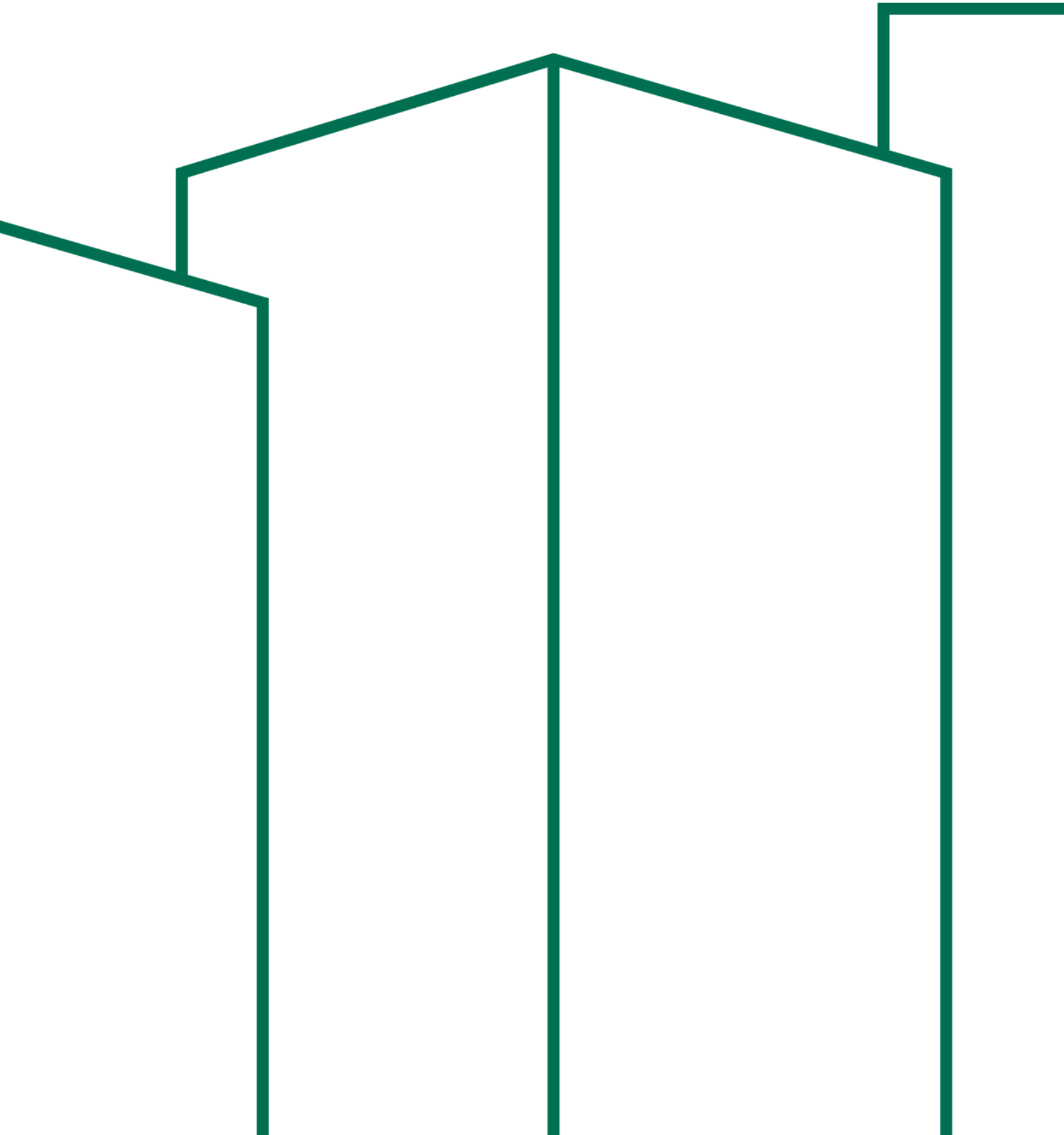


PLANNING STATEMENT

The Glade
Walsall Road
Muckley Corner
Lichfield
WS14 0BP



1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared to accompany a planning application submitted to Lichfield District Council on behalf of Mr Lee Friend. The application seeks consent for the continued use of a former agricultural building at the Glade for the storage of motor vehicles.

The Application Site

1.2 The application relates to an existing outbuilding, which is within the curtilage of The Glade, a residential dwelling sited south of Walsall Road (A461), Muckley Corner, Lichfield.

1.3 The outbuilding is situated amongst a number of outbuildings used for domestic storage. The outbuildings are constructed of corrugated metal and has a flat roof.



- 1.4 The wider site, which extends to Boat Lane to the south, comprises of the residential dwelling known as the Glade and garden area, a number of other outbuildings and a field/paddock to the rear.
- 1.5 The site is within a linear development of dwellings along Walsall Road, the surrounding area is predominantly open fields.
- 1.6 The site is located within the West Midlands Green Belt and within the 15km Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC) zone of influence.
- 1.7 The application building was previously used for agricultural storage but has since been used for storage of vehicles for a minimum of 7 years.
- 1.8 The building is of portal frame construction. The building is constructed in walls comprising profile metal sheeting coloured dark green. The roof is similarly clad in profile metal sheeting.
- 1.9 It is not the subject of any other landscape, historic or environmental designation.

Planning History

Reference No	Description of Development	Decision	Date
21/01285/CLE	Certificate of Lawfulness (Existing): To regularise use of originally agricultural building as storage building of motor vehicles for sale	Withdrawn	12.03.03
20/00145/FUL	Removal of existing	Refused	06.04.20

	outbuildings and construction of 2 bedroom bungalow		
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The Application Proposals

1.10 The application seeks consent for the retention of the use of a former agricultural building at the Glade for the storage of motor vehicles. The application building has been used for the storage of cars since October 2013 in connection with the applicant's web-based car sales business. The building can generally store between 12-14 cars.





2.0 PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework)

- 2.1 The application site is located within the Green Belt. The Government's policies concerning the Green Belt are contained in the Framework. Within Green Belt it is stated (paragraph 147) that there is a general presumption against inappropriate development since inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.
- 2.2 The Framework identifies certain forms of development that are not inappropriate in Green Belt, provided they preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in Green Belt. Paragraph 150(d) states that the reuse of buildings within Green Belt is not inappropriate, provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction and provided that the use preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes including land in it.

2.3 Paragraph 84 of the Framework, states that the planning decision should enable “... **the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of businesses in rural areas, both for conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings**”. The Framework states (paragraph 85) that the planning decision should recognise that sites that meet local business and community needs in rural areas, “**may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport**”. In such circumstances, paragraph 85 goes on to state that “... **it will be important to ensure the development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have any unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and the site itself, is equally well related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist**”.

Lichfield District Local Plan Strategy 2008 - 2029

2.4 The Development Plan includes the Lichfield Local Plan Strategy 2008-2029 which was adopted in February 2015. The following policies are considered to be relevant to the determination of this application:

- Core Policy 3: Delivering Sustainable Development.
- Core Policy 7: Employment and economic development.
- Policy ST2: Parking provision.
- Policy BE1: High quality development
- Policy NR2: Development in the Green Belt.

Re-use of Rural Buildings Supplementary Planning Guidance

- 2.5 The Council's Adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance for the re-use of rural buildings particularly encourages the re-use of rural buildings for commercial and industrial uses.

3.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The applicant operates an internet-based vehicle sales business which he operates from his home. The applicant acquires vehicles from vehicle auctions and from individuals. The vehicles are brought to the application site and are stored within the application building pending their sale. The business is purely internet based. No maintenance or valeting takes place at the site. All vehicles associated with the business can be stored within the application building. There is no requirement to store the vehicles externally. The applicant is prepared to accept a condition upon any planning permission that is granted which prevents the outside storage of vehicles.
- 3.2 The applicant advertises the vehicles for sale on the internet. Once he has a prospective purchaser he arranges to meet with the purchaser, at an agreed neutral venue. There is no requirement for the prospective purchaser to visit the application site.

- 3.3 The applicant has operated his business from the application site since 2013. There is no evidence to suggest that the business is causing any demonstrable harm to interests of acknowledged importance through increased traffic, noise, pollution, or other adverse effects.

Inappropriate Development

- 3.4 The application site is located within Green Belt. The Local Plan Strategy Policy NR2, indicates that within Green Belt, the construction of new buildings is regarded as inappropriate unless it is for one of the exceptions listed in the Framework.
- 3.5 Paragraph 147, 148 and 149 of the Framework are to be read together; the erection of buildings in Green Belt is inappropriate and only permissible under very special circumstances unless it falls within the list of exceptions set out in paragraphs 149 and 150 of the Framework. The Framework states (paragraph 150(d) that the reuse of buildings is not inappropriate development provided that the development preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.
- 3.6 This is an application for the continued use of an existing former agricultural building to storage. The building is of portal frame construction, clad in profile metal sheeting, with profile metal sheeted roof. The proposed use of the application building for use for storage does not require any operational development; there will be no material alterations to the external appearance of the building; the building will not increase in footprint; the building will not change in shape.

3.7 The application building in terms of its size, is substantial and in terms of its design and appearance, is typical of many modern agricultural buildings to be found within the vicinity of the site. The building is evidently of some permanence. The use of the application building for the storage of motor vehicles has been introduced without the requirement for any material alteration to the external appearance of the application building. It therefore follows that the use has been introduced without the need for any extension to the application building. It is therefore submitted that the proposal falls within the remit of paragraph 150(d) of the Framework and as such the proposed development does not represent inappropriate development within Green Belt. The proposal therefore complies with the objectives of the Framework (paragraph 150(d)) together with the objectives of Local Plan Policy NR2.

Openness

3.8 The Framework identifies (paragraph 133) that the “**fundamental aim**” of Green Belt policy is to keep land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belt are stated (paragraph 133) to be their “**openness and their permanence**”.

3.9 The word “openness” is not defined in the Framework. The lack of definition allows some freedom of interpretation. Part of the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl, with the intention of helping to protect the countryside. An assessment as to whether “openness” is to be preserved by the proposal in the Green Belt is a matter of judgement based on the merit

of each case. It would be reasonable to conclude that “openness” is preserved if there is no significant harm caused to the status quo.

3.10 The application proposals involve the continued use of an existing former agricultural building for storage purposes. The use of the building for storage purposes does not require any increase in the footprint or scale of the building. The proposed use has been introduced without the need for extension or significant alteration. In these circumstances it is submitted that the application building does not have any greater impact upon the openness of the Green Belt than its previous lawful use.

Highways

3.11 The application proposes to use the existing domestic access off Walsall Road. The business is internet based and the applicant drives the cars to the site and personally delivers the vehicles to the purchasers. The highway implication of the proposed development would equate to a couple of vehicle movements per week and therefore be no more intense than a residential dwelling. In terms of access suitable visibility is achieved and there is sufficient space within the site for vehicles to enter and exit in a forward-facing gear.

3.12 The proposal in turn will not have an adverse impact on the safe and efficient use of the highway network.

Other Matters

3.13 The use of the application site for the storage of vehicles in connection with the applicant's internet-based vehicle sales business makes use of a previously vacant building within the rural area. The use of the building is providing employment and economic activity within a rural area. Paragraph 84 of the NPPF states that Planning Policies should support economic growth in rural areas by taking a positive approach to new development and that planning strategy should support the sustainable growth of rural businesses.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

4.1 In the light of the above submissions, it is submitted that the retention of the use of the application building for the storage of motor vehicles is entirely consistent with National and Local Planning Policies

1. The application building is evidently of a form, bulk and general design that is typical of many modern agricultural buildings to be found in the vicinity of the site.
2. The building is of a permanent and substantial construction and the use has been introduced without the need for any material alteration to its external appearance.
3. The use of the application building has been introduced without any requirement for extension.

4. The use of the application site for the storage of motor vehicles will not have any greater impact upon the openness of the Green Belt than its previous agricultural use; the applicant is prepared to accept conditions preventing outside storage of vehicles and the valeting/minor repair of vehicles externally.
 5. The proposed development will secure the re-use of a previously vacant agricultural building within the rural area. The proposed development sustains rural employment and rural economic activity
 6. The continued use of the application site for the storage of vehicles would not have a materially greater impact than the lawful agricultural use of the building upon the openness of the Green Belt or the purposes of including land in it.
 7. The proposal in turn will not have an adverse impact on the safe and efficient use of the highway network.
- 4.2 For this reason, the proposed development is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt and would therefore be entirely consistent with paragraph 147 of the Framework, together with Local Plan Policy NR2.
- 4.3 The proposed development complies with Core Policy NR2 of the Lichfield Core Strategy, together with the policies contained within the Framework. Planning permission should therefore be granted.

CCEH/TD/5983

31 March 2022



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PLANNING STATEMENT

The Glade
Walsall Road
Muckley Corner
Lichfield
WS14 0BP

Our Reference: CCEH/TD/5983

Date: 31 March 2022

CT Planning Limited

Three Spires House, Station Road,
Lichfield, Staffordshire WS13 6HX

Tel: 01543 418779

Email: apps@ctplanning.co.uk

