PLANNING STATEMENT

Client: Mr. A. Allsop and Mr. P. S. Allsop.

Location: **Barn C, Bagnall Grange Farm, Tompkin Lane, Stanley, ST9 9NA.**

Proposal: **CHANGE OF USE AND CONVERSION OF A FARM BUILDING TO FORM A SINGLE DWELLING INCLUDING THE DEMOLITION OF THE EASTERN END OF THE BUILDING TO CREATE A PEDESTRIAN ACCESS.**



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1. INTRODUCTION

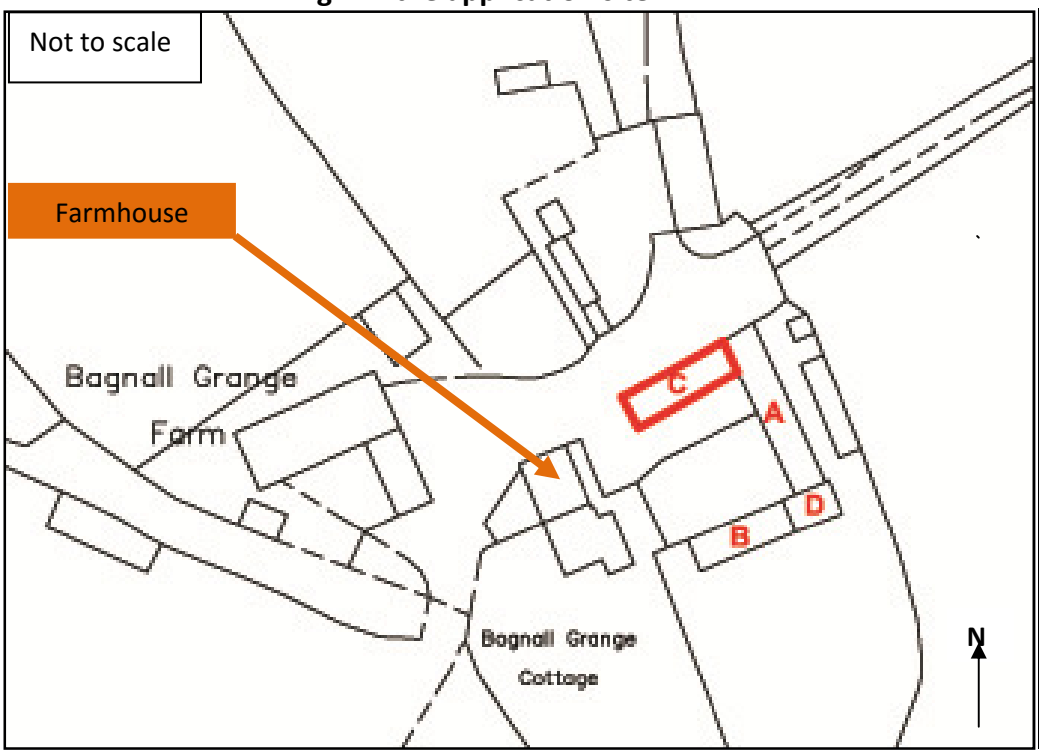
1.1 This statement is submitted in support of a prior notification application (Class Q of the General Permitted Development Order 2015 (GPDO)) for the change of use and conversion of a redundant farm building to a house.

2 THE APPLICATION SITE AND ITS SETTING

2.1 The application site is located at Bagnall Grange Farm, Tompkin Lane, Stanley which is a beef farm set in the countryside overlooking Stanley Pool and which consists of 68 acres (27.5 ha);15-20 acres (6.1-8.1ha) of which is used for haylage. There are four farm buildings (see Fig 1) forming a three-sided courtyard to the east of the farmhouse – buildings A, B, C, and D. For ease of reference they are referred to in this document as Barns A, B, C, and D. The proposal is to convert Barn C (see Fig 1 below) into a dwelling.

2.2 In September 2015 prior notification approval (DET/2015/ 0026) was granted for the conversion of Barn A to form two dwellings, the partial demolition of Barn C and the demolition of Barn D. Permission to convert Barn B was refused in the same month. Following refusal of permission to convert Barn B the clients made a decision to seek permission to convert Barn C and only demolish a small part of it. This means changes to the permission on Barn A and a prior notification application for revisions to the Barn A permission is submitted concurrent with this application.

Fig. 1 – the application site



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2.3 Barn C is single-storey and built of a mixture of brick and stone with a clay tile roof. The building abuts Barn A to the east but there is no connecting door. Photographs 1-4 below show the three visible elevations. The eastern part of the building is built in brick and the western part in stone.

Photographs 1-4: Building C



1 *The north-east side from the west*



2 The *north-east side from the east. The left hand side of the building to be demolished to create a pedestrian access.*





2.4 The Council when refusing permission to convert Barn B referred to Bagnall Grange Farm as an historic farmstead and considers the farm to be a local historic asset. As far as I am aware it is not on the Register of Local Historic Assets but nonetheless its location close to the farmhouse and its general setting has been taken into account.

THE PROPOSAL

3.1 The proposal is to create a single dwelling within the existing building and demolish and re-build the eastern end of the building to create a pedestrian access. If approved the barn would become a one bedroom house with car parking in the proposed curtilage to the south of the building. The footprint and curtilages are shown on Drawing No. 1427-02.

4 **DESIGN AND ACCESS ISSUES**

4.1 Design and access matters are described below:

- ***Appearance*** – The external changes are low key and consist of:
  - North Elevation:
    - New window at western end of the elevation.
    - Demolition of the eastern end of the building where it adjoins Barn A to create a pedestrian access and the building of a new end (eastern) wall.
  - South Elevation:
    - The doorway nearest to the western end of the building would be retained and glazed.
    - The second doorway along from the western end of the building to be changed to a window.
    - The next partly blocked doorway to the east to be re-opened ad a glazed door.
    - The next doorway to the east to be retained.
    - The second existing window from the eastern end of the building to be bricked up.
  - West Elevation:
    - The existing double doors to be glazed.
  - The roof to be re-tiled.
- ***Scale*** – The dimensions of the building would be unchanged. The footprint of the building is 95.4 m². The internal floor area in the building would be about 77 m². The proposed curtilage would consist of two parts – a northern area and an area to the south in the courtyard. The total area of the curtilage would be 82.6 m². If the application is approved that would make a total of three dwellings with approval on the site. The total cumulative floorspace (Barn A + Barn C) would be 180.2 m² plus 77 m² = 257.2 m².
- ***Layout*** – The changes to the present would be the creation of curtilage areas on the northern and southern sides of the building and the creation of a pedestrian access at the eastern end of the building. The southern curtilage to include a parking space. The entire building is to be retained; hence the need to re-submit a proposal for Barn A.

- ***Landscaping*** – none proposed.
- ***Access*** – access to the farm would be down the existing farm track and then around the west end of the building.

5 PLANNING POLICIES

5.1 The Development Plan for Staffordshire Moorlands consists of the adopted Core Strategy (2014). The relevant saved policies in the Core Strategy are Policies R1 and R2 (Rural Diversification and Rural Housing); SS6c (Other Rural Areas); and DC1 (Design Considerations). However, as this is a Prior notification application under Class of the General Development Procedure Order(GPDO) and the local planning authority must limit its considerations to the conditions and limitations of the GPDO and the issues specified in paragraph Q.2 which are:

- Transport and highways.
- Noise impacts.
- Contamination risks.
- Flooding risks.
- Location or siting……impractical or undesirable.
- Design or external appearance.

5.2 The Planning Practice Guidance in relation to Class Q was amended in April 2014 to make clear that a local planning authority must only consider the National Planning Policy Framework to the extent that it is relevant to the matter on which prior approval is sought,for example, transport, highways, noise etc".

5.3 Planning Practice Guidance on such applications was updated in March 2015. The updates in the guidance include the question of “sustainability”; the number of units allowed under Class Q on any one farm; and structural works to buildings.

6. THE CASE FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

6.1 The key issue is whether the proposed residential development is in accord with the requirements of Class Q of the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO).

6.2 Class Q allows both the change of use of farm buildings to residential use and building operations necessary to convert the building subject to certain restrictions and conditions.

6.3 The restrictions include:

- *The cumulative floor space of the existing building or buildings changing use under Class Q within an established agricultural unit must not exceed 450 square metres.*
- *The cumulative number of separate dwelling-houses developed within an established agricultural unit cannot be more than three;*
- *The site was used solely for an agricultural use, as part of an established agricultural unit on 20th March 2013 or if the site was not in use on that date, when it was last in use.*
- *If the site is subject to an agricultural tenancy the express consent to the development from both the landlord and tenant must be obtained.*
- *If the site was subject to an agricultural tenancy more than a year has elapsed since the tenancy was terminated.*

6.4 The response to these requirements is:

- The total cumulative internal floor space of Barn A plus Barn C would be = 257.2 m². This is less than the Class Q limit.
- If this application is approved there would be permission for three converted dwellings on the site. This is in line with the requirements in Class Q.
- The building contains two rooms – a tractor garage and agricultural workshop and a second room containing animal stalls for smaller animals. It is in current use and was in agricultural use on 20 March 2013. The applicant's parents and the applicant have together farmed at the land for about 50-60 years and the building is used solely for agricultural use. Class Q1(a) of the GPDO 2015 states that:

  "Development is not permitted by Class Q if -

  (a) The site was not used solely for an agricultural use as part of an established agricultural unit—

  (i) on 20th March 2013, or

  (ii) in the case of a building which was in use before that date but was not in use on that date, when it was last in use, or

(iii) in the case of a site which was brought into use after 20th March 2013, for a period of at least 10 years before the date development under Class Q begins;

This building meets the GPDO requirements in terms of agricultural use.

- No permitted development farm buildings under Class A(a) or Class B(a) of Part 6 of Schedule 2 of the GPDO (agricultural buildings and operations) has been carried out on the established agricultural unit since 20th March 2013.

- There is no agricultural tenancy on the site and the site has not been subject to such a tenancy.

6.5 The proposed building operations comply with the requirements in Part 3, paragraph Q1 (i)(i) of the GPDO. No structural alterations are proposed. Some doorways and windows are to be altered and windows created and part of the building demolished and a new wall built. This would be in line with the limits in paragraph Q1(i)(i) which allows building operations including, amongst other things, the installation or replacement of windows and doors and the building of walls to the extent reasonably necessary for the building to function as a dwellinghouse.

6.6 Curtilage in relation to Class Q means (see Part Schedule 2, 3, Paragraph X) either the piece of land immediately beside or next to the agricultural building which serves the agricultural building **or** (my emphasis) an area of land immediately beside or around the agricultural building no larger than the land area occupied by the agricultural building, This would be the case here. The footprint of the building is 95.4 sq. metres and the proposed curtilage would be 82.6 m². The proposed curtilage is less than the footprint and would be in accord with the GPDO.

6.7 With regard to the issues specified in specified in paragraph Q2 (1) it is considered that there are no issues with regard to transport and highways, noise and contamination and flooding. Access would be from the western side of the courtyard to the west of the building and parking would be within the proposed curtilage. The site is not within a flood risk zone on the Environment Agency maps and there are no contamination or noise issues.

6.8 The recent changes in the guidance on the Planning Practice Guidance website indicate that the permitted development right does not apply a test in relation to sustainability of location. The guidance recognises that many agricultural buildings will not be in village settlements. The local planning authority can consider whether the location and siting of the building would make it impracticable or undesirable to change use to a house but this does not relate to the issue of sustainability rather to practical considerations such as whether there is satisfactory access; whether there are services; whether it would be adversely affected by farming operations such as the proximity to a silage or manure pit. None of these, or similar, considerations apply to this site. The courtyard to the south will be primarily residential in use and character in the future and the area to the north is the access with the main working part of the farm further away.

6.9 With regard to design and external appearance the proposed changes to the building are relatively minimal and the essential agricultural appearance of the building will be maintained although this is not a requirement of the permitted development rights. The proposed changes would be in accord with both the advice on design in the national Planning Policy Framework and Core Strategy Policy DC1.

Other material considerations

6.10 A bat survey report is submitted with the application. The building is not considered to be used by bats.

6.11 The proposed conversion would provide a much needed house in the Moorlands which has a shortage of deliverable housing land. In simple terms every dwelling counts.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 It is considered that the proposed development accords with the intentions and requirements of the General Development Order which allows the conversion of buildings to new homes in the countryside.

7.2 The District Council is therefore requested to grant prior approval for this development.