



JUDITH DOUGLAS TOWN PLANNING LIMITED

Wheatley Farm, Four Acre Lane, Thornley, Preston Pr3 2TD.

Conversion of brick barn to one dwelling



Planning, Design and Access Statement
JDTP Loo6

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PLANNING, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

SITE: WHEATLEY FARM, FOUR ACRE LANE, THORNLEY PRESTON PR3 2TD

PROPOSAL: CONVERSION OF BRICK BARN TO ONE DWELLING, CREATION OF CURTILAGE WITH ACCESS AND PARKING AND INSTALLATION OF NEW PACKAGE TREATMENT PLANT.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This statement has been prepared to accompany an application for planning permission for the conversion of the brick barn at Wheatley Farm to one dwellings with modest garden area and off road parking. A planning application for the conversion of the adjacent stone barn is also submitted by the same applicant.

1.2 This Statement should be read with the following plans and information:

2867 100 Existing site and location plan

2867 110 Existing plan section and elevations barn no1

2867 120 Proposed site plan barn no1

2867 130 Proposed ground floor plan barn no1

2867 140 Proposed first floor plan barn no1

2867 150 Proposed elevations barn no1

Heritage assessment

Structural condition survey

European protected species survey

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Wheatley Farm comprises a listed farmhouse a traditional stone barn with stone out building and a twentieth century brick agricultural building. Set further apart from this group are modern agricultural buildings. Wheatley Farm is operational as a farm, the older farm buildings are no longer needed since planning permission was granted for a livestock building in 2015.

2.2 Four Acre Lane runs through the middle of Wheatley Farm and turns a corner in front of the farmhouse. The farmhouse and its domestic outbuildings are on one side of the lane and its farm buildings are all on the other. The older farm buildings and farmhouse form a tight knit group. The current vehicle access to the barn is off Four Acre Lane.

2.3 The site is located within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) as defined in the adopted Ribble Valley Local Plan. There are no public footpaths close to the site.

3 ASSESSMENT

3.1 The following policies of the Core Strategy are relevant to this application are:

- Key Statement DS2 (Presumption in favour of sustainable development) – the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- Key Statement EN2 Landscape-The landscape character of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural beauty will be protected, conserved and enhanced.
- Key Statement EN4 (Biodiversity and geodiversity – The Council will seek wherever possible to conserve and enhance the area’s biodiversity and geodiversity.
- Key Statement EN5 (Heritage Assets) – expects there will be a presumption in favour of the conservation and enhancement of the significance of heritage assets and their settings.
- Policy DMG1 (General Considerations) – sets out various criteria to be considered in assessing planning applications, including a high standard of building design, proposed development being sympathetic to existing land uses, highway safety and not adversely affecting the amenities of the area.
- Policy DMG2 (Strategic Considerations) – expects development to be in accordance with the Development Strategy and that development proposals in defined settlements should consolidate, expand or round-off development so that it is closely related to the main built up areas, ensuring this is appropriate to the scale of, and in keeping with, the existing settlement. The policy goes on to indicate that within the open countryside, development will be required to be in keeping with the character of the landscape and acknowledge the special qualities of the area by virtue of its size, design, use of materials, landscaping and siting. It also indicates that where possible, new development should be accommodated through the re-use of existing buildings, which in most cases is more appropriate than new build.
- Policy DME3: (Site and Species protection and conservation) -seeks to protect wildlife species protected by law and their habitats.
- Policy DME4 (Protecting Heritage Assets) – Seeks positive improvements in the quality of the historic environment.
- Policy DMH3 (Dwellings in the Open Countryside and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) – Within areas defined as open countryside or AONB, residential development will be limited to, amongst other things, the appropriate conversion of buildings to dwellings providing they are suitably located.
- Policy DMH4 (The Conversion of Barns and other buildings to dwellings) – Permission will be granted for the conversion of buildings to dwellings where the building is not isolated in the landscape i.e. forms part of an already group of buildings and there need be no unnecessary expenditure by public authorities and utilities on the provision of infrastructure.

The following elements of national policy in the National Planning Policy Framework are also relevant to the proposal.

- 3.2 Nation Planning Policy Framework, Section- “Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes” paragraph 55 promotes sustainable development in rural areas. Development for new dwellings in the countryside is acceptable in limited circumstances including where the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and would lead to an enhancement to the immediate siting or the development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset.
- 3.3 Framework section - “*Conserving and enhancing the historic environment*” paragraph 128 requires applicants to provide information to describe the significance of any heritage assets including any contribution made by their setting. A separate Heritage Assessment is included with this application. In making planning decisions the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of the heritage asset and putting it to a viable use consistent with its conservation is to be taken into account paragraph 131.

4 SITE HISTORY

- 4.1 3/2015/0054 Erection of livestock building Approved 01/10/2015.

3/2015/0357 Prior notification for a harp track for cattle to walk on reducing damage to grass land in wet weather permission not required 20/05/2015

3/2012/0451 New roof over existing silage clamp. Approved 21/05/2012.

2/2011/0813 Proposed change of use of agricultural barn to residential unit and to include retention of existing detached garage to be used as domestic garaging. Approved 19/12/2011

3/2008/0687 Proposed new building to provide extra accommodation for the dairy herd. Approved 06/11/2008.

3/2005/0899 Conversion of three barns to dwellings, erection of farm office and store/workshop and two farm buildings. Refused 19/12/2005.

5 PRE-APPLICATION ADIVCE

- 5.1 Pre-application advice was sought from the Council in regard to the conversion of the brick and stone barns at Wheatley Farm. The advice reference RV/2016/ENQ/00132 confirmed that in principle the conversion of this building to a single dwelling is acceptable under the policies of the Core Strategy. Specific comments on the design of the conversion and preserving residential amenity between the two buildings were made and where possible these suggestions have been incorporated into the submitted scheme.

6 EVALUATION

- 6.1 The main planning issues are whether the barn is suitable for conversion, having regard to its location and the development strategy for the area; the effect of the proposal on the

character and appearance of the AONB; and the effect on the significance of this non-designated heritage asset.

Principle

- 6.2 The site is within open countryside with an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Policy DMG2 states that new housing development provided through the re-use of existing buildings is acceptable in such areas. Policy DMH3 limits new residential development in the open countryside to the appropriate conversion of buildings providing they are suitably located and in keeping with their surroundings. Part of the criteria of policy DMH4 is that the buildings to be converted should “not be isolated in the landscape, i.e. it is within a defined settlement or forms part of an already group of buildings...” Although Wheatley Farm is outside a settlement, the traditional farm buildings form a readily identifiable existing group of buildings. They are well grouped, close to the road and set within the wider farm group which includes substantial modern farm buildings. As a result, the buildings to be converted would not be isolated in the landscape and the proposal accords with policy DHM4 (1). Paragraph 55 of the Framework permits new isolated homes in the countryside where development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement of their setting. This is reflected in policies DMH3 of the Core Strategy which allow for the appropriate conversion of buildings to dwellings in the countryside. The proposed development is suitably located and is compliant with policies DMG2, DMH3 and DMH4 in this respect as well as the development strategy policies DS1 and DS2.



North-east and south-east elevations

Character and appearance of the AONB

- 6.3 Farmsteads and farm buildings contribute to the character of the AONB. The traditional farm buildings at Wheatley Farm are constructed out of traditional materials and in a form which reflects the farming practices from the era in which they were constructed. This is discussed more fully in the accompanying Heritage Assessment. Both the brick and stone buildings have heritage value and contribute positively to the character and landscape quality of the AONB. In order to preserve, and not detract from the positive contribution that the brick barn makes, the proposed conversion has been designed in a way that introduces a minimal amount of physical change to the building and its setting. The changes are needed in order the for new use as dwelling to be possible.
- 6.4 The proposed conversions retain the character of the buildings by re-using existing openings to light the internal spaces and introducing a minimum of new openings.
- 6.5 The proposed conversion of the brick barn retains large open spaces with a central area for utility, bathroom and stairs to a master bedroom within the roof space. This is achieved by working with the existing split in floor levels and by creating a split floor level in the main part of the barn. The floor level of the roadside lean-to is lower than main floor of the barn. The main barn is currently all one level with the windows high up on the walls just beneath the eaves. See section drawings 2867 100. In order to create a reasonable outlook from the sitting/dining/kitchen area the floor level is raised. This room includes the full height of the barn. There are steps down from here to the lounge which is at the current floor level. The main view out of the lounge is through the main barn opening with the existing high level windows providing supplementary lighting on the rear elevation.



South-west elevation

6.6 Placing the main entrance in the centre of the building allows this arrangement to work and creates the optimal viable use for the building with a minimum a of alterations to the building. The conversion has been designed to use the existing openings or modify them. The character of the building is defined by the regular spaced and regular size of the windows in the front and rear elevations together with the corresponding placed ventilation cowls on the roof. These are retained with the exception of the central window on the front elevation which is adapted to a door. Two new conservation roof-lights are proposed on the rear (and less visible) roof slope. All other openings are retained and re-used with the exception of the main door opening on the south-west gable. This has been reduced in height and a small window placed above it.



Interior with high level windows

6.7 We have carefully considered the parking and provision of the garden area in the light of pre-application comments. Parking is provided as a pull-in off the road in front of the building. This more informal arrangement retains the banking in front of the building, retaining its rural appearance and avoiding domestication. A small area of paving is proposed adjacent to the north-east gable which is to be surrounded by a timber screen and planting. This encloses and screens the 'domestic' area within a small space.

- 6.8 These alterations will have a neutral effect on the character of the building. The building is currently a mixture of brick and render under a blue slate roof. The brick has a high range of colour within it from dark red to light orange with the hint of a decorative band between the heads of the windows in the front and rear elevation and a little way below the sill level on the front elevation. The proposal is to retain this mixture of brick and render. The proposed conversion preserves the character and appearance of the landscape of the AONB.
- 6.9 The impact of the proposed development on the appearance of the landscape will be minimal. The appearance of the building will only be slightly altered by its conversion to a dwelling and the design of the conversion will retain its agricultural character. The proposed curtilage is modest and the parking area is close to the building. New boundaries are to be defined by hedges of native Lancashire species. The current concrete area at the side of the building can be removed and made into a small garden area.

Impact on the significance of the non-designated heritage asset.

- 6.10 This brick built shippon represents an important phase in the farm's history when it specialised in and intensified dairy production. The farm still operates as a dairy farm however all the milking operations now take place in the new portal frame buildings. The various parts of the brick building express its function. The regular spacing of the window openings in the walls which reflect the fact that they would have lit a series of traditional stalls and natural light would have been needed when milking. The lower section adjacent to the road would have contained machinery and milk storage space ready for collection at the road side and hence the positioning of the building close to the road. Although this building is not as old as the stone barn it still represents a distinct phase in the history of the changing pattern of dairy farming in the area and is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset. The conversion of this building to a residential use represents the optimal viable use for this building which contributes to the history and setting of this group of agricultural building.
- 6.11 The proposal is compliant with policies EN5 and DME4

Other matters

Highway Safety

- 6.12 The new vehicle access and parking area is proposed as a pull in off the road. This is at a point where the road is reasonably straight and traffic speeds are low due to the rural nature of the road and the approach to the bend or on leaving the bend. The introduction of the new access is unlikely to compromise highway safety.

Protected Species

- 6.13 A protected species survey has been carried out. It concluded that the building has relatively low conservation significance for protected species. Two scoping site surveys have found no clear evidence of roosting bats or barn owls. The proposed building alterations are unlikely to result in loss of a bat roost or cause disturbance to roosting bats or nesting barn owls.

Structural Condition Survey

- 5.18 A structural condition survey has been carried out which concludes that the barn is in reasonable condition, with some requirement for rebuilding of external walls. It is considered suitable for conversion.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The proposed conversion of the brick barn to one dwellings will secure the future of this building which is considered to be non-designated heritage assets. The conversion to residential use represents the optimal viable use for the building. The sensitive design of the scheme ensures that its heritage significance is not diminished. The proposals fully accord with the provisions of the NPPF and the Core Strategy.