

# **Planning Statement**

## **1. Introduction**

Flynn and Co are assisting Mr Michael Keeble to prepare and submit a full planning application for a proposed change of use to allow him to reside on land adjoining Primrose Farm, School Road, Monk Soham. The formal description is as follows:

“Permission for Mr Keeble to reside in temporary accommodation on agricultural land in order to care for livestock for a period of 3 years during which he will demonstrate that he is able to earn more than the minimum wage for a period of at least one year, from this smallholding”.

The purpose of this statement is to assess and justify this application within the context of the Mid Suffolk Plan.

## **2. Site & Surroundings**

The site is a field of approximately 0.525 of a hectare, bounded on the West, North and East by trees and unkept shrubs/hedgerows and on the South by a low, maintained hedge. It is positioned to the East of Primrose Farm, on the North side of School Road. There is a gated access from School Road, dividing the hedge, which will remain as is. To the East of the site there is a Caravan/Holiday park and there are a number of residential and commercial properties along both the North & South sides of School Road.

Whilst it is believed that the entirety of the site is currently agricultural land, it is not of particularly high grade, believed to be grade 3 or lower, and it has not been used for anything other than low quality grazing land for many years, possibly dating back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The current proposal will not change that in any significant manner.

## **3. The Proposal**

### **Description of development**

There is no actual intention for any significant development of the site. The application for change of use is simply so that Mr Keeble is able to reside on site, which is necessary for him to care for his livestock. The proposal is that he will convert an articulated lorry trailer, that is already on site, to residential use. His intention is that once completed, it will be fully self-sufficient, eco-friendly and carbon neutral, through the use of solar panels and a wind turbine to provide power, a rainwater collection and purification system and ultimately a charcoal grey water filtration system and compost toilet.

In the short term it is his intention to reside in a touring caravan, that is also already on site, and dispose of grey and foul waste via the sewerage and drainage system at Primrose Farm.

## **Landscape**

There is no intention to undertake any landscaping works save that the existing, compacted earth and hardcore, driveway be extended to allow easier access to the proposed residential part of the site, which is at the North end, furthest from School Rd. There is no intention to remove or interfere with any trees or hedgerows on the site. The site is not in an area of outstanding natural beauty, and it is not believed that any other special landscape designation applies. Furthermore, the temporary accommodation will be situated at the farthest (North) end of the site from School Road and will therefore have no visual impact on the Landscape from any publicly accessible areas.

## **Access**

Both vehicular and pedestrian access to the site is currently via a five barred gate and an existing entrance/exit on to the public highway. This accessway has always been present & it is believed was originally a main access point to Primrose Farm.

There is no proposal to alter this access.

## **Pre-Application Discussions**

There have not been any official pre-application discussions, although enforcement officers have stated that they believe this application will not be successful and that the Planning Authority will oppose it.

## **4. Policy Context**

### **The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012**

The proposal is aligned with the core principles of the NPPF, being Economic, Social and Environmental contribution within sustainable development.

Although only on a very small scale, this application will be of economic benefit to both the local authority and the applicant, in that he is currently in receipt of benefits as he is unable to hold a conventional job as the result of health issues. If he is able to reside on this site, he will be able to tend to his sheep and other animals as well as cultivate the land further with a view to it being self-sufficient and in fact earning him a modest living as a small holding.

Such a small holding will add to the social amenities available to local residents and to visitors to the adjoining Holiday Park, contributing to the local economy and the welfare of the community.

The proposal is also intended to be fully self-sufficient and environmentally friendly. It will ultimately place no further burden on the local infrastructure and utilities and produce zero CO2. It is proposed that all electricity will be sourced from solar and wind power, rainwater

will be collected and filtered/purified for human/livestock consumption, grey water will also be re-used where appropriate and ultimately grey and foul waste will be dealt with by way of a sealed composter. It will therefore very much be sustainable development.

### **The Development Plan**

The Mid Suffolk Local Plan is dated from 1998 and thus several policies therein may now be out of date. It is understood that a new Local Plan is currently being developed between the newly merged Councils of Mid-Suffolk and Babergh, but this has not yet been completed or adopted and as such we refer to the paragraphs from the 1998 Plan. The Mid Suffolk Core Strategy dates from 2008 and likewise may be in need of some updating.

However, both of these key documents are still currently in use and this application accords with both.

Renewable energy and Sustainable construction are key parts of the Core Strategy and clearly the proposal accords with these, while ensuring that it has no detrimental effect on the surrounding area.

Para H11 of the Local Plan states that a residential caravan or other mobile home will be allowed where:

“a genuine short-term need has been identified and where there is no adverse effect on the character, appearance and amenity of its surroundings or highway safety. any permission will be of a temporary nature and will not be renewed unless restricted to the persons for whom the need was identified.”

The applicant is happy for any such permission to be restricted to him as the person with such a need.

Furthermore para 2.4.3 of the Local Plan states:

“The guiding principle in the *countryside* is that development should benefit the rural economy and maintain or enhance the environment.”

As previously stated, it is the intention that the proposal will do just that.

## **5. Conclusion**

Planning permission is sought to allow one temporary residence on the land adjoining the Eastern boundary of Primrose Farm, School Rd, IP13 7EN to allow the applicant to care for and ensure the welfare of livestock on the site.

This Statement has assessed the proposal against national and local planning policy. It shows that granting the application will be in accordance with the three dimensions of sustainable

development; economic, social and environmental. There are no technical reasons that prevent the granting of this application and we believe it has demonstrated that it would in fact benefit the local area and the Local Authority as well as the applicant himself, by providing accommodation and work for the applicant, saving the LA money, and contributing to the economy of the area in a manner that will have no detrimental effect on the area, its surroundings, wildlife, flora and fauna or residents.