



Barn Conversion at Willington Lodge, Horseman's Green

Design and Access Statement

D2 Architects Ltd.

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1.0 Introduction

This document has been prepared in support of a planning application to convert a detached barn into an indoor wedding venue and bridal suite. The barn is located adjacent to and within the grounds of Willington Lodge, Horseman's Green.

Willington Lodge is already an award-winning guest house, bed and breakfast and wedding venue, having been carefully renovated and restored by the current owners and applicants. The same attention to detail will be applied to the conversion of the barn, ensuring the resulting development is sympathetic to the listed building whilst enhancing the character of the area.

As a result of the fantastic renovation work done on the main house Willington Lodge has become a sought-after wedding venue, however, there is currently no provision for indoor weddings. By converting the barn, the applicants will be able provide a comprehensive wedding package for intimate celebrations, further improving the areas attractions for tourism.

This document should be read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

2.0 Design

2.1 Use

The barn is situated within a well-established estate of Willington Lodge, Horseman's Green which is currently operating as a Guest House and Wedding Venue. The area surrounding the property consists mostly of agriculture and residential properties (Use Class C).

The application itself is seeking a change of use from a disused barn (currently used partially as storage for items associated with the guest house) into a small wedding venue and bridal suite. The venue will have a capacity of up to 80 guests and will cater to intimate weddings and events. The first-floor bridal suite will consist of a bedroom and bathroom within the venue, providing an exclusive space for the bride and groom to prepare for their special day.



2.2 Amount

The conversion will involve a minimal amount of alteration to the existing structure of the main barn. The external walls will be retained and repaired where necessary, and any corrugated metal cladding will be replaced with matching timber cladding. The roof will be replaced with slate, and new windows and doors will be installed to allow natural light to enter the space whilst retaining its agricultural aesthetic.

The corrugated metal clad outrigger to the rear of the barn is to be replaced with mixed one and a half and single storey extension. The one and a half storey element will reflect the materiality of the existing barn, whilst providing a central focal point framed in oak. The single storey sections reduce the scale of the existing outrigger, whilst improving its aesthetic and enhancing the character of the estate.

The site is suitably sized to accommodate the conversion, with little to no impact on the residential amenity of the main house and/or neighbouring properties. Within a rural setting, the estate as a whole benefits from more than adequate levels of privacy and quietness, with low levels of footfall in front of the site.

2.3 Layout

The main structure of the barn is to remain unchanged, respecting its historic fabric and layout. The main door to the barn is retained on the side elevation, and the open plan arrangement of the ground floor is to remain the same. This will create a functional and versatile space for wedding events. The ground floor will feature a reception area, WCs, and a flexible hall, with external access for outdoor seating.

There is currently no first floor, however there is historic evidence of joists being built into the masonry. The proposed first floor is accessed via a central bifurcated staircase that leads to a mezzanine, bathroom, and bridal suite with small balcony over the entrance (which doubles up as a porch).



2.4 Scale

The scale of the proposal has been carefully considered in relation to its context. The main barn is to remain unchanged, which subsequently obscures the works to the rear.

The outrigger matches the scale of the barn and is not visible from the listed building itself. The single storey elements of the design are lower than the existing outrigger and therefore the impact on the listed building and its residential amenity is improved.

Wholistically, the barn will retain its original footprint and will not impact the visual amenity of the surrounding area and or have any adverse effects on neighbouring properties.

2.5 Landscaping

The proposed conversion will include landscaping measures to enhance the visual appearance of the barn and improve the functionality of the outdoor space. The terrace area will be paved, and new planting will be introduced to soften the edges of the building and integrate it into the surrounding landscape. The landscaping will be sympathetic to the rural character of the area and will not result in any adverse effects on the environment.

2.6 Appearance

The proposed conversion will retain the existing brickwork of the barn, with matching timber cladding and slate roof. Characteristics such as the barge board with routed border will be retained and replicated in the proposal, whilst the brickwork will be carefully repointed and restored.

The design is sympathetic and complimentary to the original building and aims to enhance its architectural heritage while providing a functional and modern indoor space for wedding events. The materials used are of high quality and will ensure the longevity of the building.



3.0 Access

3.1 Vehicular Access

Access to the proposed wedding venue will be via the existing driveway, which has already been improved to provide adequate parking spaces for guests. The proposal includes the provision of disabled access, with ramps and handrails installed to ensure accessibility to all areas of the building.

3.2 Inclusive Access

The design is fully compliant with building regulations and compliance with this requirement is achieved when a new dwelling makes reasonable provision for most people, which includes wheelchair users to access and enter the dwelling and access habitable rooms and sanitary facilities on the entrance level.



4.0 Conclusion

The proposed barn conversion will provide a functional and versatile space for intimate wedding events, while preserving the heritage and character of the grade II listed building. The design is sympathetic to the original structure, with high-quality materials used to ensure the longevity of the building. The proposal includes landscaping measures to enhance the visual appearance of the venue and improve the functionality of the outdoor space. The proposal will not result in any adverse effects on the surrounding environment or neighbouring properties, and adequate access will be provided for all visitors.