant.

5. On the evidence before me, and my observations during the site visit, I see no reason to disagree. Therefore, I conclude that the proposed development would accord with the policies of the development plan.

Conditions

6. Standard conditions relating to the time limit for implementation and conformity with the approved plans are reasonable and necessary.

Conclusion

7. For the reasons given above the appeal is allowed.

N Bromley

INSPECTOR

ITEM NO 7

ITEM NO 7

PLANNING COMMITTEE - 10 DECEMBER 2025

Ward Interest - Nil

Enforcement Matters

Report of Head of Economic Development and Planning

Purpose of Report

To consider the following reports:

| | Page Nos |
|---|-----------------|
| (a) Land Between School House And Farm Buildings, Radmore Lane | 68 - 88 |

Previous Consideration

Nil

Background Papers

File available in the Development Management Section

Officer Contact

Sushil Birdi, Development and Policy Manager, 01543 464326