

Planning Statement

FIRST FLOOR EXTENSION

**ASH BARN, FINKLE STREET LANE, WORTLEY, SHEFFIELD, S35
7DH**

**PREPARED FOR: MR AND MRS SENIOR
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This statement has been prepared to support the submission of an application for full planning permission for a first-floor extension to an existing dwelling house. The host property is a converted and extended mid-19th century barn. The barn was converted and extended in the early 1990s. At this time, a single storey extension was added to the north-eastern end of the former barn, and it is above this that the proposed extension is to be sited.

Planning permission has recently been granted for a single storey extension to the south-western end of the original building. The current proposal seeks to provide additional accommodation for the main house in the form of a bedroom and sitting room. The extension has been sensitively designed to ensure that it would not adversely impact on the remaining historic character and significance of the host building. The design also responds positively to pre-application advice provided by the Local Planning Authority (LPA), Barnsley MBC. The design of the extension accords with the guidance within the LPA's Barn Conversions SPD.

The site is within the Green Belt and the extension has therefore also been designed to ensure that it would not form a disproportionate addition to the original building and is fully in accordance with local and national policy in this respect.

This statement should be read in conjunction with the supporting plans supplied by NYP Architectural Services and the Statement of Heritage Significance by The Jessop Consultancy, which demonstrate the credentials of the scheme in more detail.

It is anticipated that the Local Planning Authority (LPA) will adopt a progressive approach to this sustainable scheme.

This statement now proceeds to give details of the site and the existing use. The details of the proposal are then set out. The planning merits of the scheme are then discussed in relation to relevant planning policies contained in the statutory development plan, together

with Government guidance principally set out in the NPPF. It will be demonstrated that the proposal would result in a sustainable form of development, that the development would preserve the remaining historic character of the converted barn and that the extension is an appropriate form of development within the green belt.

2.0 THE SITE

The application site is a converted barn that lies in the open countryside to the southwest of Wortley village.



The former barn is constructed from local stone and is of two storey, linear form that is typical of a 19th century agricultural building. The extension to the northern end of the original building was constructed at the time the main building was converted to residential use in the early 1990s. The extension has a more domestic appearance due to the window arrangement and double garage doors. A single storey extension to the southern end of the original building has recently been approved.

The building is not listed. Because it is a converted mid-19th century farm building, the converted barn is of some historic and architectural significance and can be considered a non-designated heritage asset. As set out in the accompanying Statement of Heritage

Significance, the significance of the building is limited, and it is of no more than local importance. A detailed discussion about the history for the building is set out in the Statement of Heritage Significance.

3.0 THE PROPOSAL

Full planning permission is sought for a first-floor extension above the 1990s single storey extension to the north-eastern end of the converted barn. More information about the proposal can be found in the accompanying plans by NYP Architectural Services and the heritage assessment by The Jessop Consultancy. The key elements of the proposal are as follows:

- The extension would provide an additional bedroom and sitting room for the host dwelling.
- The height of the extension has been carefully designed and limited to ensure that it would be wholly subservient to the original barn building.
- The extension has a simple linear form to reflect the historic character of the barn.
- The fenestration of the extension has been amended to reflect pre-application advice and would now be entirely appropriate for the host building.
- The proposed extension and previously approved extensions would not exceed the size of the original building.

4.0 PLANNING HISTORY

The most recent planning history for the site is:

- 2021/1318- Erection of single storey side extensions to dwelling– approved Nov 2021.

Other planning history comprises of:

- 2018/0985 – Installation Patio Doors – approved.
- 90/0714 – Erection of garage, convert barn, into dwelling and re-build extension – approved.
- 89-0817 – Outline conversion – approved.

5.0 PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSIONS

Pre-application discussions were initially held relating to a development comprising of both a single storey extension to the southern end of the main building and a two-storey extension to the northern end. The LPA raised concerns about the two-storey extension. The decision was therefore taken to separate the two proposals. Planning permission has now been granted for the single storey extension to the southern end. This has allowed all attention to be focused on the two-storey extension in the preparation of the current application.

The LPA raised the following concerns in respect of the two-storey extension in December 2020:

- The size of the extension will compete with the former barn.
- Doveholes and ledges to the gable end of the barn will be truncated.
- Roof lights are excessive.
- The extension doesn't defer to the historic building.

Design amendments were then made to the scheme in order to reduce the height of the two-storey extension and alter the fenestration. The LPA provided the following feedback in August 2021:

- Acknowledged the positive improvement of lowering of the ridge over the bedroom, the removal of the road facing rooflights, and the better/more sympathetic fenestration generally.

- However, retained concerns about the “sprawling” footprint of the extension and the height of the sitting room element. Concluded that the extension “subsumes the original barn as historic building”.

Whilst we are very grateful to the LPA for their pre-application feedback, and welcome the acknowledgement of the positive improvements, we cannot agree with the comments in respect of the size and footprint of the extension. It will be demonstrated below that the size and footprint of the extension are entirely appropriate and would result in no material harm to the historic character of the host building.

6.0 ALLOCATION AND POLICIES

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this instance the Development Plan consists of the Barnsley Local Plan, which was adopted in January 2019.

Material considerations exist in the form of national policy and guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as updated in July 2021 and the suite of documents comprising National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG).

Regard has also been had to the LPA’s Barn Conversions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Allocations

The site is within the Green Belt.

National

The NPPF is reflective of the guidance contained within the NPPG. The following sections of the revised NPPF are considered of direct relevance to the current proposal:

Section 2 - Achieving sustainable development
Section 4 - Decision-making
Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places
Section 13 – Protecting green belt land
Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

The overarching message of the NPPF is that LPAs should adopt a positive and pro-active approach to planning proposals, particularly those that result in sustainable development. LPAs should not place unnecessary burdens on developers and should look to support appropriate schemes such as this.

Barnsley Local Plan

The following policies are considered of relevance:

SD1 – Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development
GD1 – General Development
GB2 - Replacement, extension and alteration of existing buildings in the Green Belt
HE3 - Developments affecting Historic Buildings

7.0 ASSESSMENT

Green Belt

The NPPF sets out that new buildings in the green belt will generally be inappropriate development, unless it falls within the 'closed list' of exceptions as defined by paragraph 149. The list of exceptions includes:

“The extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;”

Local Plan policy GB2 states that the *“Extension or alteration of a building where the total size of the proposed and previous extensions does not exceed the size of the original building”* will be acceptable within the Green Belt. The combined volume of the extension that is proposed under this application, the existing single storey garage and games room extension and the recently approved single storey extension is less than the volume of the original building. The size of the extension is therefore within the scope of policy GB2.

As well as being acceptable purely in size terms, it is clear that the extension would not be a disproportionate addition visually either. It would not increase the existing footprint at all and would sit comfortably above the existing garage and games room. The extension has been designed with a split roof height and this further minimises the visual impact.

The proposed extension would not result in a disproportionate addition to the original building, and it is therefore an appropriate form of development in the green belt. The proposal accords with section 13 of the NPPF and Local Plan policy GB2.

Design and Heritage Considerations

An assessment of the significance of the former barn has been undertaken. This concludes that Ash Barn is of no more than local heritage interest, and only when considered as a group with the other historic farm buildings at Harper Hill Farm.

The building is of limited architectural significance. It has been highly altered and buildings of this type are common within the region. The 1990s conversion has detracted from the legibility of its original function. It is also of limited historic and archaeological significance.

Whilst we agree that the building is a non-designated heritage asset, it must be kept in mind that it is one of limited significance and is not especially sensitive to change.

It is also noted that the detailing of the existing single storey extension is found to be a detracting feature to the significance of the heritage asset. This application provides an opportunity to achieve enhancement in that respect.

The proposed extension has evolved significantly since the original pre-application submission. We are grateful to the LPA for their feedback, and this has undoubtedly achieved a better scheme. We are, however, very disappointed that the LPA continued to raise concerns about the size of the extension as amended in the most-recent round of pre-application discussion.

Backed by the heritage expertise in the accompanying Jessop Consultancy report, we strongly believe that the amended scheme is wholly acceptable and a refusal on the grounds cited by the LPA at the pre-application stage could not be substantiated.

The LPA agreed at the most recent pre-application stage that issues relating to fenestration have now been overcome. The Jessop Consultancy report addresses this matter in detail, noting:

“The eastern elevation of the northern extension is to be redesigned to reduce its domestic character by breaking up the large openings, removing one of the garages, and installing side hung doors in place of the up-and-over door of the remaining garage. New openings will respect the historic dimensions of original openings elsewhere and have been arranged to an irregular pattern to provide a sense of functionalism and subservience in keeping with Ash Barn’s agricultural origins. Overall, these alterations will enhance the character of the elevation which currently makes a negative contribution to the significance of the building. The west elevation has been carried forward the same philosophy, although retaining the large French doors and installing a taller narrow window to light the stairs. These contemporary touches have been designed to provide a sense of legibility of the age of the extension whilst reflecting the overall irregular pattern of fenestration that promotes its functional character. Skylights have been removed from the west facing pitch of the proposal to better respect the importance of the yard elevations in defining the setting of the building.”

The fenestration and detailing of the scheme as submitted is therefore entirely appropriate, would respect the character of the former barn and would improve the appearance of the existing 1990s extension. We are pleased that this issue has been addressed and that the LPA acknowledged this at the second pre-application stage.

The remaining issue therefore relates solely to the size of the extension. We cannot agree with the LPA's pre-application comments that the extension would have a "*sprawling footprint*" or that it would "*subsume*" the historic building.

In respect of footprint, there would be no increase at all to the existing footprint. The extension would be sited above the existing single storey extension. There would be no change to the footprint, so this is a continuation of the established situation.

In respect of the height of the extension, this has been very carefully designed to both avoid interference with the features of interest on the gable end of the former barn and to ensure that the extension is an entirely subordinate addition. The comparison of the existing and proposed elevations below shows that the scheme is very successful in achieving this:





The existing single storey extension is completely out of proportion with the former barn. Being almost as wide, but half the height, of the host dwelling gives an incoherent relationship. This is emphasised by the very wide openings and very low solid-to-void ratio that results from the domestic windows and garage doors. The low solid to void ratio of the existing extension is completely out of kilter with the barn and the opportunity to improve this should be welcomed.

Increasing the ridge height, removing the domestic-character openings and greatly improving the solid-to-void ratio creates an extension wholly more in keeping with the historic building than the existing situation. The ridge heights of the two elements of the extension breaks up the poor continuous massing of the existing extension and provides an addition with much more appropriate proportions. The improved proportions and solid to void ratio give a stronger look, much more reflective of a traditional barn.

The extension has been designed with a split-level ridge height in order to minimising massing. The LPA raised concern about the height of the taller part, but this is still well below the ridge line of the former barn. The Jessop Consultancy report notes that:

“The proposed addition of a first floor to the north range will raise the eaves and ridge height of the present building. The scale of the new range has been established at a height that will allow the dovecot in the north gable of the former barn to be preserved, and staggers to the ridgeline of the building to articulate its mass and provide greater sense of hierarchy and subservience.”

The result is an extension wholly in keeping with the historic barn, but at a scale that is entirely subordinate to it. We fundamentally disagree that the size of the extension would subsume the historic building, and, in fact, it would clearly appear as a secondary element. The original barn would remain the entirely dominant feature through both scale and detailing.

This, coupled with the significant improvements to the fenestration over and above the existing situation must direct the LPA to the conclusion that the extension would result in no harm to the (already limited) significance and historic character of the former barn.

The extension raises no conflict with the Barn Conversions SPD. The SPD states:

“Extensions (when required) should normally be located on the short or gabled elevation of the barn, typically incorporating a single pitch or ‘lean to roof’ avoiding deviations from a single rectangular plan.”

The extension is on the short, gabled elevation and has no impact at all on the historic fabric to the front and rear elevations of the former barn. Whilst the SPD advises that extensions may “typically” incorporate a lean-to roof, this is not a strict requirement. It would not be appropriate for a lean to roof to be a requirement in this instance as the existing extension already has a dual pitched roof. By replacing the existing continuous ridge height with a split ridge height, the proposed extension actually serves to create a more appropriate roof design than the existing arrangement. The linear plan form is very much maintained.

Both the scale and fenestration detailing of the extension are appropriate and would ensure no harm to the significance of the non-designated heritage asset. The proposal is therefore fully in accordance with section 16 of the NPPF and policy HE3 of the Local Plan, as well as the guidance within the Barn Conversions SPD.

Amenity

The proposed extension would be sited about 15m from the only near-neighbouring property, which lies to the southwest of the site. There would be a very acute angle between

the two. The outlook from the ground floor openings of the extension would be very similar to the existing arrangement. Only one first floor opening is proposed to the front elevation of the extension. Given the separation distance and acute angle, this window would not result in any harmful overlooking to the neighbouring dwelling. Given the lack of any near neighbours to the north or east, the openings to the side and rear elevations would result in no overlooking.

The orientation of the site to the northeast of the neighbouring property would ensure that there is no harmful overshadowing. The limited height and the way in which the application site angles away from the neighbouring dwelling would ensure no harmful overbearing or oppressive impacts.

Overall, the proposed extension would not harm the amenity of occupiers of any neighbouring dwelling and the proposal is fully policy compliant in this respect.

Highways Impacts

The proposal would not alter the well-established access arrangement to the site. The extension would provide additional living space for the host dwelling, and it would not materially alter existing levels of traffic generated by the site.

There would be a reduction in the existing amount of garage space. However, there is ample space for parking within the garage area that is to be retained and on the existing driveway.

There would be no material impacts on highways safety and efficiency and the scheme fully accords with local and national policy in this respect.

Ecology and Trees

Being a modern extension that is in daily use, the existing building that is affected by the development has no potential to be suitable for roosting bats or nesting birds. As such, the development would not be harmful to protected species. The existing footprint is not to be

extended and no trees or other features that may provide habitat opportunities would be affected.

8.0 CONCLUSION

The proposed scheme represents a sustainable form of development that would not have any unacceptable impact for the reasons set out above. The development would respect the character and significance of the non-designated heritage asset and is an acceptable form of development in the green belt.

It has been demonstrated above that there would be no adverse impacts in terms of visual and residential amenity, highways safety and ecology. The proposal fully accords with adopted planning policy and guidance and the LPA are respectfully urged to grant permission for the scheme.

The Applicant is willing to discuss any issues that may arise during the consideration of the proposal with the LPA.

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JR Planning