

COMBINED PLANNING AND DESIGN & ACCESS
STATEMENT

FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A
PERMANENT SUCCESSION AGRICULTURAL WORKERS DWELLING

CARRIER LANDSCAPES / SULNEY NURSERIES, STATION ROAD, UPPER
BROUGHTON, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE, LE14 3BQ

GRACE | MACHIN
PLANNING & PROPERTY

OCTOBER 2023

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This combined Planning and Design and Access Statement has been prepared to support a Full Planning Application by Mr Duncan Carrier of Carrier Landscapes / Sulney Nurseries, for the development of 1 no. permanent succession agricultural workers dwelling on land to the north of Station Road, Upper Broughton, Melton Mowbray, Nottinghamshire, LE14 3BQ.
- 1.2 Initially, this Statement describes the Site and its surroundings, and sets out the relevant planning history of the Site and local area, before moving on to consider the current development proposal and the prevailing planning policy framework, before assessing this proposal against the relevant national and local planning policies. Against this background, this Statement will conclude that the proposed development accords with all material planning considerations and that this justifies the approval of planning permission for this scheme. Finally, this document will provide a Design and Access Statement in relation to this proposal, which will consider the design approach taken in preparing this bespoke rural development.
- 1.3 This Planning and Design & Access Statement should also be read alongside other supporting documents and reports submitted with this Application, including the following:
- Topographical Survey
 - Site Plan / Layout
 - Proposed Elevations
 - Proposed Floor Plans
 - Site Access Appraisal
 - Horticultural Appraisal / Justification Statement
 - Drainage Strategy
 - Preliminary (Geo-Environmental) Risk Assessment

2.0 THE SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

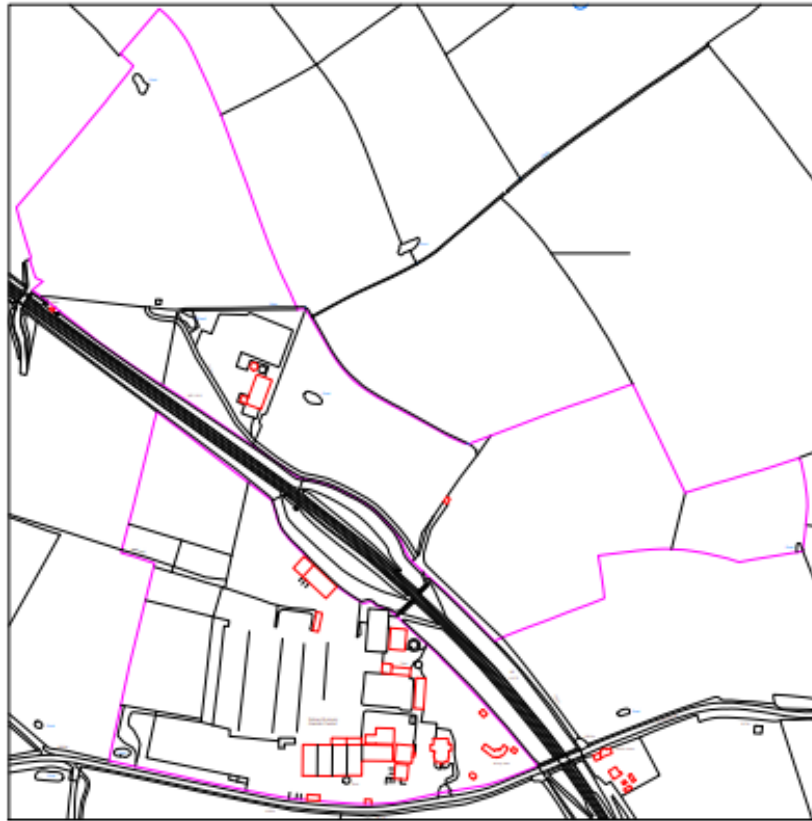
- 2.1 This Application relates to a Site comprising Carrier Landscapes / Sulney Nurseries, which is owned and operated by the Applicant, Mr Duncan Carrier, his wife and his daughter, Miss Eva Carrier. The existing farmhouse and functional centre of this rural enterprise are located within an area of open countryside, on the northern side of Station Road, approximately 1.8km to the west of the village of Upper Broughton.

- 2.2 Carrier Landscapes Ltd has been operating from this location since 1989 (a period of 34 years) and is therefore a well-established, successful rural business. This enterprise comprises two elements – Carrier Landscapes, which was conceived to carry out commercial planting at new housing estates and similar developments, and Sulney Nurseries, which grows the nursery stock (i.e. trees, shrubs and plants), used by the landscaping part of the business. More recently, Sulney Nurseries has developed and evolved further, with a Plant Centre opening to serve members of the public.
- 2.3 Originally, the business occupied an area of land to the west of the now dis-used railway line (which bisects Station Road on a roughly north-south axis), and which comprises an area of approximately 8.1 hectares (20 acres) of land. This area currently forms the hub of operations, and accommodates a significant range of agricultural buildings and polytunnels, as well as offices and the plant centre (open to the public). Immediately adjoining this horticultural hub, is the existing agricultural dwelling, Sulney House, which is owned and occupied by the Applicant, Mr Duncan Carrier and his wife.
- 2.4 In order to serve the needs of this growing business, a further parcel of 6.1 hectares (15 acres) of land was purchased by Carrier Landscapes approximately 6 years ago, with a further 6.1 hectares (15 acres) subsequently being purchased approximately 4 years ago. The entirety of this additional landholding lies to the east of the aforementioned dis-used railway line, and also to the north of Station Road. The growing of nursery stock is increasingly taking place on this additional land to the east of the railway line, as the original Site to the west is now predominantly used as a base for the landscaping part of the business, with offices, distribution centre and parking for plant and vehicles etc. The land to the east now also therefore accommodates a range of growing structures, including polytunnels and buildings typically found in association with agricultural uses.
- 2.5 The original landholding to the west of the railway line is bound along its southern perimeter by Station Road itself, with a robust and mature hedgerow separating the Site from the adopted highway. To the north is an equestrian paddock and to the west is further agricultural grassland, with further hedgerow and tree planting separating the proposed development Site from these neighbouring land uses. The Application Site itself lies within the established and enclosed confines of the nursery, and currently encompasses an area of hardstanding which has been utilised for open storage and intermittently as a staff overflow car park. However, through the rearrangement of other areas within the Site, these uses can be accommodated elsewhere.

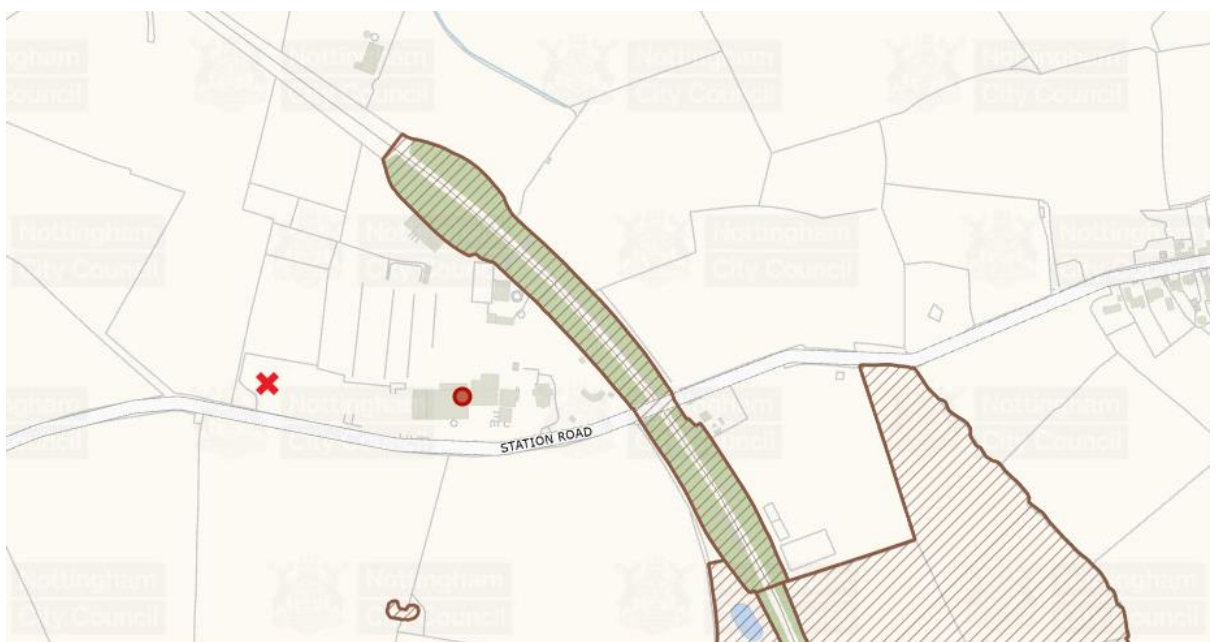
- 2.6 Whilst currently accessed through the principal point of access into Sulney Nursery / Carrier Landscapes, which lies approximately 260 metres to the east of the Application Site, a separate point of access is available into the parcel of land proposed for development, which comprises an agricultural opening within the frontage hedgerow. Whilst this point of access is not currently in use (and has become somewhat overgrown), it is envisaged that this access will be reinstated to serve this proposal, as detailed further below in Section 4 of this Statement.
- 2.7 The location of the two parcels of land belonging to Carrier Landscapes, along with the position of the Application Site itself are depicted on the Google Earth extract below.



- 2.8 The full extent of the land owned by Carrier Landscapes / Sulney Nurseries is shown on the plan overleaf, with the land outlined in pink all forming part of this rural horticultural business.



2.9 The Application Site itself is located within Flood Zone 1 and therefore is at the lowest risk of flooding. In addition, the Site is not located within a Conservation Area, nor within a designated landscape or ecological area. As depicted on the extract from the Nottinghamshire Insight Mapping System provided below, the Carrier Landscapes Site lies adjacent to a Local Wildlife Site, but with a significant element of separation between the Application Site (marked with a red cross) and the LWS itself.



3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 Since the original opening of the business at this location in 1989, there have been a significant number of planning applications in respect of Carrier Landscapes / Sulney Nurseries, fundamentally relating to the horticultural operations carried out at the Site, including for new agricultural buildings, polytunnels and supporting structures as summarised below:

- Reference 00/00942/FUL - Retention of Glasshouse, Potting Shed, sand bins and car park for use in connection with horticultural nursery – Application Permitted.
- Reference 01/01334/FUL – Erection of Polytunnels, tractor shed and barn – Application Permitted.
- Reference 93/01040/FUL – Enclosure of Dutch barn and erection of two polythene tunnels – Application Permitted.
- Reference 93/01227/FUL – Erection of Greenhouse – Application Permitted.
- Reference 94/00789/FUL – Barn Extension – Application Permitted.
- Reference 95/00547/FUL – Erection of two polythene tunnels – Application Permitted.
- Reference 95/00884/FUL – Extension of Barn – Application Permitted.
- Reference 95/01166/FUL – Improvement to Access, Erection of Fence – Application Permitted.
- Reference 96/01108/COU – Use of land for sale of plants – Application Refused.
- Reference 98/00923/CLU – Use as a horticultural nursery and in addition ancillary sales from the site of surplus shrubs and trees grown – Application Permitted.
- Reference 04/00132/FUL – Erect metal storage building for nursery use – Application Permitted.
- Reference 06/00152/FUL – Erect net covered ‘growing on’ structure (replacing existing nearby structure) – Application Permitted.
- Reference 06/01698/FUL – Extension to existing barn – Application Permitted.
- Reference 07/01979/FUL – Erect Polytunnels – Application Permitted.
- Reference 09/00677/COU – Use of existing potting shed and outdoor area for the sale of auxiliary items to complement plant nursery sales – Application Permitted.
- Reference 11/00707/FUL – Erection of Office Building – Application Permitted.
- Reference 14/00164/FUL – Construction of new first floor offices – Application Permitted.
- Reference 14/01542/FUL – Extension to existing shed – Application Permitted.

- Reference 17/01339/AGRIC – Agricultural barn, potting plants and storage – Application not required.
- Reference 18/02869/AGRIC – New multi-span polytunnel – Application not required.
- Reference 19/01146/FUL – Proposed extension to existing offices – Application Permitted.
- Reference 20/00178/AGRIC – 4 bay multispan polytunnel – Prior Approval not required.
- Reference 20/01594/FUL – Proposed new office building – Application Permitted.
- Reference 20/02392/AGRIC – Replace and enlarge existing greenhouse and replace potting shed with potting area in new building – Prior Approval not required.

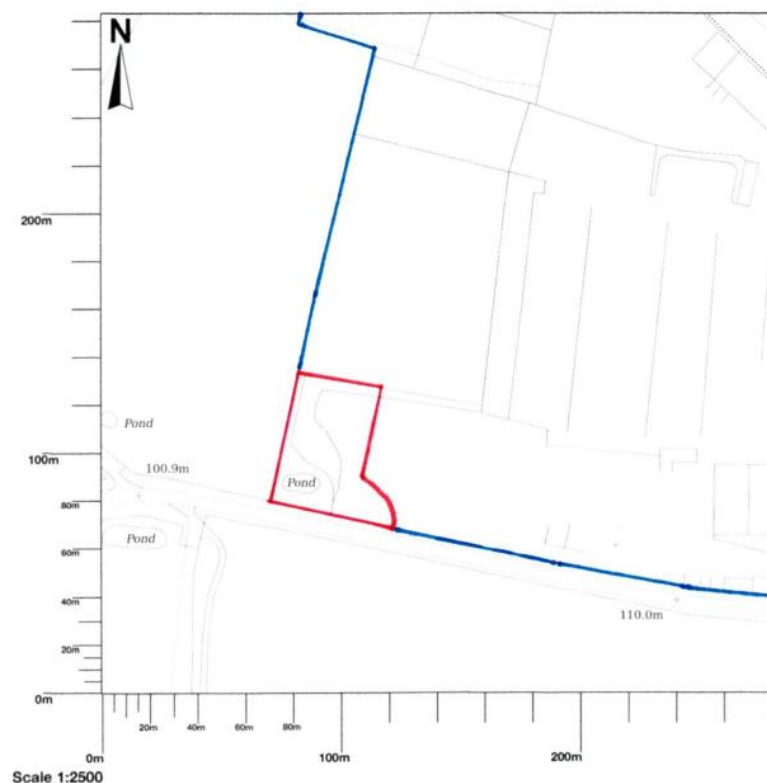
3.2 This planning history, relating to the development of this nursery / commercial landscaping business assists in demonstrating the continued growth of this rural enterprise over the past 30 years, and the commitment of the Applicant and his family to the success, evolution and development of this business.

3.3 Also of particular relevance to this Application, are the previous submissions relating to the erection of an agricultural workers' dwelling in association with this horticultural business. Historically, Applications were made in 1999 and 2000 for an Agricultural Workers Dwelling, each of which were refused consent. A further Outline Application was submitted in 2005, which was also refused consent by Rushcliffe Borough Council (Reference 05/00978/OUT); however, this decision was overturned at Appeal, with the Decision being issued in October 2006 (Reference APP/P3040/A/05/1195375).

3.4 This Consent was subsequently implemented (following the approval of reserved matters), with the resultant dwelling now being occupied by Mr Duncan Carrier and his wife. Critically, in the consideration of the current Application, we would stress that the essential requirement for a Manager to be present at Carrier Landscapes / Sulney Nurseries, as identified by the Inspector through the earlier Appeal process, remains today, which can no longer be met through the existing dwelling at the Site, owing to the imminent retirement of Mr Duncan Carrier. It is therefore necessary for this succession workers dwelling to accommodate Miss Eva Carrier, who will then provide this essential on-site presence, to ensure the continued safe operation of this rural business.

4.0 CURRENT PROPOSAL

4.1 The current proposal envisages the development of a succession agricultural workers dwelling on land which forms part of the established horticultural enterprise at Carrier Landscapes / Sulney Nurseries. The Site envisaged for the proposed dwelling is situated within the western portion of the property, on an area of hardstanding, which has been used as open storage and as an overflow car parking area for staff when required. The Site constitutes previously developed land, owing to its lawful use as part of this established rural business, and is entirely contained within the defined yard at Carrier Landscapes. The proposed siting of the new dwelling is depicted on the plan below:



4.2 The proposed dwelling will provide space which is suitable and commensurate with the needs of the Applicant, whilst also being of a commensurate size and scale to the requirements of the agricultural / horticultural operations being undertaken. The design is traditional and modest in nature, and has a scale, mass, materials palette and architectural detailing which respects and reflects the immediate rural backdrop to the Site, which is characterised by agricultural / horticultural and residential development. The dwelling itself will accommodate an open plan kitchen and dining space, with separate living room and utility room at ground floor level, with three bedrooms and a family bathroom at first floor level. A detached triple garage will be sited to the south-east of the dwelling, with the new built form enclosing a small parking / turning area.

- 4.3 The proposed dwelling will be provided with a small residential curtilage, with the entirety of this new development being enclosed by the existing fencing and planting which currently forms the western and southern boundaries to the yard / hardstanding area which forms the proposed development site. This planting will be further enhanced and bolstered through this proposal, therefore providing a clear definition to the extent of built form associated with Carrier Landscapes. The additional tree and hedgerow planting will effectively ‘wrap’ around the curtilage of the new development, thereby ensuring that the new dwelling forms a logical part of the built fabric at the Site. This new planting will also filter views of the development from public vantage points, whilst also preventing incursion into the farmland beyond.
- 4.4 The new dwelling has been designed to respect its countryside setting, and to take a cue from traditional dwellings and agricultural buildings found within this part of rural Nottinghamshire, with the scheme specifying a palette of materials which reflects this prevailing character, including facing brickwork to match the main company office building, along with stained vertical timber boarding panels within the recess of the structure. The dwelling will also incorporate feature projecting brickwork eaves and gable dentil course detailing and cambered brick soldier course lintel facings.
- 4.5 The bespoke architectural approach has sought to combine traditional elements with more contemporary features, as depicted on the plans and elevations which accompany this Application. The design also incorporates a range of features to ensure the long term energy efficiency and sustainability of the proposed dwelling. The material choices and detailing, will ensure that the new development will sit comfortably within this setting and appear as a harmonious addition to the rural built fabric, alongside the existing range of buildings and structures associated with Carrier Landscapes / Sulney Nurseries.
- 4.6 The proposed dwelling will be accessed via a new driveway from Station Road, which will provide a separate point of entry and exit for the new property, distinct from the business entrance into Carrier Landscapes / Sulney Nurseries – as per the submitted access design details.
- 4.7 Fundamentally, this proposal envisages the development of a modest and sensitively designed 3-bedroom home, which will provide a succession agricultural farm workers dwelling for the Applicant’s daughter. The need and evidence to support the requirement for a second dwelling in association within Carrier Landscapes / Sulney Nurseries will be established and set out in greater detail below within Section 6 of this Statement.

5.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 5.1 To the extent that development plan policies are material to an application for planning permission, the decision must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise (according to section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
- 5.2 The National Planning Policy Framework stresses the importance of having a planning system that is genuinely plan-led. Where a proposal accords with an up-to-date development plan it should be approved without delay, as required by the presumption in favour of sustainable development at Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework, 2021.
- 5.3 Where the development plan is absent, silent or the relevant policies are out of date, Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 requires the application to be determined in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

The Development Plan

- 5.4 For the purposes of this Planning Application, the adopted Development Plan for the Local Planning Authority is the Rushcliffe Borough Local Plan Part 1 (Core Strategy), and the Rushcliffe Local Plan Part 2: Land and Planning Policies (LPP2). In addition, the Upper Broughton Neighbourhood Plan was 'Made' in January 2020 and therefore also forms part of the Development Plan for decision making purposes.
- 5.5 Of particular relevance to this proposal are the following policies of the Development Plan:

Core Strategy

- 5.6 Policy 1 – Establishes the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out through the NPPF.
- 5.7 Policy 3 (Spatial Strategy) - Outlines the distribution of development in the Borough during the plan period. The policy promotes urban concentration by directing the majority of future development towards the built-up area of Nottingham and the Key Settlements identified for growth of Bingham, Cotgrave, East Leake, Keyworth, Radcliffe on Trent and Ruddington. The policy goes on to state that in other settlements development will be for 'local needs only' where it is envisaged that provision will be made on small scale infill plots.

- 5.8 Policy 10 (Design and Enhancing Local Identity) - Sets out the Council's expectations in respect of design and enhancing local identity. A number of detailed considerations are set out within this Policy, which should be applied to any new development proposal and which should be given due consideration throughout the design process.
- 5.9 Policy 17 (Biodiversity) – States that biodiversity will be increased across the Borough over the plan period, and that development should seek to provide new biodiversity features and habitats, and / or improve features. Where harm is unavoidable then it must be demonstrated that no alternative schemes or sites are viable, and that the proposal will mitigate and compensate for any loss.

Local Plan Part 2: Land and Planning Policies

- 5.10 Policy 1 – Development Requirements – Indicates that planning permission for new development will be granted where a number of criteria are met, including (inter alia):
- There is no significant adverse effect upon the amenity, particularly residential amenity of adjoining properties or the surrounding area, by reason of the type and levels of activity on the Site, or traffic generated;
 - A suitable means of access can be provided to the development without detriment to the amenity of adjacent properties or highway safety and the provision of parking is in accordance with advice provided by the Highway Authority;
 - Sufficient space is provided within the Site to accommodate the proposal together with ancillary amenity and circulation space;
 - The scale, density, height, massing, design, layout and materials of the proposal are sympathetic to the character and appearance of the neighbouring buildings and the surrounding area. It should not lead to an over intensive form of development, be overbearing in relation to neighbouring properties, not lead to undue overshadowing or loss of privacy;
 - There are no significant adverse effects on landscape character; and
 - There is no significant adverse effect on any historic sites and their settings including listed buildings of local interest, conservation areas, scheduled ancient monuments, and historic parks and gardens.
- 5.11 Policy 18 – Surface Water Management – Identifies that surface water drainage should be designed into the scheme at the earliest stage, incorporating the use of sustainable drainage systems appropriate to the size and scale of the

development, to help positively add to the appearance of the area and enhance local amenity. Existing drainage features should be retained and enhanced where appropriate.

5.12 Policy 22 – Development within the Countryside – States that all land beyond the physical edge of settlements that is not designated green belt should be considered open countryside, which should be protected for the sake of its intrinsic character and beauty. The policy identifies possible appropriate forms of development within the open countryside and under part 2 (a), includes “agriculture, equestrian, forestry and other uses requiring a rural location, including, where justified, associated workers’ dwellings.”

5.13 Supporting Paragraphs 6.16 and 6.17 examine this particular matter in more details and state as follows:

“6.16 Applications for workers’ accommodation related to agricultural, equestrian, forestry or other business operations that require a rural location must be supported by evidence that the operation is economically viable, there is a firm intention to develop the enterprise, there is an essential long term need for permanent and full time labour, there is a necessity for the worker to live in close proximity, and there is no existing dwelling available or suitable. Temporary accommodation should be applied for prior to any application for permanent accommodation, as this would enable the applicant to establish need and economic viability. The size of dwelling should be appropriate for the needs of the worker, its location should not provide an obvious opportunity for infill development, and it should not require public expenditure on infrastructure.

6.17 The Council will impose an occupancy condition on any permission granted for any agricultural dwelling. Occupancy conditions are necessary to ensure that dwellings that would not normally be granted planning permission are used by people because of their work, have to live in the countryside.”

5.14 Policy 36 – Designated Nature Conservation Sites – States that development likely to have a significant adverse effect on a site of local nature conservation value (such as local wildlife sites) will not be permitted unless it can be clearly demonstrated that there are reasons for the proposal which outweigh the need to safeguard the essential nature conservation value of the site.

5.15 Policy 38 – Non-Designated Biodiversity Assets and the Wider Ecological Network – Indicates that, where appropriate, all developments will be expected to preserve, restore and re-create priority habitats and the protection and recovery of priority species in order to achieve net gains in biodiversity.

Upper Broughton Neighbourhood Plan, Made January 2020

- 5.16 Policy UB5 – Local Design and Amenity – Provides design and amenity standards / criteria, including reference to a local design guide, against which all applications must be assessed.
- 5.17 Policy UB6 – Countryside – States that applications for development within the countryside (i.e. outside the Limits to Development for Upper Broughton) will be considered in the context of Policy 22 of the Local Plan Part 2.
- 5.18 Policy UB8 – Ecology and Biodiversity – Identifies Local Wildlife Sites, and indicates that all development should seek to provide a biodiversity net gain. It also states that schemes which lead to significant harm to biodiversity assets should not be supported, and should be assessed under the relevant policies of the Local Plan.
- 5.19 Policy UB10 – Housing Provision – Identifies that, outside the Upper Broughton Limits to Development, permission for housing development will be limited to:
- a) The re-use and adaptation of redundant rural buildings in accordance with Policy UB11; and
 - b) Replacement dwellings in accordance with Policy UB12.

This is somewhat at odds with Policy UB6 of the Neighbourhood Plan, which indicates that development proposals within the countryside will be assessed against Policy 22 of the LPP2, which clearly allows for the development of agricultural workers' dwellings in the countryside, where properly justified.

Other Material Considerations

- 5.20 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), most recently revised in July 2021, has replaced all previous Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) and Planning Policy Statements (PPS) in respect of the consideration and determination of planning applications. Also of relevance to the consideration of this Application, are the provisions of Planning Practice Guidance.
- 5.21 The heart of the NPPF is set out within Paragraph 11, which stresses the presumption in favour of sustainable development. In decision making, this means:
- Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

- Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are more 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 clear 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.
- 5.22 Paragraph 60 states that it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed in order to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes. In particular, the importance of addressing the needs of groups with specific housing requirements is stressed. Paragraph 62 continues, stating that, within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies.
- 5.23 Paragraph 78 states that, in rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs.
- 5.24 Paragraph 80 continues, stating that planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless specific circumstances apply, including:
- a) where there is an essential need for a rural worker, **including those taking majority control of a farm business**, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside.
- 5.25 Paragraph 84 states that planning policies and decisions should enable (inter alia):
- a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings; and
 - b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses.
- 5.26 Paragraph 126 indicates that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

- 5.27 Paragraph 130 states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:
- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
 - b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
 - c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.
- 5.28 Paragraph 174 states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by (inter alia):
- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
 - b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services.

6.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development - Evaluation of business and justification for dwelling

- 6.1 As set out above, Policy 22 of the Local Plan Part 2 addresses development within the countryside, and sets out a number of possible appropriate forms of development including agriculture, equestrian, forestry and other uses requiring a rural location, including, where justified, associated workers' dwellings. In order to justify an agricultural workers' dwelling, there must be evidence that the operation is economically viable, a firm intention to develop the enterprise, an essential long term need for permanent and full time labour, a necessity for the worker to live in close proximity and no existing dwelling available or suitable.
- 6.2 This position is supported by Paragraph 80 of the NPPF which seeks to avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless specific circumstances exist. This updated National Planning Policy position is seen to respond to changing agricultural practices and circumstances within the rural area, particularly through reference to succession farm workers, who will be taking a majority control of a farm business.
- 6.3 Indeed, National Planning Policy has stated for some time that one of the special circumstances for granting permission for dwellings in the countryside is when

there is an essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near place their place of work. Where an essential need exists, planning authorities also assess whether the need for a worker to live at their place of work could be met by any existing suitable and available dwelling. However, there is established case law that says that a retiring farmer should not be expected to vacate their home to make way for an incoming worker, and therefore the new NPPF makes clear reference to the need to accommodate the needs for succession workers' dwellings.

- 6.4 In considering the foregoing, it is our case that this established horticultural operation has a requirement for a succession agricultural worker's dwelling, to support the continued growth and development of Carrier Landscapes / Sulney Nurseries, and to allow the Applicant's daughter – Miss Eva Carrier - to live at the Site and to take over the management of this business from her father, as he nears retirement.
- 6.5 The day-to-day work, which is currently undertaken and overseen by Mr Carrier, and in the future, by Miss Carrier is summarised below, alongside the primary rationale for a permanent presence on Site:
- Strategic and day-to-day management of the business, including maintaining records and addressing the necessary legislative requirements for the farm and book keeping / accounting. Please note that Miss Carrier already oversees all paperwork and the overarching day-to-day management of the business.
 - The essential need for Miss Carrier to be on Site arises from the requirement to oversee the growing of plants both within the polytunnels and also within the open areas of the Site. In particular, it is essential for someone to be permanently available, in case of an emergency, such as a heating failure or a sudden change in temperature – such an eventuality could lead to a complete loss of the plant stock, which is the lifeblood of this business enterprise.
 - The location of the Site within an area of open countryside makes this business incredibly vulnerable to crime and vandalism. In particular, the size of the holding (which extends across two distinct sites to the east and west of the railway line), coupled with the high value of the stock grown, means that it is especially susceptible to theft – with this in mind, the Applicant has a high quality and efficient security monitoring system in place; however, the deterrent of a permanent on-Site presence is essential in both monitoring the security system and in discouraging and reducing opportunities for crime.

- This essential and functional need for a permanent presence at the Site cannot currently be met by Miss Carrier, who lives away from the business within a property at Ab Kettleby (some 5 miles from the Site). There are no properties available within closer proximity to the Application Site, which would serve the needs of this enterprise, as described above.
- The only dwelling on the Site is unable to fulfil the essential/functional needs of the nursery as it is currently lawfully and permanently occupied by Mr. Duncan Carrier (and his wife) who is approaching retirement age.
- There are no other dwellings on the unit, or in the immediate area which are both suitable and available to fulfil the essential/functional needs of the enterprise as the Applicant is required to reside on the Application Site to provide the high levels of supervision and security for the existing enterprise.

6.6 The above requirements were fully recognised and accepted by the Planning Inspector, through the previous Appeal Decision relating to the originally proposed agricultural workers' dwelling. Here, the Inspector states:

- "8. There is no dispute that the nursery is well established and financially viable. The Council also accepts that there is a functional need for a dwelling which relates to a full time worker and I agree.
9. The expert's report states that irrigation, heating and ventilation systems need to be supervised and monitored and it is accepted that the failure of an irrigation system could result in damage to a considerable amount of stock given that the majority of plants are reliant on artificial supplies of water. With regard to alarms, the appellant stated that the site is fitted with a security system which alerts the appellant to a problem via a mobile phone, but that no similar system is available which would alert him to a failure in the irrigation system and that alarm systems are generally only used in very large glasshouses where they are wired to a nearby house.
10. Evidence was given at the hearing that the employees of the business have usually finished for the day by around 17.30 and that after that time the owner will generally visit the site in the evening, and if considered necessary, during the night time. Additional visits may be considered necessary during times of adverse weather conditions such as extreme winds, cold, drought or heat. This is particularly the case given the wide range of conditions in which the various plants are grown and the need to move certain species if particular conditions become apparent.
11. Although the appellant lives in Upper Broughton, which is less than 2km from the appeal site, the nursery is located on the crest of a hill in an

exposed location and I accept that weather conditions could be considerably more severe, particularly in relation to wind strength, than in the village. I accept the appellant's evidence that, given the particular location of the site, he may be unaware from conditions in the village that there is a need to visit the site and that if he lived within sight and sound of the site he would be in a far better position to monitor situations and to prevent incidents arising. This could include a need to move outdoor grown plants inside, and I accept that no alarm system could provide this information."

- 6.7 The above matters remain entirely relevant and valid in respect of the current proposal. Whilst the original agricultural workers' dwelling allowed through this previous Appeal fulfilled the needs of the business at that time, this dwelling is no longer available to serve the essential need for a permanent presence at the Site, owing to the imminent retirement of Mr Carrier.
- 6.8 Miss Carrier, along with the other full and part time members of staff, work at Carrier Landscapes / Sulney Nurseries, between the hours of 7.30am and 5.30pm on Monday – Friday, with regular weekend work also required, depending upon the time of year. Clearly, based upon the size of this holding, at over 20 hectares, along with the nature of the operations undertaken, as described above, it is our submission that this holding requires and demands a full time presence on Site, in order to ensure the proper management of the land and plants being grown, along with the management of additional contracting staff required at peak times.
- 6.9 This family enterprise is a profitable enterprise, and has been so during its entire period of operation. The farm's record keeping, including invoices, VAT and PAYE is carried out by the Applicant but the annual / end of year farm accounts are carried out by external accountants, with the results being publicly available as a Limited Company. Financially, it is clear that the existing enterprise can sustain a succession agricultural workers' dwelling without compromising the ability to meet all normal outgoings on the holding.
- 6.10 As an independent adult, it is not appropriate for Miss Eva Carrier to move back in with her parents at the main farmhouse. The succession dwelling sought through this proposal will therefore enable the older generation (Mr and Mrs Carrier) to retire and the younger generation to take on responsibility for the farm business; it would also provide support for the older generation in their retirement through the younger providing care and thereby improving the social wellbeing of the local farming community.
- 6.11 The labour demanded for this horticultural enterprise, along with the requirements of this business show that there is an essential requirement for a senior staff member to live and work at this Site to efficiently manage the running

of the business and to ensure that the plant stock remains safe and in a good state of health, in all eventualities.

- 6.12 To maintain a profitable business in an ever increasingly difficult trading climate, the attention to detail in management and the application of land / environmental legislation is paramount. Recognising problems before they become serious and dealing with them immediately is seen as one of the keys to success. The business now depends upon the energy and enthusiasm of the Miss Carrier who needs to be on hand 24 hours a day to ensure that this operation is managed in a comprehensive and effective manner.
- 6.13 With Duncan Carrier now nearing retirement, it is essential that his successor within the business, his daughter, Eva Carrier, is provided with suitable accommodation on Site, to fulfil the essential need to have a presence at Carrier Landscapes, in order to ensure the long-term vitality and viability of this rural enterprise.

Design, Siting and Landscape Setting

- 6.14 Local Plan Part 1 Policy 10, Part 2 Policies 1 and 11, Policy UB5 of the Neighbourhood Plan, alongside Section 12 of the NPPF, jointly seek to ensure that new development proposals do not have a detrimental impact on the character of the location or its landscape setting, and in all cases, should deliver a high quality of design, which is beautiful and sustainable. In these respects, the proposal has considered the detailed requirements of these Policies to ensure that the proposed new development will reflect the rich local distinctiveness of the Borough's landscape and character through scale, form, mass, layout, design, materials and detailing.
- 6.15 With these requirements in mind, it is clear through the plans and elevations, submitted in support of this Application, that the proposed development seeks to deliver a new home of a bespoke design, which employs a high design standard, and which will contribute towards the interesting mix and character of development in the locality, whilst reflecting its rural backdrop.
- 6.16 The Application proposal has adopted a design approach, which combines traditional details with more contemporary elements, and seeks to reflect the character of the area, whilst delivering a bespoke and modest addition to this Site. The architectural detailing and materials of the proposed dwelling, including the use of rural red brick, concrete plain tile roof covering and brick detailing, will assist in tying in this new development with the local area, whilst the scale of the proposed development will ensure that it is not overly prominent within the local setting and public realm.

- 6.17 The siting and scale of the proposed dwelling have been carefully considered and have been influenced by its functional role along with its visual impact on the surrounding countryside. With these requirements in mind, the proposed dwelling, the subject of this Application has been designed and sited such that it offers a practical and functional location for access to the main growing hub of the business, whilst also providing a safe location, which will not be detrimentally impacted through noise and disturbance associated with the operation of the enterprise.
- 6.18 The proposed positioning of the dwelling, the subject of this Application, has been sited in a location which is away from the main vehicular entrance into the horticultural yard (and the public highway) and therefore away from the noise, traffic and dust created through this busy rural business.
- 6.19 The proposed siting of the new dwelling, on the far western side of the main hub of the business has been chosen, as this offers a good location to allow natural surveillance of the primary and central part of the enterprise from this direction. Indeed, one of the key purposes of a dwelling on or close to any operational farm is that it should provide additional security and surveillance. Over the last 5 – 10 years the business has suffered from attempted burglaries, as well as regular trespassing. The proposed siting of the new dwelling, which essentially ‘blocks off’ this western corner of the yard, will limit opportunities for crime and discourage criminal behaviour.
- 6.20 The area of the Site proposed for the new dwelling has been utilised over the past 10 years for open storage and car parking associated with the horticultural operations. This part of the landholding is not therefore ‘greenfield’ in character or appearance, and is wholly enclosed within the defined boundaries of the business hub belonging to Carrier Landscapes.
- 6.21 Visually, physically and functionally, the proposed siting of the new dwelling has been carefully considered, to ensure that it does not extend into the open countryside which surrounds the built form of the operational farmyard. These benefits, coupled with the opportunity to discourage crime and anti-social behaviour, result in this position being the most suitable for the proposed property.
- 6.22 In conjunction with the above considerations, this proposal has been informed by an assessment of the surrounding landscape character and setting. Fundamentally however, it must be stressed a building of the nature proposed, on the edge of an established farmyard is not uncommon in this part of rural Nottinghamshire, with this area being characterised by open agricultural land, interspersed by isolated farms of predominantly red brick core with modern agricultural buildings. The addition of the proposed dwelling to an already well-

established and built up horticultural operation will not, therefore appear as an incongruous or visually dominant feature within this landscape setting.

- 6.23 Moreover, the design, scale, orientation and external materials of the proposed dwelling have been carefully considered, to ensure that the new built form will not be visually intrusive. The soft landscaping scheme which will be prepared to support this proposal in due course, will encompass further native planting along the boundaries to the curtilage to the proposed dwelling; this additional planting will again assist in providing visual enclosure and screening and will help to assimilate the dwelling into the local landscape.
- 6.23 In summary, the proposed property has been carefully considered, to ensure that it performs well in respect of the functional and operational needs of the farm, including providing an element of security and natural surveillance, as well as ready access to the main horticultural yard and operations therein. In addition, a thorough assessment has been undertaken, to ensure that the position, orientation and design of the dwelling addresses the requirements of the Local Plan, in terms of its visual impact upon the local landscape setting and character and appearance of the locality.

Access

- 6.24 This Application is supported by a 'Site Access Appraisal', which fully assesses the suitability of the proposed point of access to serve this agricultural workers' dwelling. The proposed access is therefore considered to be both "safe and suitable" in line with Paragraph 110 of the NPPF.
- 6.25 Based upon the findings of the 'Site Access Appraisal' and supporting plans, it has been demonstrated that the proposed point of access into this development is acceptable, and accords with the requirements of Nottinghamshire County Council.

Ecology

- 6.26 As set out above in Section 2.9, it is acknowledged that the Site lies to the west of an identified Local Wildlife Site, which encompasses land along either side of the railway test track and its embankment. However, there is a separation distance of some 360 metres between the Application Site and the designated Local Wildlife Site, with a substantial quantum of intervening development associated with Carrier Landscapes / Sulney Nurseries, separating the proposed development plot and the LWS.

- 6.27 In addition, we would stress that the Application Site itself comprises an area of hardstanding, created through compacted hardcore. This part of the overarching nursery Site has been utilised for many years for open storage and car parking, and therefore represents previously developed land.
- 6.28 Given the existing, lawful use of the Application Site, along with the degree of physical separation between the proposed development and the Local Wildlife Site to the east, it is not considered that this proposal will have any impact upon this designated wildlife area. The proposed creation of a green, landscaped garden, in association with the proposed dwelling, will allow the provision of further tree, hedgerow and shrub planting, which will offer the opportunity for biodiversity and ecological enhancements.

Flood Risk

- 6.29 As depicted on the Environment Agencies Flood Map for Planning (replicated overleaf for ease of reference), the Application Site lies within Flood Zone 1, and is therefore at the lowest risk of flooding.



- 6.30 The proposed dwelling, the subject of this Application, will be positively drained, utilising a sustainable surface water drainage solution, as detailed within the

supporting Drainage Statement. It is anticipated that this can be the subject of a suitably worded planning condition in due course.

7.0 DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

This Section of the report has been prepared in accordance with the guidance set out by CABE, as detailed in 'Design and Access Statements – How to Write and Read them'.

7.1 ASSESSMENT OF CONTEXT

7.1.1 The physical context of the Site is set out within Section 2 above. This physical context has been given careful consideration in the formulation of this proposal, to ensure that the new dwelling will respect and reflect the surrounding agricultural / horticultural context and setting, whilst performing well against the functional and operational requirements of this rural business.

7.2 USE

7.2.1 The proposed development is entirely residential in composition. The proposed succession agricultural workers' dwelling seeks to support the well-established business operation at this Site and to provide for an essential presence on Site, to ensure that the plants grown at Carrier Landscapes / Sulney Nurseries are protected and cared for in all eventualities, particularly during poor weather conditions, or in circumstances where the heating, ventilation or irrigation systems fail. In addition, this residential use, located at the business enterprise itself, will ensure that security is enhanced, and opportunities for crime are reduced.

7.3 AMOUNT

7.3.1 The scheme envisages the development of a single dwelling, which will provide the Applicant's daughter, Miss Eva Carrier with 3 no. bedrooms and associated living / kitchen space, which is of a size and scale that is commensurate with the functional requirements of the business.

7.4 LAYOUT, SCALE AND APPEARANCE

7.4.1 This scheme has been developed, with a key objective to provide a traditional and modest dwelling, which is sensitive to the character and appearance of the rural / horticultural environment within which it sits, which respects and preserves the landscape character of the area, and which delivers a high quality, enduring development that is energy efficient.

7.4.2 The proposed dwelling has been sited, designed and oriented in a location that will minimise its impact on the open countryside and not adversely affect visual

amenity, with the property being viewed from the surrounding area against a backdrop of existing agricultural, horticultural, commercial and residential development at Carrier Landscapes / Sulney Nurseries.

7.4.3 The design and materials used for the proposed dwelling are sympathetic to its surroundings, reflecting the traditional character of the area. It will be constructed from local red brick with a complementary range of powder coated aluminium framed windows and timber entrance doors. The vernacular detailing and traditional architectural approach will ensure that the proposed dwelling reflects the built form found within farms within this part of rural Nottinghamshire, with the new property providing a sympathetic and subtle addition to the existing built form at this rural enterprise.

7.4.4 As stated above, it is proposed to site the dwelling within the existing horticultural yard, at its far western side. The land on which the dwelling is to be constructed is relatively flat and has, until recently been utilised for open storage and car parking. The proposed plot will be enclosed by existing and proposed additional landscaping, which essentially ‘wraps around’ the new built form, and which will assist in screening and physically enclosing the dwelling, whilst enhancing the appearance of the Site in this setting.

7.5 LANDSCAPING

7.5.1 It is anticipated that existing tree and hedgerow planting on the boundaries to the Site will be retained and protected as part of this proposal. This is considered important, in order to retain the existing natural landscape features, which provide part of the setting to the Site, as well as in providing a mature landscape backdrop for the proposed new development.

7.5.2 The scheme also envisages the provision of further soft landscaping, which will assist in providing a suitable landscape setting for the proposed development. In particular, it is envisaged that the northern, eastern and western boundaries to the plot will be reinforced and planted with suitable native tree species, in order to provide a natural backdrop to the dwelling, whilst softening and screening views of the new built form from public vantage points along Station Road.

7.6 ACCESS

7.6.1 Vehicular and pedestrian access to the proposed dwelling will be provided via a new driveway into the Site as per the supporting Site Access Appraisal document and associated plans.

7.6.2 The formation of the new access driveway will provide safe access and egress into the proposed new dwelling and the development of a single new dwelling in this

location will not result in any significant or material increase in vehicular movements on the local highway network.

- 7.6.3 Within the Site itself, there is sufficient space for vehicles to turn, park and manoeuvre, such that vehicles can both enter and exit in a forward gear. The garaging proposed will also ensure that car parking is not visually prominent.

8.0 CONCLUSION AND PLANNING BALANCE

- 8.1 The content of this Statement has established the purpose of this Application, which seeks consent for a three bedroomed, two storey dwelling, in association with the horticultural operations undertaken at Carrier Landscapes / Sulney Nurseries. The Site, whilst lying in an area of open countryside, encompasses an established and large scale horticultural operation, with a primary hub to the west of the railway line (encompassing the proposed development Site) and a further extension to the rural business to the east of the railway. This proposal seeks approval for a 'succession farm workers dwelling' which will allow the Applicant's daughter, Miss Eva Carrier, to move to the Site, to manage all day-to-day operations, whilst also being on hand to deal with unexpected circumstances or emergencies.
- 8.2 This Statement has sought to consider the relevant provisions of the Local Plan and the recently updated NPPF, which specifically allows for the development of isolated homes in the countryside, where there is an essential need for a rural worker, **including those taking majority control of a farm business**, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside.
- 8.3 In this case, it has been established, both through this Statement and through the accompanying 'Horticultural Justification Statement' prepared by Landscape Land & Property, that the proposed dwelling will allow for such a 'succession workers dwelling', with the Applicant's daughter, Miss Eva Carrier, seeking to take over the management and operation of the enterprise, as her parents, Mr and Mrs Duncan Carrier, near retirement. By providing this succession dwelling, the business at Carrier Landscapes / Sulney Nurseries can thrive and continue to make a significant and meaningful contribution to the local rural economy. It will also provide support for the older generation in their retirement through the younger providing care and thereby improving the social wellbeing of the local farming community.
- 8.4 The functional and financial support for the proposed dwelling has been established through this Statement, and we would stress the challenges facing farmers at the current time, as Brexit takes hold and legislative requirements continue to flux and become more onerous. In order to continue the land

management practices which have shaped the Borough's distinctive landscape, it remains necessary for a full time worker to live at this farming operation. This requirement is recognised by Policy 22 of the LPP2, and by national policy, which recognise and acknowledge that housing in the open countryside for rural workers is an exception to the usual policies of restraint for new development outside settlements.

- 8.5 The dwelling itself has been designed and sited such that it functions well as part of the operational business, whilst allowing the residential amenities and safety of its future occupants to be secured. The siting of the dwelling will allow for natural surveillance of the yard and surrounding land, thereby reducing opportunities for crime and discouraging anti-social behaviour or trespassing.
- 8.6 Of paramount importance however, the proposed dwelling has been designed to ensure that it responds positively to the landscape character and setting of this locality, and will appear as an organic and sympathetic addition to the built form within this established farming operation. The new dwelling will provide a modest and traditional property, which will assimilate comfortably into this setting, and which will conserve the beauty of the surrounding countryside.
- 8.7 Based upon the foregoing, we consider that this proposal accords with the provisions of the development plan and all other material considerations, and therefore we would encourage the approval of planning permission at the earliest opportunity.