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PLANNING | ARCHITECTURE | URBAN DESIGN

Planning Statement

Demolition of existing steel framed agricultural building to provide purpose built garage and agricultural machinery store, solar array and battery store

Hayes Gate Farm,
Star Bank, Oakamoor

July 2022

Document Control Sheet

Project Name	Change of use and alterations from agricultural building to garage
Client	Mr & Mrs Mellor
Project Reference	3849
Project Lead	MB
Team Members	SH, MK

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Planning & Design Practice is a town planning and architectural design consultancy consisting of chartered town planners and an architectural design team. The practice operates across England and Wales and, with over 60 years combined experience in the team, the company has an excellent record of success.

1.2 We have been instructed by Mr & Mrs Mellor, the owners of the site to prepare and submit a full planning application for the change of use and alterations of an agricultural unit to a triple garage with battery store located at Hayes Gate Farm, Oakamoor.

1.3 This report has been structured to provide an introduction to the site and discuss its planning history, details of the proposed development and the rationale for it; and an examination of the key planning issues to be considered.

1.4 Also submitted to accompany this report are the following:

- Site location plan
- Existing and proposed elevations
- Existing and proposed floor plans

2 SITE DESCRIPTION AND PLANNING HISTORY

Site Location

2.1 The proposed development site is located approximately 1.5 km outside the built framework of Oakamoor, Staffordshire. The site is located off the B5417 on the eastern side of Star Bank. The footpath 'Cotton 25' runs through the centre of the site. The site comprises a number of agricultural buildings that include both traditional stone buildings and modern portal frame buildings. The site is no longer used for farming and one of the large modern portal framed barns has been converted into a dwelling. The site is situated 5 miles away from Cheadle, where a number of key amenities are situated including a supermarket and a number of schools.

2.2 This application relates to a steel framed agricultural building located to the north-east of the site. The building is single storey with corrugated cement shed style roofing and is made up of corrugated sheeting and block work and is currently in use as a parking area for both personal vehicles and agricultural machinery. This use was approved on a previous application in 2019 (SMD/2019/0453). According to the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan, the site is situated within the Churnet Valley Masterplan Boundary and in the rural countryside. The site is not located in the Green Belt and is located in Flood Zone 1 and is not considered to be at risk from flooding.



Figure 1 - Aerial photo showing the location of the barn



Figure 2 - The rear elevation of the shed



Figure 3 – Side elevation of the shed

Relevant Planning History

2.3 **SMD/2007/0097** Steel framed agricultural building to housing sheep feed and implement storage – Approved 08/06/2007

2.4 **DET/2017/0030** Change of use Prior Approval for change of use of agricultural building to a dwellinghouse (Class C3) – Refused 15/03/2018

2.5 **DET/2018/0002** Change of use Prior Approval for change of use of agricultural building to a dwellinghouse (Class C3) Appeal – Approved 23/10/2018

2.6 **SMD/2019/0187** Variation of Condition 1 to vary the approved plans, to extend the timber cladding further down the building (in order to improve its appearance) – Approved 11/06/2019

2.7 **SMD/2019/0453** Conversion of stone barn and farm building to provide for their use as additional and ancillary living accommodation and covered parking for the dwellinghouse granted planning permission on the 11th June 2019 (ref SMD/2019/0187) – Approved 11/11/2019.

2.8 **NMA/2019/0023** Non-material amendment in relation to SMD/2019/0187 for the deletion of approved roof-lights from scheme – Approved 29/10/2019

2.9 **SMD/2021/0427** Variation of conditions 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 of planning approval reference number SMD/2019/0187 – Approved 22/10/2021

2.10 **DOC/2021/0070** Discharge of conditions 3, 4 & 6 of SMD/2019/0187 – Awaiting Decision

2.11 **DOC/2022/0018** Discharge of conditions 2 and 3 of planning permission SMD/2021/0427 – Approved 18/05/2022

2.12 Planning application SMD/2019/0453 has been implemented and the change of use of the existing building to provide a covered parking area has been implemented.

3 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

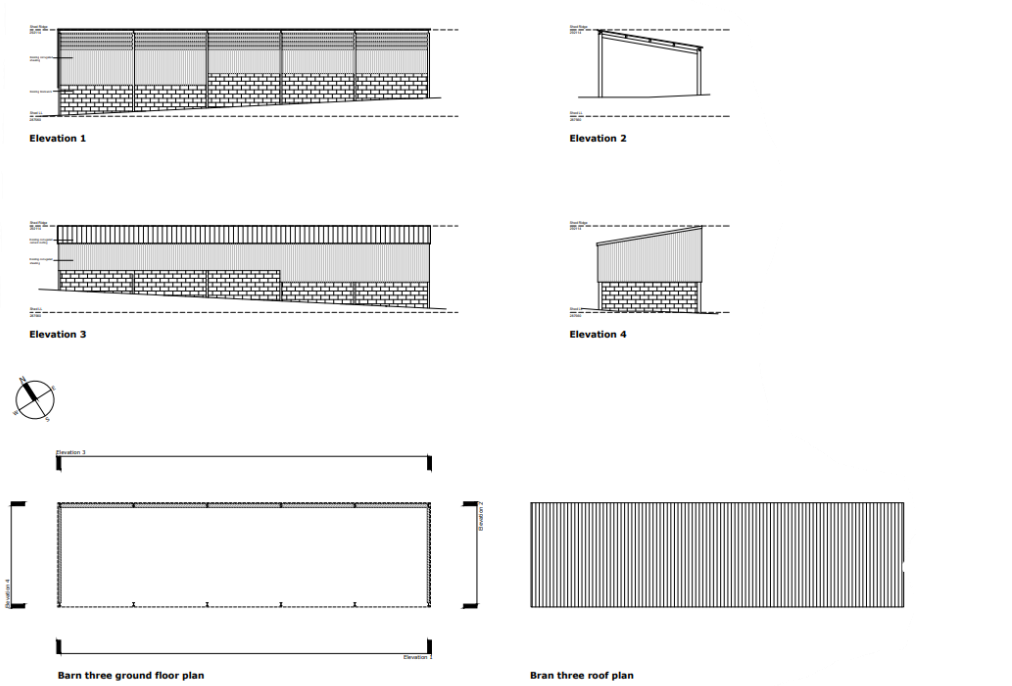
3.1 The proposed development is for the demolition of the existing building and the erection of a steel framed agricultural style building to provide domestic garage, agricultural machinery store, solar array and battery store. The applicants live on site and own the abutting agricultural land. Whilst the farming operation as largely wound down, there is still a need to manage the land and as such, the proposed building includes provision for a modest agricultural store within the building.

3.2 The steel framed building will have a dual pitched black metal roof, which has been designed to accommodate the proposed solar array on the southern half of the pitched roof. The slight offset pitch to the roof has been designed to maximise the angle and area available for solar panels whilst maintaining a rural aesthetic.

3.3 The unit will be clad in black corrugated sheet metal. On the south-western elevation there will be three garage doors for personal vehicles on the western half, with three small windows being situated on the eastern side, allowing light to enter into the agricultural machinery store and to break up the pattern of black cladding on the frontage. The south-eastern elevation will possess a large opening to store the agricultural machinery.

3.4 The new building proposed will be a large improvement in terms of the aesthetic, security and sustainability compared to the existing steel shed that is present on the site. The proposed garage style will provide a higher standard of design than that which is currently on the site, and as a result will be more complimentary to the surrounding landscape. The solar panels and the associated battery store will ensure the unit can be powered solely by renewable energy and can subsequently store it for a later date and utilise it on demand. As a result, the development's overall impact on the environment is reduced.

3.5 The proposed development forms part of a cluster of buildings which are now in (or consented for) residential use. The existing steel framed barn which has been converted to a dwelling is Timber Clad, the consented stone barn is formed of traditional, local stone.



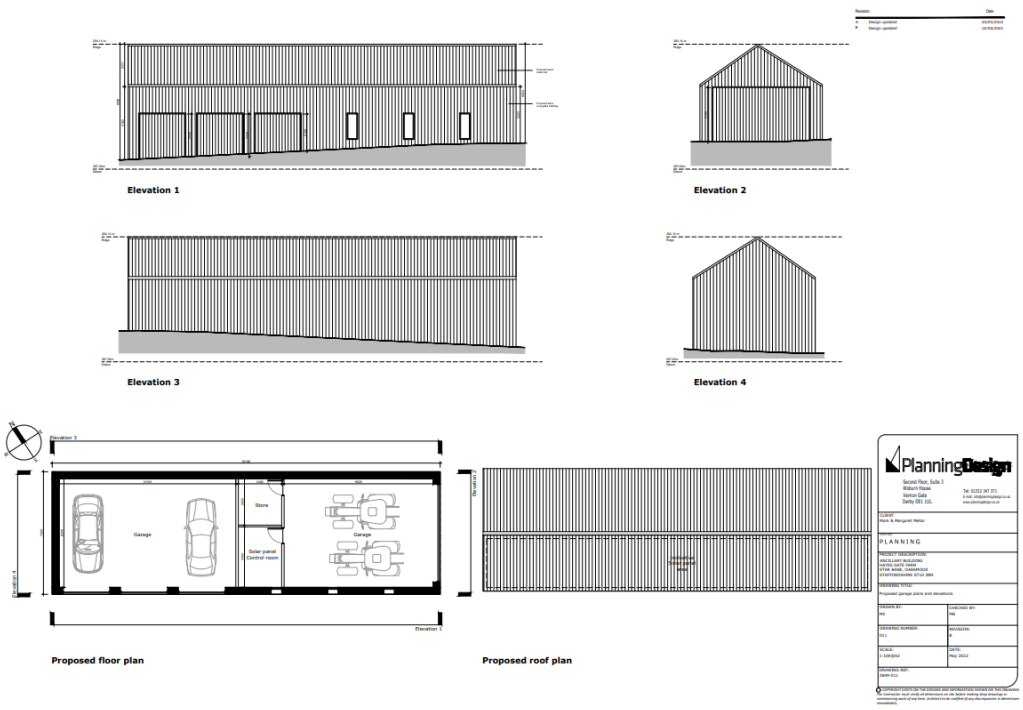


Figure 4 – Existing elevations and floor and roof plans

Figure 4 – Proposed elevations and floor and roof plans

4 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan - September 2020

4.1 The development guidance policies contained in this report refer to the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan which was adopted in September 2020.

4.2 Policy SS 10 – Other Rural Areas Strategy

"The other rural areas comprise the countryside and the green belt outside of the development boundaries of the towns and larger villages and the open countryside surrounding the smaller villages.

These areas will provide only for development which has an essential need to be located in the countryside, supports the rural diversification and sustainability of the rural areas, promotes sustainable tourism or enhances the countryside. The Council and its partners will achieve this through the following actions:

1. *Meet housing requirements and specific needs by:*

   Allowing the conversion or replacement of an existing rural building in accordance with Policy H 1;

   Allowing extensions or additional domestic outbuildings to existing dwellings provided they are appropriate in scale and design and do not have a detrimental impact on the existing dwelling and the character of the rural area. The Council will assess schemes having regard to the original dwelling, in cases where cumulative change has occurred;"

4.3 Policy SS 11 – Churnet Valley Strategy

"The Churnet Valley is identified as an area for sustainable tourism and rural regeneration. The Churnet Valley Masterplan provides a comprehensive framework for development in the Churnet Valley and development should be in accordance with the Masterplan. Within this area particular support will be given to the following forms of development and measures:

measures to enhance, protect and interpret the landscape character and heritage assets of the Churnet Valley;

measures to remediate and restore derelict land, buildings and features including the appropriate redevelopment of sites;

Any development should be of a scale and nature and of a high standard of design which conserves and enhances the heritage, landscape and biodiversity of the area. Strong sustainable development and environmental management principles should also be demonstrated. The consideration of landscape character will be paramount in all development proposals in order to protect and conserve locally distinctive qualities and sense of place and to maximise opportunities for restoring, strengthening and enhancing distinctive landscape features."

4.4 Policy SD 3 – Sustainability Measures in Development

"The Council will support further carbon-saving or water-saving measures in both new and existing developments, in the following ways:

1. *Supporting developers who propose exceeding the thermal efficiency or water conservation standards required by law for new buildings or extensions, at the time of the application. In the case of larger developments such as housing estates the Council will support measures such as 'communal' renewables, or District Heating installations.*

2. *The Council will support measures by landowners/developers designed to contribute to existing or emerging District Heating networks (for example by connecting 'exporters', with receptors, of heat).*

3. *The Council will support measures designed to improve the sustainability of existing buildings (such as improved thermal insulation, water conservation, or the installation of micro-renewables)."*

4.5 Policy DC 1 – Design Considerations

"All development shall be well designed and reinforce local distinctiveness by positively contributing to and complementing the special character and heritage of the area in line with the Council's Design Guide SPD. In particular, new development should:

1. *be of a high quality and add value to the local area, incorporating creativity, detailing and materials appropriate to the character of the area;*

2. *be designed to respect the site and its surroundings and promote a positive sense of place and identity through its scale, height, density, layout, siting, landscaping, character and appearance;*

4. *incorporate sustainable construction techniques and design concepts for buildings and their layouts to reduce the impact of the development;*

5. *protect the amenity of the area, including creation of healthy active environments and residential amenity, in terms of satisfactory daylight, visual impact, sunlight, outlook, privacy, soft landscaping as well as noise, odour and light pollution;"*

Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide (2018)

4.6 Landscape and Settlements

"The Council supports use of sustainable design and construction methods and is committed to delivering new homes with environmentally sustainable design."

4.7 Setting

3.2 "In the countryside or on the edge of settlements, buildings should sit comfortably in the landscape. This is best achieved by emulating the horizontal, ground-hugging form of traditional buildings with their strong eaves and ridge lines and simple, low silhouettes parallel with the contours."

3.9 "New buildings should use facing materials that either match or compliment those of the surroundings."

4.8 Details and Materials

7.16 "The predominant building stone in the Staffordshire Moorlands is gritstone and sandstone which vary in quality and appearance."

7.20 "It is important that the correct type, colour and finish of stone is chosen for each locality, especially when adding to, or altering, an existing building."

4.9 Sustainable Use of Materials

7.33 "Some general principles to bear in mind:

- *Use salvaged or recycled products/materials, including aggregates*

National Model Design Code

4.10 Context

9. "It is necessary to undertake a context study of the area surrounding the site and site and the opportunities that are there to develop local character and distinctiveness, the wider area for a full understanding of the place in order to respond positively to its distinctive features. Well-designed buildings need to respect and enhance their built and natural environment surroundings whilst addressing local constraints, the vision for its area type and responding positively to new issues such as innovation and environmental sustainability."

10. "Developments need to respond to the It is necessary to undertake a context study of the area surrounding the site and site and the opportunities that are there to develop local character and distinctiveness."

4.11 Resources

197. "Well-designed places and buildings conserve natural resources including buildings, land, water, energy and materials. Their design responds to the impacts of climate change by being energy efficient and minimising carbon emissions to meet net zero targets by 2050. It identifies measures to achieve: mitigation, primarily by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and minimising

embodied energy; and adaptation to anticipated events, such as rising temperatures and the increasing risk of flooding"

206. "Reducing embodied energy can be achieved by remodel and reuse of buildings where possible rather than rebuild, using low energy materials, designing to use materials efficiently, reducing the energy used in construction, the re-use of materials and design for disassembly and adaptability so that the carbon locked in the building can be retained or reused in future. This can be achieved by:

- *Reuse of materials"*

207. "All demolition and construction processes and materials production and application have environmental impacts. In addition to embodied energy, issues relate to the impacts of extraction, pollution, ozone, water extraction, and waste disposal. Design codes can include standards and guidance that address these issues."

National Planning Policy Framework

4.12 The new National Planning Policy Framework was published on 24th July 2018 and provides an updated version to the original released in 2012. The framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied.

4.13 At the heart of the Framework there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways.

"Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

a) economic – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

b) social – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) environmental – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy."

4.14 Paragraph 69:

"Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area and are often built-out relatively quickly. To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should:

c) support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes;"

4.15 Paragraph 80:

"Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:

c) the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting"

4.16 Paragraph 119:

"Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating

objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or 'brownfield' land."

4.17 Paragraph 120:

"Planning policies and decisions should:

c) give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land;

4.18 Paragraph 130:

"Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities)."

5 KEY PLANNING ISSUES

Principle of development

5.1 Replacing the existing agricultural steel shed with a more secure garage that allows for the installation of solar panels that will contribute significantly to the energy supply of the existing dwelling is considered to be a sustainable re-use of the land, which is encouraged by paragraph 119 of the NPPF.

5.2 With the site being located within the Churnet Valley strategy area there are a number of factors that need to be considered. Policy SS 11 explains how development should enhance the landscape character with strong sustainability principles whilst also remediating derelict buildings. The proposals outlined here ensure these factors are achieved. The alterations to the storage shed consist of black cladding that will not have an overbearing presence on the site or the surrounding area, but will ensure that visual improvements are achieved and bring the barn up to a higher standard. The proposals therefore satisfy policies SS 10 and SD1, along with SS 11 of the local plan.

5.3 The inclusion of solar panels and the battery store means that the client can generate renewable energy directly on the site and store it to meet demand year-round. The dark materials that are being proposed to clad the building mean that the solar panels will blend in seamlessly with the garage and will not result in any impact upon the surrounding landscape. Paragraph 8 of the NPPF states that an overarching environmental objective of the planning system is "*mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy*." The addition of solar panels on site will help with this transition to the desired low carbon economy, whilst also providing continual access to a renewable energy source. Resulting in a considerably more sustainable development than the existing car port/ domestic store.

Design

5.4 As mentioned throughout this statement, the design of the proposed garage is of a much higher quality than the unit that is currently present. The new roof style will mean that it will be of the same style as the two other existing barns that are on the site, including the approved and occupied barn conversion dwelling. Furthermore, storing vehicles internally within the garage, vehicles and machinery will reduce the over demystification of the site within the landscape. This is particularly relevant for members of the public who use the nearby walking trails and is therefore in accordance with policies SD 1 and DC 1 of the local plan.

Impact on the Churnet Valley Landscape Character Area

5.5 The area falls within the Churnet Valley Landscape Character Area, which seeks to encourage rural regeneration. The proposed building has been sensitively designed with minimal alteration to the scale of the existing building to improve the quality of the site and contribute to the effect it has to the rural landscape. The existing steel shed is in a poor state of repair and, critically, the roof pitch is inadequate for solar panels (north facing mono pitch) design quality. The re-use of the site of an existing former agricultural building which is now in use as a car port/ domestic storage area with a building which can accommodate solar panels and accompanying battery storage facility within a more enclosed building is an enhancement to the existing situation. The proposed use of materials are utilitarian, functional materials that are common within the rural landscape and will not detract from the Churnet Valley Landscape Character Area.

Impact on public footpaths

5.6 Public Footpath 'Cotton 25' runs through the site up the drive from the highway and through the centre of the existing farmyard between the approved conversion and the existing car port/domestic store that this application relates to. The footpath exits the site over a stile, next to a vehicle access gate, at the northern gable end of the stone barn. The footpath will be unaffected by this development and will be maintained.

6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 This application seeks approval for the demolition of an existing steel framed former agricultural building (in use as a car port and domestic store) and erection of a garage and agricultural machinery store with solar array and a battery store. The existing shed was granted permission to provide covered parking facilities under the previous approved barn conversion located on the site.

6.2 The design of the proposed garage is one that will be an improvement on the existing steel shed that occupies the site, with the new design taking into consideration mitigation strategies in order to not have a lasting impact on the surrounding landscape. A garage on the site will also ensure that the visual amenity of the area is improved by placing large agricultural machinery out of sight from walkers looking to use the nearby walking trails.

6.3 The inclusion of solar panels also means that the garage will look to take advantage of the renewable energy opportunities that are available and also satisfies the Government's aim to transition to a low carbon economy.

6.4 The proposals are compliant with the pertinent policies of the Development Plan and the objectives of the NPPF. We therefore respectfully ask for the Authority's support in the matter.

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