

August 2026



Planning, Design & Access Statement

Land off Trapp Lane,
Simonstone

Erection of two storey office with
associated landscaping & parking



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning & Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Urban Future Planning Consultancy Ltd on behalf of the Applicant, White Stud Hill Ltd, to accompany a planning application seeking consent for the erection of a two-storey office building (Use class E(g)) with associated landscaping and parking to be utilised in conjunction with the White Hill Stud Equestrian facility, off Trapp Lane, Simonstone. This Statement should be read alongside the accompanying plans and other supporting documents which accompany the application.
- 1.2 The application site is located within a commercial setting and forms part of an Equestrian facility. White Hill Stud was established over a decade ago. The organisation breeds and produces quality horses within their purpose-built yard featuring 20 stables, two arenas, a lunge pen and horse recovery spa.
- 1.3 The organisation has grown in recent years and the current office provision on site is at full capacity and no longer meets the commercial requirements of the business. As such, a new office building is proposed.
- 1.4 The following sections describe the application site and its surroundings as well as the Applicant's intentions for the site. It then sets out the relevant local and national planning policy context before assessing the proposal and concluding that the scheme comprises sustainable development and is compatible with the site and its surroundings whilst not bringing about undue harm to the local highway network or to amenity. Consequently, it is concluded that consent ought to be granted.

2.0 SITE & SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The application site is located North of the settlement of Simonstone, in an open countryside location off the Western side of Trapp Lane and to the West of the Higher Trapp Hotel. The site sits within an existing group of buildings and is a previously developed site.



Figure 1. Application site location

- 2.2 The site is located within the Equestrian Centre comprising a number of buildings and external facilities as well as an access road from Trapp Lane. The area lies within open countryside on a sloping hillside. There are limited views of the site from Trapp Lane with more open views of the site from Whins Lane to the south which is at a lower level.
- 2.3 The landform is such that the gradients fall in a Southerly direction across and beyond the site limits with dwellings that front onto Whins Lane set at a much lower level approximately 120m to the South of the site.
- 2.4 The site is accessed via Trapp Lane, the C554, a classified road which is a subject to a national speed limit. The application site is located

within a readily accessible location, just 0.7 miles from the settlement of Simonstone.

Planning History

- 2.5 There is an extensive planning history over the past 5-6 years. Planning permission was originally granted in 2015 Ref: 3/2015/0283 for the redevelopment of an existing equestrian centre to form horse stables and livery, indoor arena and external riding area, including the demolition of the existing dilapidated building.

3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 Consent is sought for the erection of a two-storey office building (Use class E(g)) with associated landscaping and parking, to be utilised in conjunction with the White Hill Stud Equestrian facility, off Trapp Lane, Simonstone.



Figure 2. Proposed site layout (not to scale)

- 3.2 The proposed office building would be two storey and feature a green roof. Internally it comprises a number of meeting rooms and office spaces and other ancillary spaces associated with an office use.
- 3.3 The design rationale seeks to bring to fruition an appropriate design suitable for a semi-rural setting albeit with plentiful glazing to enhance the building's energy efficiency and sustainability whilst providing much natural light.
- 3.4 Four new parking spaces are proposed in addition to the existing parking provision which exists at the site.



Figure 3. Proposed Computer-Generated Imagery of the scheme



Figure 4. The design rationale seeks to bring to fruition an appropriate design suitable for a semi-rural setting albeit with plentiful glazing to enhance the building's energy efficiency and sustainability whilst providing much natural light

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

- 4.1 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise (Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004). The Development Plan for the purposes of this application comprises the Core Strategy (December 2014). The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2026) sets out the Government's planning agenda and is also of relevance.

Core Strategy (December 2014)

- 4.2 The following policies are of relevance:

- *Policy DMG1 General Considerations* - states that all development must be of a high standard of building design and be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature as well as scale, massing, style, features and building materials.
- *Key Statement EN2 Landscape* - states that the landscape and character of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be protected, conserved and enhanced. Any development will need to contribute to the conservation of the natural beauty of the area.
- *Key Statement EN5* - There will be a presumption in favour of the conservation and enhancement of the significance of heritage assets and their settings. The Historic Environment and its Heritage Assets and their settings will be conserved and enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance for their heritage value; their important contribution to local character, distinctiveness and sense of place; and to wider social, cultural and environmental benefits.
- *Key Statement EC1 Business and Employment Development* - states that developments strengthen the wider rural and village economies will be supported in principle.
- *Key Statement DMB1 Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy* - proposals that are intended to support business growth and the local economy will be supported.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2026)

- 4.3 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies. According to the NPPF, the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Chapter 4 of the NPPF (2026) states that new development should improve the environment, in a way that promotes a sustainable pattern of growth and seeks to mitigate climate change and adapt to its effects.
- 4.4 The NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. It states that development in accordance with an up-to-date Local Plan should be approved and proposed development that conflicts should be refused unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.5 *Ensuring the vitality of Town Centres* is a crucial part of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF states that Local planning authorities should apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses which are neither in an existing centre nor in accordance with an up-to-date plan. Main town centre uses should be located in town centres, then in edge of centre locations; and only if suitable sites are not available (or expected to become available within a reasonable period) should out of centre sites be considered.
- 4.6 The NPPF goes on to state that, when considering edge of centre and out of centre proposals, preference should be given to accessible sites which are well connected to the town centre. Applicants and local planning authorities should demonstrate flexibility on issues such as format and scale, so that opportunities to utilise suitable town centre or edge of centre sites are fully explored.
- 4.7 The NPPF at Policy TR6 states that development proposals should be refused if they would have a severe adverse impact on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion, including cumulative impacts), or an unacceptable impact on highway safety; taking into account any mitigation measures proposed as well as any wider

network improvements, including measures to support sustainable patterns of movement. This applies both during the construction phase and following completion.

- 4.8 The general perspective from the NPPF is that planning should proactively drive growth and support sustainable economic development. It also states that planning should make effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed and sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The Government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth.

NPPG

- 4.9 According to National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG), the sequential test guides main town centre uses towards centre locations first, then, if no centre locations are available, to edge of centre locations, and, if neither centre locations nor edge of centre locations are available, to out of centre locations, with preference for accessible sites which are well connected to the centre.
- 4.10 The sequential test seeks to deliver the Government's 'town centre first' policy. However as promoting new development in town centre locations can be more expensive and complicated than elsewhere, NPPG states that local planning authorities need to be realistic and flexible in terms of their expectations.

5.0 PLANNING APPRAISAL

5.1 The purpose of this section of the Statement is to identify and assess the main planning considerations raised by the proposals in the context of relevant national and local planning policy and guidance. The key issues are;

- the principle of the development, having regard to the provisions of the adopted Development Plan and other local planning policy documents;
- the effect of development on residential amenity;
- the effect of development on character and appearance;
- the effect of development on highways

5.2 Each of these matters is considered below.

Principle of development

5.3 As previously set out, the application site is located within a commercial setting and forms part of an Equestrian facility. White Hill Stud was established over a decade ago. The organisation breeds and produces quality horses within their purpose-built yard featuring 20 stables, two arenas, a lunge pen and horse recovery spa.

5.4 The organisation has grown in recent years and the current office provision on site is at full capacity and no longer meets the commercial requirements of the business. As such, a new office building is proposed. The general perspective from the NPPF is that planning should proactively drive growth and support sustainable economic development. It also states that planning should make effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed and sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The Government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth. The proposed development is consistent with the NPPF's aims.

5.5 The proposed development is also consistent with the Local Plan insofar as *Key Statement EC1 Business and Employment Development* states that developments that strengthen the wider rural and village economies will be supported in principle. Key Statement

DMB1 *Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy* states that proposals that are intended to support business growth and the local economy will be supported.

- 5.6 Whilst it is acknowledged that office uses tend to be 'town centre use', this does not apply in this instance given that the office is to be utilised by an existing Equestrian Facility and would replace / be in addition to existing office provision already on site.
- 5.7 On this basis, there is clearly no conflict with the spatial development policies of the adopted development plan and the NPPF advises that proposals which accord with the development plan should be approved without delay. The NPPF instructs that permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF as a whole or its specific policies indicate development should be restricted. The scheme will clearly deliver beneficial sustainable development for the local community that should be granted planning permission, and it will not result in any adverse impacts that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of its approval. This is confirmed in the following assessment of the detailed material considerations relevant to the application.

The effect of development on residential amenity

- 5.8 The site is located a considerable distance away from residential properties as to not result in any impact. Moreover, the proposed office use is not a 'noise generating use' and would be set within an existing commercial setting. The proposal will not give rise to undue amenity concerns such as overlooking or privacy concerns.

The effect of development on character and appearance

- 5.9 The existing equestrian complex is a large addition in the surrounding landscape by virtue of its elevated position and so the proposed office block would be seen within an already established / built up setting. The proposed height and scale of the building is consistent with the general built pattern and it would in no way appear over dominant or at odds. Moreover, the site is somewhat screened by the existing built form and landform to the south.
- 5.10 The design rationale seeks to bring to fruition an appropriate design suitable for a semi-rural setting albeit with plentiful glazing to enhance the building's energy efficiency and sustainability whilst providing much natural light. The provision of a green roof would ensure the development assimilates in to the semi-rural location.
- 5.11 On balance, the scheme is considered to be compliant with *Key Statement EN2 Landscape*.

The effect of development on highways

- 5.12 The application site is accessed via Trapp Lane, the C554, a classified road which is a subject to a national speed limit. The application site is located within a readily accessible location, just 0.7 miles from the settlement of Simonstone. The scheme includes provision for an additional 4no. off-road parking spaces and there is considered to be ample existing parking within the site which would remain available for staff.
- 5.13 Given the modest size of the proposed office and that it is to support an existing business, it is unlikely to generate additional vehicular comings and goings to and from the site. The NPPF states that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 This Statement has justified the merits and acceptability of the proposed erection of a two-storey office building (Use class E(g)) with associated landscaping & parking on land off Trapp Lane, Simonstone. For the reasons set out, the scheme is policy compliant on balance and will not give rise to undue harm in terms of impact on amenity or on the functioning of the local highway network.
- 6.2 There are many benefits to be accrued through permitting the proposed scheme, namely, securing the future of a long-standing vacant site in a sustainable location, visual improvements to the site and surroundings and supporting a well-established local business which is a source of employment within the local community.
- 6.3 The NPPF states that local planning authorities should approach decision-taking in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development. It goes on to state in that local planning authorities should look for solutions rather than problems, and decision-takers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.
- 6.4 For the reasons provided throughout, the Local Planning Authority is kindly requested to grant planning permission.