

HERITAGE, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Proposed Conversion of Redundant Barn (Barn 1)

To

Accommodation Ancillary to Adjacent Listed Farmhouse

At

Rushton Hall Farm, Dingle Lane, Rushton Spencer, SK11 0QT

For

Ms E Forrester (Applicant)

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1 INTRODUCTION

This revised supporting statement is submitted as part of a planning application re-submission following withdrawal dated 12th December 2013 of applications Ref. 13/01082/FUL and 13/01083/LBC. The only changes to the applications in addition to this revised statement are the submission of a new and increased scope 'Bat Survey and Barn Owl Report' and the removal of one proposed rooflight on the east elevation.

This supporting statement describes the 'assessment-involvement-evaluation' design process that has been followed during the preparation of proposals to convert an existing redundant Barn (Barn 1) at Rushton Hall Farm into accommodation ancillary to the adjacent Listed Farmhouse.

The Applicant purchased the site early in 2013 with the intention of a) establishing a family home in the recently refurbished listed Farmhouse, b) converting an existing large listed Barn 2 for commercial use for their family based printing business relocating from Congleton, and c) converting an existing smaller Barn 1 to provide additional accommodation ancillary to the Farmhouse including for the use of a parent of the applicant.

This application is for the conversion of Barn 1 only. It is anticipated that another application will be submitted in the future to convert the listed Barn 2 for commercial use.

2 SITE ASSESSMENT – Context of the Site and Surroundings

The red line application site (drawing 3686/00) embraces land in the ownership of the applicant including the occupied two storey Farmhouse and two old redundant two storey Barns that are grouped around the original farmyard, various old outbuildings including implement sheds, garage, former pig sty's etc., and two large portal frame former agricultural buildings outside the core of the original farmyard buildings. The applicant also owns adjacent fields used for agriculture.

There is a single vehicle access point off Dingle Lane with two immediately adjacent gates set back from Dingle Lane approx. 15m, one leading into the farmyard, the other leading behind Barn 2 to the portal frame buildings.

Barn 1 is a two storey building approx. 7m x 22m with clay tiled roof, built of natural stone walls facing the farmyard and to the gable ends, but with a brickwork wall to the east elevation. It is a building that faces the farmyard with five original doorways (some blocked) and more recent metal windows at ground floor level. There are three pitching openings towards the farmyard and various ventilation slits around the perimeter at first floor level. The east elevation has three windows and a blocked doorway to the ground floor. There is a mixture of original stone and concrete cills and lintels reflecting various changes to the superstructure during its long life.

Barn 1 internally retains ten old shippon/milking stalls and has a stepped and sloping concrete floor slab. All the former principle timber first floor support beams have been replaced with a variety of steelwork sections supporting the timber joist and boarded floor to the hayloft above. There are five impressive original timber roof trusses supporting purlins and rafters but there is a very limited 1.5m headroom beneath the bottom truss members that is further reduced where the floor level steps up.

Barn 2 as existing is listed and illustrated for information on drawings 3686/02 and /03.

The site is surrounded by fields, open countryside and trees with the closest neighbouring buildings being approx. 60m east of Barn 1 beyond Dingle Lane and hidden from view by trees.

3 INVOLVEMENT – Consultations

3.1 LPA Consultation

February 2013 – Meeting at Rushton Hall Farm between Applicant and SMDC Conservation Officer Gill Bayliss who in addition to inspecting ongoing construction works to listed Farmhouse, commented favourably regarding possible ‘granny annexe’ and business use in adjacent barns.

23 April 2013 – Telephone conversation between David Werrell VWB Architects and SMDC Conservation Officer Gill Bayliss who refers to her visit to site February 2013 recalling that proposed development for ancillary accommodation and business use appears to be in line with SMDC Policy.

30 May 2013 PRE APPLICATION MEETING - held on site with Wayne Johnson SMDC Senior Planning Officer, a SMDC Highways Officer, Emma Forrester, Simon Forrester and David Werrell VWB Architects.

10 July 2013 PRE APPLICATION RESPONSE - Email response from Wayne Johnson SMDC Senior Planning Officer to Mr Werrell VWB Architects as follows (in italics):

Thank you for your pre-application enquiry for the above site and would like to thank you for your patience in regards to the matter, which is concerning the conversion of two existing (old stone) barns at the above site. The smaller of the barns to the east of the farmhouse would be converted to ancillary residential accommodation and the larger barn to the north of the farmhouse would be still be used for commercial purposes in the form of a printing business. The site lies outside and development boundary and is therefore located within the open countryside on land defined as Green Belt and Special Landscape Area as defined in the Local Plan. It is noted that in the submission and from our site meeting that both buildings would be dealt with separately when the future planning applications are submitted.

Planning Policy

Barn 1: Conversion to ancillary accommodation to farmhouse

This is a sizeable 2-storey building (footprint 129m²), and I note the range of proposed rooms – 3 bedrooms, lounge, kitchen, w.c. etc.

As this is for an annex there is no self-contained dwelling, so no sustainability issue under para 55 NPPF as such.

Please note that SMLP Pol B21(F)/Core Strat R2 do not distinguish between self contained- and ancillary- residential, when promoting commercial re-use.

So, to overcome the usual expectation for commercial marketing (or other endeavours under Core Strat R2), key considerations are:-

- *is there a strong case that there would be a strong functional relationship between the house and annex?*
- *would facilities be shared or is this a de facto new dwelling?*
- *is there an extreme shortage of existing domestic space which rules out the use of the house instead?*
- *whether the annex building is structurally sound enough to warrant re-use in the first place;*
- *could the dwelling be extended to obviate the need for conversion? Would this be preferable to annex accommodation in terms of SMLP Pol H13, N2, etc (bearing in mind house extensions over and above the H13 tolerances are automatically “inappropriate” in the greenbelt)?*

It would appear that there is a close relationship between the farmhouse and this building, but whether there is a strong case for domestic annexation is yet to be demonstrated. If this can be justified, the normal requirement for prior commercial marketing can be forgone. In any other case it must be considered if there is any reason why the building could not viably be re-used for commercial use and marketing will be required.

Such questions that should be addressed in the supporting statement should be: Would the proposal be preferable to extensions to the house (given its greenbelt location)? The identity of the occupant(s) is not given - Why is more than 1 bedroom (and kitchen/w.c.) required? If the current scheme is unjustified, could a scheme involving the conversion of less floorspace be justified? If this is a de facto new dwelling, then it would need to be assessed as a new residential dwelling in the countryside in the normal way (eg para 55 NPPF, Core Strat Pol SS6C).

If the Council were able to support the scheme a condition would be attached to the permission that would prevent the subdivision of the resultant annex from the existing house.

Barn 2: Conversion to ancillary workshop/office for farm use

SMLP B21 supports commercial use of rural buildings (there is no distinction between separate- or ancillary- commercial on farms). Para 28 NPPF supports diversification of existing farms etc so the workshop is broadly acceptable, but with the caveat that para 28 refers to “sustainable growth”- this would cover issues like whether the location is remote and would traffic generation result (eg from commuting staff or visitors) – and whether this could be done by non-car modes. There is no information on this, so it would be important that such information is provided addressing issues like are there any new staff etc?

Conservation / Design Issues

The Farmhouse & Barn 2 (north of farmhouse) are separately listed buildings. As a result the LPA has a duty to preserve and enhance their historic significance. Barn 1 is a curtilage structure (and has been rebuilt in brick to the roadside).

Barn 1: The residential conversion will by its nature involve significant changes to the significance of the historic building & therefore will need to be justified. Given that the building has witnessed numerous changes already (rebuilding of rear wall, insertion of steelwork and blocking of openings) the development would be considered more favourably if it seeks to enhance the significance of the building. The sensitive re-use of the other barn to a non-residential use, absence of a separate residential curtilage, and restoration works to the farmhouse will count in its favour. Any new lintels installed should be stone.

The farm buildings do not have rooflights & these are not a typical feature on Moorland barns. The number proposed needs to be substantially reduced (at most – 3 on roadside & 1 within courtyard). Rooflights should be the low-profile type (not Velux). Upper windows should read as 'pitching holes' and be clear-glazed without glazing bars. Ground floor doors should be designed as plank doors, stable doors or glazed and simply divided with timber vertical divisions. The original position should be maintained for windows and doors. If there are any changes proposed to the existing floor / floor levels and roof trusses they would need to be justified, but it would be preferred that these elements remain unaltered.

Barn 2: The Conservation Officer is most concerned by the extent of rebuilding work and would suggest that this is looked at again to stabilize as much as possible without rebuilding? A specialist historic building structural engineer may be required for this aspect of the proposal. First floor pitching holes should be clear-glazed and other window and door designs should respect original detailing. There are too many rooflights proposed and these should be drastically reduced in number. The re-alignment of the roof trusses needs further explanation as they should remain in their original positions. Can the existing first floor can be reused and the adjustment of ground floor levels will need to be clearly explained to assess what the implications of this are for the building.

Highways

There is no objections in principle and any application should include the following:

- 1 confirmation of details of the family business*
- 2 Parking and turning for business and residential*
- 3 Servicing/delivery space*

None of the above should be problematic as there is plenty of room in the courtyard. On the information provided it would appear that there are no issues with the sign making business being sited at Rushton Hall Farm. Its not going to have a high number of public visitors; not many deliveries and mainly in vans. When the farm was working, larger vehicles than that would've visited more regularly. Its a type of live/work unit which the Local Highways Authority would encourage.

Any future planning application should be accompanied by a comprehensive Design and Access Statement; An Engineers Structural Report; a Heritage Statement and a Scoping Report for protected species. If the presence of any protected species are found then a suitable mitigation

strategy should be provided. A full list of the Councils Validation requirements please refer to our web site via the following link:

http://www.staffs Moorlands.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/pages/Validation_Guidance_Document_2011_%28Final_Draft%29.doc_2_.pdf

The advice in this e-mail is given in good faith on the basis of the information available at the present time. The advice may be subject to revision following further examination or consultation, or where additional information comes to light, and is therefore not binding on any future recommendation that may be made by the Council, or any formal decision by the Council.

Regards Wayne Johnson Senior Planning Officer Staffordshire Moorlands District Council

10 December 2013 SMDC ADVICE DURING DETERMINATION PERIOD OF PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS -

Email from Wayne Johnson SMDC Senior Planning Officer to Mr Werrell VWB Architects as follows (in italics). Following receipt of this email the planning applications were withdrawn:

I have discussed this application with the Council's Ecology Officer and Conservation Officer. In design terms, it is recognised that this is a sympathetic barn conversion with minimal changes to the exterior of the building. The interior has already been substantially altered with concrete stalls and steel beams carrying the first floor. There are no objections to the proposal subject to a reduction in the number of rooflights, which are not a typical feature of these buildings. It is requested that one rooflight on the east elevation be omitted.

With regards to the ecology report that you submitted by e-mail on 14th November 2013. It concludes that further survey work is recommended in order to ascertain specific detail. In paragraph 6.46 it states:

Further maternity season bat survey will be required to determine the extent to which bat species are roosting at this site. A minimum of three further surveys should be carried out (two dawn, one dusk survey) during May to September inclusive, under optimal conditions. All survey should follow best practice guidance set out by the Bat Conservation Trust and should be led by a licensed bat ecologist, working with a minimum of one further bat ecologist and two ecological assistants (to ensure that sightlines of all relevant buildings are covered throughout each survey).

As you know in relation to bats, as European Protected Species, the widely adopted approach supported by case law decisions is that the LPA cannot determine an application without first knowing the scale and detail of any bat presence. We do not have this information here and therefore it would be wrong to approve any works. This factor requires assessment before any decision is made and cannot be covered through a pre-commencement condition. This is a fundamental issue and cannot be rectified through the submission of additional information or with amended plans by the target date of 24th December 2013.

On this basis and taking into account the fundamental issue surrounding bats, the application can not be supported and the Council will have to refuse it, unless it is withdrawn.

Regards Wayne Johnson Senior Planning Officer Staffordshire Moorlands District Council

4 HERITAGE BACKGROUND

4.1 Heritage Background

This Heritage, Design and Access Statement has been prepared to support a planning application for the conversion of Barn 1 only. Barn 1 is an unlisted building within the curtilage of two adjacent Listed Buildings referred to in this Statement as 'Barn 2' and the 'Farmhouse'.

The SMDC Pre Application Response regarding conservation notes amongst other things the importance of enhancing the significance of the building as it relates to the adjacent listed buildings. The design proposals will respond to the SMDC issues raised. (see section 6 The Design).

The range of accommodation possible in the existing Listed Farmhouse is limited due to the existing size, construction and style of the traditional stone building and due to its listed status is thought undesirable to extend when there is a suitable redundant building available to convert immediately adjacent to it.

For information, the English Heritage listings are as follows (in italics):

Barn Approximately 20 Metres North of Rushton Hall Farmhouse, Rushton

Grade: II

Date Listed: 20 November 1987

English Heritage Building ID: 275370

OS Grid Reference: SJ9289661467

OS Grid Coordinates: 392896, 361467

Latitude/Longitude: 53.1503, -2.1077

Location: Dingle Lane, Rushton, Staffordshire SK11 0QY

Locality: Rushton

Local Authority: Staffordshire Moorlands District Council

County: Staffordshire

Country: England

Postcode: SK11 0QY

Listing Text RUSHTON C.P. DINGLE LANE

SJ 96 SW

4/159 Barn approximately - 20m north of Rushton Hall Farmhouse

GV II

Barn. Mid-C19 with C20 alterations. Coursed stone; blue machine tile roof; verge parapets. 2-level plan of hay loft over stables and byres. Long yard front of approximately 30m; 2 hay loft doors offset to left half over a pair of windows to left-hand end; 3 blocked windows and a door to centre; boarded stable door to right of windows and under hay loft door and pair of boarded doors to right-hand end, one a stable door and the left-hand door late C20. Included for group value with farm-house (q.v.), which is of similar size and placed parallel, directly across the yard.

Listing NGR: SJ9289661467

Rushton Hall Farmhouse, Rushton

Grade: II

Date Listed: 20 November 1987

English Heritage Building ID: 275369

OS Grid Reference: SJ9288961447

OS Grid Coordinates: 392889, 361447

Latitude/Longitude: 53.1501, -2.1078

Location: Dingle Lane, Rushton, Staffordshire SK11 0QY

Locality: Rushton

Local Authority: Staffordshire Moorlands District Council

County: Staffordshire

Country: England

Postcode: SK11 0QY

Listing Text

RUSHTON C.P. DINGLE LANE

SJ 96 SW

4/158 Rushton Hall Farmhouse

GV II

Farmhouse. Late C17 with early C19 and C20 alterations. Coursed and dressed rubble; blue machine tile and stone slate roofs; brick end stack to left and ridge stack to right of entrance. 2-storey front with 3+1 ranges of 3-light block mullioned casement windows equally spaced, with further single-bay range set lower to right-hand end and C20 gabled single-storey porch set between the 2 groups of windows; lower stable and hay loft, set-back to right-hand end with stone steps to first floor entrance; single-storey, stone slate-roofed shed slightly set-back to left-hand end.

Listing NGR: SJ9288961447

4.2 Heritage Proposals

The Structural Report concludes that the condition of the existing building ‘...is of permanent and substantial construction...’ and can ‘..see no reason why the building should not be successfully converted to residential use without recourse to major rebuilding works’.

There is very limited (max 1500mm) headroom between the underside of the timber roof trusses and the timber first floor that severely limits the potential use of the roofspace. In order to make better use of the first floor it is proposed to use only the central three bays (the end bays being void over the proposed lounge and storage) with a new staircase rising to a reduced level landing enabling increased headroom to get access under the trusses to the bedrooms in adjacent bays. As a consequence of this reduced level landing and other height limitations at ground floor it is proposed that the whole of the concrete ground floor slab be replaced and the ground floor level beneath the landing be reduced to give headroom from the foot of the staircase into the kitchen dining room and new back door.

5 EVALUATION – Opportunities and Constraints

5.1 Opportunities

- To restore and bring back into use a sound but redundant old farm building and to ensure a long maintained future under occupation.
- To provide additional accommodation ancillary to the Farmhouse including for the use of a parent of the applicant.

5.2 Constraints

- To respect the historical significance of the building that is within the curtilage of two adjacent listed buildings all overlooking a central farmyard.
- Severe headroom limitations at first floor level beneath existing timber roof trusses that are to be retained.

6 THE DESIGN

6.1 Use

The proposal is to convert the existing redundant Barn (Barn 1) into accommodation ancillary to the adjacent listed Farmhouse, including for the use of a parent of the applicant.

The listed Farmhouse (total 251m² / see drawing 3686/10 Farmhouse – Floor Plans Existing) has been altered and refurbished in recent years and now contains porch, breakfast kitchen, dining hall, stairs, cloakroom and living room at ground floor (136m²) and three bedroom and two bathrooms at first floor (115m²). The range of accommodation is not considered adequate for the applicants expanding family and in particular the wish to have a parent of the applicant living with the family.

It is not considered feasible to alter the current Listed Farmhouse floor plans to meet current and future requirements or desirable to extend the Listed Building to provide additional floor space. The proposed conversion of the immediately adjacent Barn 1 is seen as a workable solution for the applicant and a means of refurbishing and maintaining the historic building for future generations.

6.2 Amount

The primary proposed use of the converted Barn 1 will be to accommodate a parent of the applicant and to enable the applicant/family to accommodate short stay visitors and friends. The applicants parent is engaged in the family business that is expected to relocate to the adjacent Barn 2 in the future. As Barn 1 is physically separated from the principal dwelling it is proposed to include bathroom/s and kitchen/dining facilities to enable some independence for the occupant/s when needed. Accommodation will also include two bedrooms, a study/bedroom, lounge, and utility room.

It is also proposed to have a workshop at ground floor with a storage area above at first floor that may if required be designated as a bat roost.

Barn 1 has a total existing floor area of 246m² being 123m² at ground and first floor. The proposals to convert the building include a double height lounge providing a space that visually includes the existing timber roof trusses.

6.3 Layout

The proposed floor plans are illustrated on drawing 3686/06 Proposals Barn 1.

The proposed floor plans are heavily influenced by the limitations imposed by the existing building structure/superstructure and the desire to retain the existing character and features wherever feasible.

The building faces the existing Farmyard, Farmhouse and Barn 2 and this is where the focus of the building will continue to be. The front door is positioned to give reasonably short and direct access across the farmyard to the Farmhouse front door and most of the existing and former openings are utilised.

The internal plans with various level changes at both ground and first floor around the staircase/landing area are needed to give headroom under the retained timber roof trusses.

6.4 Scale (Size)

No physical changes are proposed to the massing of Barn 1 as existing.

6.5 Landscaping

No changes are proposed to the site or landscaping around Barn 1 as existing.

6.6 Appearance

The proposed changes to the elevations are shown on Drawing 3686/08 Proposed Elevations Barn 1.

To the west elevation facing the farmyard two existing doors are to be replaced with new, one existing door is to be replaced with a glazed screen and one existing door opening with a glazed screen. The existing metal windows will either be renovated or replaced to match. At first floor the two pitching holes will be clear glazed without glazing bars.

To the north gable elevation an existing metal window will either be renovated or replaced to match. The existing door will be blocked internally and replaced externally with a new door fixed shut. At first floor the existing pitching hole is to have a new timber boarded door.

To the east elevation the three existing metal window will either be renovated or replaced to match. A new window opening is to be formed to be the same size as those existing and fitted with a metal window to match existing. A former door opening is to be reinstated and brickwork arched head to be raised to take a fully glazed timber door. Three low profile rooflights are proposed. Ground levels to be adjusted adjacent to the building to be min 150mm below new internal floor levels.

To the south gable elevation an existing first floor opening is to be built up in stone to match.

Generally any defective lintels or stonework will be replaced with stone to match. Any defective clay roof tiles will be replaced to match. The numerous first floor ventilation slits will be blocked internally but remain visible externally.

7 ACCESS

No changes are proposed to the access to or around Barn 1. Any vehicles associated with the use of the converted barn will park within the curtilage as existing.

8 PLANNING APPLICATION – Schedule of SUBMITTED DRAWINGS

The following drawings have been prepared to illustrate the existing buildings and proposals:-

3686/00	Location Plan / Block Plan	A3	1:1250 + 1:500 @ A3
3686/01	Existing Conditions – Barn 1	A2	1:100 @ A2
3686/02	Existing Conditions / Barn 2 Floor Plans	A2	1:100 @ A2
3686/03	Existing Conditions - Barn 2 Elevations	A2	1:200 @ A2
3686/06A	Proposals – Barn 1	A3	1:100 @ A3
3686/08A	Proposed Elevations – Barn 1	A3	1:100 @ A3
3686/10	Farmhouse – Floor Plans Existing	A3	1:100 @ A3

9 PLANNING APPLICATION – Schedule of SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

The following Documents have been prepared to support this planning application:-

a) Bat Survey and Barn Owl Report

Prepared by Ken Wainman Associates. Dated June 2014

b) Structural Inspection - Outbuildings

Prepared by Mark Edwards Associates Ltd Ref. MRE/nw/J1745 Dated 8th May 2013

10 PHOTOGRAPHS Barn 1 (2, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 22, 30)



RUSHTON HALL FARM – Approach From Dingle Lane (Barn 1 Left / Barn 2 Right)



BARN 1 – Entering Farmyard from Dingle Lane



BARN 1 – West Elevation (part) Facing Farmyard



BARN 1 – West Elevation (part) Facing Farmyard



BARN 1 – South Elevation



BARN 1 – Ground Floor Shippon



BARN 1 – First Floor Roofspace



BARN 1 – West Elevation (part) Facing Farmyard

END