

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Proposed Conversion of Existing Agricultural Barn
To Provide a Separate Dwelling

at

MULSFORD FARM

MULSFORD

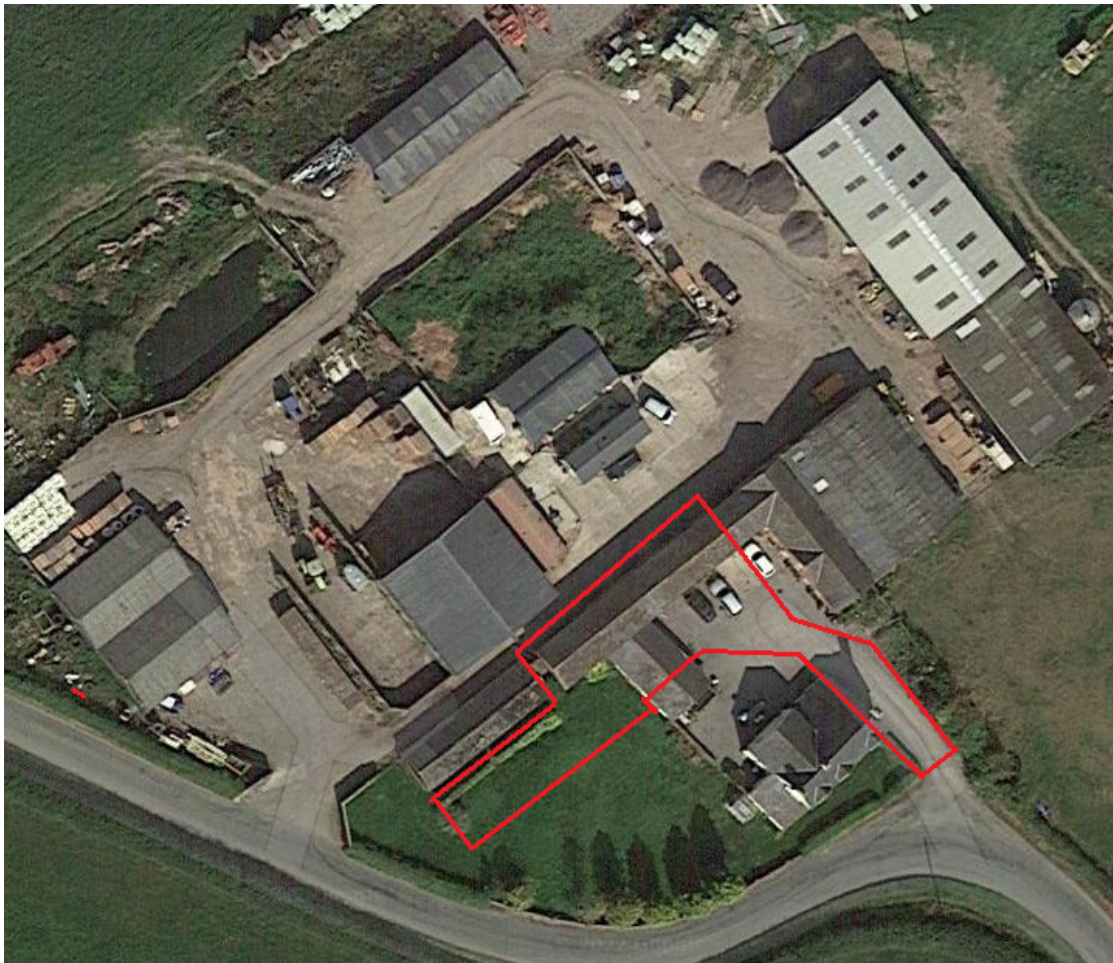
SARN

MALPAS

SY14 7LP

For

Mr & Mrs N. VICKERS.



D S Jones & Co.

Architectural & Planning Consultants.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION.

1.1

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of an application for full planning permission for the conversion of an existing agricultural barn to a separate dwelling including means of access and associated works.

1.2

This statement meets the statutory requirements of Article 7 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure)(Wales) Order (“the DMPWO”) 2012, as amended by Article 9 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) (Amendment) Order 2016.

1.3

This Design and Access Statement provides an analysis of the application site and building and sets out the principles that have guided and informed the design.

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

2.1

The application site comprises an existing farmhouse, farm complex and outbuildings known as Mulsford Farm, Sarn, Malpas. Whilst the Applicants currently live in the original farmhouse, it is proposed that the converted dwelling will provide accommodation for them allowing the existing farmhouse to be occupied by the Applicants’ Son and his family.

2.2

The Applicants operate a family-run business, Probale Limited, in conjunction with their Son which supplies haylage and horse bedding predominantly from the buildings located to the north of the application site. It is important for the

Applicants that their Son and his family are able to occupy the farmhouse whilst allowing the Applicants to live on site for the benefit of the business. It has therefore been decided that the optimum way to achieve this aim is to convert the existing, underused barn to a dwelling.

2.3

The barn which is the subject of this application for planning permission is currently used for domestic storage at ground floor level with one bay in use as a stable at the south western end of the building. At first floor level, the barn has been vacant for a considerable time due to limited accessibility.

3.0 THE PROPOSAL.

3.1

The proposal is to convert the existing building to a dwelling without substantial external alteration other than the partial reinstatement of original openings which have been bricked / closed up in the past.

3.2

The barn will be converted to a 2-bedroomed unit of residential accommodation to meet the future needs of the applicant's whilst providing a separate area of external amenity land and a separate foul drainage system.

3.3

External alterations to the existing building will be kept to a minimum and are clearly defined and annotated on Dwg No. 10487.04, Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations. In addition to minor external alterations and reinstatement of the some of the original openings, a scheme of external renovation including re-roofing with recycled natural slates, re-pointing brickwork where necessary and general overhaul and repair of windows and external drainage goods.

3.4

The proposals, provide an opportunity to breathe new life into an important but underused building which complements the character and appearance of the existing farmhouse and which will provide sustainable residential accommodation for the Applicant's for the benefit of the Applicant's business and family life.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT.

4.1

The site has recently been the subject of a similar application for planning permission to convert the subject building to a dwelling, Local Planning Authority reference No. P/2021/1194. Concerns have been expressed by the Planning Case Officer and the Conservation Officer about the extensive amount of alterations to the external fabric of the building and the application therefore remains undetermined. Furthermore, Natural Resources Wales have raised concerns due to a lack of information in relation to the proposed arrangements to dispose of foul effluent from the proposed dwelling.

4.2

Whilst the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan is time expired, it remains the adopted Development Plan for development control due to the slow emergence of the Local Development Plan. Strategic Adopted Local Planning Policies PS2 and PS3 of the UDP are relevant to the proposals as are Policies GDP1 and H3. Local Planning Guidance Note LPGN3 sets out locally adopted supplementary guidance for the Conversion of Rural Buildings to Dwellings.

4.3

Policy PS2 states that "*Development must not materially detrimentally affect landscape / townscape character... or the quality of the natural environment*". The proposals include the conversion of the building with minimal external alteration and it can therefore be seen that the subject building will continue to

contribute substantial character to the farmstead as a whole in compliance with this particular planning policy.

4.4

Policy PS3 states that *“Development should use previously developed brownfield land.... wherever possible”*. The subject building is an integral part of the character and appearance of the farmstead as a whole and has been in use for many years. The conversion of this building to a residential use is clearly in compliance with the aims and objectives of the particular locally adopted strategic planning policy.

4.5

The proposed development can further be shown to be in compliance with the aims and objectives of UDP Policy GDP1 which requires that *“All new development should:-*

- a) Ensure that built development in its scale, design and layout, and in its use of materials and landscaping, accords with the character of the site and makes a positive contribution to the appearance of the nearby locality.*
- b) Take account of personal and community safety and security in the design and layout of development and public / private spaces.*
- c) Make the best use of design techniques, siting and orientation in order to conserve energy and water resources.*
- d) Ensure safe and convenient pedestrian and vehicular access to and from development sites, both on site and in the nearby locality.*
- f) Ensure the safety and amenity of the public and safeguard the environment from the adverse effects of pollution of water, land or air, hazards from industry and quarrying, and associated noise, odour or vibration arising from development.*
- g) Secure public services (e.g. gas, water, electricity) to development at minimum public cost.*

h) Safeguard sites and areas of nature conservation and wildlife interest, and to provide new habitats where there is an unavoidable loss of existing habitats and areas of wildlife interest.

4.6

The proposed development will occupy an existing building and so there will be no impact upon scale, design or layout. It is proposed to sensitively repair the existing external elements of the building in order to accentuate the original design detailing to accord with the character of the site and wider environment to contribute positively to the appearance of the locality in compliance with part a) of this policy.

4.7

The change of use and conversion can be undertaken without any negative impact upon the amenity of adjacent neighbours and other nearby residents. Statutory services are all available adjacent to the site and can be provided without costs to the public purse.

4.8

The development of the site will result in the loss of habitat but this impact is to be mitigated against as set out in the Bat Survey Report prepared by Tyrer Ecological Consultants and which is submitted in support of this application for planning permission. The proposed mitigation involves the provision of a receptor bat roost to be installed within a suitable near to the application site in conjunction with an external bat box fitted to the south west facing elevation of the converted barn. These measures are to be taken in conjunction with the conversion of the loft space within an adjacent barn to form a permanent, dedicated bat roost. The development represents sustainable development in accordance with the aims and objectives of this particular planning policy.

4.9

Adopted Policy H3 in the UDP states that “*The change of use or conversion of a building to residential use outside settlement limits will only be permitted where :-*

- a) In the case of agricultural buildings, there is no longer an agricultural need and alternative non-residential uses have proved inappropriate; and*
- b) The building is structurally sound and capable of conversion without extensive rebuilding tantamount to the erection of a new dwelling; and*
- c) Any inherent characteristics of merit in the building are retained; and*
- d) The proposed dwelling and the resulting curtilage does not constitute an undesirable intrusion into the landscape, create access problems nor require the provision of services at public cost; and*
- e) The floor plan of the existing building is sufficient to create a habitable dwelling.”*

4.10

In recent years the building has been used at ground floor level only and this use has predominantly involved domestic (not agricultural) storage with the first floor remaining vacant due to accessibility problems. The building is structurally sound as can be seen from reference to the Structural Report provided by GWK Structural Solutions Ltd which makes suggestions for minor works to be undertaken in order to preserve structural stability for the long term. The drawings which form part of the application for planning clearly show that inherent characteristics of merit are to be retained and minimal external works are to be undertaken to the external elevations of the building. The existing access to the farmhouse will be utilized to serve the proposed dwelling and the main commercial access to the Applicant's business premises will be unaffected. With regards to the floor plan of the building, this currently provides around 216 square metres of potentially habitable space which is wholly appropriate to provide the type of accommodation proposed.

4.11

In summary, it can be shown from reference to the submitted drawings, the adopted policy H3 has been fully complied with in the preparation of the proposals which form part of this application for planning permission.

4.12

Local Planning Guidance Note No. 3 sets out the approach that the Council takes in dealing with proposals to change the use of and convert rural buildings. The guidance supports and amplifies the relevant policies in the UDP which in this case are GDP1 and H3 as set out above. In general terms, the Guidance requires that to be considered suitable and appropriate for conversion to a dwelling a rural building must :-

- be structurally sound and substantially complete
- be of permanent construction
- be of sufficient floor area to provide a sustainable unit of accommodation

To be acceptable to the Local Planning Authority, any scheme for the conversion of an appropriate rural building must :-

- utilize the overall form and proportions of the existing building without substantial alterations
- use traditional materials to match the existing to effect any repairs to the external fabric and structure of the building
- preserve the architectural detailing evident to the existing / original building
- preserve and utilize existing and / or original openings without significant closure of existing openings or the opening up of new openings
- retain the roof line and height as existing without alteration
- utilize internal elements of character as an integral part of the scheme of conversion

In terms of the general principles outlined above which form part (but not all) of LPGN No. 3, the submitted drawings show that care has been taken in the preparation of the scheme of conversion to have due regard to adopted planning policy and local planning guidance and it has been demonstrated that the proposals submitted as part of this application for planning permission

are in compliance with the Adopted Policies and Guidance as summarized above.

5.0 **DESIGN**

5.1

Good design is an all embracing concept. The statement considers the essence of good design in response to the following factors :-

- Use
- Amount
- Layout
- Scale
- Landscaping
- Appearance

The above objectives are key to good design, to the understanding of and response to context and should form the basis of any scheme and design statement.

5.2 **Use and Amount.**

The proposed development which constitutes the conversion of use of underused space at first and second floor levels, will utilize space which is not required to support the agricultural use of the site. The space available within the existing building has been shown to be adequate to support the proposed use without extension or alteration.

5.3 **Layout.**

The proposed site layout includes the building itself and the yard / access area which will provide access for delivery vehicles to serve the residential

unit and provide resident's access to the new dwelling. Additionally, an area of soft landscaping to the south west of the building will be utilized to provide external private amenity space.

5.4 **Scale.**

The proposed development is to occupy the existing ground and first floors of the existing building. There will be no impact upon the scale of the building.

5.5 **Landscaping.**

An area to the south west of the building is to be utilized to provide an area of external garden. This area is currently laid to lawn and maintained as such and it is not necessary to alter the current surface appearance of this area of the site.

5.6 **Appearance.**

As outlined above, the external elevations of the building will be sensitively repaired and refurbished such that appearance of the original building is restored and enhanced. As such the outward appearance of the building will be preserved and this will contribute positively to the character and appearance of the farmstead in particular and the wider natural environment as a whole.

6.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.

In summary, the proposed development identified as part of this application for planning permission has striven to achieve the following aims and objectives :-

- Provide residential accommodation within an underused agricultural which will allow the applicants to remain living on site once their Son takes occupancy of the main farmhouse. This is for the benefit of the Applicants' business and family life.
- Maintain the character and enhance the form of the existing building in order to successfully assimilate the proposed development in to the immediate and wider surroundings.
- Provide a development which achieves the aims and objectives of adopted UDP policies for this type of conversion of a rural building to a residential unit of accommodation.

In conclusion, this Design and Access Statement has demonstrated that the proposals are in accordance with adopted local planning policy and supplementary planning guidance for the conversion of non-residential space to residential use in the Town Centre.

In consideration of the above and the other information provided as part of the application, officers are respectfully requested to view these proposals favourably and resolve to grant planning permission.

D.S. Jones & Co. June 2022.

For and on behalf of Mr & Mrs N. Vickers.

Photographs.



Image of the westernmost corner of the building clearly showing the original hand-made brickwork pier at the corner of the building with later infill brickwork panel to the north west and south west elevations.



Image of the north west elevation again showing the original corner pier and intermediate pier and later infill panels of brickwork.



Further image of the north west elevation showing the second and third modern brickwork infill panels.



Image of the existing window at ground floor level exhibiting infill brickwork evidencing the fact that this opening was previously a doorway. This opening is to be reinstated as a doorway to provide the main access to the hallway.



Image of the existing south east elevation to show that that only alteration to this part of the building is to be reinstatement of an original doorway.



Image of the interior of the building at first floor level from a central position looking north east indicated the vacant condition of the first floor and quality of the traditional roof structure.



Image of the interior of the building at first floor level from a central position looking south west and showing the Oak Queen Post Trusses supporting the purlins which will require modification to allow unimpeded access to all parts of the building at first floor level.

