

Design & Access Statement Heritage Statement

Proposed Conversion of a Listed Agricultural Building to a
Dwelling at Catswall Farm,
Huntley Lane, Denford, ST13 7JX
Mr T Boote

Design and Access Statement in support of the

Proposed conversion of a listed agricultural building to a dwelling for Mr T Boote

"Good design can help to create lively spaces with distinctive character, streets and public spaces that are safe, accessible, pleasant to use and human in scale; and places that inspire because of imagination and sensitivity of their designers."

- By Design, Urban Design in the Planning System; Towards Better Practice (DETR & CABE, 2000).

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This Design & Access statement has been prepared in response to the Governments changes to the planning application process outlined in circular: Guidance on Changes to the Development Control System, which came into effect on the 10th August 2006.
- 1.2. The statement provides an analysis and narrative of the proposals and is in line with guidance produced by CABE entitled Design and Access Statements: how to write, read and use them.
- 1.3. This proposal consists of a detailed design for the conversion of one listed agricultural building to a dwelling at Catswall Farm, Huntley Lane, Denford.
- 1.4. The production of this appraisal has been considered as a necessary part of the design development process to ensure that detailed design actively seeks to respond positively to its specific context in order to provide a valuable addition to the surrounding area.
- 1.5. The approach has sought to achieve a design that meets the requirements of the applicant while:
 - Being reflective of the form and character of the original barn
 - Respecting and enhancing local character
 - Reflecting best practice in layout and built form



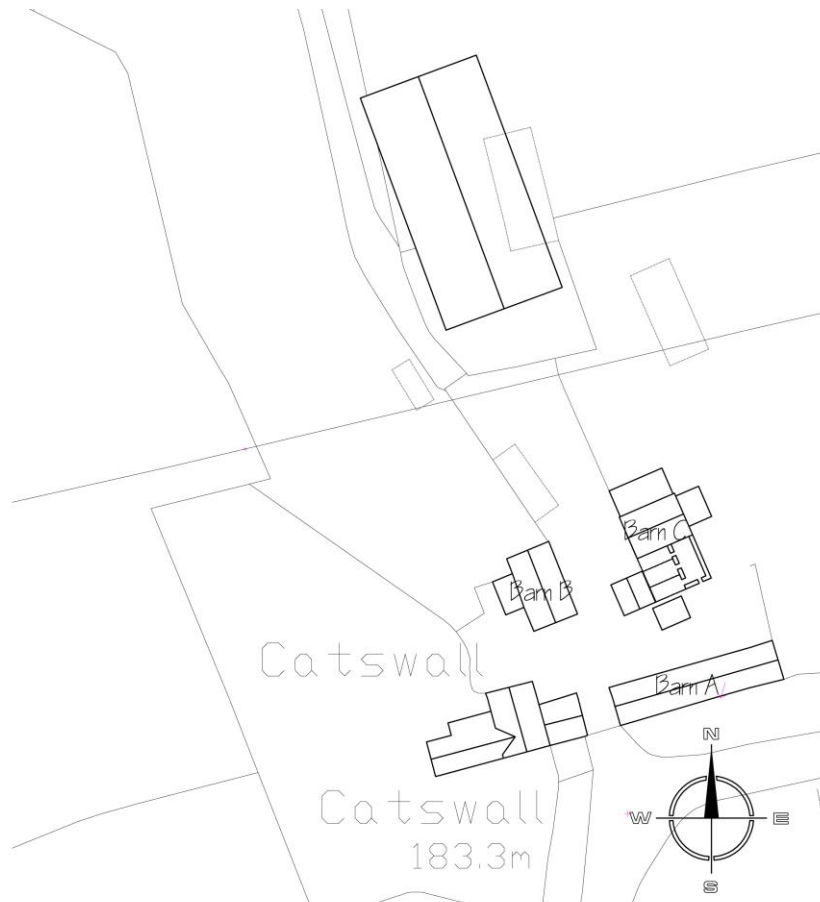
2.0 USE

- 2.1. The site is located in a rural location, with Stanley to the West and Cheddleton to the East, adjacent to an existing farmstead.
- 2.2. The proposed conversion of two barns into three holiday lets, and alterations to an existing barn to form garage and shed unit ancillary to the farmhouse received planning and Listed Building Consent in 2017.
- 2.3. Under the previously approved application, the barn was to provide two self-catering holiday lets. Whilst the original approval has been implemented through the change of use of what was previously referred to as Barn B, the barn to which this application relates remains untouched.
- 2.4. This application proposes the conversion of a listed agricultural building into a single dwelling. The proposed scheme would reinstate the barn as a usable asset.



3.0 THE SITE DESCRIPTION

- 3.1. The application site is located close to Denford, accessed via Huntley Road. Catswall Farm is directly adjacent to the site.
- 3.2. The site comprises of existing agricultural fields immediately surrounding Catswall Farm, which forms a collection of traditional stone farm buildings and farmhouse of traditional appearance and design.
- 3.3. The site is well contained with the boundaries formed by hedges, agricultural fencing and dry stone walling, with occasional trees.
- 3.4. The context of the site is framed by Catswall Farm to the immediate west, agricultural shed and open fields to the north and east, and separate dwellings to the south.
- 3.5. This application relates to Barn A, which fronts onto Huntley Road, located adjacent to the existing farmhouse.



Site Plan 1:500

4.0 AMOUNT

- 4.1. The barn is to provide a single four-bedroom dwelling.
- 4.2. The proposal makes a point of utilizing the existing floor area at ground and first floor. No addition to the floor space is proposed as part of the dwelling.

5.0 LANDSCAPING & ENVIRONMENT

- 5.1. The proposed dwelling is set within an established landscape setting, formed by the existing dwelling boundary, fence and hedge line.
- 5.2. Amenity space is to be provided for the proposed dwelling. The layout of this takes cues from the existing features on the site to minimise intervention. Stone walling is proposed to provide privacy, which will harmonise with the existing materials visible on site, and maintain the open areas around the buildings as much as possible. The proposed landscaping has been designed to be sympathetic to the context. Gritstone setts have been introduced to improve the site access points, and carried through into the rest of the design to denote threshold strips. Opportunities have been taken to include areas of planting, and there are no trees affected by the proposed change of use.



Barn A

6.0 LAYOUT

- 6.1. The proposed layout of the barn aims to respect the original function of the barn.
- 6.2. The internal functionality of the dwelling has been designed so as to maintain and utilise as many original features and openings as possible.
- 6.3. Upon entering the barn you are met with a double height space which demonstrates the impressive nature of the building and provides a central point from which the open plan dining, kitchen, and lounge are accessed. A cloak room and utility room, with a separate cupboard for the boiler, are also included at ground floor.
- 6.4. Up the stairs to the galleried landing the proposal offers four bedrooms, including two ensembles, a separate bathroom, and study.
- 6.5. The dwelling has been developed to allow the simplicity of the barn to be appreciated and become an intrinsic part of the proposal. This ethos has been worked into the layout of the building and helps maintain the exterior appearance as well as a functional dwelling.

7.0 SCALE

- 7.1. There are no proposed changes of scale to the design as a whole.

8.0 APPEARANCE

- 8.1. The proposal aims to respect both the materials palette and the character of the original building. The barn will maintain the existing stone and other components of the building, carefully repaired where necessary, and supplemented by like-for-like materials wherever repairs are no longer possible.
- 8.2. Care has been taken in terms of design and layout to ensure that a high-quality design is achieved that maintains the historic integrity of the building, while providing appropriate living accommodation.
- 8.3. Changes to the openings are limited and discrete, the effect being to maintain the character of the barn, clearly referencing its former use.
- 8.4. The inclusion of rooflights is seen as necessary to meet the needs of the proposed use, however a conservation or heritage roof light system is proposed, to ensure minimal impact to the roof scape.

- 8.5. The barn would always have had a first floor and, notwithstanding that many of the timbers have rotted over the years or been removed in the past, the retention of a first floor remains faithful to that form.

9.0 ACCESS

- 9.1. The site benefits from two access points off Huntley Road. The western access is to be used by the farmhouse. The eastern entrance is to be used by the proposed dwelling, with parking and turning space provided off this.
- 9.2. The layout of the site provides adequate turning and parking area, and ensures access for any necessary service vehicles, such as removals, deliveries and farm vehicles.
- 9.3. During construction, there is ample space for delivery vehicles to enter, turn and leave in a forward gear.

10.0 HERITAGE STATEMENT

Description of the Asset

- 10.1. Catswall Farm is located along Huntley Road, in the small hamlet of Denford. A handful of farmsteads are situated in the area, with evidence of ancient field enclosure (Brunskill, 2000). The village of Cheddleton lies to the east, and Stanley to the west.
- 10.2. Situated in the same area is Deep Hayes Country Park, which covers 143 acres containing a mixture of woods, meadows and pools. The site was originally a compensation reservoir, built in 1848 by the Potteries Waterworks Company to supply water to the pottery towns. Nearby was once a hive of industry, with the large Wall Grange brick works and other smaller industrial sites. The reservoir was abandoned in 1979 and soon afterwards the Country Park, with visitor centre, was established.
- 10.3. Catswall Farm is a collection of stone farm buildings, including the early 18th century Grade II listed farmhouse. The original farmhouse is of coursed and dressed stone, with a large gabled brick addition (late 19th century).
- 10.4. The Grade II listed barn is located approximately 5 metres east of Catswall Farmhouse, and was first listed in 1986. The proposal involves the conversion of the stone barn into a single dwelling.
- 10.5. The listing description is as follows:

"Barn. Early C18 with mid-C19 and C20 alterations. Coursed dressed and squared stone; tiled roof on chamfered eaves band to left and brick band to right end. 2-level plan of hay loft over cattle sheds; 5 windows to front, 3 to right of large stone buttress, 2 windows to left widely spaced, the inner with heavy lintel formerly the through".

It is also worth noting that it is "Included for group value".

- 10.6. The location of the farm buildings in relation to the farmhouse suggests a variation on a parallel layout (Brunskill, 2000), with the traditional cow house given priority adjacent to the farmhouse, and other buildings e.g. stabling, pig sties etc. situated behind, forming a courtyard/foldyard inbetween.
- 10.7. The listed barn takes the form of a cow byre and hayloft above, but with obvious alterations over time. There is no longer a door access from the road side, with the "through door" since infilled and converted to a window. A large stone buttress remains, while the majority of stonework to this elevation has been reconstructed.
- 10.8. It's likely that cattle were originally tethered tail on to a single central passage or, alternatively, nose on to a central feeding passage and tail-on to manure

passages at either side. However, the barn looks to have been altered to provide longitudinal passages, as these became more common in the 19th century following the Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops Order of 1885 (Ryan, 2013). The addition of windows was also common during this period, for hygiene and ventilation purposes, and may account for the larger number of openings than would be traditionally be found within a cow byre.

- 10.9. The storage of hay above the cow house was commonplace, and its use here is indicated by the first floor pitching eyes to the road side elevation and gable end, and the numerous ventilation slots.
- 10.10. The current owner had previously converted the barn to use as stabling, however this currently lies empty as horses are no longer kept by the farm.

11.0 HERITAGE STATEMENT

Assessment of its Significance

- 11.1. Most surviving agricultural buildings date from the late 18th century or early 19th century. Therefore, farm buildings dating from the early 18th century, such as the cow byre at Catswall Farm, carry far greater significance (Brunskill, 2000).
- 11.2. In order to assess the significance of the barns within their setting, this document adopts the methods outlined in Historic England's publication "*Conservation Principles, Policies & Guidance*." The guidance describes four heritage values that may contribute to the significance of a place: Evidential, Historical, Aesthetic and Communal.
- 11.3. *Evidential Value* is described as "*the potential of a place to yield evidence of past activity*." For example, archaeological deposits may provide clues in place of any written record. This is arguably the value which applies in the strongest way to the barns at Catswall Farm. Their layout and structure give a clear indication of how the buildings were once used for agricultural purposes.
- 11.4. The barn proposed for conversion to a dwelling appears in reasonable condition, and has obviously been used for various purposes throughout its lifetime.
- 11.5. Evidential value is proportional to the amount of material evidence lost or altered since their original use and, particularly in the case of the cow byre, it is obvious that openings have been altered and added to over time. However, this is a reflection of the changing times and developing methods of farming during the 19th century.
- 11.6. *Historical Value* derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. It is similar to evidential value, but is more focused on how people originally used the building.

The barn has an obvious connection to the farmhouse, and form a typical farmstead dating from the early 18th century.

- 11.7. The layout of the buildings, such as the cow byre situated in the prime location next to the farmhouse and adjacent to the road, give clear indicators of how the farm may have operated.
- 11.8. *Aesthetic Value* derives from the way in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place. This may be the result of conscious design, or fortuitous evolution.
- 11.9. Some people may question the amount of aesthetic value which might be obtained from such agricultural buildings. Their vernacular architecture is borne out of the need for function over form, and the materials that were available at the time. However, the mixture of materials and ad hoc alterations add a charm to the aesthetic of the buildings at Catswall Farm.
- 11.10. Quoins and brick corbelling are used throughout the site which forms a visual relationship between all of the structures. The use of stone and brick in the farm buildings adds to the texture and historic interest as well as helping us to understand different phases of the development.
- 11.11. *Communal Value* is about the meaning of a place for the people who relate to it. As a private farm with much set back from the road, communal value is somewhat limited. However, the farm's presence in Denford, and within the wider area, helps reinforce its identity as an agricultural community.

12.0 HERITAGE STATEMENT

The Design Concept

- 12.1. The proposal seeks to convert a listed barn to a single dwelling. Given that the barn to which this application relates has been left untouched whilst the previous planning approval has been implemented through the works to Barn B, the proposal will include the repair and conversion of the barn to form a dwelling.
- 12.2. The listed barn is to be converted into a single dwelling. The barn is suffering various structural problems, which have been identified within the structural report prepared for the previous planning application, with recommendations made by the engineer to ensure the building's continued survival. The report concludes by saying that, subject to the correct remediation, repair and maintenance being undertaken, the barn should be suitable for conversion.
- 12.3. Externally, the barn will retain much of its current appearance. The stonework is to be repaired and repointed (using lime mortar of the appropriate specification), where necessary. A small amount of bulging around the tie rod ends may require more substantial repair/rebuilding.

- 12.4. The existing openings are to be retained, with one blocked up opening to the courtyard elevation reinstated. Existing glazing units should be retained, or replicated if not possible. New glazing should be of simple modern design in aluminium frames, set back to reduce the appearance, with the original shutters retained where possible (fixed back to the wall). Ventilation slots will remain visible externally, while three concrete lintels are to be replaced with stone.
- 12.5. Internally, the modern stabling and concrete floors will be removed to allow investigation of foundations, underpinning and remedial damp proofing. A new solid ground floor should be constructed, utilising limecrete on a base of loose fill and insulating aggregate to provide suitable insulation values.
- 12.6. A new first floor has been recommended by the engineer, due to inadequate joist sizing, rot and beetle attack. However, the existing first floor level is to be retained. Any rotten timber lintels must also be replaced, as identified by the appropriate timber and damp specialist.
- 12.7. The roof also requires overhauling due to substantial movement and bowing. The engineer recommends the installation of steel moment frames as the right and left hand truss positions. Roof timbers require further investigation by a specialist as to their conditions. These will require repair or replacement as specified. Roof tiles are to be retained and reused. Conservation rooflights are proposed to provide natural light, but these have been kept to a minimum.
- 12.8. The proposed layout aims to respect the existing character of the barn as much as possible. The ground floor benefits from an open plan layout, while voids above the entrance allow views of the roof space. A small log burner is proposed, which involves the addition of a chimney flue to the roof. This should be painted black to minimise impact along the roofscape. Rainwater goods to be black cast iron on rise and fall brackets.

13.0 HERITAGE STATEMENT

The Impact

- 13.1. It is apparent that the listed barn is in need of attention if it is to survive much longer. The structural survey has identified numerous defects which may cause the barn to collapse, as the external walls continue to lean and bulge. This is obviously an historic problem and is presumably the reason behind the addition of the stone buttress and significant rebuilding to the rear wall. Nevertheless, it has been established that, subject to the correct remediation methods being employed, the barns will be suitable for conversion.
- 13.2. Externally, the barn will change very little. Existing windows will be retained where possible, while new glazing will be obviously modern, and set back to reduce its impact. The retention of shutters will ensure little evidential value is destroyed.

- 13.3. The proposed layout of the site will provide amenity and parking for the proposed dwelling, whilst taking the opportunity to make improvements to the overall landscaping of the site, such as the enhancement to the site entrances, and the provision of planting areas. Sympathetic materials are to be utilised throughout to ensure that they harmonise with their context, such as the gritstone setts and stone walling. This will provide consistency across the site and ensure that the proposed landscaping makes a positive contribution.
- 13.4. Internally, the necessary measures must be taken to ensure the building's stability, which may require more significant works and intervention to the historic fabric. However, this is seen as a necessity, regardless of conversion, as it would appear the barn's condition continues to deteriorate.
- 13.5. Historic methods and materials (timber, lime etc.), will be utilised wherever possible, to maintain the integrity of the fabric. The use of light partition walls rather than blockwork should minimise potential harm.
- 13.6. It is felt that in order to secure the future survival of the building, it will require a degree of adaptation. The barn's use as holiday accommodation is no longer viable, and the owner must find a method of funding the repair and maintenance of the building. The conversion of the barn to a dwelling will ensure the building's repair and maintenance by providing it with a new purpose.