



PLANNING STATEMENT

Site: Sheepy House Farm, Main Road, Sheepy Magna

Proposal: Retrospective change of use of land for the siting of caravans, together with associated hardstanding, utility connections, access, parking, and ancillary works

Client: Mr and Mrs Garland

Prepared by: LB Planning

June 2026



INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

CONTENTS

	PAGE
1. Introduction	2
2. Site Characteristics and Context	2
3. Proposed Development	3
4. Planning Policy	4
5. Planning Assessment	9
6. Planning Balance	15
7. Conclusion	16

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This Planning Statement has been prepared by LB Planning on behalf of Mr and Mrs Garland in support of a retrospective planning application at Sheepy House Farm, Main Road, Sheepy Magna.
- 1.2. The application seeks retrospective planning permission for the change of use of land for the siting of caravan pitches, together with associated hardstanding, utility connections, access, parking, and ancillary works.
- 1.3. The caravan pitches and associated works are already in place. The application has therefore been submitted to regularise the existing position on site and to allow the Local Planning Authority to assess the development as implemented.
- 1.4. The proposal is modest in scale and represents a small-scale rural diversification use which supports the rural economy, makes productive use of the landholding, and provides a proportionate form of development.
- 1.5. The purpose of this Planning Statement is to describe the site and proposal, identify the relevant planning policy context, and provide a robust planning assessment in support of the retrospective application.

2. SITE CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT

- 2.1. The application site comprises land at Sheepy House Farm, Main Road, Sheepy Magna. The site lies within the countryside, outside the defined settlement boundary of Sheepy Magna.
- 2.2. The site forms part of a wider rural landholding. The surrounding area is rural in character, with a mixture of agricultural land, established rural buildings and the existing farmhouse.
- 2.3. The application site is contained within the wider landholding and is accessed from the existing access arrangement serving the site. The use of the existing access avoids the need to create a new access point and limits the extent of physical intervention required.
- 2.4. The caravan pitches are positioned within the site and are served by hardstanding and utility connections, which have already been installed. Parking is provided adjacent to each pitch.

- 2.5. The site is not within a Conservation Area and there are no listed buildings within or adjacent to the immediate site boundary.
- 2.6. The site is visually contained by the wider landholding, existing boundary features and the surrounding rural context. The proposal does not involve the construction of permanent buildings or substantial new built development. It therefore remains materially less permanent and less visually intrusive than a built development scheme.
- 2.7. Sheepy Magna is a rural village with access to local facilities and services. The wider area is also accessible to nearby settlements, including Atherstone, Hinckley and surrounding villages. The proposal therefore provides a modest development within a rural location, while supporting local services, local spending and rural economic activity.

3. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1. The application seeks retrospective planning permission for the change of use of land for the siting of caravan pitches, together with associated hardstanding, utility connections, access, parking and ancillary works.
- 3.2. The development comprises caravan pitches within the site. The pitches are served by the associated infrastructure necessary for the use to operate safely and appropriately, including hardstanding, utility connections and parking adjacent to each pitch.
- 3.3. Section 29 of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 defines a caravan as any structure designed or adapted for human habitation which is capable of being moved from one place to another, whether by being towed or by being transported on a motor vehicle or trailer.
- 3.4. Section 13 of the Caravan Sites Act 1968 is also relevant where a caravan is composed of more than one section. This confirms that a structure designed or adapted for human habitation, which is composed of not more than two sections separately constructed and designed to be assembled on site, and which is physically capable of being moved by road from one place to another, is not to be treated as falling outside the statutory definition of a caravan merely because it cannot lawfully be moved on a highway when assembled.

- 3.5. The development is modest in scale and does not amount to a large-scale caravan site or an intensive form of development.
- 3.6. The proposal provides a small-scale rural diversification use. It allows the landholding to generate an additional income stream, supports rural economic activity, and makes productive use of land within the wider rural enterprise.

4. PLANNING POLICY

- 4.1. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.2. The Development Plan for the purposes of this application comprises the Hinckley and Bosworth Core Strategy, adopted December 2009, the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document, adopted July 2016, and the Sheepy Parish Neighbourhood Plan, made May 2022.
- 4.3. The National Planning Policy Framework is a material consideration. The current adopted version is the National Planning Policy Framework published in December 2024 and amended in February 2025.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 4.4. The NPPF establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development and requires that planning decisions support economic growth, social well-being and environmental protection in a balanced way.
- 4.5. In rural areas, the Framework recognises that flexibility is required to support the long-term sustainability of communities and businesses. It places particular emphasis on supporting rural economic activity.
- 4.6. Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework confirms the presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision taking, this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date Development Plan without delay.
- 4.7. Paragraph 39 confirms that Local Planning Authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way, using the full range of planning tools available and working proactively with applicants to secure

developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision makers should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

- 4.8. Paragraph 85 states that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.
- 4.9. Paragraph 88 is particularly relevant to this proposal. It confirms that planning decisions should enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, and the development and diversification of agricultural and other land based rural businesses. The proposal directly supports these objectives by providing a small-scale development which contributes to the productive and diversified use of the rural landholding.
- 4.10. Paragraph 89 recognises that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may need to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. It states that in these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads, and exploits opportunities to make a location more sustainable.
- 4.11. Paragraph 115 confirms that, in assessing specific applications for development, it should be ensured that safe and suitable access can be achieved for all users, and that any significant impacts from development on the transport network or highway safety can be cost effectively mitigated.
- 4.12. Paragraph 116 confirms that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or where the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe.
- 4.13. Paragraph 131 confirms that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve.
- 4.14. Paragraph 135 requires development to function well, add to the overall quality of the area, be visually attractive as a result of good layout and appropriate landscaping, and be sympathetic to local character.

- 4.15. Paragraph 187 confirms that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment, including by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity.

Hinckley and Bosworth Core Strategy 2009

- 4.16. The Hinckley and Bosworth Core Strategy was adopted in December 2009. The Core Strategy predates the current National Planning Policy Framework and should therefore be afforded weight according to its consistency with the Framework.
- 4.17. Policy 12 relates to Rural Villages and seeks to support appropriate development within rural villages where this helps sustain local services and supports the rural economy.
- 4.18. Policy 23 relates to Tourism Development. It encourages appropriate development in suitable locations where the development can help support existing local community services and facilities, adds to Hinckley and Bosworth's local distinctiveness, and adds to the economic wellbeing of the area.
- 4.19. The proposal is consistent with the economic objectives of Policy 23 insofar as it supports rural economic activity and contributes to local spending without requiring substantial built development.

Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD 2016

- 4.20. Policy DM1 sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development. It confirms that development proposals that accord with the Development Plan should be approved without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.21. Policy DM4 relates to safeguarding the countryside and settlement separation. It seeks to protect the intrinsic value, beauty, open character and landscape character of the countryside. However, it does not impose a blanket restriction on all countryside development. It recognises that development in the countryside may be sustainable where it significantly contributes to economic growth, job creation and/or the diversification of rural businesses, and where it does not have a significant adverse effect on the intrinsic value, beauty, open character and landscape character of the countryside.

- 4.22. Policy DM6 relates to the enhancement of biodiversity and geological interest. It seeks to ensure that development does not result in unacceptable harm to biodiversity and, where possible, secures enhancement.
- 4.23. Policy DM7 relates to preventing pollution and flooding. It requires development to avoid unacceptable impacts relating to drainage, flood risk, water quality, pollution, noise and light.
- 4.24. Policy DM10 relates to development and design. It requires development to complement or enhance the character of the surrounding area with regard to scale, layout, density, mass, design, materials and architectural features, and to avoid significant adverse impacts on the amenity of nearby residents.
- 4.25. Policy DM17 relates to highways and transportation. It requires development to ensure that there is safe and suitable access and that the development would not result in a significant adverse impact on highway safety.
- 4.26. Policy DM18 relates to vehicle parking standards. It requires development to provide an appropriate level of parking having regard to the nature and location of the proposal.
- 4.27. Policy DM24 relates to cultural and tourism facilities. To the extent that this policy is engaged, the proposal is limited in scale and supports the wider rural economy, subject to compliance with other Development Plan policies.

Sheepy Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2022

- 4.28. The Sheepy Parish Neighbourhood Plan forms part of the Development Plan and is therefore relevant to the determination of this application.
- 4.29. Policy S17 relates to the rural economy. It supports small scale business and enterprise development where it meets the requirements of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document.
- 4.30. The proposal is consistent with the broad objectives of Policy S17. It is small in scale, rural in nature, and contributes to rural diversification and local economic activity. The use is proportionate to the site and does not require substantial new built development.

Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 and the Caravan Sites Act 1968

- 4.31. The Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 and the Caravan Sites Act 1968 provide the statutory framework for the definition of caravans.
- 4.32. Section 29 of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 defines a caravan as any structure designed or adapted for human habitation which is capable of being moved from one place to another, whether by being towed or by being transported on a motor vehicle or trailer. The definition excludes tents and railway rolling stock.
- 4.33. Section 13 of the Caravan Sites Act 1968 confirms that twin unit caravans can fall within the statutory definition, provided that they are composed of not more than two sections, are designed to be assembled on site by means of bolts, clamps or other devices, and are physically capable of being moved by road from one place to another when assembled.
- 4.34. This statutory context is important. The application does not relate to permanent buildings or separate dwellinghouses. It relates to caravan pitches, and the development should be assessed on that basis.
- 4.35. The statutory framework also recognises that small scale caravan use can, in appropriate circumstances, be accommodated through an exemption framework. In particular, paragraph 5 of Schedule 1 to the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 relates to sites approved by exempted organisations for the stationing of up to five caravans. This application is not advanced on the basis that the development benefits from that exemption. However, the statutory framework provides an important proportionality benchmark. The current proposal comprises caravan pitches, which is comparable to the scale associated with what is allowed under the statutory framework.
- 4.36. The proposal should therefore be assessed as a modest and proportionate development, not as a large scale or intensive form of development.

5. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development

- 5.1. The application seeks retrospective planning permission for the change of use of land for the siting of caravan pitches, together with associated hardstanding, utility connections, access, parking and ancillary works.
- 5.2. National planning policy provides clear support for the rural economy. Paragraph 85 of the National Planning Policy Framework confirms that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity. Paragraph 88 requires planning decisions to enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, and the diversification of agricultural and other land based rural businesses.
- 5.3. The proposal directly supports these objectives. It provides a small-scale rural diversification which allows the landholding to generate an additional income stream, supports the wider rural economy, and provides a proportionate form of development without requiring substantial new built form.
- 5.4. Policy DM4 also supports development in the countryside where it significantly contributes to economic growth, job creation and/or the diversification of rural businesses, provided it does not have a significant adverse effect on the intrinsic value, beauty, open character and landscape character of the countryside.
- 5.5. The proposal supports rural diversification and rural economic activity, while remaining small in scale and physically contained. It does not introduce substantial built form into the countryside and does not undermine the open character of the wider rural area.
- 5.6. Policy 23 of the Core Strategy and Policy DM24 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document are relevant insofar as the proposal contributes to local economic wellbeing and supports the wider rural economy. Policy S17 of the Sheepy Parish Neighbourhood Plan also supports small scale business and enterprise development and recognises the importance of the rural economy.

- 5.7. The proposal is consistent with these policies. It provides a modest development in a rural location, supports local spending and rural enterprise, and contributes positively to the economic wellbeing of the area.
- 5.8. The application is retrospective, which means the Local Planning Authority is able to assess the development as it has actually been implemented. This allows the Council to consider the actual impacts of the development in respect of character, appearance, highways, amenity and servicing.
- 5.9. The principle of the development is therefore acceptable and is supported by national and local planning policy.

Scale and Context

- 5.10. The proposal is modest in scale. The number of pitches is limited, and the use remains physically contained within the site. The development does not require extensive new infrastructure and does not result in a dense or urbanising form of development.
- 5.11. The statutory framework provides a useful proportionality benchmark. Schedule 1 to the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 recognises that small scale caravan use can, in certain circumstances, be accommodated through an exemption framework. Paragraph 5 relates to sites approved by exempted organisations for up to five caravans.
- 5.12. The statutory framework allows caravan sites with five pitches and one waiting pitch, without the need for planning permission. This application is not advanced on the basis that the site benefits from an exemption certificate. However, the statutory position is relevant to the planning judgment because it demonstrates that small scale caravan use can be an accepted and recognised form of land use.
- 5.13. The proposal should therefore be assessed in a proportionate way, whereby the proposal sits comfortably within the type of rural diversification and rural economic development supported by national planning policy.

Rural Diversification

- 5.14. The proposal provides clear economic benefits. It supports the diversification of the rural landholding by providing an additional income generating use. This assists the

long-term resilience of the rural enterprise and helps ensure that land and infrastructure can continue to be used productively.

- 5.15. Rural diversification is strongly supported by national planning policy. Paragraph 88 of the National Planning Policy Framework specifically requires planning decisions to enable the diversification of agricultural and other land based rural businesses. The proposal responds directly to that policy objective.
- 5.16. The economic benefits also extend beyond the application site. The development is likely to generate local spending within the area, including at local shops, public houses, restaurants and services. The development therefore contributes to the wider rural economy and helps support existing local facilities and employment.
- 5.17. The proposal makes productive use of land within a rural enterprise and provides a low impact diversification use without the need for substantial new buildings or a more intensive form of development.
- 5.18. The proposal therefore accords with Core Strategy Policy 23, Policies DM1, DM4 and DM24 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document, Policy S17 of the Sheepy Parish Neighbourhood Plan, and paragraphs 85, 88 and 89 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Character and Appearance

- 5.19. The site is located within the countryside and Policy DM4 is therefore relevant. Policy DM4 seeks to safeguard the intrinsic value, beauty, open character and landscape character of the countryside. However, the policy expressly allows development in the countryside where it contributes to economic growth or rural business diversification and does not result in significant adverse landscape harm.
- 5.20. The proposal is modest in physical terms. The siting of the pitches is contained within the site, and the associated works are limited to the infrastructure necessary to support the use, including hardstanding, parking and utility connections.
- 5.21. The development does not undermine the open character of the countryside in any significant way. The number of pitches is limited, the layout remains spacious, and the development is capable of being assimilated into the site through existing and proposed landscaping.

- 5.22. The use of caravan pitches is also relevant to the visual assessment. Caravans are capable of being moved and are inherently less permanent than buildings. Their presence on the site does not result in the same degree of landscape change as a built scheme.
- 5.23. The proposal would not result in ribbon development, would not undermine the physical or perceived separation between settlements, and would not introduce a dense or urban form of development into the countryside. It remains a small scale, contained and proportionate rural use.
- 5.24. Any limited visual impact arising from the development can be mitigated through appropriate hard and soft landscaping, including native hedgerow reinforcement, additional tree planting and boundary treatment where necessary.
- 5.25. The proposal therefore accords with Policy DM4 and Policy DM10.

Design, Layout and Visual Impact

- 5.26. Policy DM10 requires development to complement or enhance the character of the surrounding area with regard to scale, layout, density, mass, design, materials and architectural features. Paragraphs 131 and 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework similarly require development to be well designed and sympathetic to local character.
- 5.27. The development is acceptable in design and layout terms. The caravan pitches are positioned within the site and are served by the necessary infrastructure. Parking is provided adjacent to each pitch. The layout is functional, low density and appropriate to the nature of the use.
- 5.28. The caravans stationed on the pitches are modest in scale. Their appearance is consistent with their statutory character as caravans, and they should be assessed accordingly.
- 5.29. The associated hardstanding, parking areas and utility connections are ancillary to the use and are limited in extent. They do not materially alter the character of the wider countryside or result in unacceptable visual harm.
- 5.30. The proposal therefore accords with Policy DM10 and the design objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Highways, Access and Parking

- 5.31. The development is small scale and would generate a modest number of vehicle movements. The scale of use is not comparable to a large caravan park or other intensive use.
- 5.32. The access arrangements are already in place and serve the site as implemented. The retrospective nature of the application means that the Local Planning Authority is able to consider the actual operation of the development.
- 5.33. There is no evidence that the siting of caravans has resulted in an unacceptable highway safety impact. The proposal is limited in scale and the number of vehicle movements associated with the use is modest.
- 5.34. Paragraph 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework confirms that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds where there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or where the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 5.35. That high threshold is not met in this case. The proposal is modest in scale, served by existing access arrangements, and does not give rise to a severe impact on the highway network.
- 5.36. Parking is provided adjacent to each pitch. This ensures that parking is contained within the site and directly related to the layout of the development.
- 5.37. The parking arrangements are proportionate to the scale of the development and are capable of accommodating the needs of the development without resulting in overspill parking on the public highway.
- 5.38. The parking arrangements are consistent with the rural nature of the use. The provision is functional and appropriate to the scale of the development.
- 5.39. The proposal therefore accords with Policies DM17 and DM18 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Residential Amenity

- 5.40. The proposal is small in scale and does not result in unacceptable harm to residential amenity. The use does not involve noisy commercial processes, late night external activity or any form of development which would be inherently incompatible with nearby occupiers.

- 5.41. The caravan pitches are located within the site and can be managed as part of the wider landholding. Any external lighting can be kept low level and directed to avoid unnecessary light spill. Waste storage, servicing and utility arrangements can also be controlled through the approved details where necessary.
- 5.42. The scale of the development is such that it would not result in unacceptable overlooking, loss of privacy, overbearing impact, noise or disturbance.
- 5.43. The proposal therefore accords with Policy DM10 in respect of amenity.

Drainage, Utilities and Servicing

- 5.44. The development is already served by utility connections, which have been installed as part of the implemented development. The proposal does not require substantial new infrastructure. The development is limited to the servicing necessary for caravan pitches, and the associated utility connections are ancillary to the caravan pitch use.
- 5.45. The installed utility connections do not alter the overall character of the development. They enable the site to function safely and appropriately and are proportionate to the limited scale of the proposal.
- 5.46. There is no evidence that the development has resulted in any unacceptable drainage, pollution or servicing impact. The proposal therefore accords with Policy DM7.

Sustainable Development

- 5.47. The proposal represents sustainable development when assessed against the economic, social and environmental objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 5.48. Economically, the development supports rural diversification, assists the resilience of the landholding, and contributes to the wider rural economy through local spending.
- 5.49. Socially, the proposal supports productive use of the rural landholding and contributes to the availability of small-scale facilities within the rural area.
- 5.50. Environmentally, the development is modest in scale, does not require substantial built form, and is capable of being integrated into the rural landscape through appropriate landscaping.

- 5.51. The proposal therefore accords with the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out within Policy DM1 and paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

6. PLANNING BALANCE

- 6.1. The application seeks to regularise a modest development in an established rural landholding. The development comprises caravan pitches, together with associated hardstanding, utilities, access, parking and ancillary works.
- 6.2. The proposal provides clear benefits. It supports rural diversification, assists the resilience of the landholding, makes productive use of land and contributes to the wider rural economy. These benefits attract significant positive weight having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework, particularly paragraphs 85, 88 and 89.
- 6.3. The scale of the development is limited and represents a small and proportionate form of development. The proposal is only one pitch above the five-caravan limit recognised within the statutory exemption framework for small caravan sites. Whilst the application is not advanced on the basis of that exemption, it provides an important benchmark when considering the proportionality of the proposal.
- 6.4. The impacts of the development are limited. The caravans stationed on the pitches are not permanent buildings and have a materially lesser impact than built development. Parking is provided adjacent to each pitch and is contained within the site. The site is capable of being appropriately landscaped, the highway impacts are modest, and there is no evidence of unacceptable harm to residential amenity, drainage, ecology or the character of the countryside.
- 6.5. When the Development Plan is read as a whole, the proposal is considered to represent an acceptable form of rural diversification. Any limited harm arising from the siting of the caravan pitches is clearly outweighed by the economic and diversification benefits of the scheme.
- 6.6. For these reasons, the proposal represents sustainable development, and retrospective planning permission should be granted.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1. This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a retrospective planning application for the change of use of land for the siting of caravan pitches at Sheepy House Farm, Main Road, Sheepy Magna, together with associated hardstanding, utility connections, access, parking and ancillary works.
- 7.2. The development is already in place, and the application therefore allows the Local Planning Authority to assess the actual effects of the proposal as implemented.
- 7.3. The caravans stationed on the pitches fall within the statutory definition of caravans and should be assessed on that basis. They are materially different from permanent buildings or built development and do not introduce substantial built form into the countryside.
- 7.4. The proposal is modest in scale, comprising a small and proportionate form of development, comparable to the number of pitches allowed without planning permission.
- 7.5. The development provides clear rural economic and diversification benefits. It supports the productive use of the landholding, contributes to local spending, and accords with national planning policy support for rural business growth and diversification.
- 7.6. The development does not result in unacceptable harm to the character or appearance of the countryside, highway safety, residential amenity, drainage, ecology or landscape character. Parking is provided adjacent to each pitch, and the layout remains proportionate to the scale and nature of the use.
- 7.7. The proposal accords with the Development Plan when read as a whole, including Policies DM1, DM4, DM6, DM7, DM10, DM17, DM18 and DM24 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document, Policy 23 of the Hinckley and Bosworth Core Strategy and Policy S17 of the Sheepy Parish Neighbourhood Plan. It is also supported by the National Planning Policy Framework, particularly paragraphs 11, 39, 85, 88, 89, 115, 116, 131, 135 and 187.
- 7.8. For these reasons, it is respectfully requested that retrospective planning permission is granted.