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Project number 12-289

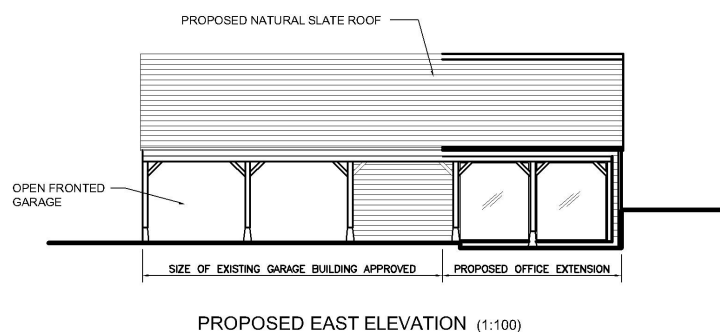
Design and Access Statement in Support of Proposed Revisions to Approved Planning Consent for Garage at Heath Barn, Epwell

Introduction and Planning History

This planning application is a variation to an earlier application made in June 2013 (reference 13/00865/F) which was withdrawn following adverse comments. A planning consent was granted in 29th March 2012 (reference 12/00141/F) for residential conversion of the barn at the site and this included a garage to be constructed in the form of a converted cart shed or implement store. The withdrawn application proposed to vary this by altering the driveway approach, reconfiguring the garage doors to the end elevation and increasing the footprint of the garage building to include a plant room and home office. Proposals were also included to modify the landscape proposes. Although no objection was raised by the parish council or any neighbours, concern was expressed by the planning officer that the combined effect of the increased footprint of the building, non-traditional appearance of openings in the gable and increase of the domestic cartilage by re-routing the access could not be supported.

Proposals and Use

The revised proposals seek to instigate some of the concerns noted above. The additional space is essential in order to provide space for a suitable sustainable heating system and a home office. However, the driveway access is now returned to the approved consent and the openings to the garage are returned to the east side elevation and are now entirely consistent with a former cart shed/implement store as shown below.



Mains gas is not available at the site and the fossil fuel choices available are not considered sustainable and would result in relatively high carbon emissions. This could be offset, to some degree by the use of solar thermal and photovoltaic panels in the roof(s) of the building(s). This is considered particularly undesirable in this location and would only be partially effective in reducing the carbon footprint as they would only contribute significantly during parts of the year/day. Consideration has been given to the use of an air-source heat pump. However, this would require an electrical capacity beyond that readily available at the site and would, furthermore, require the siting of an outdoor unit. The site is, however,

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well-suited to the use of a bio-mass boiler with good supplies of biomass in the area and suitable access for delivery. The biomass boiler will require a dedicated plant room of moderate size and also a store for the biomass fuel (anticipated to be wood chip). The minimum practical area is shown on the drawing to allow the installation of the boiler and for a storage area suitable for a modest bulk store of wood chips (which would be delivered by blowing into the store from a delivery vehicle parked adjacent to the building). The bulk store must be positioned adjacent to the boiler location to allow screw feeding directly to the boiler.

A reduced size home office now been shown. The owner of the building runs two businesses both of which are operated predominantly rurally. Parkinson Blackwell is a long-established thatching business with sites typically located in villages in Oxfordshire and South Warwickshire. Cord Developments is a development company anticipating projects in a similar area. Mr Blackwell currently operates from an office at Duns Tew resulting in travelling that could easily be made unnecessary by the proposed home office.

Layout and Scale

The general layout and scale are similar to the approved scheme except that the building has been lengthened with a height and depth to match the existing. The additional section of the garage building will be masked from the east by the converted barn and from the west will be built into the ground and screened by the rising ground and hedge line. From the north and south the appearance will be unchanged as the profile matches the approved scheme.

Appearance and Materials

The appearance of the garage building is entirely compatible with the site and surroundings. The building will be oak-framed with way-edge oak cladding. The home office glazed elevation will be opposite the gable end of the barn and will only be visible from within the site. It will match the threshing door infill of the main residential barn to emphasise that it represents part of the same conversion.

The roof will be slate covered as would be expected.

Access

The access arrangements to the site would be unchanged. The home office will incorporate and disabled compliant access.

Sustainability

All aspects of the project are considered to be compatible with the aims of sustainable development.