

**STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE**

27 September 2018

Application No:	SMD/2018/0316	
Location	Former Lask Edge Methodist Church, Cowallmoor Lane, Ladymoor Gage, Lask Edge	
Proposal	Proposed Change of Use from Place of Worship (D1) to residential dwelling (C3)	
Applicant	Dane and Trent Methodist Church	
Agent	Tarpey Woodfine Architects	
Parish/ward	Biddulph Town Council	Biddulph South Ward
If you have a question about this report please contact: James Stannard tel: 01538 395400 ex 4298 james.stannard@staffsmoorlands.gov.uk		

REFERRAL

1.0 The application has been put before Planning Committee by the Operations Manager – Development Services due to the contentious nature of the application and number of objections received from members of the general public.

1. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION

Approve with Conditions

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

2.1 The application site comprises the former Lask Edge Methodist Church which ceased its active use as a Church in September 2017 and an area of land to the rear. The site sits at the junction with Cowallmoor Lane and Lask Edge Road and lies approximately 2.6 miles north of Brown Edge village in the Green Belt. The site is considered to constitute a non-designated heritage asset by the Council's Conservation Officer.

2.2 The site is bounded on all sides by a low stone boundary wall. To the west of the site is open agricultural land. To the north of the site is a private farm track, bordered by a line of trees and mature vegetation. To the east is Lask Edge Road which runs in a north to south direction. This boundary is also characterised by a line of trees and mature vegetation. To the south of the site is Cowallmoor Lane.

2.3 The existing site plan shows the existing site to comprise the Church building which has a footprint measuring approximately 15m x 12m; a small area of

ground between the front and side elevations and the public highway; and a larger area of grassland to the rear which extends some 35m beyond the rear elevation of the Church building and spans a width of approximately 25m. The eastern part of this large grassland area measuring approximately 12m x 16m contains a number of gravestones marking the place of rest for deceased residents of the Parish.

- 2.4 A field gate comprises the existing access at the north-eastern corner of the site, approved under SMD/1979/0237, which opens onto the junction where the private farm track and Lask Edge Road meet.
- 2.5 An application to designate the Church as a Listed Building was received by Historic England in June of this year. This application has been assessed and determined, with a copy of the report being issued to the Council on 12th July. The report confirms that whilst the building is of local interest, it does not have any national architectural or historic interest which would warrant it to be listed.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The application seeks planning permission for a proposed Change of Use from a place of worship (D1 Use Class), to a single residential dwelling (C3 Use Class).
- 3.2 The plans, section and elevations drawing (Ref: 1026-04 Rev A) shows that the resultant dwelling would be a two storey property with a ground floor that comprises an open plan kitchen/dining and living area, a study, and utility room. The first floor would comprise two bedrooms; a bathroom; and a larger master bedroom with en-suite bathroom.
- 3.3 The plans highlight that no significant external changes are proposed to the existing building, with the excepting of roof lights, with key features such as roof lines and window openings being retained.
- 3.4 The Proposed Site Plan (Drawing No: 1026-05 Rev E) shows that the pedestrian access to the property would be from the existing front entrance from Cowallmoor Lane. A new vehicular access from Lask Edge Road and driveway is proposed with off street parking provision for two vehicles and turning area. A new pedestrian access from Lask Edge Road is also included.
- 3.5 The Proposed Site Plan shows that the existing graveyard and gate access in the north eastern corner of the site is not included within the proposed Change of Use and would be blocked up. The garden area north of the parking area stands to the west of the graveyard and is marked by a clear boundary.
- 3.6 Section 11 of the Application Form has stated that the details for the disposal of foul sewage and whether it is proposed to connect to an existing sewer is unknown. Due to issues with drainage experienced on other sites for

residential development within the district, the applicant was advised that this issue should be fully investigated and resolved prior to determination.

- 3.7 As such, a drainage scheme and subsequent revisions have been submitted by the applicant which has been the subject of consultation with Building Control. The latest drainage scheme is made up of the 'Drainage & External Works Layout' (Drawing Ref: 18378-100-P01) and 'External Works Layout' (Drawing Ref: 18378-101-P1).

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 The site has formed part of the following previous planning applications:

SMD/1979/0237 Vehicular Access to Church (Approved)

5. PLANNING POLICIES RELEVANT TO THE DECISION

- 5.1 The Development Plan comprises of:

- Saved Local Plan Proposals Map / Settlement Boundaries (adopted 1998).
- Core Strategy Development Plan Document (adopted March 2014)

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (1998)

- 5.2 Development boundaries within the 1998 Adopted Local Plan are still in force until such time as they are reviewed and adopted through the site allocations process.

Adopted Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy DPD (26th March 2014)

- 5.3 The following Core Strategy policies are relevant to the application:-

- SS1 Development Principles
- SS1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- SS6 Rural Areas
- SS6c Other Rural Areas Strategy
- H1 New Housing Development
- DC1 Design Considerations
- DC2 Historic Environment
- DC3 Landscape Character
- R2 Rural Housing
- NE1 Biodiversity
- T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy NPPF

- 5.4 The following parts of the National Planning Policy Framework are relevant to this application:-

- Achieving Sustainable Development

Chapter 2

- | | |
|---|------------|
| ▪ Delivering a sufficient supply of homes | Chapter 5 |
| ▪ Achieving well-designed places | Chapter 12 |
| ▪ Protecting Green Belt Land | Chapter 13 |
| ▪ Conserving and enhancing the natural environment | Chapter 15 |
| ▪ Conserving and enhancing the historic environment | Chapter 16 |

6. CONSULTATIONS CARRIED OUT

Press Notice expiry date: N/A
 Site Notice expiry date: 6th July 2018

Local residents have been notified by letter.

At the time of writing the report, 40 letters of objection have been received in respect of this application. A summary of the key material objections to the proposed change of use are summarised below:

- Concerns of proximity the driveway and garden area being intrusive to and encroaching on the graveyard and resultant negative impacts on the amenity of visitors to the graveyard
- Strong objection to any disruption to existing graves
- Problems with parking and access on to Lask Edge Road
- Lack of detail regarding boundary treatment between graveyard and curtilage
- No details regarding septic tank or sewerage connections
- No plans included for storage/collection of waste
- Character of existing Chapel will be significantly altered, any proposals should be sympathetic to the existing building
- Lask Edge Chapel should be treated as a Listed Building

Biddulph Town Council

Approve – subject to clarification on whether this was consecrated ground.

Conservation Officer

Initial Response 3rd July:

This would definitely qualify as a non-designated heritage asset under the terms of the NPPF. It is an historic and characterful building in an extremely prominent location. Both changes to the exterior and setting should be under close scrutiny. I feel that you should have a heritage statement with this application to describe its historic significance and allow us to ensure that the key significance relating to the building is retained. The Council's design guidance on Conversions is relevant (and new design guidance).

- There are some issues that I would pick up at this stage:
- Staffordshire blue clay tiles should be retained on the roof – not concrete.

- Windows need to be assessed and significance ones retained (secondary glazed if necessary) to retain stained glass. Poorly detailed windows and loss of historic glass will harm the building's character.
- Roof lights are not an historic feature of the building and their use should be restricted to only where absolutely necessary. The front elevation is the most sensitive. The make, model and size needs to be specified.
- Details are required of junction of first floor with the windows
- Information on the interior of the building is required and the impact of proposed changes on this – trusses, rafters, decorative features
- Treatment of the walling needs careful handling to ensure that the setting of the chapel is not harmed and conditions will be required to control boundaries and remove PD.

Further Comments 9th July following further information submitted by applicant:

If three roof lights are acceptable for the front elevation then we should be requiring The Roof light Company roof lights or similar with the slim frame. Velux have wide frames and will look intrusive on the front elevation.

Conditions: Prior to Commencement

- Joinery details including details of re-using existing decorative glass, position within the opening and method statement for the junction of the first floor across the windows
- Vents and ducts
- Rainwater goods
- Roof lights (if not already agreed)
- Boundaries
- Remove PD

Staffordshire Moorlands Ecology

No objections subject to following conditions

1. *There shall be no removal of any trees, shrubs or hedgerows during the bird nesting season (nominally March to August inclusive), unless otherwise agreed by the LPA and in this case only following careful inspection by a competent person to establish that such trees, shrubs or hedgerow are not in active use by nesting wild birds.*

I would also suggest that standard conditions for hard and soft landscaping, and for boundary treatments. It may well also be worth removing permitted development rights in order to control visually inappropriate domestic curtilage features, in

particular standard 2m high panel/board fencing which would be incongruous and out of character with both the site itself and the local landscape setting.

SMDC Waste

I have reviewed the plans as requested and I do not have any concerns with regards to waste collection or waste storage at this location. From the plans it shows plenty of outside space for the storage of wheel bins and the collection point would be where the property meets the adopted highway.

SMDC Building Control

Initial response – 26th July:

The information provided by the customer isn't sufficient enough. From a building control point of view, we would be asking the customer if there is provision to connect to an existing sewer, and if not, then is the ground suitable enough for a septic tank and soakaway.

Revised response – 28th August:

The tank can take up to six people so depending on the number of bedrooms and occupants of the proposed house this should be fine. However, a percolation test would be required on the outfall for both the rainwater and tank outfall to determine the condition of the ground and whether or not the existing ground could take the proposed outfall.

SCC Highways

No objections subject to following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until details of the 2.4m x15m to the south and 2.4mx79m to the north visibility splays have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. 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.
2. The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until the parking and turning areas have been provided in accordance with the approved plans. The parking and turning areas shall thereafter be retained unobstructed as parking and turning areas for the life of the development.
3. The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until the access drive rear of the public highway has been surfaced and thereafter maintained in a bound and porous material for a minimum distance of 5m back from the carriageway edge in accordance with details to be first submitted to and approved in writing by the Local planning authority. The access shall thereafter be surfaced in accordance with the approved details.

7. OFFICER COMMENT AND PLANNING BALANCE

Key Issues

- Principle of Development & Green Belt
- Impact on heritage assets
- Ecology
- Design & Landscape Character
- Amenity
- Highway Safety

Principle of Development & Green Belt

- 7.1 The site is situated outside of the development boundary in the open countryside and within the North Staffordshire Green Belt. As such, this proposed Change of Use application is subject to Policies SS6, SS6c and R1 of the Core Strategy and restrictive policies relating to the Protection of the Green Belt contained in Chapter 13 of the NPPF.
- 7.2 Policy SS6c allows for the conversion of rural building in accordance with policies R1 and R2. Policy R2 sets out the types of housing development which would be supported in the rural areas outside of development boundaries. The policy supports the conversion of non-residential rural buildings for residential use where the following applies:
- the building is suitable and worthy in physical, architectural and character terms for conversion
 - it can be demonstrated that agricultural or commercial use is not viable or suitable, or;
 - conversion to residential use would enable the building of particular merit to be safeguarded.
- 7.3 Paragraph 146 of the NPPF contains forms of development which would not be considered as inappropriate development within the Green Belt (and thereby acceptable in principle), provided they preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the five purposes of including land within it, as set out within paragraph 80 of the NPPF. One such form of development is *“the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction”*.
- 7.4 The existing building ceased to be in operation as a place of worship in September 2017 and is currently redundant. The Church is constructed from coursed rock face stone built in the 19th Century and is considered to constitute a building of suitable and worthy physical and architectural form and character which could be reasonably converted for residential use with minimal alterations to external and internal architectural features. Given the

former use of the building and external and internal site layout, it is clear that any agricultural or commercial use would be unsuitable.

- 7.5 The Church was constructed in 1875 and is constructed of a coursed rock-faced stone with a tiled roof. It is therefore considered that the building is considered to constitute a permanent and substantial construction. As such, the principle of re-using this redundant rural building in the Green Belt is considered to be acceptable in principle providing it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of its designation.
- 7.6 The purposes of Green Belt are:
- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
 - b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
 - c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
 - d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
 - e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Given that the proposal involves the re-use of an existing building it will not exacerbate urban sprawl or result in any increased risk of merger of towns or result in additional encroachment into open countryside. There will be no greater impact on the setting of any historic towns. Although development of a dwelling in this location could potentially reduce demand for properties on derelict urban land, given the small scale of the development, this impact would be negligible.

- 7.7 Turning to openness, no new physical structures are proposed, and the site is well defined by a dry stone boundary wall and bordered by a line of mature vegetation on its northern and eastern boundaries. No external alterations are proposed as part of this application, with the exception of a number of roof lights. Subject to sensitive boundary treatment and removal of Permitted Development Rights, it is considered that the proposed use of this building as a residential dwelling would not result in any adverse harm to the openness of the Green Belt.
- 7.8 Based on the above assessment against relevant local development plan policies and restrictive Green Belt policies contained within Chapter 13 of the NPPF, the proposed change of use from a place of worship to a dwelling is considered to constitute a sustainable form of development in the Green Belt which is acceptable subject to all other relevant material considerations.

Loss of Community Facility

- 7.9 Policy C1 of the Core Strategy relates to Creating Sustainable Communities and states that in order to create sustainable communities at a local level the Council will, inter alia, resist proposals involving the loss of community facilities unless:
- (i) an alternative facility of the same type is available or can be provided in an accessible location in the same locality; or

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

- 7.10 Biddulph and Victoria Centre Methodist Church is an active place of worship located in Biddulph Town Centre approximately 5km from the site, providing an alternative similar facility within a reasonably close proximity to the site. As such, the proposal satisfied the first bullet point to Policy C1 and is therefore considered to be sustainable in this regard.

Impact on Heritage Assets

- 7.11 The site is considered to be of local importance by the Conservation Officer and should therefore be treated as a non designated heritage asset. An application was made to Historic England by a member of the public to designate the Church as a listed building. A decision was received from Historic England on 12th July 2018 stating that whilst the building is of local interest, there is no architectural or historic interest which would warrant its listing.
- 7.12 Policy DC2 of the Core Strategy states that the Council will safeguard and where possible enhance the historic environment, which includes buildings of local importance.
- 7.13 Paragraph 135 of the NPPF requires local authorities to take into account the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and significance of the heritage asset.
- 7.14 The original plans and elevations submitted within the application raised comments by the Conservation Officer with regards to the proposed roof material; positioning and appearance of roof lights; importance of retaining historic windows; and that further clarification was required regarding the interior of the building.
- 7.15 A Heritage Statement assessing the significance of the building and proposed alterations was duly submitted by the applicant's agent, together with revised plans, sections, elevations and internal photographs. Upon reviewing this information, the Conservation Officer has commented that there is no objection subject to strict conditions.
- 7.16 Based on the comments received by the Conservation Officer and the imposition of a number of conditions, the proposed change of use would not result in any harm to the character and appearance of this non-designated heritage asset. It is also considered that converting this redundant building to a residential dwelling allows the opportunity to ensure that the character and appearance of this locally important heritage asset is preserved. The

application is therefore judged to comply with policy DC2 of the Core Strategy and paragraph 135 of the NPPF.

Ecology

- 7.17 Policy NE1 of the Core Strategy requires all new development proposals to conserve or enhance ecological assets within the district. This includes protecting and enhancing habitats and species of principal importance, as identified in legislation. Chapter 11 of the NPPF contains the relevant national policies relating to nature conservation.
- 7.18 An Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey & Daytime Bat Survey has been submitted as part of this application. The survey found no evidence of bat activity and therefore the structure is considered to offer negligible potential for a bat roost. As such, no further survey work was recommended, although appropriate mitigation has been recommended depending on when development takes place.
- 7.19 There are no objections from the Council's Ecologist subject to appropriate conditions being applied to the development.
- 7.20 Based on the results of the submitted survey and the response from the Council's Ecologist, it is considered that subject to appropriate conditions the proposed change of use will not result in any adverse harm to any protected species or any other ecological asset, in accordance with policy NE1 of the Core Strategy and Chapter 15 of the NPPF.

Design & Landscape Character

- 7.21 Policies SS1 and DC1 of the Core Strategy set out the design principles and considerations for all new development proposals in the District. Development should be designed to respect the site and its surroundings and promote a positive sense of place and identity through its scale, density, layout, siting, landscaping, character and appearance. Paragraph 56 of the NPPF highlights the importance of good design and that it forms a key part of achieving sustainable development.
- 7.22 Policy DC3 of the Core Strategy supports development which respects local landscape character.
- 7.23 Paragraphs 124 and 127 of the NPPF highlight that the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development should achieve, and that development should add overall quality to an area for the lifetime of development, by being visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and effective landscaping.
- 7.24 The original Proposed Site Plan (Drawing Ref: 1026-05) showed the rear garden area to cover the majority of the existing grass area, maintaining a boundary between the graveyard and the proposed garden area. Following a significant number of objections from members of the public regarding the

close proximity and relationship between the graveyard and proposed rear garden, the applicant was asked to reduce the footprint of the garden to allow more space to be retained for members of the public to visit the graveyard and reflect.

- 7.25 Following a revision to the proposed site plan the footprint of the garden area significantly reduced. A final Site Layout (Rev E) is the subject of the assessment which shows a new pedestrian access from Lask Edge Road separate to the vehicular access, with the existing access at the northern part of the site discontinued.
- 7.26 The revised rear garden is of a reduced size which retains the area immediately adjacent to the graveyard for public access, which includes a memorial bench towards the northern boundary. Access from the north eastern gate will continue to be retained. This revised layout is considered to be acceptable. However, it is considered to be appropriate to remove permitted development rights for garden structures.
- 7.27 With the exception of roof lights and replacement roof tiles, no external alterations are proposed to the existing building. Subject to the strict conditions that will ensure that the character of the building is retained, the proposed change of use would be of an acceptable scale, height, massing, layout, character and appearance, which preserve the rural character of the landscape, in accordance with policies SS1, DC1 and DC3 of the Core Strategy and paragraphs 124 and 127 of the NPPF.

Amenity

- 7.28 Policy DC1 of the Core Strategy requires all new developments to protect the amenity of the area, including residential amenity. Aspects of residential amenity include satisfactory daylight, sunlight, outlook, and privacy. The council's 'Space About Dwellings' SPD provides further guidance with regards to required distances between habitable windows and minimum amenity space standards. Paragraph 17 of the NPPF requires all development to ensure a high standard of amenity for current and future occupiers,
- 7.29 The application site lies at the corner of a road junction, with the nearest residential property 'Chapel Cottage' situated some 50m to the south adjacent to Lask Edge Road. Two public right of ways are within the vicinity of the site. The first heads in a north easterly direction from Lask Edge Road opposite the eastern side elevation of the Church. The second runs east to west along the single farm track beyond the northern boundary.
- 7.30 Given the layout of the site, and distance of the nearest property, there are not considered to be any adverse impacts to the residential amenity of any neighbouring property. Due to the existing screening to the east and north of the site, it is also considered that no harm to the recreational amenity for users of either public footpath will occur as a result of this use.

- 7.31 A significant number of objections have been received from members of the public in relation to the originally submitted plans. Many refer to the small separation distance between the proposed rear garden, driveway and graveyard, and that the majority of what is currently public space is taken up by a private garden.
- 7.32 Having considered these objections, it was requested that the footprint and width of the rear garden area be reduced so that the eastern boundary of the garden runs directly parallel with the western stone wall boundary.
- 7.33 This revised plan shows that the shortest distance between the edge of the driveway and existing graveyard is 2.0 metres. Subject to sensitive soft landscaping and boundary treatments, the revised plan is considered to represent an acceptable solution with regards to the proposal respecting the privacy of visitors to the graveyard.
- 7.34 In light of the above, the revised layout of the proposed curtilage is considered to be acceptable with regards to public and visual amenity, in accordance with policy DC1 of the Core Strategy and paragraph 17 of the NPPF.

Highway Safety

- 7.35 Policy T1 of the Core Strategy requires all new development to be located where it can be satisfactorily accommodated within the existing highway network. Paragraph 108 of the NPPF requires safe and suitable access to all developments. Paragraph 109 states that development should only be refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 7.36 The final proposed site plan (Rev E) shows a proposed access from Lask Edge Road approximately 8m in width with exit visibility splays taken from 2.4m behind the edge of the carriageway.
- 7.37 The proposed site plan shows off street parking provision for two vehicles with a turning area. It is considered that two parking spaces for a three bedroom property are sufficient.
- 7.38 The Highways Authority have stated they have no objection to the proposed access subject to conditions which include the parking and turning areas are completed prior to the dwelling being brought into use.
- 7.39 Based on the above, it is considered that the proposed development will not result in any severe adverse harm with regards to highway safety and therefore the application is compliant with policy T1 of the Core Strategy and paragraph 109 of the NPPF.

Other Matters

- 7.40 Objections have been received from members of the public with regards to a lack of detail and clarity with regards to foul drainage. Due to the sites rural location, it was considered appropriate to request the applicant address the issue of drainage prior to determination.
- 7.41 With regards to the latest drainage scheme, Building Control have stated that the scheme will work for up to six people. The converted property is shown to have two double bedrooms which equates to a maximum of four occupants, and as such is considered to be acceptable. This is subject to a percolation test which would be required on the outfall for both the rainwater and tank outfall to determine the condition of the ground and whether or not the existing ground could take the proposed outfall.
- 7.42 Based on this consultation response, it is considered that the applicant has submitted sufficient information to allow the application to be determined, and that a percolation test should be submitted and approved by the local authority prior to the proposed use coming into operation.
- 7.43 All other material objections, which include the potential impact upon the existing graveyard and the amenity of people visiting it have been addressed within this report.

Planning Balance/Conclusion

- 7.45 The development would provide a single dwelling into the District, where the Councils are currently unable to demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing land. The conversion of the building would ensure that the important architectural qualities and historic features of this non-designated heritage asset are preserved, supporting the aims of Chapters 5 and 16 of the NPPF. Both are considered to be benefits that weigh heavily in favour of the proposal.
- 7.46 Policy S1a of the Core Strategy reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out at paragraph 11 of the NPPF. For decision making this means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay unless 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; or specific policies indicate development should be restricted.
- 7.47 The site is located outside of the development boundary within the Green Belt and is therefore subject to restrictive policies contained within Chapter 13 of the NPPF. Paragraph 146 of the NPPF allows for the re-use of buildings within the Green Belt providing they are of a permanent and substantial construction and do not have any further harm on openness or the purposes of including the land within the Green Belt. The building is of a permanent and substantial construction and would not result in any harm to the openness of the Green Belt or the purposes of including land within it, and thereby constitutes a sustainable form of development within the Green Belt.

- 7.48 A similar alternative facility (Biddulph Methodist Church) is situated approximately 5km from the site. The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policy C1 of the Core Strategy and as such the loss of this community facility is not considered to result in any adverse impacts; constituting a sustainable form of development in this regard.
- 7.49 Lask Edge Methodist Church is considered to be a building which is not suitable or viable for commercial use, and is of a suitable and worthy in physical and character terms for a residential conversion which will allow this non-designated heritage asset to be safeguarded, in line with policies SS6, SS6C, DC2 and R2 of the Core Strategy and paragraph 197 of the NPPF.
- 7.50 Subject to conditions, the Council's Ecologist is satisfied with the findings of the submitted Ecological survey and as such it is considered that the application is in accordance with policy NE1 of the Core Strategy and relevant policies contained within Chapter 15 of the NPPF.
- 7.51 The proposed site layout in its final revised form has addressed all concerns raised by members of the public with regards to potential impacts to the adjacent graveyard and surrounding amenity area for visitors. This has been done by reducing the area of rear garden thereby retaining a significant area of land for visitors to the graveyard; and creating a new separate pedestrian access. Sensitive boundary treatment will be required and is to be secured by condition.
- 7.52 The proposal has not been judged to have any adverse impacts to the rural landscape character or residential amenity, in accordance with policies R2, DC1 and DC3 of the Core Strategy and paragraph 127 of the NPPF.
- 7.53 The site layout in its final revised form is considered to be acceptable in highway safety terms, as an appropriate exit visibility splay has been demonstrated from the proposed access to Lask Edge Road. It is therefore considered that there would be no adverse impacts with regards to Highway Safety, in line with policies DC1 and T1 of the Core Strategy and paragraph 109 of the NPPF.
- 7.54 Following concerns relating to a lack of detail regarding the drainage of foul waste from the site in this rural location, the applicant has been required to submit a drainage scheme, the latest plans of which have been reviewed and approved by Building Control subject to a percolation test to determine the condition of the ground prior to the change of use coming into effect.
- 7.55 In conclusion, the application is considered to comply with the relevant restrictive policies contained within Chapter 13 of the NPPF and therefore comprises a sustainable form of development within the Green Belt. There are no adverse impacts which significantly or demonstrably outweigh the modest benefit of introducing a single dwelling to the area which utilises a redundant building and which allows a building of architectural merit to be preserved.

7.56 As such, in line with policy SS1a of the Core Strategy and paragraph 11 of the NPPF, the application is recommended for approval subject to appropriate conditions.

8. RECOMMENDATION:

A. Approve subject to the following conditions:

- 1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.**

Reason:- To comply with the provisions of Section 51 of the Town & Country Planning, Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004.

- 2. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following Approved Plans:**

- Location and Block Plans 1026-06**
- Existing and Proposed Site Plan 1026-05 Rev E**
- Proposed Plans, Sections and Elevations 1026-04**
- Drainage and External Works Layout 18378-100-P01**
- Drainage and External Works Details 18378-101-P01**

Reason:- For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning

- 3. There shall be no removal of any trees, shrubs or hedgerows during the bird nesting season (March to August inclusive), unless otherwise agreed in writing by the LPA and following careful inspection by a competent person to establish that such trees, shrubs or hedgerow are not in active use by nesting wild birds.**

Reason: - In the interests of preserving environmental and biodiversity assets in accordance with policy NE1 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy and Chapter 15 of the NPPF

- 4. Prior to the commencement of development a Percolation Test shall be carried out and a report containing the results of the test shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing by, the local planning authority. Subject to this test being accepted, the drainage scheme shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans (Drawing Ref: 18378-100-P01 & 18378-101-P01).**

Reason:- In the interest of public amenity and the environment, in line with Policies SD4 and DC1 of the Staffs Moorlands Core Strategy

- 5. The exit visibility splay as shown on the Revised Proposed Site Plan (Drawing Ref: 1026-05 Rev E) shall be maintained and kept free of all obstructions to visibility over a height of 900mm above the adjacent**

carriageway level and be provided in accordance with the Revised Site Plan prior to the development being brought in to use.

Reason:- In the interests of Highway Safety in line with policy T1 of the Core Strategy and paragraph 109 of the NPPF.

- 6. Prior to occupation, the parking and turning areas will be provided in accordance with the approved plans. The parking and turning areas shall thereafter be retained unobstructed as parking and turning areas for the lifetime of the development.**

Reason: - In the interests of Highway Safety in line with policy T1 of the Core Strategy and paragraph 109 of the NPPF.

- 7. Prior to commencement of development, details of the materials to be used in the construction of the private access drive shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.**

Reason:- In the interests of Highway Safety in line with policies DC1 and T1 of the Core Strategy and paragraph 109 of the NPPF.

- 8. Prior to occupation, the access drive shall be surfaced and thereafter maintained in a bound and porous material for a minimum distance of 5m back from the carriageway edge.**

Reason:- In the interests of Highway Safety in line with policies DC1 and T1 of the Core Strategy and paragraph 109 of the NPPF.

- 9. Prior to commencement of development, a scheme detailing all boundary treatments shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.**

Reason:- In the interests of high quality design in line with policy DC1 of the Core Strategy and paragraph 127 of the NPPF

- 10. Prior to commencement of development, details of joinery; vents and ducts; rainwater goods; and roof lights; shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans.**

Reason:- In the interests of preserving heritage assets in line with policy DC2 of the Staffs Moorlands Core Strategy and relevant policies within Chapter 16 of the NPPF.

- 11. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any amendment) no development as specified in Part 1, Schedule 2 Classes A-E and Part 2,**

Classes A-C shall be carried out unless consent has been granted by the Local Planning Authority following the submission of a planning application

Reason:- In the interests of ensuring a high quality design of development and residential amenity, in line with policies SS1 and DC1 of the Staffs Moorlands Core Strategy

- B. In the event of any changes being needed to the wording of the Committee's decision (such as to delete, vary or add conditions/informatives/planning obligations or reasons for approval/refusal) prior to the decision being issued, the Operations Manager – Development Services has delegated authority to do so in consultation with the Chairman of the Planning Applications Committee, provided that the changes do not exceed the substantive nature of the Committee's Decision.**

Site Plan

