

**Land at Elmridge Farm
Elmridge Lane
Chipping**

Planning and Design Statement
on behalf of Mr and Mrs Taylor

July 2019



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1. Development Proposal

- 1.1. This Planning and Design Statement has been prepared by Plan A (North West) Limited in support of a full planning application made on behalf of Mr and Mrs Taylor (the Applicant) proposing the erection of a building for stabling horses, housing sheep and storing agricultural equipment and the creation of a menage arena with associated external lighting.
- 1.2. Mr and Mrs Taylor have redeveloped the Elmridge Farm site to deliver three converted barns and a replacement farmhouse. It is their intention to move into the farmhouse when complete. The family own four horses and a small flock of sheep, all of which are kept at their current home. The animals and associated equipment will move to Elmridge Farm with the family and, therefore, appropriate livestock facilities are required.
- 1.3. The proposal has been the subject of pre-application discussions with the local planning authority (ref: RV/2019/ENQ/00041).

Application Site

- 1.4. The application site comprises a field located to the south of Elmridge Farm on Elmridge Lane near Chipping. The field extends to 1ha in total and comprises grazing pasture that slopes down from the north west to south east on a consistent gradient. An existing mature hedgerow forms the northern western, south western and southern eastern boundary with a stock fence forming the north eastern boundary. Gated access to the field is taken directly from a hard surfaced driveway along the north western boundary which serves Elmridge Farm and the neighbouring dwellings.

Proposed Development

- 1.5. It is proposed to erect a barn and a menage on land located in the field to the south of the farm house and access road.
 - 1.6. The multi-function barn will provide four stables, a tack room, feed store, an area to house sheep when required over winter and when lambing and an equipment store. The barn will extend to 288m² gross and will have a ridge height of 5.1m. The building will be finished in a profiled metal sheet roof with timber cladding elevations, with appropriate openings for access and ventilation.
 - 1.7. It is also proposed to construct a 60m by 20m full dressage arena along the southern boundary of the site where the land is at its lowest level. It is proposed that the menage will be illuminated by six pole mounted LED lighting units, each of approximately 100 LUX. The lights will only be illuminated when the menage is in use and when natural background lighting levels dictate, which is likely to be no more than 2 hours on any day during the winter. The lights will not be illuminated overnight. It is proposed that a detailed lighting scheme and operational controls are agreed by condition.
 - 1.8. The barn and menage will be used privately for domestic use by the Applicants only and not for any commercial or livery purposes.
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2. Planning Statement

- 2.1. The proposed development is assessed below in accordance with relevant planning policies.

Principle of Development

- 2.2. The application site is located within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), where Core Strategy Key Statement EN2 requires development to be in keeping with the character of the landscape and to reflect local distinctiveness, vernacular style, scale, style, features and building materials.
- 2.3. As a matter of principle, agricultural and equestrian buildings are common and appropriate features within the open countryside and the AONB and it is demonstrated in the Design Statement at Section 3 how the proposal satisfies the requirements of Key Statement EN2 through appropriate and well-conceived design.
- 2.4. The barn and menage are proposed to occupy the lowest part of the site which is visually less prominent, with the undulating topography, high hedgerows and tree cover ensuring that the proposed development is not widely visible from the surrounding area. Indeed, the proposals are unlikely to be seen in views of the site from the north and south along Elmridge Lane. Where the barn is visually evident, it will be seen in the context of the cluster of existing farm buildings. The proposals will not appear as a discordant or isolated feature in views from the local or wider area.
- 2.5. The proposal is, therefore, appropriate in principle in the open countryside and will not have an unacceptable impact on the AONB. Indeed, where the proposal will be visually evident, it will be seen as a feature that is commonplace in the local and wider area.

Design

- 2.6. Design considerations have been assessed separately in Section 3, with the conclusion being drawn that the proposals respond positively to the character of the area and its sensitivity as an AONB.

Compatibility with Neighbours

- 2.7. The local topography, trees and hedgerows serve to mitigate visual impact of the proposal from the neighbouring properties across Elmridge Lane to the west. There will be a distance of over 50m between the front elevation of the neighbouring bungalow and the closest point of the proposed barn. It is proposed that the barn will have a floor level lower than the existing ground levels on the north eastern corner of the site and this together with the surrounding topography will obscure the main bulk of the building from view. It is entirely possible that the barn will not be visible when the hedges (and proposed landscaping) are in growth and the intervening field in crop. This distance, together with the siting of the barn and menage, will reduce the potential for amenity impacts, with the barn building itself providing visual and acoustic screening qualities.
- 2.8. The barn has also been designed and set out to ensure that areas of activity take place beyond the eastern and southern elevations of the barn, thereby minimising the proposals potential disturbance on neighbouring residents.
- 2.9. The position of the barn on the far western corner of the site also means that it will be located as far as possible from the other dwellings adjacent to Elmridge Farm and will not dominate views from those properties. Being several metres below the floor level of the
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neighbouring dwellings, the menage, and the use of it, will also preserve the amenity of neighbours by removing the potential for overlooking or a loss of privacy.

- 2.10. It is proposed that the lighting scheme for the menage and appropriate operational controls, such as hours of use, are agreed by condition with the Council in order to protect the amenity of neighbouring uses.

Drainage

- 2.11. The application site is located within Flood Zone 1 and, therefore, is not at risk of flooding.
- 2.12. It is proposed that surface water collected from the barn will drain to an existing ditch running along the western site boundary. An amount of surface water may be collected from downpipes in water butts for the Applicant's use.
- 2.13. The menage will have a permeable surface finish and will drain freely.

Conclusion

- 2.14. The proposed development has been appropriately conceived to be in keeping with the character of the area, with the layout seeking to mitigate the potential for impact on the visual quality of the landscape and the amenity of neighbours. The requirements of the Development Plan have, therefore, been satisfied.
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3. Design Statement

- 3.1. The proposed development is assessed below in accordance key design considerations.

Site Layout

- 3.2. It is proposed that the barn is located to the south of the access drive on the north western corner of the field. In this position, the barn will be seen in the context of the farmhouse and other buildings, yet will occupy a lower ground level and be visually less prominent. Indeed, views from outside the site will include the farmhouse and barn conversions alongside the proposed barn, meaning that the proposal will be seen as part of a cluster of buildings that formed the original farm complex. .
- 3.3. Furthermore, in this position, advantage can be taken of the existing mature hedgerows on the site boundaries to provide a visual screen, whilst also allowing surface water from the barn to be drained to the adjoining ditch.
- 3.4. The orientation of the barn also affords the Taylor family the ability to overlook the barn from the farmhouse, thereby providing natural surveillance and security, with direct access provided from the access road off Elmridge Lane.
- 3.5. Whilst other potential locations have been considered, the proposal offers the optimum solution. For example, locating the barn to the north of the farmhouse would position it at a higher level, where it will be visually more prominent and where noise and activity could have a greater impact on residential amenity. Alternatively, positioning the barn to the west of the farmhouse could conflict with the canopy and roots of several mature trees and would place the building in open view from the road and close to the neighbouring bungalow.
- 3.6. With regard to the menage, its position in the site is dictated by the need to deliver a level arena of the required dimensions within a sloping site. A topographical survey has, therefore, been undertaken to inform the options available. Whilst it has been originally intended to orientate the menage so that the 60m length ran on a north-south axis, this would result in substantial engineering works to achieve a level arena. This would have resulted in the northern end of the menage needing to be lowered by several metres and the southern end needing to be raised by several metres. Such an arrangement was not considered suitable or practical.
- 3.7. The menage has, therefore, been arranged to run across the gradient on an east-west axis in order to minimise the changes to existing levels. The menage has also been positioned along the south eastern boundary, which is the lowest part of the application site, to ensure that the raising of levels has a minimal visual impact.
- 3.8. The layout of the proposals, therefore, responds positively to the characteristics of the site to ensure that is sympathetic to the character of the locality.

Scale

- 3.9. The scale of the barn is led by the facilities it needs to accommodate, which include four stables, a tack room, a feed store, an area to house sheep when required over winter and an equipment store. It is proposed that the barn will extend to 12m wide, 24m long and have a ridge of 5.1m in height.
- 3.10. The scale of the building is commensurate with the scale of the neighbouring cluster of buildings and not inappropriate in a rural setting. Indeed, there are several agricultural
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buildings of a significantly greater scale located in the local area.

- 3.11. With regard to the scale of the proposed menage, Mr and Mrs Taylor's daughter is a competitive dressage rider who competes across the UK and is progressing through the ranks towards the FEI international level. It is essential that she trains within an international size arena (i.e. 60m by 20m) so that horse and rider are overtly familiar with the international standard dressage format.
- 3.12. The scale of the proposed development is, therefore, entirely appropriate.

Appearance

- 3.13. The Applicant is keen to ensure that the proposed development has a positive or, at worst neutral, impact on the appearance of the area. A single multi-function building is, therefore, proposed instead of several smaller buildings, to ensure that the appearance of the equestrian and agricultural facilities are visually contained in a tightly defined area. The choice of external facing materials reflects the typical finish of agricultural and equestrian buildings in rural areas.
- 3.14. Further, this multi-function building will be located in the most visually appropriate and functionally appropriate position within the Applicant's land. The barn will be seen in the context of a cluster of rural buildings, screened by existing mature hedgerows and proposed new planting.
- 3.15. The menage will be enclosed by new planting, not a fence, to ensure that it will be less visible when in use and practically invisible when not in use. It will, nevertheless, be positioned on the lowest part of the application site to ensure that its visual impact is minimised.
- 3.16. The proposals will not, therefore, appear as a discordant or isolated feature in views from the local or wider area, with any limited visual impact mitigated by enhanced screen planting.

Landscaping

- 3.17. As previously stated, the proposals will include a scheme of soft landscaping that will bolster the existing mature boundary planting and help to screen the proposed development from view.

Conclusion

- 3.18. It has been demonstrated that the Applicant has taken a number of appropriate measures to ensure that the design and appearance of the proposed development satisfies the requirements of planning policies and is appropriate in the context of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in which it is located.
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