

Cheshire Planning Solutions Ltd

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

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CHANGE OF USE OF EXISTING SUMMERHOUSE TO CREATE HOLIDAY
LET ACCOMMODATION AT
VILLA FARM,
BANGOR-ON-DEE,
NR WREXHAM,
LL13 0BD

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Introduction

Villa Farm is comprised of a farmhouse, garaging, outbuildings, land and a walled garden with summerhouse building. The two storey summerhouse was given approval, along with the boundary wall, under application P/2007/0588 in June 2007.

In March 2020, approval was granted to sub divide the existing dwelling to create one dwelling and one holiday let (application reference P/2020/0045).

Site Description & Location

The site is situated in Bangor-on-Dee, accessed directly from the A525 via a long private driveway. There are no immediate neighbours to the property, which is surrounded by farmland to each elevation. The nearest neighbours are in excess of 200m to the south and west.

The summerhouse building is situated approximately 30m north east from the main house, positioned around the edge of the residential curtilage of the property; formed as part of the walled garden. It consists of a small two storey, red brick building with external staircase, along with an enclosed, walled area to the south east.

Photographs of the site





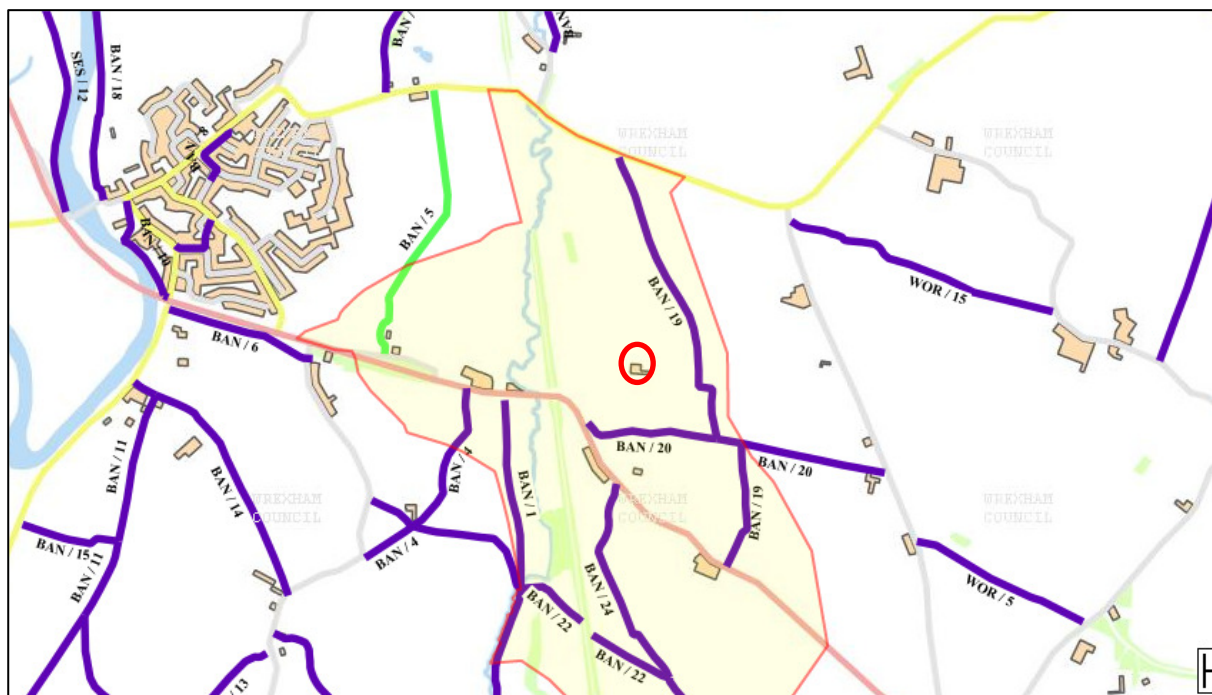


Bangor on Dee is a village in the ancient district of Maelor in Wales, situated on the banks of the River Dee. It is host to a 12th Century Church and beautiful old bridge. There are eating places, shops, fishing on the River Dee, and the nearby racecourse.

The application site overlooks beautiful countryside and is within easy reach of the village. There are many local footpaths within the local area and a bus stop in the village (Dee Court – 146) that travels to Whitchurch and Wrexham.

This is a popular area for visitors, hence the applicant site has an existing holiday let and Bank Farm Caravan Park is situated just a short distance from the application site, at the neighbouring farm.

Map of local footpaths – application site shown as red circle



Proposal / Layout

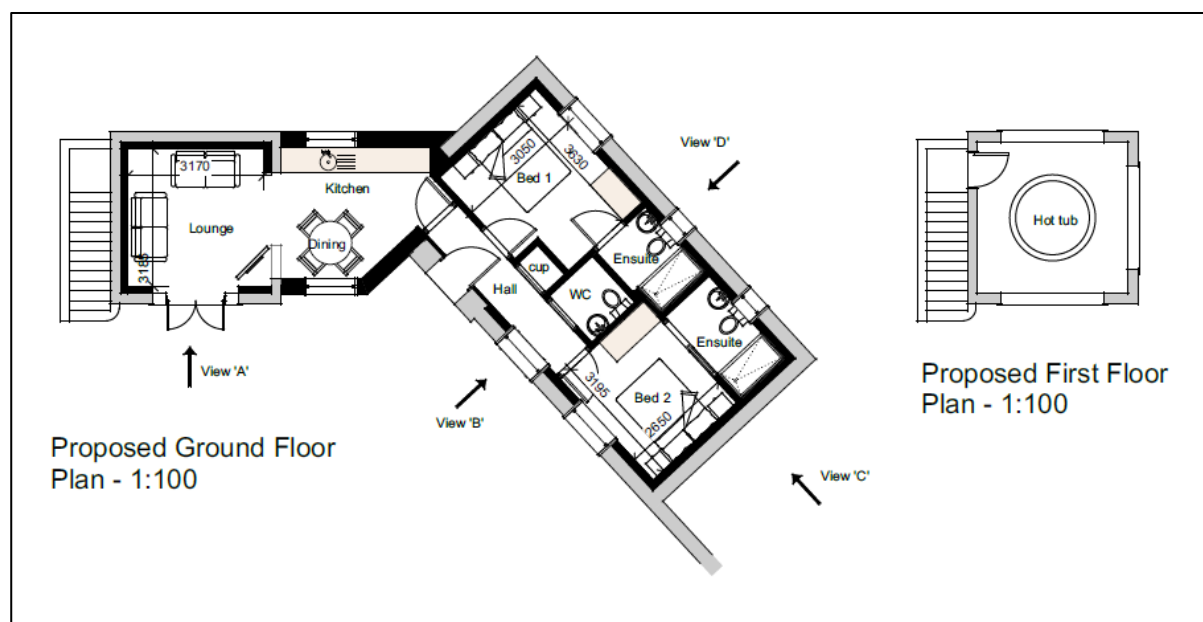
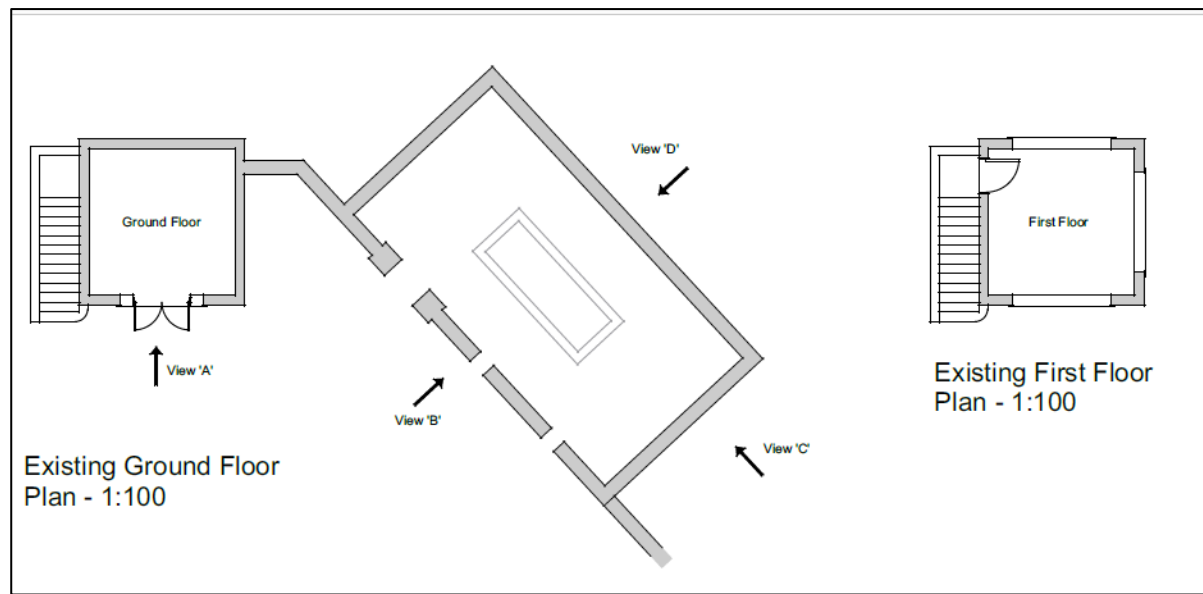
This proposal is to change the use of an existing two storey outbuilding to provide holiday let accommodation at Villa Farm. The building will only be used as a holiday let and shall not at any time be occupied as a separate and independent dwelling unit.

The proposal aims to retain the layout and footprint of the existing built form, with the addition of a small extension to link the two existing structures, to create a two bedroom holiday let. All living accommodation would be on the ground floor. The first

floor of the former summerhouse would house a hot tub so that visitors could enjoy the countryside views whilst relaxing.

All existing, established trees, hedgerows and walls around the boundaries of the site are to be retained.

Existing and proposed plans



The outbuilding is sited to the north east of the farmhouse and within the existing cluster of built form, thereby retaining development to within the same location of the site and some considerable distance from the road or any neighbouring dwellings.

By converting the existing summerhouse and walled enclosure, which is within the curtilage of Villa Farm, the proposal should not have a detrimental effect on the character of the local, rural environment or local residents. The existing structures will be little altered from their current form and a flat roof is proposed on the walled enclosure to retain the existing outlook from the surrounding area.

The nearest neighbouring dwelling to the outbuilding would be approximately 200m to the south west. Due to the positioning of the outbuilding and the existing house, boundary wall, land and tree and hedgerow boundaries surrounding the land and between the A525 and the application site, there should be no views of the development from the neighbouring residences or the highway.

Landscaping

There are existing walls around the immediate site, with tree and hedge boundaries around the land and these are all to be retained.

Use

The use of the outbuilding will be for holiday let use only.

Scale

The proposed development will be as follows:

Site as red lined = 0.8 hectares

Outbuilding:

To incorporate 2 bedrooms, a bathroom, kitchen / dining room and living room

Total = 64 sq m

Access & Parking

The site benefits from existing access from the A525 and there are sufficient, existing parking facilities on site. No new or altered access arrangements from the public highway are proposed and there will be no significant intensification of traffic, as the proposal is for one, two bedroom holiday let only.

Materials

The existing outbuilding and wall are of red brick. It is therefore proposed that the small extension to link the two structures will also be red brick with brick detailing to match and retain the character of the immediate area. Please refer to the proposed elevation drawings for further details.

Drainage

The site is not within an area at risk of flooding, noted as Zone A, from the Natural Resources Wales flood risk maps. It is proposed that disposal of surface water will be by way of new run-offs and soakaways as necessary, as advised by a specialist contractor. Therefore the proposal should not cause an increase risk of flooding within the immediate vicinity.

The Provision of New Services and Utilities

The site has the benefit of mains services, including water and electricity.

The foul waste will be linked to an existing treatment plant.

Planning Considerations

This proposed development aims to meet the planning objectives of local and national planning policy.

The current Development Plan is the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan. The key policies relating to the application are believed to be as follows:

GDP1 Development Objectives

CLF9 Visitor Accommodation Outside Settlement Limits

PS2 Development And The Environment

T8 Parking

EC5 Special Landscape Areas

Policy GDP1 Development Objectives

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.
- e) Ensure that built development is located where it has convenient access to public transport facilities, and is well related to pedestrian and cycle routes wherever possible.
- 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.
- i) Ensure that development does not result in, or is subject to, flooding, soil erosion, landslides or contamination, either on or off the site.
- j) Have regard to the need to safeguard those areas that possess a strong Welsh cultural and/or linguistic identity from development that could harm this identity.
- k) Secure the development of sustainable communities, through the promotion of the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area.

The proposal is to change the use of an existing building to form a holiday let. In terms of scale, design and materials, the scheme is sympathetic to the character of the immediate setting. With regard to security, the building will be accessed from the main driveway to Villa Farm. This is a private driveway and as such, no unauthorised individuals would have access to the site. There are many local footpaths for visitors to explore and the site is within walking distance of the village, where the bus link travels to Whitchurch and Wrexham.

As the building structures are already on the site, within the garden of Villa Farm and no hedges or trees are to be disturbed, there should be no impact on wildlife habitats. Being garden land, there are no contamination concerns and the site is not within a flood risk area.

With regard to sustainability, re-using an existing structure is generally accepted as a sustainable form of development. The materials for the construction works, where

feasible, will be sourced locally to reduce embodied energy levels associated with construction materials. The work will be undertaken by local contractors which will further contribute to reducing carbon emissions associated with transport.

The site is within a mile of the village and a short distance to local attractions, being within just 2 miles of the racecourse.

With regard to economic, social and environmental goals, the proposal will provide employment for both the construction works and for the management and maintenance of the holiday let facility. Encouraging more tourism, also increases the revenue of local businesses, as visitors explore the local area and make use of local shops, eateries and entertainment facilities. Socially, the holiday accommodation offers the opportunity for people to visit the beautiful local countryside, relax in a peaceful environment, enjoy exercise by walking or cycling and experience a calming retreat, away from the stresses of everyday life. Environmentally, the conversion works would be undertaken to a high standard of specification, incorporating environmental and energy efficient design features along with some of the latest modern facilities and technology. The building will fully comply with the latest building regulations.

CLF9 Visitor Accommodation Outside Settlement Limits

Visitor accommodation outside settlement limits will only be permitted through the conversion of existing buildings and by extensions to existing serviced and self-serviced accommodation. The conversion of existing buildings will only be permitted where:-

- a) the building is of pre-1948, brick/stone, and slate/tile construction; and
- b) the building is structurally sound and capable of conversion without extensive rebuilding tantamount to the erection of a new structure; and
- c) any inherent characteristics of merit in the building are retained; and
- d) the proposed accommodation 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 must be sufficient to create a habitable unit without extension.

Extensions to existing serviced and self-serviced accommodation will only be permitted where:-

- a) existing buildings are fully utilised and incapable of further adaptation; and

b) the proposed extension is appropriate in scale and design to the existing building, and does not have an adverse impact on the local landscape, green barrier or other features of acknowledged importance.

The proposal is to change the use of an existing building within the garden area of Villa Farm in order to expand the holiday let provision at the site. The existing holiday let was formed by sub-dividing the original dwelling and now a separate unit is proposed. The scheme is small scale and due to the position of the existing structures and design of the proposed unit, to be in keeping with the immediate area, only small changes to the building will be made, including a flat roof on the enclosed wall section and a small extension to link two existing structures.

The proposed accommodation is within the garden area of Villa Farm and therefore would not intrude into the landscape, create access problems, nor require the provision of services at public cost.

PS2 Development and the Environment

Development must not materially detrimentally affect countryside, landscape/townscape character, open space, or the quality of the natural environment.

As the proposal relates to holiday accommodation formed from existing structures within the curtilage of a dwelling, it is believed that the development would not affect the landscape character, open space or quality of the natural environment.

T8 Parking

Development granted planning permission will be required to provide vehicle parking spaces either on site or nearby, in accordance with the Council's current parking standards. Special regard will be paid to the following factors, as appropriate:-

- a) the availability of public transport nearby,
- b) proximity to public car parking,
- c) proximity to local services and facilities,
- d) road safety hazards and amenity considerations arising from on-street parking in the vicinity of the site.

Where implementation difficulties arise in making parking provision on-site or nearby, the Council will require a developer to make financial contributions for measures to assist public transport, or walking and cycling as appropriate.

Villa Farm is a large site and has the benefit of a large area for parking vehicles. As the proposed scheme is for a small holiday let, there will be sufficient existing space for car parking of visitors.

EC5 Special Landscape Areas

Within Special Landscape Areas, priority will be given to the conservation and enhancement of the landscape. Development, other than for agriculture, small-scale farm-based and other rural enterprises, and essential operational development by utility service providers, will be strictly controlled. Development will be required to conform to a high standard of design and landscaping, and special attention will be paid to minimising its visual impact both from nearby and distant viewpoints.

The change of use and adaptation of existing structures within the curtilage of a dwelling to form visitor accommodation will not impact on the Special Landscape Area. The development would be classed as a rural enterprise, that will be constructed of high quality. The design of the proposal takes account of the landscape character of the area and as such, only minimal amendments to the buildings are proposed, including a flat roof on the single storey section. The development will not encroach into the open countryside. Due to design, topography of the local landscape and established boundaries around surrounding land, the development will not impact on the views from within or from outside the site.

Conclusion

This proposal is for the change of use and extension of a two storey outbuilding for holiday let accommodation within the curtilage of Villa Farm. The siting, scale, design and materials used are sympathetic to the existing farmhouse and surrounding area.

As noted within the UDP, Policy CLF9, paragraph 9.9, "Good quality overnight visitor accommodation can provide opportunities for local jobs and benefits for local service suppliers and, in rural areas aid economic diversification. There is a general shortfall in accommodation locally."

It is believed that the design of the proposed accommodation in terms of materials, scale and location is sympathetic to its immediate surroundings and will not negatively impact the existing settlement pattern and the local historic, wildlife, and landscape character.

This proposed application is small scale to provide visitor accommodation and is to be sited within the residential curtilage of the site. The proposed development will be formed from existing buildings and will not have a detrimental impact on the landscape, wildlife habitats or neighbouring land and residences. The proposed development will expand an existing rural business, providing economic benefits to the rural community. As such, it is respectfully requested that this application should be recommended for approval.