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Design and Access Statement



Proposed Conversion of Existing Barn to a Single Four-Bedroom Dwelling

Bryn Y Cabanau Farm, Marchwiel, Wrexham

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the conversion of an existing agricultural barn at Bryn Y Cabanau Farm, Marchwiel, Wrexham into a single four-bedroom residential dwelling.

The proposal seeks to secure the long-term beneficial use of the existing rural building through sensitive conversion works that preserve its character and appearance while providing high-quality residential accommodation.

This statement describes the site context, design principles, access arrangements and how the proposal accords with relevant national and local planning policy.

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2. Planning Policy Context

The proposal has been prepared having regard to national and local planning policy relevant to the conversion of rural buildings within the open countryside.

The statutory development plan for Wrexham currently comprises:

- Future Wales: The National Plan 2040;
- Wrexham Unitary Development Plan 1996–2011 (adopted 2005).

The proposal has particular regard to the following Wrexham UDP policies:

- **Policy GDP1 – Development Objectives**
- **Policy PS2 – Development and the Natural Environment**
- **Policy H3 – Conversion of Buildings Outside Settlement Limits**
- **Policy H5 – Housing in the Countryside**
- **Policy EC6 – Biodiversity Conservation**

The application has also been prepared with reference to:

- Wrexham Local Planning Guidance Note No. 3 – *Converting Rural Buildings*;
- Wrexham Local Planning Guidance Note No. 13 – *Housing in the Countryside*;
- Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12);
- Technical Advice Note (TAN) 6 – *Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities*;
- Technical Advice Note (TAN) 12 – *Design*.

The proposal accords with the overarching objective of supporting the sensitive re-use of existing rural buildings where their character and setting can be preserved and enhanced.

3. Site Context

The application site forms part of Bryn Y Cabanau Farm located within the rural area surrounding Marchwiel, near Wrexham. The site comprises an existing agricultural barn situated within the established residential grounds and close proximity to the existing dwelling and will share the existing access.

The surrounding area is characterised by open countryside, agricultural land and dispersed rural buildings. The barn is of traditional agricultural appearance and makes a positive contribution to the rural character of the locality.

The building is currently underutilised and the proposed conversion will ensure its continued maintenance and preservation.

4. Existing Building

The existing barn is structurally sound and capable of conversion without substantial rebuilding. The proposal retains the majority of the existing structure, including the external walls, roof form and overall scale and massing. A portal frame structure existing to the rear of the building forming a covered section.

This is at odds with the area, and will be removed as part of the conversation, further enhancing the appearance of the area.

The building's agricultural character will be preserved through the retention of traditional openings and the use of sympathetic materials and detailing.

5. Design Principles and Policy Compliance

Principle of Development

The proposed conversion involves the re-use of an existing rural building of permanent and substantial construction to provide a single residential dwelling.

The proposal accords with UDP Policy H3 relating to the conversion of buildings outside settlement limits. The building is capable of conversion without extensive rebuilding and retains its essential rural character and appearance.

The proposal also complies with Policy H5 in that it does not constitute isolated new-build housing in the countryside but instead represents the sustainable re-use of an existing structure.

The scheme reflects the objectives of Policy GDP1 by:

- respecting the character and appearance of the surrounding area;
- safeguarding residential amenity;
- providing satisfactory parking and access arrangements; and
- avoiding unacceptable environmental impacts.

Amount and Use

The proposal involves the conversion of the existing barn to form one four-bedroom single dwelling. The scale of development is limited to the existing footprint and volume of the building.

No extensions are proposed, ensuring that the development remains subordinate to and respectful of the original structure.

Layout

The internal layout has been designed to work within the existing structural form of the barn. Living accommodation is arranged to maximise natural light while retaining the character of the building.

The proposed dwelling includes:

- Entrance hall;
- Open-plan kitchen, dining area and living space;
- Living room;
- Utility and ancillary accommodation;

- Four bedrooms 2 at ground floor level with 2 further bedrooms within the roof void;
- Bathrooms and en-suite facilities.

External amenity space and parking are accommodated within the existing residential setting.

Scale

The proposal retains the existing scale, height and proportions of the barn. The conversion therefore maintains the established appearance of the building within the rural landscape.

Appearance

In accordance with Local Planning Guidance Note No. 3 – *Converting Rural Buildings*, the conversion has been designed to retain the building's:

- original form and proportions;
- existing structural character;
- traditional external appearance; and
- relationship with the wider farmstead setting.

Existing openings will be retained and 2 new openings are kept to a minimum in size and designed to reflect the agricultural character of the building. The front elevation is to remain as existing, being the most prominent aspect.

Existing stonework and external materials will be retained wherever possible and repaired using matching materials.

New windows and doors will be modest in scale and traditional in appearance to respect the original building form.

Roofing coverings are to remain in place.

The proposal therefore accords with the Council's guidance for rural building conversions and the design objectives contained within Planning Policy Wales and TAN12.

Landscaping

Existing boundary treatments and landscape features will be retained where practicable. Any additional landscaping will be modest and rural in character, ensuring the proposal integrates appropriately within the surrounding countryside.

External lighting will be kept to a minimum to reduce visual impact and protect rural amenity.

6. Access

Vehicular Access

Access to the site will be obtained via the existing access track onto the local highway network. No significant alterations to the existing access arrangements are proposed.

The development is expected to generate a low level of traffic consistent with a single residential dwelling and will not materially affect highway safety.

Adequate parking and turning areas will be provided within the site curtilage.

Pedestrian Access

Safe pedestrian access will be available from the parking area to the dwelling entrance via level or gently graded pathways where practicable.

Inclusive Access

The dwelling has been designed to provide a practical and accessible environment for all users. The ground floor accommodation and access arrangements provide flexibility for occupants and visitors with differing mobility requirements.

7. Sustainability and Rural Character

The proposal represents a sustainable form of development through the retention and re-use of an existing rural building, reducing the need for new construction materials and preserving the embodied energy of the existing structure.

The conversion will incorporate modern insulation and energy-efficient measures where appropriate while respecting the character of the building.

The development will secure the long-term future of the building and prevent deterioration associated with redundancy and underuse.

In accordance with Planning Policy Wales and TAN6, the proposal supports the sustainable management of the rural environment by making effective use of an existing building while preserving the character of the countryside.

8. Biodiversity

The proposal has been designed to minimise impacts upon the surrounding natural environment in accordance with UDP Policies PS2 and EC6.

Existing landscape features and ecological habitats will be retained wherever practicable. Any external works associated with the conversion will be limited in scope and sympathetic to the rural setting.

Where appropriate, biodiversity enhancement measures such as bat or bird boxes may be incorporated into the development, as detailed on the planning drawings.

9. Conclusion

The proposed conversion of the existing barn at Bryn Y Cabanau Farm into a single four-bedroom dwelling represents an appropriate and sustainable form of rural development.

The proposal complies with the relevant provisions of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan, including Policies GDP1, H3, H5, PS2 and EC6, together with the principles contained within Local Planning Guidance Note No. 3 – *Converting Rural Buildings* and national planning policy guidance.

The development will preserve the character and appearance of the existing rural building, maintain the visual quality of the countryside and provide a high-quality residential conversion with safe and suitable access arrangements.

It is respectfully requested that planning permission be granted.

Prepared by:
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on behalf of Blueprint Architectural Services