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Planning Statement

Hayes Gate Farm, Star Bank,
Oakamoor

Erection of an extension to ancillary accommodation

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1 Introduction

1.1 Planning & Design Practice is a multidisciplinary practice consisting of chartered town planners, architects and heritage specialists. The practice operates across England and Wales and has an exemplary track record of submitting successful planning applications and in creating sustainable development.

1.2 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.

1.3 Also submitted to accompany the report are the following:

- Site Location Plan
- Existing and Proposed Elevations
- Existing and Proposed Floor Plans
- Ecological Report
- Ecological Cover Letter

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 in 2018 prior approval was granted for the conversion of one of the large modern portal framed barns into a dwelling under Class Q of permitted development.
- 2.2 This application relates to a small stone barn located to the east of the site. The barn is single storey with a pitched roof and timber windows. The barn has a floor area of 53 square metres, is of traditional sandstone construction and is structurally sound. The outbuilding is situated to the south of the site, separated from the stone barn by a small courtyard. 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. The site is located in flood zone 1 and therefore is not considered to be at risk from flooding.



Figure 1: Aerial photo showing the sandstone barn and the outbuilding to the southern end of the site



Figure 2: Rear elevation of the standstone barn



Figure 3: Outbuilding



Figure 4: South elevation of the stone barn and the outbuilding in the foreground



Figure 5: Gable end of the stone barn

2.3 The barn has an extant consent (SMD/2019/0453) for use as ancillary living accommodation (which has been implemented). The consent was for the change of use of the building which is the subject of this application and the change of use of the former agricultural building on the site to domestic storage/garaging. This consent was implemented by virtue of the following acts of development;

- Change of use of the former agricultural building to ancillary use as a 'parking shed'.
- Works to the drainage of Barn 1 have been carried out along the eastern boundary of the building
- Erection of a footpath gate and boundary fencing

2.4 The ancillary use consented is in connection with the Class Q barn conversion located on the site, which has been the applicant's residence since 2019. The derelict outbuilding is located to the south of the stone barn, with a small courtyard currently occupying the limited space that separates these two buildings.

Relevant Planning History

2.5 Steel framed agricultural building to housing sheep feed and implement storage | Ref. SMD/2007/0097 | Approved (June 2007)

2.6 Change of use of agricultural building to a dwellinghouse (Class C3) | Ref. DET/2017/0030 | Prior Approval Refused (December 2017)

2.7 Change of use of agricultural building to a dwellinghouse (Class C3) - resubmission of DET/2017/0030 | Ref. DET/2018/0002 | Prior Approval Refused (March 2018) | Appeal Allowed (October 2018)

2.8 Variation of condition 1 relating to the appeal decision for DET/2018/0002 | Ref. SMD/2019/0187 | Approved (June 2019)

2.9 Non material amendment in relation to SMD/2019/0187 for the deletion of approved roof-lights from scheme | Ref. NMA/2019/0023 | Approved (October 2019)

- 2.10 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) | Ref. SMD/2019/0453 | Approved (November 2019)
- 2.11 Variation of conditions 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 of planning approval reference number SMD/2019/0187. | Ref. SMD/2021/0427 | Approved (October 2021)
- 2.12 Discharge of conditions 3, 4 & 6 of SMD/2019/0187 | Ref. DOC/2021/0070 | Awaiting decision
- 2.13 Discharge of conditions 2 and 3 of planning permission SMD/2021/0427. | Ref. DOC/2022/0018 | Approved (May 2022)
- 2.14 Demolition of existing steel framed agricultural building to provide purpose built garage and agricultural machinery store, solar array and battery store. | Ref. SMD/2022/0395 | Refused (September 2022)
- 2.15 Change of use of a stone barn from ancillary accommodation to open market dwelling with modest extension | Ref. SMD/2022/0447 | Withdrawn (June 2024)
- 2.16 Full planning application for the change of use of a stone barn from ancillary accommodation to open market dwelling with modest extension | Ref. SMD/2024/0262 | Refused (August 2024)
- 2.17 Planning application SMD/2019/0453 was approved in 2019 and works towards the change of use have been commenced. The Boundary treatments and works to the foundations have been completed and as such it is considered that the consent is extant.
- 2.18 This application follows the previous application for the change of use of the stone barn from ancillary accommodation to an open market dwelling, including the erection of an extension (SMD/2024/0262).
- 2.19 The applicant sought to work with the Local Authority and amend the title of the previous application to limit use to ancillary accommodation, but this was not accepted, and the application was refused based on the submitted development title.

- 2.20** It is not considered that the change of use is required for ancillary use given the extant consent for the use of the building in connection with the dwelling. However, the 'use' of the building has been included within the development title of this application for the avoidance of doubt.
- 2.21** The previous application was refused on the grounds that the building could not be converted to an open market dwelling without the provision of the proposed extension and that this would be contrary to local policy. This reason for refusal does not apply to the ancillary use as it has already been demonstrated that the building can be used in connection with the host dwelling without the need for extension.
- 2.22** The previous application was also refused on the grounds that the proposed extension would be harmful to the building's scale, proportions and character. This application primarily aims to address this reason for refusal through the proposal of an extension of reduced proportions.

3 The Proposed Development

- 3.1 The proposal is for the erection of an extension on an existing stone barn, and the installation of rooflights. The extension will provide dining space for the ancillary accommodation use for the barn, which was approved under application ref. SMD/2019/0453.
- 3.2 Notwithstanding the removal of the change of use of the ancillary accommodation to an open market dwelling, the current application differs from the previous application in the following ways:
- The boundary treatments are being kept as they are existing;
 - The small stone barn is proposed to be kept, rather than demolished;
 - The 'red line' on the Site Location Plan has been amended to include the barn which has already been converted to accommodation under application ref. SMD/2019/0187;
 - The ridge of the extension has been reduced by 0.23m, so it is now at a height of 4.64m;
 - The width of the extension has been reduced by 0.45m, so it is now 5.71m wide.
- 3.3 The proposed extension will provide an additional 16.61m² of internal floor space to complement the existing 53m² provided by the stone barn.
- 3.4 The extension will feature a single large powder-coated aluminium window on the west elevation, and the south elevation will have full length bi-folding doors and a single full length window. The slate roof of the existing barn will be continued for extension, coupled with stone bricks, the new extension will be of a high-quality design that will appear seamless alongside the existing barn's design.

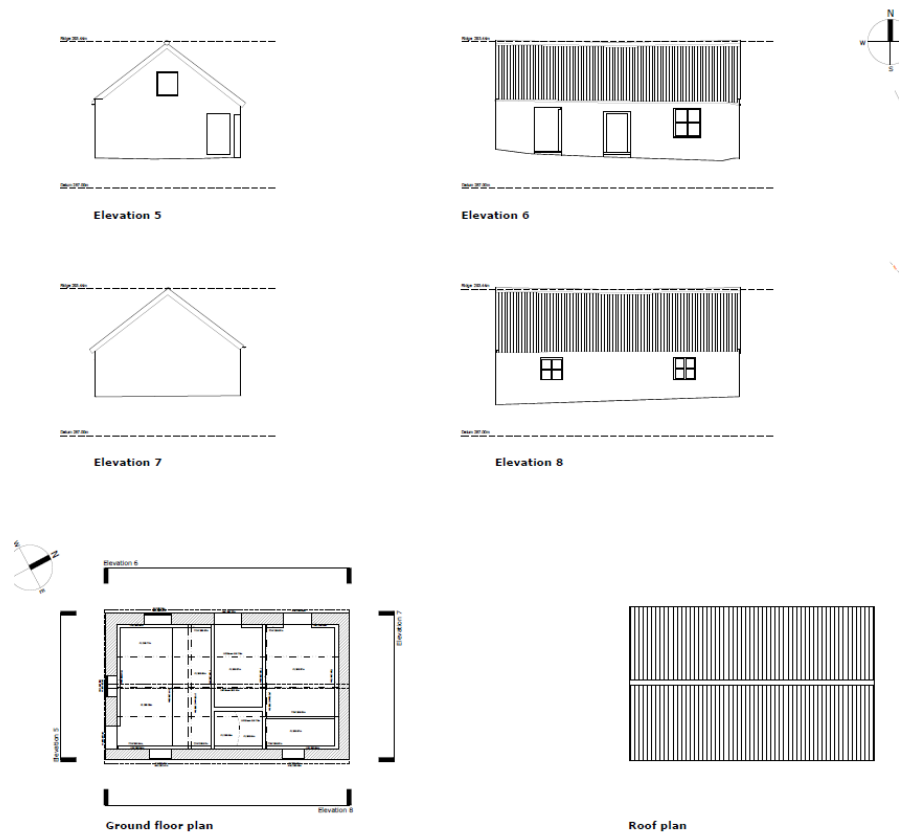


Figure 6: Existing elevations & plans

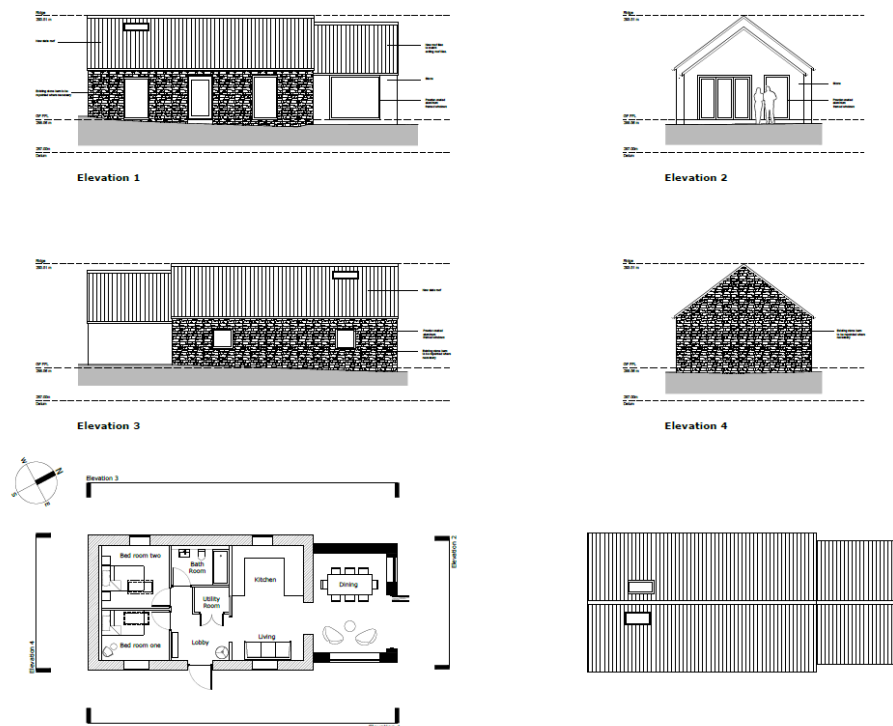


Figure 7: Proposed elevations and plans

4 Planning Policy Context

- 4.1 The purpose of this section is to set out the relevant planning policy background which is pertinent to the site and proposed development.
- 4.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.3 In this case, the development plan consists of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (2020). Other material considerations include the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), the associated Planning Practice Guidance and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs).

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (2020)

4.4 Policy SS 1: Development Principles

“The Council will expect the development and use of land to contribute positively to the social, economic and environmental improvement of the Staffordshire Moorlands in terms of delivering, in partnership with other agencies and services:

- ... development which maintains the locally distinctive character of the Staffordshire Moorlands, its individual towns and villages and their settings;”*

4.5 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 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;"*

4.6 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 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."

4.7 Policy SD 1: Sustainable Use of Resources

"The Council will require all development to make sustainable use of resources, and adapt to climate change. This will be achieved by:

- *... The Council will encourage developers to investigate the potential for re-using construction or construction waste materials, especially those sourced locally (which can include those minerals available on site, as appropriate) and integrates where possible on-site waste management facilities."*

4.8 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;*
- 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)

4.9 Landscape and Settlements

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

4.10 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.”

4.11 Extensions

5.5 “All extensions should harmonise with the parent building. An extension should respect the dominance of the original building and be subordinate to it in terms of its size and massing.”

4.12 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.”

National Model Design Code

4.13 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.”

4.14 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 (2024)

4.15 2. Achieving sustainable development

“8. 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) an economic objective – 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) a social objective – 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 well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and*

- c) *an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.”*

“11. Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

For decision-taking this means:

- c) *approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or*
- d) *where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

4.16 11. Making effective use of land

“125. 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, proposals for which should be approved unless substantial harm would be caused, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land;*
- d) *promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could*

be used more effectively (for example converting space above shops, and building on or above service yards, car parks, lock-ups and railway infrastructure);”

“129. Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account:

- d) ...the desirability of maintaining an area’s prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and*
- e) the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.”*

4.17 12. Achieving well-designed places

“131. The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.”

“135. 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);”*

4.18 15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

“187. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);*
- b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;*
- c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;*
- d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs;*
- e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and*
- f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.”*

5 Key Planning Issues

Principle of Development

- 5.1 The proposal is for the extension of an outbuilding which is used as ancillary accommodation to the dwelling on site.
- 5.2 Policy SS 10 allows for extensions to existing dwellings, as long as they are appropriate in scale and design. The proposed extension is subservient to the existing unit and uses materials which are appropriate for the surrounding area. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal is in accordance with Policy SS 10.
- 5.3 The extension will be constructed using sustainably sourced materials, and will therefore support the Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide, and the National Model Design Code. It will also support paragraph 8 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) by making effective use of sustainably sourced materials, on an established accommodation unit.
- 5.4 The site is located within the Churnet Valley strategy area, meaning 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 extension consists of sandstone that has a distinctive presence in the area, as outlined in the local design guide, and ensures that sustainable materials are used to erect the extension. This satisfies policies SS 10 and SD 1, along with SS 11 of the local plan.
- 5.5 For the reasons above, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in principle.

Impact on Neighbouring Residents

- 5.6 The barn related to this application is situated adjacent to the previously approved Class Q barn conversion. The separation distance between the two properties is above the 10 metre minimum set out by the National Model Design Code, with the separation distance around 10.5 metres. There is a wall to the north-west of the proposed extension, which will provide some privacy for the occupiers of the stone barn.

- 5.7 Notwithstanding this, the barn used as ancillary accommodation to the barn conversion on site, meaning that it is expected that residents of both the barn conversion and the stone barn are expected to be interacting frequently. The boundary treatments are not proposed to be changed; these were considered acceptable in the application under which the stone barn was converted to ancillary accommodation (ref. SMD/2019/0453).

Design

- 5.8 As mentioned throughout this statement, the design of the proposed extension is subservient to the existing stone barn. The sandstone bricks that will be used will be sustainably sourced will match the traditional style that is currently present on site, whilst adding high-quality design and materials that are appropriate to the character of the area to provide a modest, modern internal dwelling. This satisfies policies SD 1 and DC 1 of the local plan.
- 5.9 The scale of the extension has been reduced since the last application which was refused by the Council. There is now approximately only a 31% increase in floor space provided by this extension, which is considered suitable for the existing size of the barn.

Impact on the Churnet Valley Landscape Character Area

- 5.10 The area falls within the Churnet Valley Landscape Character Area. The proposed extension of the stone barn is sensitively designed with minimal alteration to the building and will preserve this vernacular building and the contribution it makes to the rural landscape in the area. The use of prominent local stone will also contribute to ensuring the development remains in-keeping with the local area.

Impact on Public Footpaths

- 5.11 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 Class Q conversion and the barn to the north of the site. 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.

Impact upon Protected Species & Biodiversity Net Gain

- 5.12 An ecological survey of the site has been conducted by Elite Ecology, full details of which have been submitted alongside this application.
- 5.13 From the site survey, it has been established that the structure at Hayes Gate Farm, Oakamoor contains roosting bats. These are a day roost of common pipistrelle bats, soprano pipistrelle bats and historic day roost of brown long-eared bats. In addition to this, foraging and commuting brown long-eared, common pipistrelle, Natterer's, noctule, and soprano pipistrelle bats were detected around the site. From the survey visit undertaken on the site, it can be concluded that the surveyed structure does not contain nesting birds. In addition, the surrounding landscape provides all of the necessary habitat elements that birds require.
- 5.14 The recommendations of this report have been taken into consideration in the design of the building including measures such as no breathable roofing membrane is to be used on the structure. The applicant is willing for these requirement to be conditioned as part of any Decision Notice.
- Apply for a Natural England Development Licence to legally carry out the works.
 - No re-development works can proceed on the structure until October when the bats have gone to their hibernation roosts.
 - At the start of works, site supervision by a licenced bat ecologist in accordance with the Natural England Development Licence will be required.
 - Install bat compensatory features on the site
- 5.15 A letter from Peak Ecology has been submitted alongside this application which states that the smaller barn, which is now proposed to be retained, has a high roosting potential and therefore a Non-Licensed Method Statement should be implemented during the construction of the proposed extension on the adjacent barn. This letter also confirms that the proposal is exempt from providing the mandatory net gain in biodiversity, due to the proposed extension being sited on land which has a biodiversity value of 0.

6 Conclusions

- 6.1 The proposal is for the erection of an extension on a stone barn in association with the use of the buildings for ancillary accommodation in connection with the dwelling on site.
- 6.2 This application follows a consented and implemented scheme for the change of use of the building to ancillary accommodation and then a further application which was refused for the change of use of the barn to an open market dwelling, and the erection of a larger extension.
- 6.3 The applicant sought to work with the Local Authority and amend the title of the previous application to limit use to ancillary accommodation, but this was not accepted and the application was refused based on the submitted development title.
- 6.4 Taking on board the officer's concern over the scale of the proposed extension and potential impact upon amenity arising from an open market dwelling, the applicants have re-submitted and amended scheme with a more subservient extension and limited use as ancillary accommodation in connection with the host dwelling. Whilst it is not considered that the change of use is required for ancillary use given the extant consent for the use of the building in connection with the dwelling, the 'use' of the building has been included within the development title for the avoidance of doubt.
- 6.5 The proposed extension has been reduced in size since the previous application, providing a modest 31% increase in floor space for the unit, which is not disproportionate to the size of the existing barn. The materials proposed are consistent and integrate well with the existing barn and surrounding area, all of which will be sustainably sourced.
- 6.6 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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