

P/2019/01547

Received 20 Dec 2019

## **PLANNING AND DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT**

**PROPOSAL** : Conversion of Existing Barn to form Dwelling including external alterations, erection of garage/workshop and installation of drainage  
**ADDRESS** : Riddings Farm, Moisty Lane, Marchington, Staffs, ST14 8JY  
**APPLICANT** : Mr and Mrs J Mellor  
**DATE** : December 2019 **JOB No.** : 2019-2471

### **Introduction**

The application proposes amendments to the planning permission P/2019/00301 granted on the 9 August 2019 in the form of: -

1. The rebuilding of the single storey element of the barn;
2. The erection of a garage/workshop; and
3. Alterations to the drainage scheme by the installation of a treatment plant rather than a septic tank.

### **The Application Building**

The application building is a part single storey/part two storey brick barn. The single storey element is a later addition and constructed of a poorer brick and has a flat roof. There is a smaller lean-to on the opposite side of the barn which has a lean-to roof. The building appears to have been modified in recent years and is understood to have been used for domestic purposes.

### **The Application Site**

The application building is situated in a farm complex and lies between the farmhouse and a storage yard. It is located in the open countryside in Marchington and therefore outside any identified development boundary. It is sited about 150m from the highway to which it is linked by a private driveway which it shares with an adjacent business. The building has a tarmacked forecourt with the garden of Riddings Farm at the rear.

### **Planning History**

P/2014/01525: Outline application for the erection of up to 6 dwellings- REFUSED

P/2015/01103: Conversion of barn to dwelling including the demolition of single storey building and erection of two storey extension, erection of garage and installation of septic tank- APPROVED

P/2018/01178: Discharge of conditions of application 2015/01103- APPROVED

P/2019/00301: Conversion of barn to dwelling, erection of garage and installation of septic tank- APPROVED

### **The Approved Development**

The most recent planning permission relates to a conversion of the barn to provide a two-bedroom dwelling. This retains the single storey addition with the roof replaced with a pitched, tiled roof. The earlier P/2015/01103 was amended to remove the proposed two storey extension, and effectively mirrors the current permission. The permission also includes the erection of a double garage.

### **Planning policy**

The development comprises the East Staffordshire Borough Council Local Plan 2012-2031 Planning for Change adopted in 2015 and the Marchington Neighbourhood Plan adopted in 2016.

Policy SP8 of the Local Plan allows the suitable re-use of a rural building that is located outside of a development boundary to an appropriate use. This allowance is conditional on the proposal not harming the amenities of the area including neighbours, the design of the building being well related to the site, and it avoiding any adverse impacts on highway safety.

The Council has an SPD "Re-use of Rural Buildings" which was adopted in 2010. It states that "(residential) use is generally only appropriate for traditional agricultural buildings which are structurally sound, make a positive contribution to their surroundings, are capable of conversion without substantial alteration or extension, where there is an existing vehicular access to the building, and where any domestic curtilage can be accommodated without creating a visual intrusion into the surrounding countryside".

### **Planning Assessment**

The principle of the conversion of the application building to form a single dwelling has clearly been accepted by the Council in the granting of two planning permissions.

The 2015 application proposed the demolition of the flat roofed single storey addition with it being replaced by a two-storey new extension. During the processing of the application, this was amended by the retention of the walls of the addition but with a new pitched roof. This permission included a consent for a double garage.

The 2019 application proposal is essentially the same as the 2015 permission.

The proposed amendment proposed by this application is the demolition of the flat roofed addition and its replacement by a single storey extension with a pitched roof and a larger garage building that incorporates a small workshop.

The appropriateness of the design of a proposal of this kind is judged against the SPD "Re-use of Rural Buildings". This has various arms to it: -

1. The policy applies to only traditional farm buildings;
2. The building must be structurally sound;
3. The building must make a positive contribution to the character of the area;
4. The building must be capable of conversion without substantial alteration or extension;
5. There is already a vehicular access to the site; and
6. A domestic curtilage can be provided without any visual intrusion into the countryside.

In terms of how the current planning application responds to these points: -

1. This is a traditional barn;
2. The application is supported by a Structural Report that confirms that the building is structurally sound;
3. The building is considered to make a positive contribution to the character of the area. The only proviso to this is that the flat roofed building does have a mix of three different bricks in the rear elevation (see photo 1)
4. The building is capable of conversion without significant alteration or rebuilding. However, the approved applications proposed new openings in the front and rear elevations of the flat roofed addition. There are currently four long windows in the front elevation and these are going to be replaced by three square windows. The approved plans show that the door opening is to be blocked up with new bricks, and the remnants of the existing window openings treated in a similar fashion. The result, even with the use of a bespoke brick, will not have an attractive appearance- it will resemble something akin to a jigsaw. This is why the current application proposes the rebuilding of this part of the building. The approval already permits a new roof on this part of the building partly, it is assumed, to enhance the appearance of the building. Having taken this on board, it would be a pity if the scarring of the front elevation prevents this improvement being fully realised. The current proposal will result in a far better overall appearance, and in doing so, increases compliance with point 3;
5. There is an existing vehicular access;
6. The majority of the residential curtilage is already garden.

In these respects, applying a balance to this important policy consideration, it is considered that the current proposal, whilst proposing a slightly greater amount of rebuilding, provides a much better appearance to the building and allowing it to make a greater positive contribution to the character of the area.

The proposed change to the drainage for the site is driven by the imminent outlawing of new septic tanks. The proposed treatment plant will be located within the proposed rear garden.

The proposed enlargement to the proposed garage is minor and allows the applicant space for a workshop.



**PHOTO 1**

### **Conclusion**

The current planning application is not dissimilar to the two granted planning permissions. The element that requires careful consideration against current policy is the proposed replacement of the walls in the flat roofed part of the application building. The Council's policy to restrict rebuilding is not dissimilar to planning policies applied elsewhere, and are important to ensure that applications like this truly propose a conversion rather than a rebuilding project.

It is considered that this application does comply with part 4 of the SPG- it does not propose a "significant" level of rebuilding- the two-storey element of the barn and the smaller lean-to on the end are structurally sound and will need no rebuilding. This single storey element is not a significant proportionate part of the barn and this part of the proposal is therefore compliant with the Council's policy.

## **DESIGN**

### **Use**

The application proposes a residential use on the site that is acceptable in principle.

### **Amount**

The application proposes a single dwelling.

### **Layout**

The layout has to a large extent been determined by physical constraints on the building and the Council's policy. The proposal will not increase the footprint of the barn

### **Scale**

The scale of the proposal will be unchanged. The footprint and envelope of the building will not be changed.

### **Landscaping**

Landscaping will be incorporated in the proposed curtilage in terms of planting and boundary treatment.

### **Appearance**

The appearance of the building will be enhanced by the proposal.

## **ACCESS**

### **VEHICULAR AND TRANSPORT LINKS**

The property is not within easy walking distance or a local bus ride of local facilities.

### **INCLUSIVE ACCESS**

The proposed development makes provision for access by less abled people. The mass, approach and materials are considered acceptable.