

EDGARS

Ms Rebekah Morgan
Planning Officer
Cherwell District Council

By email: rebekah.morgan@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Our Ref: 934/2940
Your reference: 22/03033/F

06/12/2022

Dear Ms Morgan,

22/03033/F THE STABLES, MAIN STREET, WENDLEBURY, OX25 2PR

Proposal: The conversion and infill extension of equestrian stables to a create a single residential dwelling.

This letter seeks to address and clarify a number of matters which have been raised against the application thus far.

The Conservation Officer, Parish Council and neighbour comments have identified concerns with regard to the following aspects of the proposal:

- Increased number of openings
- Impact of domestic paraphernalia and outdoor amenity space
- Impact on Grade II listed Stables and College Farmhouse
- Position within the village
- Principle of Development
- Drainage and flooding
- Neighbouring residential amenity
- Impact on the character and setting of surrounding properties
- Lighting and disturbance to the landscape setting

The following pages of this letter responds to each matter in turn, drawing on the site and surrounding buildings planning history, and information contained within the current application to outline how the current proposal is acceptable and accords with planning policy.

Increased number of openings

The Conservation Officer has raised concerns with the increased number of openings. Whilst the proposal does seek the introduction of windows on the southern and eastern elevation, and the infilling of the car port on the northern elevation, this has been designed in a way that retains the rural aesthetic of the building. Existing openings are being retained and the proposed new openings on the south and east resemble stable doors with timber boarding in the lower sections.

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The infill of the car port with vertical windowpanes and oak timber frames is an appropriate design response to infilling this large opening in a manner concurrent with barn conversions countywide. This maintains a rural aesthetic through referencing the use of the building as a stable, retains existing openings and features, and limits openings to where they are necessary. Furthermore, the proposed insertion of windows will not overlook neighbouring properties.

Overall, the design solution ensures that the conversion of the building is functional while maintaining a simple, non-domestic character.

Impact of proposed amenity space

The extent of the outdoor amenity space for the proposed dwelling has been considered carefully. The residential curtilage that would be associated with this dwelling is tight to the converted building on its eastern, southern and western side. The proposed private amenity space is to the north of the existing stable, an area already occupied by a horse menage area. The equine paddock which adjoins to the east lies outside the proposed curtilage and as such will not be subject to domestic paraphernalia. Existing hardstanding, menage area and land to the buildings north is utilised with an overall improvement in condition through additional lawned and landscaped areas. The proposed landscaping seeks to maintain the character of the existing garden land and reinforce the boundary with estate fencing which is in keeping with the existing character of the land.

Notwithstanding, existing dwellings and gardens at Farriers Mead adjoin to the north and extend considerably further east beyond the site toward the open countryside. In light of its siting and existing equine use, it is not considered that the proposed garden area will be harmful to the character of the area or countryside to the east.



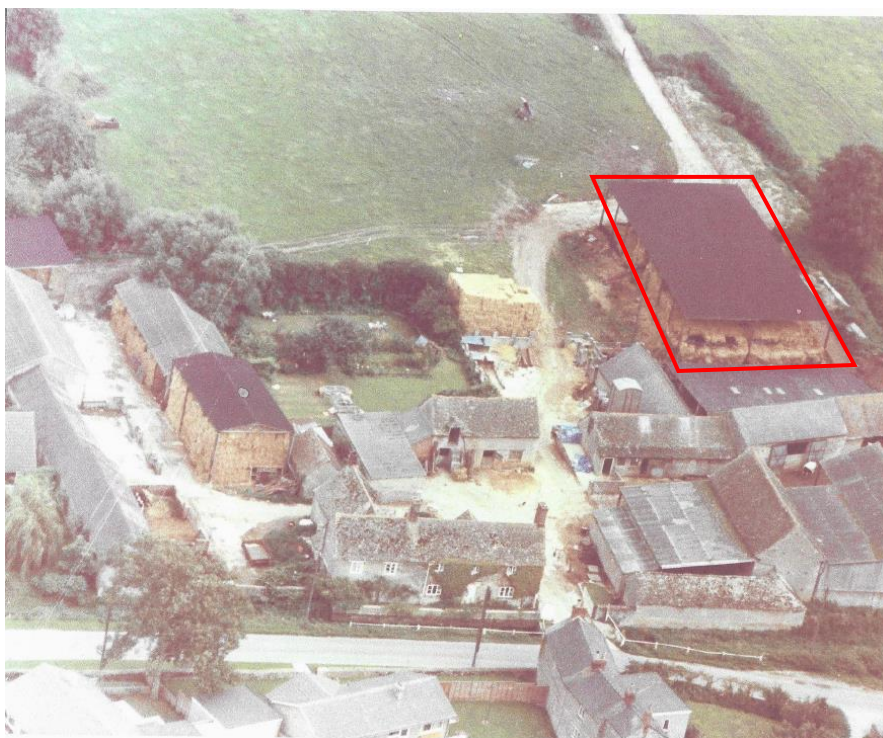
Impact on Grade II listed Stables and College Farmhouse

Considering the sensitive nature of the proposed design approach which converts and reuses the existing building it is not considered that the proposal will have any material effect on the heritage significance of this asset or other assets in the village.

The Conservation Officer comments state that the building is on land associated with College Farm but the stable building itself is some distance from the listed building. The comments go on to explain the area originally had some agricultural buildings on the site which formed part of the



agricultural holding relating to the farmhouse (College Farm). The photo below shows the grouping of buildings around College Farm. The site is outlined in red.



As part of the 2014 application (14/00426/F) for the modern stable building, no formal Conservation Officer comment were provided. However, within the Officer Report, the case officer states that the proposed stable building, given its height, design, form and siting would not adversely affect the setting of the listed buildings. The officer considered that the proposal represented an opportunity to enhance and better reveal the significance of the heritage asset 'The Stables' through the removal of older and more unattractive buildings. It is clear therefore that the provision of the Stable building as existing and the change of use of the land from agricultural to equestrian was not considered harmful to the historic significance of College Farm.

Considering the neighbouring buildings, the Grade II listed building 'The Stables' was subject to planning and listed building consent in 2010 and 2015¹. These applications have included significant extensions and alterations to the existing stable building increasing its size and the number of openings. This has altered the buildings' character to a more domestic form, compared with its original simple and diminutive form. Similarly, The Old Granary and The Old Dairy associated with College Farm have also been converted to residential dwellings and such the land and buildings between the site and College Farm are now solely residential. This further illustrates that the previous agricultural connection with the site and College Farm has already been subject to change and loss. Subsequently, the site does not contribute to the historical significance of the buildings.

The current proposal to convert the modern stable building into a dwelling centres around retaining the existing buildings height and form, maintaining its rural aesthetic and limiting its residential curtilage to that which is experienced as residential equestrian land currently. It is also important to add that this building was replaced from a previously existing barn and therefore is not a new building. Subsequently, it is considered that there is no harm or impact on the listed buildings and their settings. For the reasons that the proposal seeks to convert the existing modern stable building that was given permission in 2014 with no heritage harm identified.

¹ 10/01124/F, 10/01125/LB, 15/01697/F and 15/01698/LB



Building Line

The building line of the village has been set out within our planning statement and in Figure 1 above. Farriers Mead, St Giles Close and Rectory Close extend the settlement envelope beyond the built-up frontage of Main Street. Farriers Mead which immediately adjoins the site to the north extends the built-up part of the settlement much further east than the proposal site.

Furthermore, the existing stable building benefits from its relationship to The Stables, The Old Granary and The Old Dairy as a group of converted agricultural buildings and is served from an existing access road. This cluster of buildings means that there is no open land between the proposed site, residential dwellings along Main Street and Farriers Mead, so the existing stable building is read as being within the built-up envelope of the village.

The historic photograph above shows the original farm layout prior to any conversions. The modern stable building is in the original barn location at the back of this group. The barn/silo was taken down in 2013 and re-built at a later date when the various outbuildings were converted into houses.

To further emphasise, this is an existing building on the site of an existing agricultural building, and so will not be extending the building line because no new buildings are being proposed.

Principle of Development

Policy Villages 1 identifies that acceptable development in Category C settlements such as Wendlebury includes 'infilling and conversions'. To be a conversion, it is considered that a proposed development should not significantly alter the overall form or scale of an existing building - this is achieved by this proposal.

The proposed conversion of the stable building to a dwelling maintains the scale, footprint, roof form and the overall appearance of the existing stable building. It utilises the existing openings and minimises new openings and thus satisfies the criteria of Policy Village 1. In addition, the proposal is also in an appropriate location due to its relationship with neighbouring dwellings and the character of the settlement envelope and such is considered to be infilling. It is therefore considered that the proposal is compliant with Local Plan Policy Villages 1.

Drainage and Flooding Issues

The building is located within Flood Zone 1 with the access to the site itself in Flood Zone 2/3 (like most of the dwellings accessed off Main Street). We have received no objection from Oxfordshire County Council Highways who have no issues with the access to the site which will remain unaltered.

Condition 6 of application 14/00426/F states:

Prior to the first use of the development hereby approved, the hard standing areas shall be provided in accordance with the plan approved and shall be constructed from porous materials or provision shall be made to direct run-off water from the hard surface to a permeable or porous area or surface within the curtilage of the site. Thereafter, the hard standing area shall be retained in accordance with this condition.

The development was implemented in accordance with this condition. The proposed conversion of the stable building does not change the existing drainage conditions of the site as it maintains the porous areas of hardstanding previously permitted. There is an existing foul sewerage connection that will be utilised for the dwelling.

Subsequently, we do not consider that there would be any issues within drainage or flooding to preclude the conversion of existing building to a dwelling. A suitably worded drainage condition could be included if necessary.

Amenity Issues



It has been noted that some neighbours and the Parish Council have objected to the proposal due to the impact on neighbouring amenity, including privacy and overlooking.

The proposed development and the design of the scheme has centred around the conversion of the existing building and therefore the sites conditions are largely unaltered. New openings are proposed; however, these do not directly overlook any neighbouring building as they are located on the northern, eastern and southern elevations.

Existing dwellings located to the west are separated by an existing hedge and tree line which will remain. There are no windows proposed on the western elevation, with only the insertion of four rooflights on the western roof slope. However, these are considerably above head height and would not allow for any loss of privacy or overlooking to the dwelling to the west. As the dwelling is to remain single storey, the majority of the dwelling would look onto the existing fence or hedge, and such there is no opportunity for overlooking.

The proposed garden area will adjoin the existing garden area for the dwelling also known as The Stables and those to Farriers Mead to the north. Existing vegetation, boundary treatments and landscape proposals will reinforce boundaries to ensure adequate amenity in the gardens of these dwellings.

Accordingly, the conversion of the building to a dwelling will maintain adequate levels of outlook, natural lighting and privacy to neighbouring dwellings.

Lighting

Any remaining concerns regarding external lighting can be secured via condition.

Conclusion

This letter has drawn on information contained within the submitted application and applications within the site's history to outline the acceptability of the proposed development. The applicant has carefully considered the comments received thus far submitted to the application and considers these clarifications to be an appropriate response to concerns raised.

I trust that this letter provides you with the clarification required to determine that the proposed development is in accordance with Local and National Planning policy.

Yours sincerely,

Emma Wagland

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