

DBD Architectural Consultancy Ltd.

50 Broad Street, Leek,

Staffordshire ST13 5NS

01538 383118

mail@dbdconsultants.co.uk

www.dbdconsultants.co.uk

Design, Access & Heritage Statement

**PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE CONVERSION OF A STABLE BLOCK INTO
A NEW DWELLING, WITH ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPING AND ACCESS AT
STONEY DALE FARM, OAKAMoor, ST10 3AH**



Photo courtesy of Google Maps

February 2026

Introduction/Context

This design and access statement has been prepared to accompany the full planning application to convert an existing brick stable building into a dwelling, with associated landscaping works. The proposal will see the use of an existing access track and the formation of domestic garden curtilage around the building.

The site is located south of Oakamoor, still within the conservation boundary, but within the open countryside, which has many local amenities including a successful public house, a primary school and "Dimmingsdale" offering idyllic walks and bridleways. The existing farmhouse has adjoining land totalling 17 acres, but the brick stable block is the only other substantial building on the site. Additional timber stabling and various other wooden outbuildings are spread across the site. The east wing of the building has a number of bays which are used for domestic car garaging, and these are accessed from the driveway area to the east of the building, behind the existing dwelling. The remainder of the building provides horse stabling and associated workshop/storage space, with a WC.

Proposal

The proposal is to convert the existing building into a single dwelling, whilst doing this the fabric of the building will be left untouched where possible as the construction of the building, being solid masonry, is ideal for a retrofit conversion, being insulated to habitable standards from the inside. The front gable of the westerly wing of the stable block is showing signs of subsidence and will require general rebuilding, due to the extensive cracking in the masonry structure and evidence that the front wall foundations are failing, causing the building to sink in this area.

A common feature on stable blocks is an overhanging roof to provide shelter for horses when stable doors are open for ventilation etc. This stable block bears this design feature across the west wing and the central portion of the building, but on the internal courtyard facing elevations only. Whilst the front gable of the west wing of the building will require rebuilding, it is proposed to reconstruct the side wall in the wider position, thus removing the roof overhang and provide more internal floor area, without effecting the design or proportion of the roof structure.

Due to the restricted circulation space provided in a u-shaped stable block, and the building being formed by separate bays, which are one room deep and not interconnected, it is proposed to construct an extension to infill part of the internal courtyard in the middle of the building. This will create a central area to the building, where the new primary access to the dwelling will be, and allow for improved circulation around the building. Otherwise, if a corridor was to be formed around the perimeter of each bay/room, the resultant space is compromised and does not lend itself well to provide a layout suitable for a modern family dwelling. The extension will have a brick frontage, to match the existing, and where possible, bricks reclaimed from existing walls that are removed will be salvaged for use in the new construction. It will have a flat roof which is visually unintrusive and will not affect the overall traditional design of the building. The extension includes the area under the roof overhang on this part of the building, so it is proposed to replicate the overhang to the front elevation to provide shelter in front of the door.

There are a modest number of alterations being made to the existing openings on the building, mainly from a practical perspective, but also to provide light and access to suit the layout of a modern family dwelling. Retained window openings shall contain window units to reflect the original hopper design and new, taller openings are of a design to reflect the existing proportions of the window designs. Four rooflight opening are proposed in the East facing elevation's roof plane. These are to serve non habitable rooms where window openings are not possible in the walls, in order to maintain privacy between the existing dwelling. The building would not be considered a designated heritage asset, due to its relatively utilitarian design, form and material palette, however, it is a building of a traditional nature, which will be respected and conserved by the proposed development.

Use/Amount

There is no longer a requirement for this scale of stable building on the site, as there is ample stabling provided by the wooden stables further east of the wider site. The building is largely unused and is not a requirement to the existing dwelling.

The proposed use of the building will be a single market dwelling with full residential use. The area of land which is to become the garden curtilage, dedicated to the new dwelling, is relative to the scale of the development and provide vital private amenity space in the area immediately surrounding the dwelling.

Layout

The proposed internal layout provides a four-bedroom family dwelling. The habitable rooms have been configured, so that windows do not incur overlooking issues in relation to the existing dwelling. This means all openings on the east elevation have been blocked up and rooflights are provided to the rooms which do not benefit from windows facing frontwards or rearwards.

The layout on site makes use of the redundant driveway to the west of the building, providing ample parking for the dwelling and a private amenity space to the side of the dwelling. The small paddock in front of the building will remain as an open lawned area.

Scale

The scale of the development is in keeping with the site and the existing building. The only extension is contained within the existing side walls and roofline of the central courtyard, so the extensions will not appear as an obvious additional massing on the building. Similarly, the rebuilding of the side wall in a wider position infills the area under the existing roof and does not alter or increase the form of the building's appearance.

The GIA of the existing building is 190m² and the proposed GIA of the dwelling is 233m². This increase is less than the general cap of 30% in rural locations, but the overall increase in volume will be substantially less given the extension includes partial infills under existing roof overhangs.

The garden curtilage and associated facilities for the dwelling are in keeping with the proportions of a family home within a rural setting, making use of the parcel of land immediately surrounding the building. The proposed garden curtilage is enveloped by the driveway to the west, the existing dwelling's garden curtilage to the North and East, and the roadside to the South. Given this existing arrangement, we do not see this as undue encroachment into the countryside, with it being contained within existing hard features and development to all sides.

Appearance

Being a conversion, the appearance of the building will remain largely unchanged. The only extension is contained within the existing side walls of the central courtyard, so will not appear as an obvious additional massing on the building. Materials shall be used to match the existing and complement the surrounding area, which is particularly sensitive with the site lying within the conservation area.

Landscaping

The existing garden curtilage of the farmhouse wraps around the rear of the dwelling and it is proposed that the full extent of this existing garden will be retained by the existing dwelling, so it is of a suitable size and in proportion to the rural dwelling and protects potentially historic garden features relating to the existing farmhouse. There is a graduated increase in the ground level between the stable building and the farmhouse's lawned area, which is demarked by a stone retaining wall around the rear perimeter of the building. Beyond the retaining wall is an existing Beech hedge across the North boundary of the development area (red edge). This is to be extended across the full length of

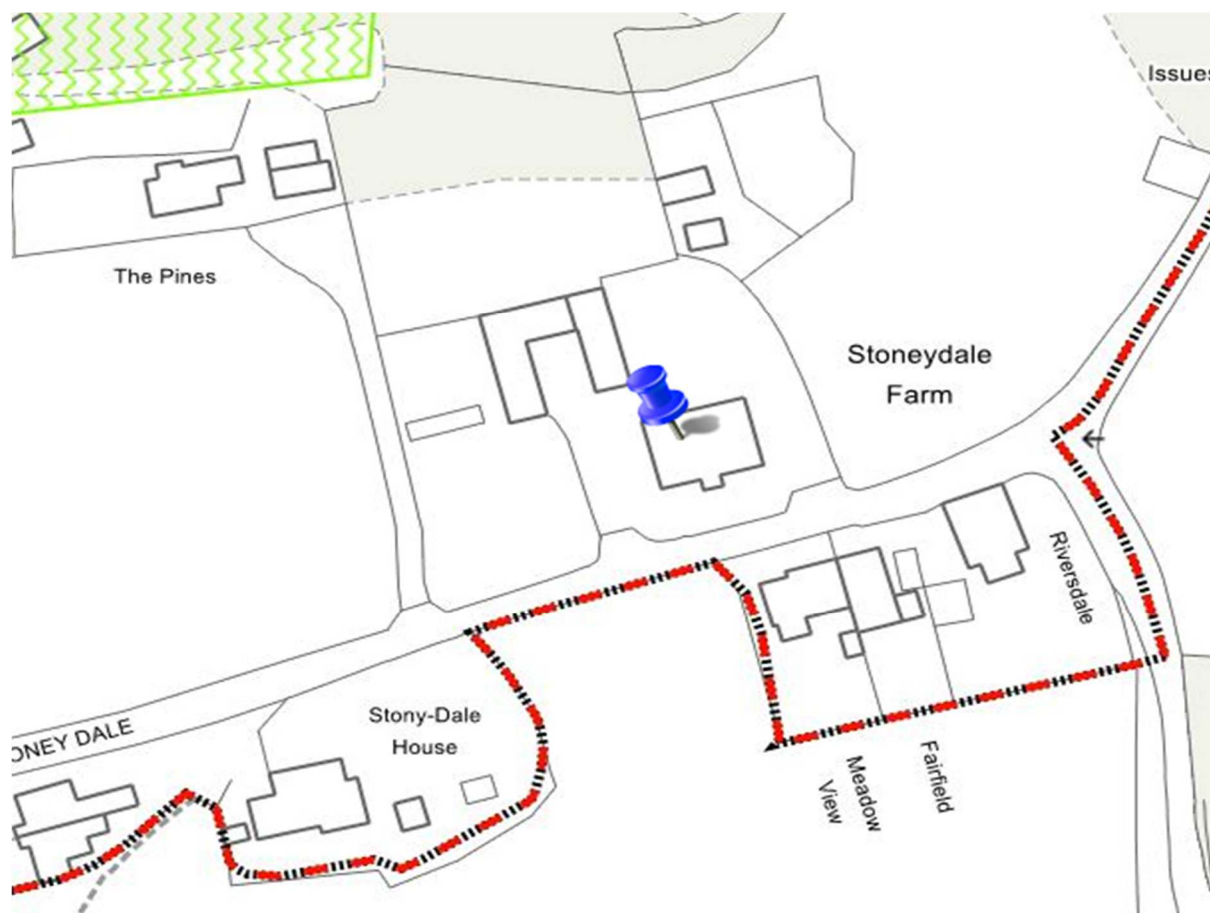
the rear elevation of the stable building to maintain privacy and adequate separation between the two separate dwellings. This replaces the existing smaller buxus hedge which is currently in place.

It is proposed that the garden curtilage of the new dwelling will be the area to the side and in front of the building. The area to the side of the building currently contains a dilapidated structure and other storage containers. This area has a higher ground level also and the retaining stone wall follows the West side perimeter of the building also, down to the front where the ground level returns to the standard threshold level of the stable building. It is proposed that the land to the west of the building will be excavated out to the side of the building, to approx. 3m distance away from the existing driveway and this area can be used as a patio/sitting area with planting beds and other domestic garden features. The parking area will be in front of this, and the remaining paddock in front of the building will be retained as an open lawn area. A small domestic garden shed is proposed at the rear of the garden area, abutting the extended retaining wall, but otherwise, we would invite restrictions to permitted development rights, in order to control future development within the curtilage of the new dwelling. Domestic garden paraphernalia will be concentrated to the side of the dwelling, which is more obscured from views either side, whilst the grass paddock in front shall retain its open lawn vista. The existing roadside frontage is partially obscured with mature evergreen trees and smaller shrubbery, but infilling would provide greater screening from the roadside. The drystone boundary wall will also be repaired and infilled where necessary, along Stoney Dale, to improve its contribution as a rural landscape feature.

Access

The existing property benefits from an “in-and-out” driveway arrangement, with two highway access points. The more westerly entrance approaches the front of the stable block and passes to the side, leading to the parking area behind the existing dwelling. This is where the existing garage openings are on the east elevation of the building. It is proposed that the existing dwelling will retain both these access drives.

The new dwelling will make use of a third driveway, on the other side of the development site. It is understood that this driveway is used to allow access to the neighbouring dwelling, The Pines, however, the driveway is owned by Stoney Dale Farm and The Pines have since created a different highway access to the North of their property. This driveway has minimal use currently, only providing field access to the adjacent paddocks and continued pedestrian access to The Pines, but it is an established access point with a wider, splayed entrance making it more suitable for use to access the proposed dwelling. Off the existing driveway, a new opening will be made in the fencing to provide access to a parking area of the proposed dwelling. Boundary stone walls will be rebuilt/repaired to a maximum height of 600mm to maintain the existing visibility of the access.



Statement of Historic Significance and Impact

A description of the heritage asset, its history and setting.

The stable block is sited on Stoneydale Farm, which was a farm tied to Oakamoor Lodge (demolished 1960s). The farmhouse (existing dwelling on the site) has a notable walled garden to the rear which benefits from wide landscape views from within the confines of the valley. This part of the garden curtilage is being retained by the existing farmhouse and no alterations to this area are being made.

The farmhouse is likely the earliest introduction in the area (18th century), with other dwellings featuring on the opposite side of Stoney Dale being in place by 1938. The land surrounding the farm was likely a coppiced area of the wider woodland in order to create a small holding for the farm to manage. Likely following the downfall of Oakamoor Lodge, farming activities may have decreased on the site or parcels of land sold off, because the site no longer bears any infrastructure required to actively farm the land. It is currently grazed by sheep.

Stoney Dale, a dry valley connecting with the Churnet. The underlying geology on the north side of the valley is Hawksmoor Sandstone, the land to the south side of the valley Hollington Sandstone. The rising land to the north of Stoney Dale is heavily wooded and Lightoaks Wood sits on Freehay Conglomerate.

The stable building is not evident on historic mapping. Earliest mapping shows other outbuildings either side of the dwelling in 1888, which still remain in 1975. By 2003 satellite imagery shows these buildings have been replaced by this singular stable block. It is believed the stable block was granted planning permission in 1976 and constructed thereafter.

The design of the building is a symmetrical “u-shaped” building with oversized stable door openings to the internal facing elevations of the building providing access to the bays. The West wing side wall is recessed from the roof line to provide a classic stable overhand to the side. The front room of the East wing is a workshop/storage room with WC facilities and it has a smaller personell door to the side. Along the East facing outer elevation, each bay has evidence of a full width opening, similar to a garage door, however only two of the bays have garage doors installed, another two have been infilled with horizontal timber boards with smaller window units installed, and two other are open fronted. The rear and side facing elevations have uniform window openings, which are a hopper style opening casement, with vertical glazing bars. The roof is a simple hipped strcutre finished with plain clay tiles.

An assessment of its significance.

This dwelling is not an individually listed building, or is the existing dwelling on the site, however, both are situated within the conservation area, and the existing farmhouse is one of the earliest structures within the Stoney Dale area, along with Stoney Dale Cottages which are further down the lane.

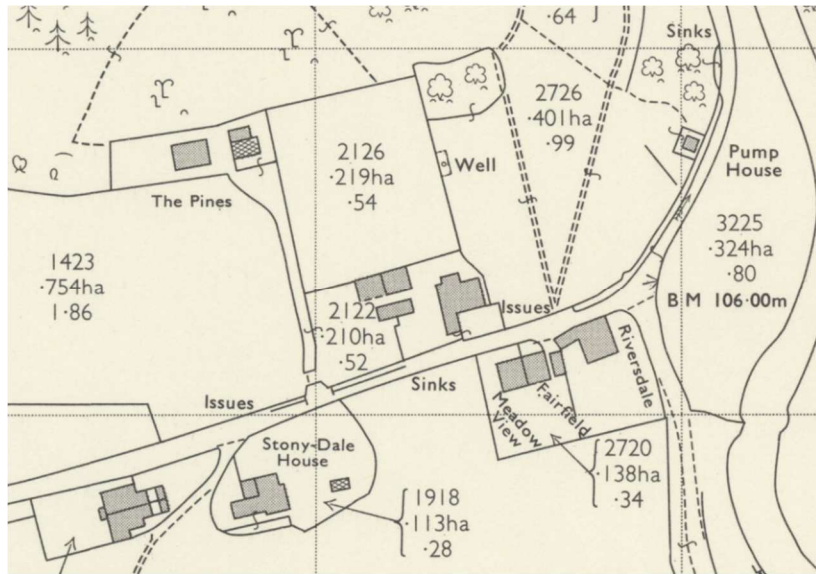
The stable building has limited architectural merit, given its function over form design, and relatively late introduction to the site, however, it bears a traditional design which is appropriate, given the context of the rural area it is sited in.

A description of the design concept for the proposed development

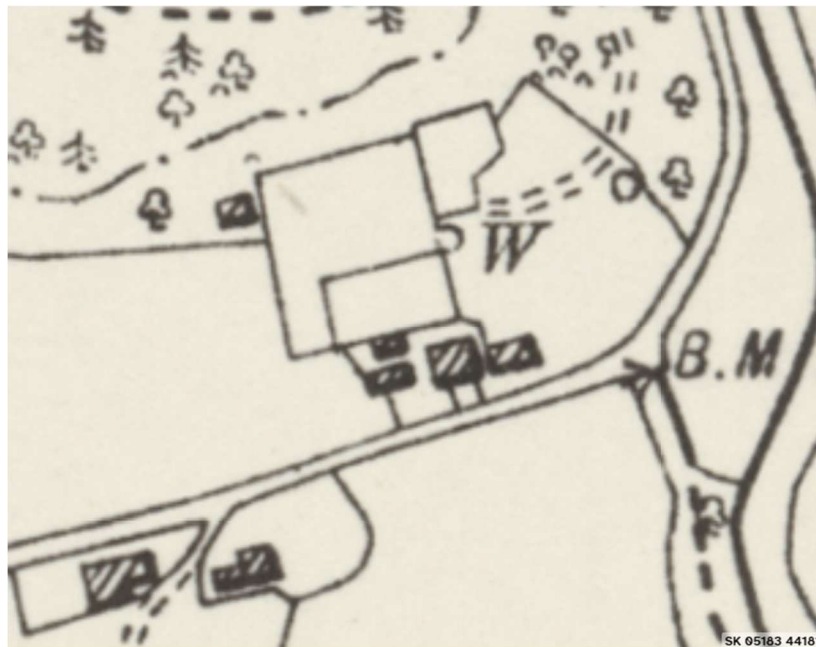
The proposal is to convert the existing building into a single dwelling. The front gable of the westerly wing of the stable block will require rebuilding using the existing materials. This is due to subsidence in the front wall foundation. The side wall on the courtyard side will be rebuilt at the same time, in the wider position under the existing roof. An extension is proposed to infill part of the courtyard area between the two wings of the building. This too will use the same matching brickwork and will have a flat roof, so that the appearance of the existing hipped roof from is not altered. A flat roof would be considered appropriate in this instance because of its concealed position within the building, only being visible from the front, where it will not be an obvious extension to the building. These elements of rebuilding will not detract from the existing appearance of the building within the conservation area.

Other alterations to the appearance of the building are limited to, amended openings for access and light purposes. Retained window openings shall contain windows units to reflect the original hopper design and new, taller openings are of a design to reflect the existing proportions of the window designs. Four rooflight opening are proposed in the East facing elevation's roof plane.

The removal of the dilapidated buildings to the side of the stable block will greatly improve the outlook from the conservations area and repairs to the stone boundary wall along Stoney Dale will be repaired where required with local stone to ensure it continues to positively contribute to the amenity of the area. The front paddock will remain as an open lawn area, so that its appearance from Stoney Dale will not be altered and new planting/hedging will limit its visibility and provide privacy to the new dwelling. The disused access track will be cleared and maintained to a higher standard than it is presently, overgrown vegetation will be cut back, and the surface will be kept clear. As this is an existing access track, there shall be no overdevelopment to the surrounding area by the introduction of a new access point, as this is not required.



1975



1888