Planning Statement
Including Rural Workers Dwelling Assessment

for a

New Dwelling

at

Hillside Quarry
Cross Lane
Thurlstone
Sheffield
S30 0PZ

Prepared by

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Section 1 - Introduction

DesignSpace has been commissioned by Roger Hunt of 9 Kensington Avenue, Thurlstone, to prepare a Planning Statement to support a rural workers tied dwelling within the grounds of the quarry development.
The planning statement considers the relevant policy background and other material considerations to the proposal and presents sufficient evidence to conclude a dwelling at Hillside Quarry is acceptable.
Technical drawings and a design and access statement are also provided under a separate cover.

Section 2 - Site and Surroundings

Location

Hillside Quarry is located on the junction of Cross Lane, Hillside Lane and Hornthwaite Hill Road which are class B highways, access to the quarry is taken directly off the junction of the three lanes. The site is located nearby the 'washed over' green belt settlement of Hillside Lane and is within 1 mile of the centre of Thurlstone village and conservation area and 1 mile from Millhouse Green village

Context Characteristics

The site sits atop the hillside with views along the Millhouse/ Thurlstone valley, in the distance and on the adjacent ridge lines sit a number of wind turbines. To the North of the site is a covered reservoir and agricultural buildings, agricultural land surrounds the site, a number of farms and dwelling houses are scattered throughout the area.

Intrinsic Characteristics

The site consists of 20,000m2 overall, of this 13000m2 form part of the worked quarry, 7,000m2 of access/ parking/ storage area related to the quarrying works and of this area 4,000m2 will form the site of the proposed new dwelling.

The site fronting the highways is enclosed by a new 1.5m high dry stone wall recently constructed by the applicant along with a new gated access.

The applicant currently sets aside an adjacent field as natural meadow to encourage wildlife.

The quarry area consists of the main area of quarried rock and spoil mound, a large steel portal frame shed and a container/ office, these are located on the Western hillside, for the most part out of view of the highway. The area visible from the highway, consists of the main access road and parking area for the quarry intersecting the proposed site which is a corner of land used as storage for products and machinery.

Planning Policy Designations

Hillside quarry lies within the southern fringes of the South Yorkshire Green Belt, wherein it is the policy of the Local Planning Authority to not permit development except for very special circumstances for purposes other than agriculture or other similar activities that are set out in planning policy guidance note 2.

Planning History

The relevant planning history comprises planning application B/05/0459/PU for mineral extraction, date 24/01/2007 for an initial 3 year period

A 10 year license was granted on 10/02/2010 for the extraction of approximately 9,500m3 minerals per year and to provide a low level restoration scheme.

Before the imposition of planning control, stone was extracted from a small quarry within the site

Section 3 - Hillside Quarry and its Operations

Hillside Quarry is the product of a successfully implemented strategic business plan. This is highlighted below showing the quarries growth and evolution over the past 3 years.

- The land as detailed has been owned by the Hunt family for 36 years
- Previous generations farmed the land as pasture and there was a small stone quarry on the site prior
- More recently the site has been used for the applicants agricultural and ground works contracting business
- Quarrying works commenced February 2010
- Currently outputting 250 tonnes per month of Grenoside member of sandstone
- The stone is sawn and finished on site, and is also used as a research and development facility for cutting rock using high pressure water.
- The quarry is able to produce sandstone finished to individual specification, with all commercial finishing operations available on site allowing the quarry to compete both financially and technically with its competition.
- The heavy machinery, saw mill and stone working sheds and the static office/container were introduced in the first few months of the granting of the quarrying application
- The quarrying has shown a good increase in business over the last 2 years, becoming well known in the local area for a source of quality building and landscaping stone
- Recent BMBC grants have enabled the implementation of a professional website and the development of a national marketing strategy. (details under separate cover)
- The applicant's contracting business and the subsequent quarry have shown a year on year profit over the last 3 years.

Employment

The business currently employs 4 full time staff and 5 sub-contractors, these incorporate a number of roles, including stone masons, heavy machinery operatives, labourers and administration staff.
The establishment also requires consulting services from engineers, fabricators and mechanics.
This adds up to a major employer to the local rural community.

Future Developments

The companies 5 year business plan is provided under separate cover.

- The overall aim is to increase output to the region of 500 tonnes per month
- Improve and increase the input/ output/ partnerships for the working of stone from surrounding quarries

- Gain recognition on a national level through advertising/ website and implementation of further quality standards so that the product is accepted on a broader commercial level.
- Employment forecasts over the 5 year period will bring the number of full time employment to 10 along with additional sub-contracting staff as and when required.
- Implementation of an apprentice trainee scheme
- Development of feature entrance building/ visitors centre/ office/ showroom which will showcase the product
- Development of ecology features throughout the site
- Development of a dwelling which will act as a showcase of the quarries work and provide site security
- General site improvements will continue
- Long term plan beyond the current 10 year license to develop the site as a hub for the specialist working of stone from surrounding quarries

Section 4 - The Proposed Development

Please refer to the technical drawings and the design & access statement provided alongside this statement.

Reference should be made to the design & access statement for the Layout/ Massing/ Scale/ Appearance/ Sustainability of the proposal

Section 5 – Planning Considerations

Relevant Extracts from Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

Settlements, or outside areas allocated for development in development plans, should be strictly controlled; the Government's overall aim is **to protect the countryside for the sake of its intrinsic character and beauty,** the diversity of its landscapes, heritage and wildlife, the wealth of its natural resources and so it may be enjoyed by all.

All development in rural areas should be well designed and inclusive, in keeping and scale with its location, and **sensitive to the character of the countryside and local distinctiveness.**

Very occasionally the exceptional quality and innovative nature of the design of a proposed, isolated new house may provide this special justification for granting planning permission. **Such a design should be truly outstanding and ground-breaking**, for example, **in its use of materials, methods of construction or its contribution to protecting and enhancing the environment, so helping to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas**. The value of such a building will be found in its reflection of the highest standards in contemporary architecture, the significant enhancement of its immediate setting **and its sensitivity to the defining characteristics of the local area.**

Isolated new houses in the countryside will require special justification for planning permission to be granted. Where the special justification for an isolated new house relates to the essential need for a worker to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside, planning authorities should follow the advice in **Annex A** to this PPS.

Planning authorities should take a positive approach to innovative, high-quality contemporary designs that are sensitive to their immediate setting and help to make country towns and villages better places for people to live and work.

SPG 14: Agriculture/ Forestry (& Rural) Workers Dwellings

SPG 14 supplements Policy GS8 in the Unitary Development Plan. It states that proposals for agricultural and forestry (& Rural) workers dwellings will be determined in accordance with the following principles:

Presumption against development within the green belt; exceptions:
Rural workers dwelling in line with PPS7 annexe A, sustainable development in rural areas (replaces PPG7) & BMBC supplementary planning guidance 14

- **Essential Need to sustain a demonstrably viable agricultural or forestry (or other rural workers) enterprise can be shown**

- **Where new dwellings are accepted solely on the basis of an agricultural or forestry need, the size shall be in proportion with the established functional requirement**
- **Where new agricultural workers dwellings are permitted in the countryside they shall normally be sited directly adjacent existing or proposed farm buildings**
- **Where new dwellings are permitted they shall be constructed using materials appropriate to the locality to safeguard the visual amenities of the countryside**
- **A condition shall be imposed restricting the occupancy to a person working in the enterprise**

Such dwellings will be permitted providing *inter alia* that:

(i) There is a clearly established ***existing*** **functional need**, for example, there are essential animal or agricultural processes that may require prompt attention at short notice or **a permanent presence is needed to deal with emergencies that could otherwise cause serious loss of crops or products.**

(ii) The need relates to a ***full-time*** **worker**, or one who is primarily employed in agriculture and does not relate to a part-time requirement;
(iii) The unit and the agricultural activity concerned have been **established for at least three years,** have been **profitable for at least one of them**, are **currently financially sound**, and **have a clear prospect of remaining so.**

PPS 1 Delivering Sustainable Development (PPS1)

PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development sets out the overarching planning policies on the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system. "Sustainable development is the core principle underpinning contemporary planning. Its premise is to ensure a better quality of life for current and for future generations. Planning's role within this is to facilitate and promote sustainable and inclusive patterns of urban and rural development by:

• making suitable land available for development in line with economic, social and environmental objectives to improve people's quality of life;
• contributing to sustainable economic development;
• protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment, the quality and character of the countryside, and existing communities;
• ensuring high quality development through good and inclusive design, and the efficient use of resources;
• ensuring that development supports existing communities and contributes to the creation of safe, sustainable, live-able and mixed communities with good access to jobs and key services for all members of the community.

PPS1 Sustainable Economic Development

With regard to the sustained economic growth at Hilltop Farm, the Government seeks to promote a strong, stable, and productive economy that bring jobs and prosperity for all. To this end, planning authorities inter alia should consider the benefits **of economic development alongside any adverse local impacts, whilst at the same time recognising that local economies are subject to change.** To pre-empt adverse change, planning authorities **should actively promote and facilitate good quality development, which is sustainable and consistent with their plans**. (PPS1Sustainable Economic Development,Para 23)

Planning Policy Guidance Note 2: Green Belts

"The fundamental aim of *Green Belt policy* ***is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the most important attribute*** **of** ***Green Belts is their openness****. Green Belts can shape patterns* of *urban development at sub-regional and regional scale, and help to ensure that development occurs in locations allocated in development plans. They help to protect the countryside, be it in agricultural, forestry* or *other use. They can assist in moving towards more sustainable patterns* of *urban development."* (PPG2, Para 1.4).

This regional spatial remit is given more specific clarity at Paragraph *1.5: Purposes* of *including land in Green Belts,* where the following five uses are stated:

- **To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;**
- **To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;**
- **To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;**
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Within this spatial context, actual land within a Green Belt should fulfil one or more of the following land-use objectives:

- Provide opportunities for access to the open countryside for the urban population;
- Provide opportunities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation near urban areas;
- **Retain attractive landscapes, and enhance landscapes, near to where people live;**
- **Improve damaged and derelict land around towns; to secure nature conservation interest; and for as long as it exists.**

Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

PPS9 sets out planning policies on protection of biodiversity and geological conservation through the planning system. In this context biodiversity is the variety of life in all its forms (source: *UK Biodiversity Action Plan).* In moving towards this vision, the Government's objectives for planning include:

Promotion of sustainable development by ensuring that biological and geological diversity are conserved and enhanced as an integral part of social, environmental and economic development, so that policies and decisions about the development and use of land integrate biodiversity and geological diversity with other considerations.

Conservation, enhancement and restoration of England's wildlife and geology by sustaining, and where possible improving inter alia, the quality and extent of natural habitat; the natural physical processes on which they depend; and the populations of naturally occurring species which they support.

Promote rural renewal by enhancing biodiversity in green spaces and among developments so that they are used by wildlife and valued by people, recognising that healthy functional ecosystems can contribute to a better quality of life and to people's sense of well-being; and ensuring that developments take account of the role and value of biodiversity in supporting economic diversification and contributing to a high quality environment.

Section 6 - Assessment

The proposal will accord with PPS7 "*Very occasionally the exceptional quality and innovative nature of the design of a proposed, isolated new house may provide this special justification for granting planning permission. Such a design should be truly outstanding and ground-breaking, for example, in its use of materials, methods of construction or its contribution to protecting and enhancing the environment, so helping to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas. The value of such a building will be found in its reflection of the highest standards in contemporary architecture, the significant enhancement of its immediate setting and its sensitivity to the defining characteristics of the local area.*"

- **In that the design will be truly outstanding in its use of stone, using the highest standards of stonemasonry to produce a truly unique and exceptional country house**
- **Using building materials quarried from the land upon which it sits; carved by local craftsmen, a truly sustainable form of construction**
- **Creating a landscape and subsequent habitat that combats the intensively farmed surrounding fields, the landscape design will return Indigenous trees and shrubs and provide a great number of wildlife habitat improvements**

Please refer to the design & access statement for detail on the design

The proposal for a rural workers dwelling at Hillside Quarry will meet the needs of family members engaged full time in the quarrying enterprise. It will also provide the residential needs of younger members of the family, and on this basis accords fully with the PPS1 core principle to ensure a better quality of life for current and for future generations.

The house will allow the enterprise to be run more efficiently, which will contribute to the quarries continued sustainable economic development; it will allow the quarry to be run better to protect the quality and character of the surrounding high quality countryside. These are all facets promoted by PPS1. In a similar vein, the proposal can be seen to accord with PPS3's requirement to promote high quality housing in rural areas that contribute to the maintenance of sustainable rural communities.

The business plan shows a commitment to local employment and training over the coming years, within 5 years the enterprise will be aiming at employing at least 15 people, both skilled and unskilled; coupled with a commitment to passing on the skills and trades of the business to young people through **a trainee scheme that is currently in the planning stages with the aid of BMBC expertise, this is in line with PPS7 para 5, planning authorities should support a wide range of economic activity in rural areas.**

With regard to PPG2: Green Belts, the proposal is an appropriate form of development in the Green Belt in that it does not undermine the fundamental

aim of Green Belt policy to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.

"Development within the Green belt, or conspicuous from it, should not by reason of *its siting, materials or design result in significant harm to visual amenity* of *the Green Belt."* **The dwelling will be constructed from site sourced coursed sandstone, detailing will be that common to grander buildings throughout the area, the dwelling will be sited in its own grounds with appropriate landscaping as such it will be representative of the built form of the area and so not detract from the visual amenity of the green belt.** *Please refer to the design & access statement for detail on the design*

In addition to this, the proposed house does not detract from the five purposes of including land in Green Belts: to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas; to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another; to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment; to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

With regard to Circular 11/2205, the proposed dwelling at Hillside Quarry is too insignificant to fall within its remit, which stipulates that proposals with a floor space exceeding 1,000 m2, or which would have a significant impact on the openness of a Green Belt, shall be referred to the Secretary of State.

Additionally

The dwelling will also accord with BMBC SPG 14: Agriculture/ Forestry (& Rural) Workers Dwellings & PPS7 annexe A, sustainable development in rural areas (replaces PPG7) in that:

- Essential Need to sustain a demonstrably viable agricultural or forestry (or other rural workers) enterprise can be shown - ***See section 6, functional need***
- Where new dwellings are accepted **solely** on the basis of an agricultural or forestry need, the size shall be in proportion with the established functional requirement - ***Primarily the dwelling complies with paragraph 11 of PPS7 as described above, therefore the size of the dwelling is determined by the 'truly outstanding design' and not solely the functional need described in section 6.***
- Where new agricultural workers dwellings are permitted in the countryside they shall normally be sited directly adjacent existing or proposed farm buildings - ***The existing buildings form part of the quarry and it would not be suitable from a health & safety aspect and general living standards to position a new dwelling close to the existing units.***
- Where new dwellings are permitted they shall be constructed using materials appropriate to the locality to safeguard the visual amenities of the countryside - ***Use of local stone***
- A condition shall be imposed restricting the occupancy to a person working in the enterprise - **The applicant would welcome such a**

condition to reinforce his commitment to the enterprise and to prevent any questions of the dwelling becoming a speculative development.

Functional Need

The proposal is for the residential needs of a person (and their family) that are genuinely engaged full time in a successful rural enterprise.

A working quarry is by its nature a highly dangerous place with heavy machinery and unstable ground conditions and as such should be frequented only by suitable trained and experienced operatives, any visitors to the quarry should at all times be accompanied by a site operative. All staff and visitors should at all times wear high visibility clothing and protective gear.

The quarry has at any time a large value of product and machinery on site, the isolated nature and large site area makes it very difficult to secure. Outside of the 8 to 10 working hours a day when staff are on site, the quarry is susceptible to trespass and theft of machinery and product, this is heightened by the current propensity for theft of tools and machinery.

A dwelling on the site would provide:

- A physical deterrent
- Out of hours security for theft of machinery or product
- Out of hours security from trespass into (highly dangerous) quarry area and machinery
- Out of hours security from trespass and damage to property

The client has gone to considerable expense to secure the site and currently has CCTV, floodlighting and a very well secured gated entry, despite this thefts continue, list of reported incidents detailed below:

21/10/2011 – Incident No 175 - theft of power tools to value of, £2,000
24/10/2010 – Ref B/104608 – theft tractor which was subsequently overturned near Thurgoland and written off by the insurance company, £24,500
08/2010 – Theft of stone flags from trailer, value £4,000

No arrests or prosecutions were achieved for any of these crimes.

Other forms of security have been considered, namely professional security firm, guard dogs, none of which have offered a satisfactory preventative measure.

Financial Test

Hillside quarry and the associated agricultural and ground works contracting enterprise is well established and has enjoyed sustained and proven strategic growth and has always been financially sound.

The enterprise has 9 years remaining on its current quarrying license and an estimated yield from the quarry that could last circa 20 years, this alone shows a longevity to the enterprise. The enterprise also sources stone from other quarries around the area, for cutting and finishing on site, this adds a further longevity to the enterprise well beyond the stone available on site.

As required by annexe A of PPS7 (shows a working profit for 1 of the last 3 years), the enterprise shows a working profit in each of the last 3 financial years
2010/2011 turnover = £TBC, profit = £TBC
2009/2010 turnover = £140,000, profit = £40,000
2008/2009 turnover = £95,000, profit = £30,000
Capital assets excluding land and property = £207,000 as of Nov 2011

Such is the robust nature of the enterprise in question, that the proposed dwelling will always be needed by the original business and will always remain part of the planning unit. It would therefore never be sub-divided from the holding and sold separately from the business. On this basis it would not become part of the general housing stock.

Section 7 - Conclusion

We have shown that the development is in line with planning policy in its truly outstanding use of stone, its sustainability credentials and its improvements to the landscape value of the area.

The document goes further and clearly demonstrates the applicants commitment to the quarry and site by requesting a condition to tie the dwelling permanently to the quarry enterprise; this adds further strength to the planning argument by demonstrating both a functional and financial need for the dwelling as is clearly required by planning policy 'agricultural (rural workers) workers dwelling'.

We have demonstrated that the proposal is in keeping with many of the grander country houses around the area constructed with a local stone and so does not detract from the visual amenity of the green belt, but indeed adds a great deal.

The proposal looks to utilise past styles and crafts that are slowly being lost, not to create a pastiche as is often the case with today's housing but to create a truly unique building for the area that is respectful of its heritage.

The proposal is part of a masterplan to create a prosperous enterprise, inextricably linked to the Penistone area, generating employment, training and specialist skills.

Houses such as this have always been built in the green belt; they are as much a part of our countryside as the dry stone walls. Dwellings of this type and scale should be one offs, unique and exceptional; they cannot be built in our rural villages because the land is not available; they should stand apart and be isolated from other housing, within their own grounds. **We must be very careful of what we do build in the green belt and that what we do is of outstanding quality, but green belt planning law is in place to prevent urban sprawl NOT to stop us building a legacy of fine country houses.**

Appendix 1

A selection of Relevant Residential Developments in the Barnsley Green Belt

NEW DWELLINGS IN THE BMBC GREEN BELT

• Racecommon Quarry, Penistone, two new earth sheltered houses on the site of an old quarry, committee consent, 2010
• Firs Lane, Hoylandswaine, New underground house, committee consent, 2010
• Grime Lane, Near Hepworth, 1 new underground house, committee consent, approx. 2001
• Hog Close Lane, Near Hepworth, 1 new underground house, committee consent, approx. 2002

AGRICULTURAL WORKERS' DWELLINGS

• Anchor Farm, Elmhlrst Lane, SIlkstone, Barnsley, Planning Application Number B/05/0496/DO, Erection of farm workers dwelling
• Land adjacent 5 The Beeches, Beech House Road, Planning Application Number 2007/1520, Erection of an agricultural workers dwelling, Committee Consent /11/2007
• Land off Nether House Lane, Langsett, Planning Application Number 2006/1757, Erection of a bungalow for agricultural worker

SECOND AGRICULTURAL WORKERS' DWELLINGS

• Broad Close Farm, Silkstone, Erection of a second agricultural dwelling, Planning Application Number 2008/0844, Committee consent 24/07/2008
• Gunthwalte Hall Farm, Penistone, Planning Application Number 2007/0009
• Conversion of redundant outbuilding into 1bed self contained cottage, Delegated Consent 11/02/2007
• Highfield Farm, Worsbrough, Planning Application Number 2007/0500, Erection of 1 block of 3 independant living units, Delegated Consent 29/04/200
• Lower Townhead Farm, Dunford Bridge, Planning Application Number 2006/0133, Erection of wooden bungalow, Committee Consent 08/10/2006
• Stead Farm, Hoyland Common, Planning Application Number 2006/1151, Conversion of single dwelling to form two dwellings, Delegated Consent 20/08/2006

CONVERSIONS IN THE GREEN BELT

• Bromley Farm, Low Bromley, Sheffield, Planning Application Number 2006/1642, Conversion of existing cottage into 2 dwellings.

• Delegated Consent 12/11/2006
• Carlton House Barns, Wortley Planning Application Number 2007/118, Conversion of redundant farm building to 3 dwellings, Delegated Consent 26/08/2007
• Carr Head Farm, Stocksbrldge, Planning Application Number 2007/0253, Conversion of redundant barn into dwelling, Delegated Consent 01/04/2007
• Cat Hill Hall Mews, Hoylandswalne, Planning Application Number 2006/1128, Conversion of attached barn to provide residential dwelling, Delegated Consent 22/10/2006
• Cold Bath Farm, Hood Green, Conversion of redundant farm buildings to form dwelling, Delegated Consent 31/12/2006