

CS PLANS Ltd

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**Proposed for development within the grounds of
Brankston House, Stonehouse, Lanarkshire**

12 Holiday Cabins

**On behalf of M Devine
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1. INTRODUCTION

This proposal has been prepared by CS Plans Ltd in support of the proposed development of 12 holiday cabins within grounds of Brankston house situated to the south west of Stonehouse.

The proposal merits an in depth review due its situation within the countryside around Stonehouse. The review will examine the implications of development within woodland area outwith the town boundaries, the context of the site to its surroundings as well as the site itself in its current state, and rationalize the design process to present the final proposal & layout.

Stonehouse is a rural village in South Lanarkshire, Scotland. It is on the Avon water in area of natural beauty and historical interest, near to the Clyde valley. It is on the A71 trunk road of Hamilton, Larkhall and strathaven.

In 1971, Stonehouse was designated to become one of Scotland's new Towns, a modern urban design to alleviate overcrowding in and around Glasgow and to generate industrial development, similar to the towns of East Kilbride, Cumbernauld and Livingston.

The South Lanarkshire local development plan main theme is 'To promote the continued growth and regeneration of south lanarkshire by seeking sustainable economic and social development within a low carbon economy whilst protecting and enhancing the environment'. The development of vacation spots is a key part of the economy and can be used as an indicator of an area's prosperity and attractiveness. Provision of new holiday cabins of the right type at the right price will encourage people to holiday in the area.

2. CONTEXT

In order to begin the examination of the site, the context of the surrounding area must be considered. First this section will discuss the local area in relation to the town of Stonehouse. The woodland area of Brankston estate is less than a mile south of stonehouse and the house is located centrally within the grounds looking over a large lawn to the front. (Photos attached)

SURROUNDINGS

Brankston house is approximately one mile south of Stonehouse and is rural in its context. The local area is farmland with farm steadings and some individual new houses all linked with minor B class roads. Farm buildings are generally stone with slate roofs either one or two storey in size along with a cluster of outbuildings again of stone walls, slate or corrugated iron roof finishes. These all contribute to the local character of the area. Stonehouse town center has all amenities required for local inhabitants with major shopping centers in Hamilton and East Kilbride some 10/15 miles away. Brankston house is approximately one mile south of Stonehouse from where the links to the A74 to Glasgow is 2 miles. Train link is local in larkhall roughly 5 miles giving direct access to Glasgow amenities. Airport link in Glasgow is 30 miles drive.

The proposal being put forward with this presentation is to supply holiday cabins on the grounds of Brankston house which is located to the south of Stonehouse on a site which is defined by trees. The proposed cabins will be located throughout the grounds with minimum effect on the grounds with all trees on the boundaries being retained to minimize impact on the woodland area and to retain the character of small group of the dwellings farm around Brankston house. The woodland area has been infested and there are a large proportion of trees either dead or dying of a disease. Along with this, many trees have been blown down in the recent storms which can be seen in the photographs within this report.

The photographic study attached clearly indicates the character of the local rural area, it is proposed that the new development will be of a high standard of design and integrated within the local landscape of Brankston House.

3. BRANKSTON HOUSE

Brankston house was originally built in 1745 with stone and slate finished roof. The house has been added to over the years and now is a 7 bedroom family home with main entrance and rooms facing north looking over a large lawn round which the entrance road is created. The property is not listed due to this factor of extensions over the years. The property is now painted white with black paint finish to all the timber windows and doors which gives a countryside feel to the property. Most of the local farms round the site have white painted houses with steel and timber clad outbuildings. The house is well screened from its neighbors by being central to a 5 acre woodland setting with a mixture of trees which blend in well with the local landscape. The house can only be seen in winter time when many trees have shed their leaves although the pine trees still screen the buildings and only an image is retained from passersby whether walking or in vehicles. The access track is at a slight bend in the road which then feeds up a hardcore track. Many trees in this woodland group have been attacked by diseases which along with the strong winds over the years have blown down and slowly being cut back removed by the present owner.

4. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Design Process

Scottish planning policy (SPP) (2014) encourages “positive change in the historic environment which is informed by clear understanding of the importance of heritage assets effected and insure their future use” (para 137)

This proposal is to form 12 private holiday cabins throughout the tree belt which will be designed in a manor suitable to the area and subservant the main house. The new log cabins be high quality holiday cabins 2/4 bedrooms size and be designed to meet the latest regulations and energy requirement of the Scottish building regulations.

The appearance of the surrounding buildings contribute to the composition of this rural area, however the positioning, height and viewers are just as vital as these aesthetic qualities. The proposed designs will be a result of careful review, and intends to enhance the overall landscape through high-quality design features.

Stonehouse is a vibrant small community and this proposal will fill a void in the vacations/camping market.

4.2 HOLIDAY CABINS

In order to maximize the development potential of this site in its distinct location, the design takes inspiration from other parts of the local environment in a similar setting such as the local; farm steadings.

The proposal for this site is to have a group of log cabins design which will be single storey & a 1 ½ style being secondary to Brankston house.

The concept for accommodation is for 2/4 bedroom holiday cabin in a rural landscape which will have spacious grounds and be private in nature. The design will reflect the rural nature of location and will merge into the tree belt after all works are complete. The tree belt will be kept as the main image for the area so that the local landscape does not alter.

Access to the development will be by the local network of B class roads which exist and start at the south west of Stonehouse. Within the site itself a new road will be formed to the proposed holiday cabins to the east within the existing walled garden and existing track access will be upgraded for the new traffic.

New landscaping will be introduced throughout the project with holiday cabins having gardens, driveways and fencing as part of the finished product. There will be replacement tree planting with some existing trees being pruned as required. A tree surgeon will be involved in this process during the works so that the minimum felling and planting is undertaken after a report on the size and condition of existing is undertaken.

The existing indoor swimming pool & gym will be utilized & the original tennis court will be restored for the use of log cabins & some of the vast garden ground will be used as a picnic/games area, which will help with the recreational needs of this development.

4.3 DESIGN REVIEW & CONTEXT ANALYSIS

The grounds of Brankston house extend to 4.76 acres which is felt large enough for this proposal whilst retaining the grounds around Brankston house. There has been a recent tree disease in the wood and many trees are now dead or have been blown away. as part of the development new trees will be planted throughout along with other landscaping.

The proposed new holiday cabins will be kept to the perimeter of the site as noted in the accompanying proposal which allows Brankston house and immediate gardens and ground to be retained. A new access to the main house will be formed which will be separate from the new access road required for the properties to the north west of the site. The new access will give an improved gateway into Brankston house in its gardens.

The new cabins will be maximum storey & a half which will not interfere with the sightlines out of the site from the main house.

The holiday cabins would be designed to integrate within the woodland area with minimal felling being undertaken. New trees will be planted throughout to replace disease and dead trees as part of the landscaping proposal for the whole site which includes the new access road, boundaries to new and existing Brankston house.

4.4 ENERGY EFFICANTCY

- a) External fabric to have U values to current requirements as follows – Roof = 0.18w/m²
Floor = 0.20w/m² Walls = 0.22w/m² Windows 1.6w/m²
- b) All windows to be double glazed in timber frames
- c) All internal rooms to have sound deadening quilt within the room division walls and floors both ground and intermediate.
- d) All lighting will use low energy units.
- e) Water efficient fitting to be provided throughout with combined WC/WHBs and all WCs being dual flush with more than 4.5litres. Taps to have flow rate of not more than 6litres/min.
- f) Hot water for each cabin will be fed from a central hot water tank heated from main boiler plant with back up electric immersion heaters.
- g) All drainage will be by biodisc to soakaway within each and surface water will be fed to soakaways within each site.

All installations to be tested and fitted by approved certifiers. All of the above will improve the overall energy performance of the building and reduction in CO₂ emissions.

All materials used in the building fabric will be from naturally resourced and eco-friendly sources.

4.5 MATERIALS, SCALE AND PROPORTION

High quality materials are used throughout – including, local timber and grey slate. This proposal takes its scale and proportions from the local vernacular retaining the vertical style windows and material finishes.

4.6 CONTRIBUTION TO LOCAL VERNACULAR

There is an increase in demand for high quality holiday cabins in the lanarkshire area which can be seen by the increase in people travelling to such developments as piper damn in the Dundee area. This proposal will help to meet the needs of the market place where high quality individual cabins are required and are currently not being provided. Which will help bring more tourism into the lanarkshire area.

5. SURROUNDING AREA:

WOODLAND & SCOUT & GUIDE CAMP

Neighboring the estate of Brankston house is the now closed Avondyke scout & guide camp which was part of the Stonehouse community for many years and shut down in 2015 due to the facilities falling into a state of disrepair & funds not being available to carry out the repairs required, there is an opportunity for the scout & guide camp to utilize the proposed holiday cabins so they can camp in the same area as previously and use the facilities and wooded area that would be provided by the proposal to fulfill their recreational needs.

6. IMPACT ON THE LOCAL AREA
LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

The proposal here is to build new holiday cabins within the grounds of Brankston house which will require the felling and removal of all dead and diseased trees within the existing wooded grounds which stands alone in the countryside. The cabin designs will be controlled through the south Lanarkshire council planning department process as being suitable for the local environment. As part of the planning process there will be requirements for landscaping, roads and hedgerow to maintain and improve the quality of the local area. This will mean new tree planting, hedgerows trimmed for sightlines. Within the site the existing track will be retained and upgraded along with the new access to the eastern boundary.

Servicing the new development will be undertaken using existing overhead electric and telephone poles which appear along the south boundary. Water supply pipes are existing and any build period. There is no natural gas pipes and drainage will be within each site as bio-discs with soakaway.

Travel is primary aspect of this proposal. This proposal will increase traffic locally and it is hoped that after discussions with the council roads department that a satisfactory solution will be made as the local B road access to this site is able for two way traffic. Within the site there will be passing places to existing single tracks and also in new access track.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The proposed development for 12 holiday cabins is to create single storey and 1 ½ cabins within the grounds of Brankston house. The provision of this vocational use will contribute to the ongoing need for executive style holiday cabins in the Lanarkshire area in an appropriate location for convenient commuting to Stonehouse and the wide areas for amenities and leisure pursuits. This would allow potentially more economic income for the local community.

The proposal, in terms of its uses and sustainable development, is entirely in line with the South Lanarkshire Councils policies for the next five years. The owner of the property sees this proposal as a way to fulfill a requirement of a vacation spot and at the same time improve the quality of the grounds in which Brankston house is central with little effect on the property. The client does intend to remain in Brankston house and have full control over the design and layout of the cabins and the landscaping which is to be undertaken. The proposal will also help with the economic factor of trying to keep such a large estate from falling into disrepair.