

Planning and Sustainable Development  
Cornwall Council  
County Hall  
Truro  
Cornwall  
TR1 3AY

LTR/0375 - 01  
30 July 2020

Dear Sir / Madam

**Higher Whiteleigh Farm, Whitstone. EX22 6LB : Conversion / Replacement of Barn to Dwelling**

Please find attached a Pre-Planning Application Enquiry for the conversion or replacement of an existing barn adjacent to Higher Whiteleigh Farm to create a new dwelling. We would like to enquire if Cornwall will support the proposal to convert the barn to a single dwelling either under a Class Q Prior Approval or a Full Application. Alternatively, and probably the better solution for the location, would be to replace the barn with a new dwelling as shown on the submitted sketches.

The L-shaped barn sits adjacent to the property known as Higher Whiteleigh Farm separating the dwelling from the main highway. The barn is currently used for storage and livestock namely chickens and pigs but this is soon to cease as the applicants are now in their 80's and have decided they can no longer continue with this. The barn is in extremely good condition structurally and from a weathertight perspective and we believe qualifies for all of the tests under a Class Q Prior Approval Application. However, if the Council is happy to support the principle of conversion, we would rather submit the proposal as a Full Application so we could replace the roof with slate and in doing so raise the ridge of the lower section so it is at the same height as the higher section providing a betterment to both the immediate and wider setting.

We would, therefore, seek the Council's view on whether they would support the conversion under a Full Application and if they believe, as a fall back, it qualifies under the Class Q criteria. To achieve the conversion, we would need to form a new driveway utilising the existing paddock access for Higher Whiteleigh Farm itself as shown on the submitted drawings. We would, therefore, need clarification if this can be included under the Class Q Application if this is the suggested method for gaining consent for the barn.

Even if Cornwall Council are happy with the principle of conversion under Class Q or the Reuse of an Existing Building, we believe the best solution for this particular barn would be to replace it with a new dwelling. The barn is quite close to the existing house so we have included two potential indicative options for the setting of a replacement dwelling. We feel in terms of scale and position; a new dwelling would be more sympathetic and a betterment to both the immediate and wider setting. Option A (0375 – 02) shows a new dwelling positioned within the footprint of the barn but set a comfortable distance from the existing property. As shown on the drawing, the existing access would then be retained for the new dwelling and a new driveway from the existing paddock access brought around the back for Higher Whiteleigh Farm.

However, if acceptable to the Council, then Option B which would reposition the replacement dwelling slightly to the west in the adjacent paddock would be the preferred option. This would allow ample amenity space and privacy between the dwellings and allow the existing access to be retained by Higher Whiteleigh Farm while the new property would use the existing paddock access. All existing well-established hedgerows and field boundaries could then be retained and untouched retaining the visual setting of the landscape.

If Cornwall Council are happy with the principle of replacing the barn with a dwelling we would also seek their advice on the scale. The two options show an indicative scale of a 4 bedroom property at a scale of 1.5 stories which is in keeping with Higher Whiteleigh Farm. In terms of design, the new dwelling would be designed perhaps as a cluster of structures mimicking a small farmyard setting. The structures would then use a palette of traditional materials typically found in such a setting so natural stone, rendered walls and timber cladding all beneath a natural slate roof.

The submitted drawings show that there are no immediate neighbours so there will be no issues of privacy or overlooking. The replacement of the barn with a new dwelling will also create a much more 'active' street frontage as at the moment the existing barn cuts Higher Whiteleigh Farm off from the highway. Similarly, replacing of the barn structure will provide a betterment to the visual setting with a sympathetically designed and positioned new dwelling. Both properties will utilise existing access points so there should be no highway issues.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us. In the meantime could you please forward details of how the applicant can pay £320 Council Fee to include a site visit and meeting?

Yours sincerely



Gareth Williams **RIBA**  
Director | GW Architects Ltd