DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

(incorporating Heritage Statement)

Retrospective Planning application for
Tree House at
Little Oaks Barn, Overton Road,
Penley, Wrexham. LL13 0LU



for

Mr & Mrs R Jones

June 2024

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

PROJECT: Retrospective Planning application for Tree House at Little Oaks Barn, Overton Road, Penley, Wrexham. LL13 0LU

CLIENT: Mr & Mrs R Jones

LOCAL AUTHORITY: Wrexham County Borough Council

AGENT: Portman Surveyors Ltd

DATE: June 2024

1.0 BACKGROUND

Little Oaks Barn and Corner Barn are both Listed structures that have previously been acquired separately by the owner and subsequently granted permission to erect a glazed link between the two to form a single dwelling.

Aside from the above the owner has recently installed a private Tree House for their own enjoyment.

The applicant has been visited by an Enforcement Officer from Wrexham CBC, Mr. Gary Evans, on Wednesday 15th May 2024. They had been advised to attend on the understanding the Tree House had been built without formal permission.

Upon visiting Mr. Evans advised the property owner that a Householder Planning application was required to seek retrospective permission for the structure.

Given this Portman's have subsequently been asked to submit the necessary Planning application with this DAS & Heritage Statement provided to clarify the works.

2.0 DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The works are as detailed on Portman's' Drwg. Nos. A_386_10 and show the previously erected Tree House built without formal approval.

This consists of a modest timber structure built around a mature tree to the Northern extremity of the site. The building measures approximately 4.4m x 3m and consists of an upper storey element with access from the ground via a timber staircase. There is a wraparound balcony at the upper level.

The Tree House is ancillary to the main accommodation and incidental to the enjoyment of the dwelling. It is solely for the private use of the applicant and their family for recreational purposes.

In terms of the materials the court is finished with timber with no stain or paint finish applied meaning the timbers are naturally weathering. The walls are formed using timber close boarded panels with a timber stairwell and timber post & rail balustrade around the perimeter of the wrapround balcony, itself formed in timber decking.

By its' very nature the Tree House is set around a mature tree on the edge of a wooded copse that borders and thereafter continues beyond the Northern boundary of the applicants ownership. Due to the maturity of the trees and modest scale of the new structure it blends into the background of the copse (see Photo 1). It does not stand proud or above any f the tree and its' natural weathering means, over time, if will further blend into the background.



PHOTO 1: Tree House largely screened from view within mature copse

3.0 ACCESS

Due to the nature of the works and use of the structure it is not considered the access requirements of The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005 or Approved Document Part M of the Building Regulations apply.

4.0 HERITAGE STATEMENT

4.1 Heritage assets and its Setting

The site is located within Penley with its listing detailed as follows (source CADW Heritage Bill):

History

(Shippon) A late C19 Gredington estate farm building shown on the 1900 Ordnance Survey.

(Barn) A C17 barn, probably originally 3 bays but later extended to 5 bays. It was converted to a shippon in the latter half of the C19 by the Gredington estate, when the front was entirely rebuilt, contemporary with the stable and shippon.

Exterior

(Shippon) A lofted stable and shippon of brick with blue-brick segmental-headed openings, and slate roof. It has large replacement double doors, in an original opening, to the R, then a split door and window to the L. The loft has 3 openings, the R-hand open, the central retaining some original glazing bars and the L-hand with boarded shutter under a wooden lintel. A lean-to against the L gable end has a split door. Set slightly back to the R is the lower shippon. It has a split boarded door flanked by steel-framed hopper windows under lintels. Its gable end has a boarded door for the feeding passage to the R. The rear has 2 windows similar to the front and the stable has a single window on the L side.

(Barn) A brick-fronted farm building under a slate roof. It has split doors with strap hinges R and L of centre, both under blue-brick segmental heads, flanked by steel-framed hopper windows under wooden lintels, the R-hand of which was also originally a doorway. Gabled dormers to the centre and R have shutters. The L gable end is timber- framed, with weatherboards and loft doorway, but in poor condition. It has an inserted door on the R side. Against the R gable end is an added lean-to, above which is a weatherboarded gable. The rear is also timber- framed, but in poor condition. To the L of centre is evidence of the former wagon bay, with a mortise suggesting a former porch canopy.

Interior

(Barn) The older part retains 2 queen-post trusses. Another queen-post truss has been reconstructed, and a 4th truss is of sawn timber.

Reasons for Designation

(Shippon) Listed as a well-preserved C19 farm building and as part of a strong farm group.

(Barn) Listed, notwithstanding its condition, as one of the few surviving early farm buildings in the district, and as part of a strong C19 farm group.

4.2 Assessment of Significance

The property sits on the edge of a wooded copse toward the Northern boundary of the site. It is formed in natural timber that is being allowed to weather and due to the relative scale of the trees does not stand proud of any element.

The overall volume of the Tree House amounts to approximately 59.4m3. For comparison purposes a typical Field Shelter for two horses would amount to circa 78m3 hence it is reasonable to state the former is a modest structure.

The works do not involve any change to the Listed property itself hence the provision of the Tree House and its' significant distance from the main dwelling means it has no significance to the house.

4.3 Design Concept & Impact of the Proposed Development

The previously erected Tree House is sited well away from the house and further screened by being set within a wooded copse of large, mature trees. It has purposefully been set in this location to be as far away from the house as practical to the extreme North at the bottom of undulating grounds.

It is therefore considered there is no impact on the Listed property.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

The applicant has formed a Tree House on the edge of a wooded copse toward the Northern boundary of the site. It is a modest size and formed in natural timbers that over time is allowing it to weather into the background.

The Enforcement Officer has visited site and advised a retrospective planning application shall be required.

Portman's have attended site and prepared a Drwg. No. A_386_10 to clarify the location, scale and appearance of the Tree House.

Given the above this Design and Access Statement is to be read in conjunction with the Householder application duly submitted to Wrexham County Borough Council.