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**Proposal to Convert Existing Stable Building into**  
**2 no. Holiday Let Apartments**

**Heath House Farm, Caverswall Old Road, Forsbrook  
Staffs ST11 9BQ**

**For**

**Mr A Doherty**

**PLANNING APPLICATION**  
**DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT**

**JOB NO 2887**  
**December 2015**

# **PLANNING APPLICATION DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT.**

## **1) Use of the Development and Relevant Planning Considerations**

Heath House Farm is a well-established small plant nursery, with a thriving shop and restaurant business, situated between Caverswall and Forsbrook, close to Blythe Bridge, Staffordshire.

The proposed development is to convert an existing Stable Building within the Heath House Farm site into 2 no. Holiday Let Apartments.

In the preparation of this application, the following Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan Policies have been considered:

B13 – Design Quality, Amenity Standards and Access Requirements

B21 – Conversion of Rural Buildings

T16 – T18 Access and Parking

R16 – R18 Tourism Accommodation – Conversion of Existing Buildings.

Core Strategy Development Plan (March 2014)

## **2) Site Analysis**

The Heath House Farm Site is situated off Caverswall Old Road, Forsbrook, close to the junction with Caverswall Road. The grid reference is SJ 95894 41903. (See accompanying Location Plan)

The Site, overall, measures approximately 8 hectares, comprising the Applicant's own dwelling, the Shop and Restaurant, three barns and a large area of glasshouses for the production and sale of plants, in addition to the Stable Building, the conversion of which is the subject of this application. There is also a considerable area of agricultural land, used for the production of silage and haylage.

The stable building in question was built in 2006, but has, in fact, never been utilised as a stable.

A two-bay area of the ground floor functions as a kitchen / preparation area and stores, as an annexe to the main restaurant.

The remainder of the stable is largely empty, small areas being used as temporary storage only.

## **3) Justification for Proposals**

The suitability of holiday let accommodation and the desirability of bringing back into use empty or underused properties is supported by Staffordshire Moorlands' Core Strategy Development Plan (March 2014), as noted in the following extracts:

“Well managed, sustainable tourism will be a major driver in regenerating the rural areas and enhancing their character and quality.”

7.44 “The strategy places a strong emphasis on sustainable tourism, as a key driver for diversifying the local economy and strengthening the District’s role in the sub-region. The District already has a significant number of tourism assets and given its strategic location near to major centres of population and adjoining the Peak District is well placed to play a major role in the North Staffordshire sub-region as a centre for rural tourism. **This will be achieved by providing opportunities to increase the length of visitor stays,** promoting more sustainable forms of tourism which are compatible with the character of the area, establishing links between existing tourist facilities and enhancing and managing tourism in a way which balances the needs of visitors, residents and the environment. Delivering this will require a partnership approach with key organisations and neighbouring authorities as well as engaging the private sector in identifying opportunities. The Council has undertaken a Tourism Study which highlights that the District has the potential and capacity to attract more visitors and to create more jobs in this sector. It identifies a number of potentially transformational projects which could provide significant impact on the tourism economy of the District, either in terms of direct impact and job creation or in terms of catalysing wider development.”

“For local ‘Larger Villages’ (in this case Blythe Bridge and Forsbrook), the Council will ensure that new development reflects and enhances each village’s special character and heritage **by giving priority to the reuse and regeneration of existing redundant, underused or surplus sites and premises for new development.**”

The applicant has, additionally, canvassed local letting agencies and received positive responses regarding the provision of family orientated holiday rental accommodation, in view of the proximity of attractions such as the adjacent Foxfield Light Railway, Alton Towers and the general attraction of the Staffordshire Moorlands for outdoor pursuits.

#### **4) Design Concept and Principles**

It is not proposed to fundamentally alter the character or surroundings of the existing stable block, but to incorporate family dwellings into the existing building within the amenities of Heath House Farm, with it’s nursery, shop and restaurant activities, along with the Applicant’s own residence, which is also nearby.

The proposal is to provide two family sized holiday apartments, each on two floors, by adjusting the existing first floor / roof space floor level to achieve the necessary space for first floor accommodation.

Additional window openings, roof lights and dormer windows are proposed, to provide the necessary daylight, ventilation and general internal domestic environment.

## **5) External Appearance**

The existing facing brick elevations will be retained, with new external window and door openings being located in the positions of existing door and shutter openings, where possible.

The existing plain tiled roof will be maintained, with the addition of traditional dormer windows, constructed with lead-faced cheeks and plain tiled pitched roofs to match the existing roof.

The existing yard area to the north of the proposed accommodation will be paved with porous block paving, providing parking spaces for 4 no cars.

The boundary of this new courtyard will be delineated by a 1.5M high brick garden wall, with a vehicle width access opening, all as indicated on the accompanying Block Plan.

## **6) Access**

Vehicular access to the proposed accommodation will be via the existing driveway to the Applicants own dwelling, the entrance to which is next to the public entrance from Caverswall Old Road. This access continues into the new paved courtyard, as previously described under External Appearance. (See accompanying Location and Block Plans.

Given the popular use and proximity of the public access to Heath House Farm's nursery, shop and restaurant, there should be no discernible increase in traffic flow to the site brought about by this proposed development.

As previously noted, Heath House Farm is a short drive from the villages of Forsbrook, Caverswall and Blythe Bridge.

Pedestrian access into the proposed accommodation will be facilitated by flat access thresholds in accordance with Approved Document M of the Building Regulations.

## **Drawings for Full Planning Approval**

This Design and Access Statement should be read in conjunction with the planning drawings submitted for this application.