

SUPPLEMENTARY COMMENTS

Prior approval for conversion and alteration of former
agricultural building to form 1 no. dwelling at
Rakeway Farm, Rakeway Road, Cheadle
For the Estate of Mrs. Martha Doris Beardmore Alcock
(Deceased)

1.0 COMMENTS ON LPA STATEMENT

- 1.1. The Local Authority comments that the revised structural survey omits various elements that had previously been included. The report has omitted the extent and limitations section as the site has been revisited by the Structural Engineer on 12th March 2024, with further investigations having been undertaken by him, with sight of the proposed scheme also before him (having not been previously). This has enabled the Structural Engineer to provide greater certainty as to the structural integrity of the building. The Structural Survey is explicitly clear in its conclusion that:

“The barn is in a robust structural condition and there is no reason, from a structural point of view, why it should not be converted to residential use”
- 1.2. In terms of the proposed internal works, these do not require planning permission as is confirmed within the Planning Practice (see paragraphs 4.17 – 41.9 of the Grounds of Appeal)... guidance that the Local Authority has plainly ignored.
- 1.3. The Structural Survey has been prepared by a Chartered Structural Engineer, and Chartered Civil Engineer and member of the Institution of Royal Engineers (see qualification and experience listed in pp.4 of the updated Structural Survey). The conclusions set out therein can consequently be relied upon and afforded substantial weight.
- 1.4. The Local Authority by contrast has not presented any evidence to the contrary. The Local Authority contends it is not their responsibility to disprove the structural survey, but they are the ones who have refused the application claiming that the structural condition of the building is unsuitable. A structural survey, prepared by a competent and qualified structural engineer has been submitted to address the structural integrity of the building and is explicitly clear in its findings.
- 1.5. The extent of alterations proposed is covered in detail within the Grounds of Appeal, including reference to a salient appeal decision that took account of the judgment in *Hibbit*. Any proposal to convert a building is going to necessitate alterations – this is recognised within the legislation with building operations being specifically allowed for.
- 1.6. In terms of design considerations, these are also covered in detail within the Grounds of Appeal but we note with interest the Local Authority’s observation that the building is not a traditional stone and tile building, rather it is a modern portal framed building with a functional appearance. The provisions of Class Q do not differentiate between traditional and modern buildings and many utilitarian buildings have been successfully converted to residential use under the provisions of Class Q. The Local Authority’s stance reflects their general blanket resistance to the conversion of modern buildings via Class Q.
- 1.7. The conversion of any rural building is likely to necessitate the provision of new openings to enable it to function as a dwellinghouse, and such building operations are allowed for within the legislation. For the reasons set out within the Grounds of Appeal we consider that the proposed design is acceptable.
- 1.8. The Planning Inspector is respectfully requested to take these additional comments into consideration when determining the appeal.