

10/07982

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT | Full Application

AMENDED

Project

Conversion of Barn into Dwelling
Great Tregastick
Widegates
Looe
Cornwall
PL21 1PZ
13

Client

Mrs S Rowe

Prepared by

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This statement accompanies the detailed application to explain how the applicant has considered the proposal, and understands what is appropriate and feasible for the site in its context. It is intended to clearly explain and justify the design and access principles that will be used to develop future details of the scheme. Such information will help community involvement and informed decision making.

This report must be read in conjunction with the following reports which accompany this application;
Structural Survey Report by David Tithecott – Chartered Surveyor
~~*Bat and Barn Owl Survey by David Wills – Ecologist*~~
~~*Statement of Attempts for Business Use – Trewin Design Partnership*~~
~~*Planning Significance Statement – Trewin Design Partnership*~~

1.1 PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION

“Proposed conversion of barn into a dwelling”

2.0 APPRAISING THE CONTEXT

- 2.1 *ASSESSMENT: The site is located in an isolated rural location. The site is accessed from a lane with access onto a classified road. The buildings sits to the east side of the existing Grade II Farmhouse of Great Tregastick. The site is isolated and well screened by existing hedgerow trees and buildings. The barn originally formed part of a group of buildings of Cornish farmstead character.*
- 2.2 *HISTORICAL CONTEXT: The agricultural building is a bespoke service building to Great Tregastick dates from the period 1860 – 1905 when increased agricultural productivity, encouraged by rising grain prices and the demands of ever increasing urban population saw substantial improvements with buildings and farming methods to make working areas more efficient.*

The application building is traditional and of stone construction, erected post 1905. Its close proximity to the existing farmhouse notifies the buildings importance in the past and its functions served as a central building to the farming enterprise, combined with the original quality of the materials and construction, made the original barn a fine example of traditional rural farm buildings due to its form, scale and use of local materials.

A copy of the aerial photo (attached) shows the original farmstead character where the buildings were grouped around a large yard originally provide accommodation of livestock, the housing and processing of crops, and the storage of vehicles, implements and fodder.

The barn alongside the Grade II Farmhouse makes a significant positive contribution to the

architectural and historic interest of the area.

"Farmsteads and their buildings were typically designed to serve one or more purposes, which are clearly expressed in the siting, scale, arrangements and features"¹

¹ *The Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings: A Guide to good practice*, English Heritage.

- 2.3 **ARCHITECTURAL APPRAISAL:** *The character of the barn is established by the use of traditional rubble local stone and pitched slate roof. Most traditional farm buildings are comparatively simple functional structures built from locally available materials with a minimum of decoration. The building has few architectural embellishments, simple, well proportioned and a good example of local traditional building of good quality construction and appearance.*

Many architectural details such as the slate roof, the stone walls and quoins, timber lintols and timber trusses are to be retained. Doors and windows are of a simple agricultural style all of which makes the barn a significant positive contribution to the architectural and historic interest of the area.

The building has openings with stone quoins and walling all of which is relatively common to the area and demonstrates a certain quality of construction. Window frames are constructed in timber. The walls are constructed in local stone with lime putty mortar joints.

- 2.4 **SIGNIFICANCE:** *The appearance of the building is entirely traditional and makes it an important contribution to the local scene. It represents a lost part of Cornwall's past. The design of the barn in its original form allowed for the flow of process and the working operation with the building sited to one side of the yard and access. The proximity between the farmhouse and barn indicate it was at the time a small thriving rural based operation.*

There is little historic information on the barn. It does appear (see aerial photograph page 12) to be a typical Cornish farmstead, where the buildings were originally grouped around a large yard in close proximity of the Farmhouse. The building would have originally been used for cattle housing, stabling and implement storage.

The footprint of the building is "L" shaped. Internal space is large central area open plan with two loose boxes on each end.

Internally the roof trusses are exposed. There is no internal plaster work. The ground floor slopes to the south side. Part of the original drainage channels have been removed.

- 2.5 **EVALUATION:** *The application building has close association with the areas agricultural past and is a traditional rural building of character. It makes a significant positive contribution to the*

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architectural and historic interest of the area therefore careful consideration is required to ensure the building has a future use and in this respect a new use that sits comfortably with the main dwelling house and ensures long term maintenance and use of the buildings.

2.6 **PLANNING POLICY CONSIDERATION:** *The application meets the following policy requirements;*

The barn is alongside the farmhouse which is a Grade II Listed Building. The Listing states;

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4/39 Great Tregastick

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Farmhouse, now private house. Circa mid C17 extended to rear with outshuts in circa late C18 or early C19. Stone rubble, partly rendered and slate-hung above ground floor on front elevation. Asbestos slate roof with gable ends continued in outshut over rear elevation. Projecting stone rubble chimney stacks on gable ends and rear lateral chimney stack with brick shaft at junction of main range with outshut.

Circa mid C17 range of 2 room and possibly through passage plan with hall kitchen on left and parlour on right, both heated by end stacks with cloam ovens. Circa late C18 or early C19 outshut added to rear to form double depth plan with larger kitchen to back right heated by fireplace situated to rear of original through passage and dairy to back left. Stair inserted in through passage.

2 storeys, regular 3-window front; ground floor with mid C19 3-light casement with glazing bars to hall kitchen on left and circa mid C19 2-light casement with glazing bars to right, both with C17 chamfered timber lintels with straight cut stops. C19 stone rubble lean-to porch with slate hipped roof and C20 glazed door near centre. First floor with mid C19 3-light casement on left, mid C19 2-light casement in centre and C20 casement to right, all with glazing bars. Eaves of roof probably raised when outshut added to rear and roof pitch altered.

Interior Probable hall-kitchen on left with circa mid C17 chamfered timber lintel to fireplace with straight-cut stops and large cloam oven. Probable parlour on right with reduced ovolo-moulded timber lintel to fireplace with ogee stop on left and large cloam oven. C19 fireplace with large cloam oven to kitchen in outshut to rear. Circa late C18 or early C19 framed stair in passage with balustrade above replaced in circa 1970s. Roof timbers not inspected.

Listing NGR: SX2820859585

(Source English Heritage)
2.7 STRATEGIC PLANNING POLICY

The Strategic Planning Policy for the Caradon District is set out by the following documents:

- The Cornwall Structure Plan
- The Caradon District Local Plan

Both of these documents form the development plan. There are also two design guides, the Cornwall and the Caradon, which are informal advisory documents.

Within the Local Plan, Policy HO8: Conversion of Buildings states:

Planning Permission will not be granted for the change of use or conversion of non residential buildings to dwellings outside town and village development limits unless:

- (i) compelling evidence is given that every reasonable attempt has been made, but without success, to secure a suitable reuse for economic development purposes, or the residential conversion would be a subordinate part of the scheme for such development;
- (ii) the buildings involved are of permanent and substantial construction;
- (iii) the building is capable of conversion without the need for major extension or rebuilding;
- (iv) the scale, design and use of materials are in keeping with its surroundings;
- (v) the proposal will not affect the functioning of a working farm or lead to any conflict between residential occupation and farming activity in terms of reduced amenity;
- (vi) the proposal will not add to difficulties with water supply, sewage treatment or waste disposal;
- (vii) a safe access can be provided, and the development would not result in inconvenience and/or danger on the public highway;
- (viii) reasonable measures have been taken to provide for any nature conservation interest, including bats and owls.

It is submitted that within the accompanying statements and plans that this proposals meets with the above Policy.

2.8 POLICY ENV12 OF THE LOCAL PLAN STATES:

1. Development proposals involving the internal or external alteration, or extension, or change of use of a listed building or structure will only be permitted where they would not adversely affect its special architectural or historic interest, or its setting.

It is submitted that these works have had no material impact upon the special architectural or historic

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interest of the building, or its setting. Indeed they can only enhance it and ensure the long term maintenance and retention of the building.

- 2.9 *Policy 1 of the Structure Plan outlines the principles relating to sustainable development, advocating prudent use of resources, the re-generation of villages, a reduction in the need to travel whilst optimising the choice of transport modes, access for all to employment*

Clearly, these proposals enable the re-generation of an important rural property using local resources, in keeping with this policy.

- 2.10 *Policy 2 of the Structure Plan is an all encompassing policy primarily relating to landscape and major areas rather than individual buildings such as this. However, the proposals are in accordance with the broad principles.*

- 2.11 *The proposals are also in accordance with Policy 3, "Use of Resources" whereby development should be prudent with the use of natural and built resources and energy conservation. Development should:*

Follow sustainable construction principles including consideration of the use of resources, energy efficiency and local materials.

In this respect the proposals will safeguard the building for the future whilst using local materials.

- 2.12 *Both the Cornwall and North Cornwall Design Guides are non- statutory advisory documents.*

- 2.13 *In terms of extensions, much of the advice refers to impact on neighbours, outlook, overlooking etc., none of which applies to this proposal. In respect of Listed Buildings, it states:*

Anything which compromises the interior fittings, setting or fabric of a Listed Building is not acceptable.

In this respect the proposals have no impact on the interior fittings, the setting of the building or its fabric. Indeed the proposal will ensure the long term preservation of the building and its fabric.

- 2.14 *The advice also states that extensions should complement the style, proportions and materials of the existing house. The part rebuilding of the outshot has been carefully designed to be in keeping with.*

Again the proposals followed the advice of the Design Guide.

- 2.15 The advice within the Cornwall Design Guide is very similar and from the foregoing it can be seen that not only is the structure in accordance with the relevant policies in the Development Plan, it is also in accordance with the relevant advice in the Design Guides.
- 2.16 **CENTRAL GOVERNMENT ADVICE**
- 2.17 Planning Policy Statement 1 highlights the need for sustainable and inclusive patterns in urban and rural development. It retains a presumption in favour of development which is in accordance with the relevant policies within the Development Plan. Development should also be located where access is available by foot, bicycle and public transport and focus development near to public transport provision.
- 2.18 It goes to advocate integration of housing into the established form and built environment. It stresses the need to optimize the ability of a site to accommodate development. It is submitted that the proposal pays full regard to the advice in PPS1.
- 2.19 The primary source of Government advice in terms of housing is Planning Policy Statement 3, Housing. This advises that one of the roles of the planning system is to ensure that new homes are provided in the right place and at the right time, whether through new development or the conversion of existing buildings. The aim is to provide a choice of sites which are both suitable and available for house building.
- 2.20 A KEY POINT OF PPS3 IS: The Government is committed to promoting more sustainable patterns of development, by;
- making more efficient use of land by maximizing the re-use of previously-developed land and the conversion and re-use of existing buildings.
- 2.21 FURTHERMORE: The Government is committed to maximizing the re-use of previously-developed land and empty properties and the conversion of non-residential buildings for housing, in order both to promote regeneration and minimize the amount of Greenfield land being taken for development.
- 2.22 Planning for the Historic Environment PPS5, Policy HE6.1 gives advice on the need to undertake an Assessment of Significance to an extent necessary to understand the potential impact of the proposal and to the level of thoroughness proportionate to the relative importance of the asset whose fabric or setting is affected.
- 2.23 Planning Policy Statement 7 also stresses the need to make better use of previously-developed land

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in the provision of rural housing.

2.24 *It also sets out that the Government supports the re-use of appropriately located and suitably constructed buildings in the countryside where it would meet sustainable objectives. Re-use for economic objectives will normally be preferable but residential conversions may be more appropriate in some locations and for some types of buildings. It also sets out various criteria which local planning authorities should consider, including the need to preserve or desirability of preserving buildings of historic or architectural importance or interest, or which otherwise contribute to local character.*

2.25 **PPG13 ALSO STATES THAT LOCAL PLANS SHOULD:**

Promote healthy rural communities where people can both live and work.

Aim, so far as is practical, to move towards a better balance between employment and population, both within existing urban areas and in rural communities, in order to enable people to live near their work.

IT ALSO EMPHASISES: There is scope in rural communities to reduce the need to travel by improving the match between employment and housing; and bringing jobs, through teleworking, to people rather than the other way round.

It is therefore submitted that far from being contrary to PPG13 the proposal is in accordance with its aims.

2.26 *Furthermore, it is submitted that the proposal is in full accordance with the advice set out in all policy guidance, as set out above.*

2.27 **INVOLVEMENT:** *Preliminary examination recognised that the building is of historic and architectural interest and considered to be a heritage asset worthy of exploration for a viable re-use in order to conserve it.*

2.28 **EVALUATION:** *The application building has close association with the areas agricultural past, and it is typical of a Cornish farmstead character and therefore makes a significant contribution to the architectural and historic interest of the area. Careful consideration is required to ensure the building has a future use that sits comfortably with the main dwelling house and ensures long term use and maintenance.*

3.0 DESIGN PRINCIPLES & CONCEPTS

This design and access statement intends to explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied to particular aspects of the proposal – these are the **amount, layout, scale, landscaping and appearance** of the development.

3.1 **DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:** *The proposal consists of converting the barn into a dwelling to provide residential accommodation.*

The main internal feature of the design will be to retain existing building fabric and features to include the roof trusses to remain visible within the internal space. It is felt important to keep the subdivision of the building to a minimum.

The interior and exterior of the barn will be retained as a result of the minimal works proposed and therefore the distinctive historic and architectural character of the barn will be retained.

The existing space is to be well utilised to avoid excessive subdivision. The existing openings have been well utilised with a minimal adjustment of new openings. A small number of conservation style roof lights have been shown to provide light from the west.

3.2 **MATERIALS:** *Externally the stone work will be repaired and re-pointed were necessary using lime putty. The roof slate will be reclaimed to match the existing roof line. Rainwater goods will be half round gutters and round downpipes in black powder coated aluminium. The clipped roof eaves are to be retained. Windows will be constructed using timber and painted.*

3.3 **AMOUNT:** *The proposal consists of the conversion of an existing single storey barn into a dwelling. The additional three bedrooms of accommodation is to be provided by conversion and renovation to ensure the long term retention of the rural building providing continuous use and regular maintenance.*

3.4 **LAYOUT:** *The vehicular access is provided from the existing yard gate off the lane. The application site is set well back and screened from the lane and is also screened within the surrounding countryside. Parking is to be provided within the original yard.*

With regards to providing safe access the detailed application should consider the following;

From 'Safer Places – the Planning System and Crime Prevention', an ODPM/Home Office publication

1. *Access and movement – places with well defined routes, spaces and entrances that provide for convenient movement without compromising security*

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2. *Structure – places that are structured so that different uses do not cause conflict*
3. *Surveillance – places where all publicly accessible spaces are overlooked*
4. *Ownership – places that promote a sense of ownership, respect, territorial responsibility and community*
5. *Physical protection – places that include necessary, well-designed security features*
6. *Activity – places where the level of human activity is appropriate to the location and creates a reduced risk of crime and a sense of safety at all times*
7. *Management and maintenance – places that are designed with management and maintenance in mind, to discourage crime.*

3.5 *SCALE: The scale of the building is not significantly altered by this proposal.*

3.6 *LANDSCAPING: The external areas to each side will remain relatively unaltered. ~~Private amenity space will be created by constructing a Cornish hedgebank along the eastern edge of the original yard on what would have been the frontage of the original buildings.~~ Additional boundary treatment is not proposed. Consideration has been given to maintain the landscape to retain visual appearance.*

3.7 *APPEARANCE: This application should be considered as a unique opportunity which demonstrates an imaginative approach which maximises the features of the original building. The following aesthetic matters have been given consideration in forming this application;*

- *The use of the space with an open roof space and exposed trusses creates a dramatic interior.*
- *The proposal retains its original character by respecting existing features such as materials, opening, and existing features.*
- *The appearance of the proposed building reflects characteristics and detailing found on local traditional farm buildings. The form is simple and uncluttered with no attempt to domesticate or prettify, which would of course lead to loss of character.*
- *We have conserved and enhanced the buildings original idiosyncrasies.*
- *Much of the external space will remain the same ad-hoc appearance which avoids domestication*
- *The materials are honest and authentic, using natural stonework, natural slate and timber windows.*
- *Colours are to be harmonious and muted, especially in structural elements such as roofs and walls.*
- *Roof lights have a vertical module and are to be laid flush with the roof.*
- *The roof slate is to be laid to the slopes. Eaves and ridge detail to be replaced to match original*

- *The pattern and type of openings are important features, all have been retained and utilised creatively as essential features to the design.*
- *Traditional details have been indicated to reflect local buildings. Boxed eaves and render have been avoided. All windows shall be set back at least 150mm from the face of the wall.*
- *Top opening night vent casements in windows have been avoided and all the windows have a vertical emphasis.*
- *Half round gutters to be used with circular down pipes.*

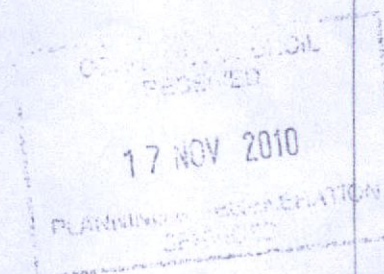
3.8 *WILDLIFE: A Barn Owl and Bat Survey accompanies this application.*

3.9 *ACCESS: There is an existing vehicular access to the development. As this proposal is intended for residential purposes the property will provide for adequate parking and in-curtilage turning in accordance with the Highway authority requirements. The access lane can accommodate Emergency vehicles and the new proposals will not encumber access.*

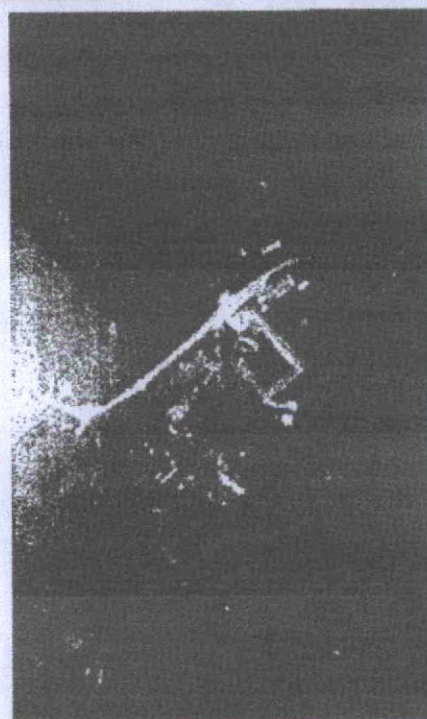
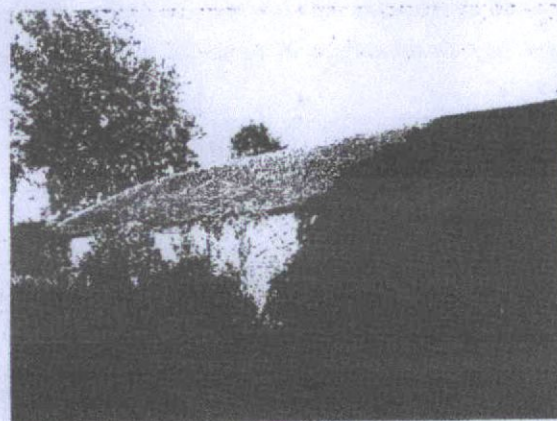
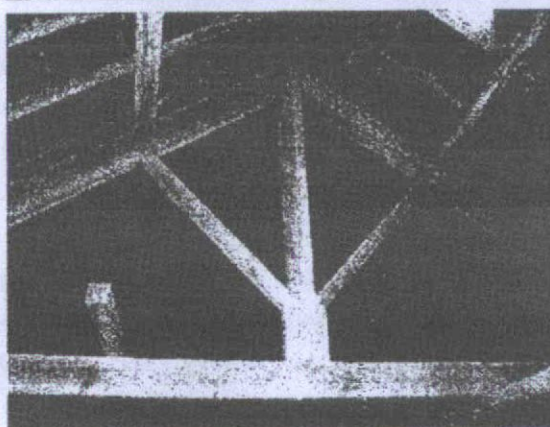
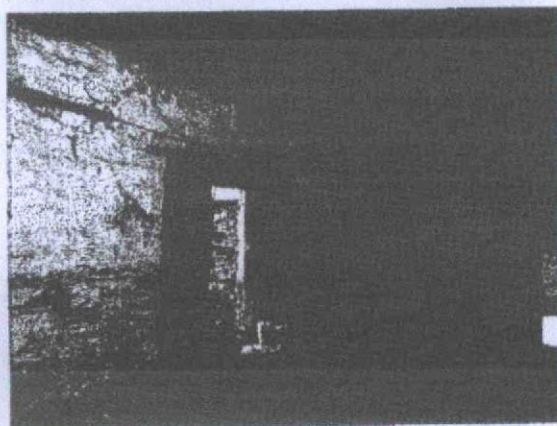
3.10 *CONCLUSIONS: It is considered that the barn is of significant architectural/historic interest and makes an important contribution to the character and appearance of the area. In view of this the building should be retained and a viable use found to secure its long term future.*

The barn is in a reasonably sound structural condition and the proposed conversion works will retain the intrinsic character of the barn both internally and externally. The reuse of existing buildings is an inherently sustainable practice that typically consumes significantly less energy and materials than the construction of new building which outweighs any disadvantage in terms of the sites rural accessibility.

The proposal would secure the sympathetic conversion and retention of a traditional rural building which seeks to conserve and enhance local character, distinctiveness and the historic environment.



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*Aerial photograph showing original farmstead.
Note the plan form.*