

PLANNING STATEMENT
New Dwelling, Thurlaston

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this document

This Planning Statement has been prepared by Indigo Architecture in support of a planning application to provide 1no. 5-bedroom dwelling house to a field site that currently makes up part of the extended garden to The Mulberries, Thurlaston.

This document intends to provide a narrative of the development of the proposal through a series of activities including site appraisal, reviews of relevant planning history, relevant national and local policy appraisals, and consultation processes to inform the design principles and concepts upon which the proposal is based including the access strategy and sustainable principles.

1.2 Scope of this document

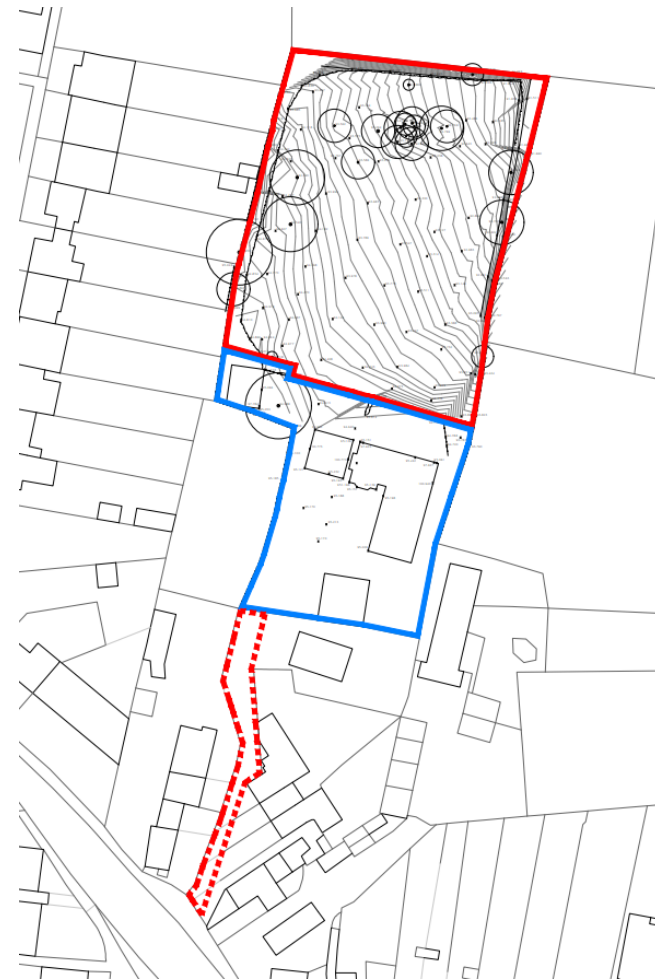
This document provides a narrative of the proposal which combines with the architectural drawings which should be considered as one to comprise the proposal documents.

1.3 Site Introduction

The site, indicated on the adjacent picture, is located behind The Mulberries off Desford Road.

The site is a field that makes up the extended rear garden of the existing dwelling.

Most of the site is unoccupied with a small storage building in the South West corner.



1.4 Project Introduction

The proposal is for a bespoke and contemporary home in a barn style, providing a countryside vernacular response to the site for the family currently living in the existing 'mulberries' dwelling. The dwelling is proposed to be positioned into the existing north eastern corner, concealed by existing and newly planted vegetation and recessed into the ground so that the overall form and mass is low level and less impactful.





2.0 Site Appraisal

2.1 Physical

2.1.1. Site Characteristics

The site is a c.3000s.qm plot which presents as a paddock with significant hedgerows to the North, East and West boundaries with trees organically placed throughout.

The site is accessed via a private road which serves the applicant and neighbours off Desford Road.

The site is generally enclosed by the surroundings and cannot be seen from the highway.

2.1.2 Current use of Site and Neighbouring Sites

The site is currently used as an extended garden to the existing dwelling and is mostly devoid of existing structures.

The site is abutted by the rear gardens of properties located on Holt crescent to the West but is privately screened by the previously mentioned hedgerows and trees. The site is bordered by open fields to the North and East with the applicants existing dwelling and access to the South.

The site composition is made up of soft landscaping, trees, and other vegetation.

2.1.3 Ground Conditions

The ground conditions have not been intrusively investigated at this stage.

There is no reason to suspect any conditions incongruent with the proposed development and it is expected that this will be

confirmed through ground investigation works prior to construction works commencing on site.

2.1.4 Topography

The sites highest point is to the South West and slopes down towards the North East corner. There are ditches along the North and East boundaries within the hedgerows which act as natural drainage runs for water runoff. This presents an opportunity to maintain these ditches and utilise as a sustainable drainage system.

2.1.5 Existing Buildings

The site currently accommodates a small storage building to the South West corner. The existing building is removed from the proposal and is not to have any detrimental effect on the scheme.

2.1.6 Ecology and Arboriculture

No ecological appraisal has been undertaken at this stage and none is expected to be relevant for this site.

2.1.7 Archaeology

(Also refer to 2.1.3 Ground Conditions)

The site is outside of the nearby area designated as an Area of potential Archaeological importance. There is not therefore any reason to anticipate any requirement for an archaeological investigation.

2.1.8 Constraints

The site is within an established residential settlement.

The site is within the designated Countryside area (Policies CS18 and DM2).

The site is not within a designated Conservation Area.

The site is not subject to any Strategic Allocations.

The site is not within a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation

The site is not within a Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation.

The site is not within a Strategic Open Space

The site is not within a Wildlife Corridor

The site is not within a Local Nature Reserve

The site is not subject to a Historic Parks and Gardens designation.

The site is not considered to be a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

The site is not subject to a Safeguarded Land designation.

The site is not within an Area of Potential Archaeological Importance.

The site is not within Flood Zone 2 or 3.

There are no known historic environment constraints.

There are no known geological constraints.

There are no known archaeological constraints.

There are no known heritage constraints.

2.1.9 Noise, Air Pollution

Any increase to the level of noise and air pollution arising from the new dwelling would be insignificant.

2.1.10 Flood Risk

The Environment Agency considers the site to be a Flood Zone 1 site with a very low risk of flooding (less than 1 in a 1000 annual probability of river or sea flooding).

The long-term flood risk information for the site identifies a medium risk from surface water. Further inspection of the modelling for the site suggests the risk is not considered to affect the relevant area.

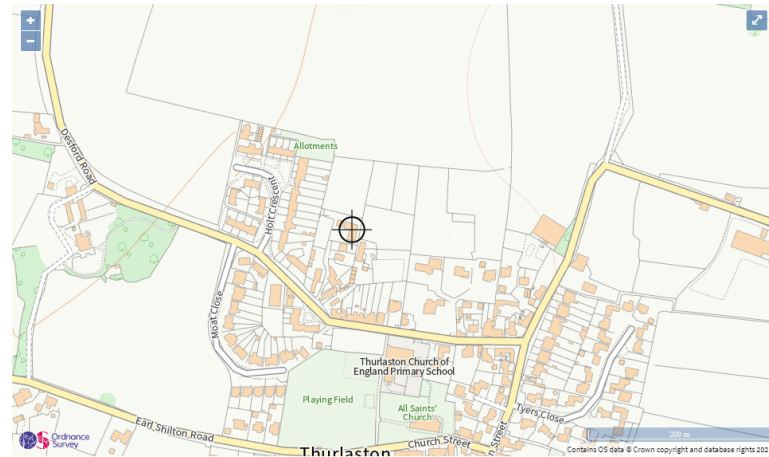
The long-term flood risk information for the site identifies very low risk from rivers or the sea.

No further comment on flood risk to the site is required as part of the proposal.



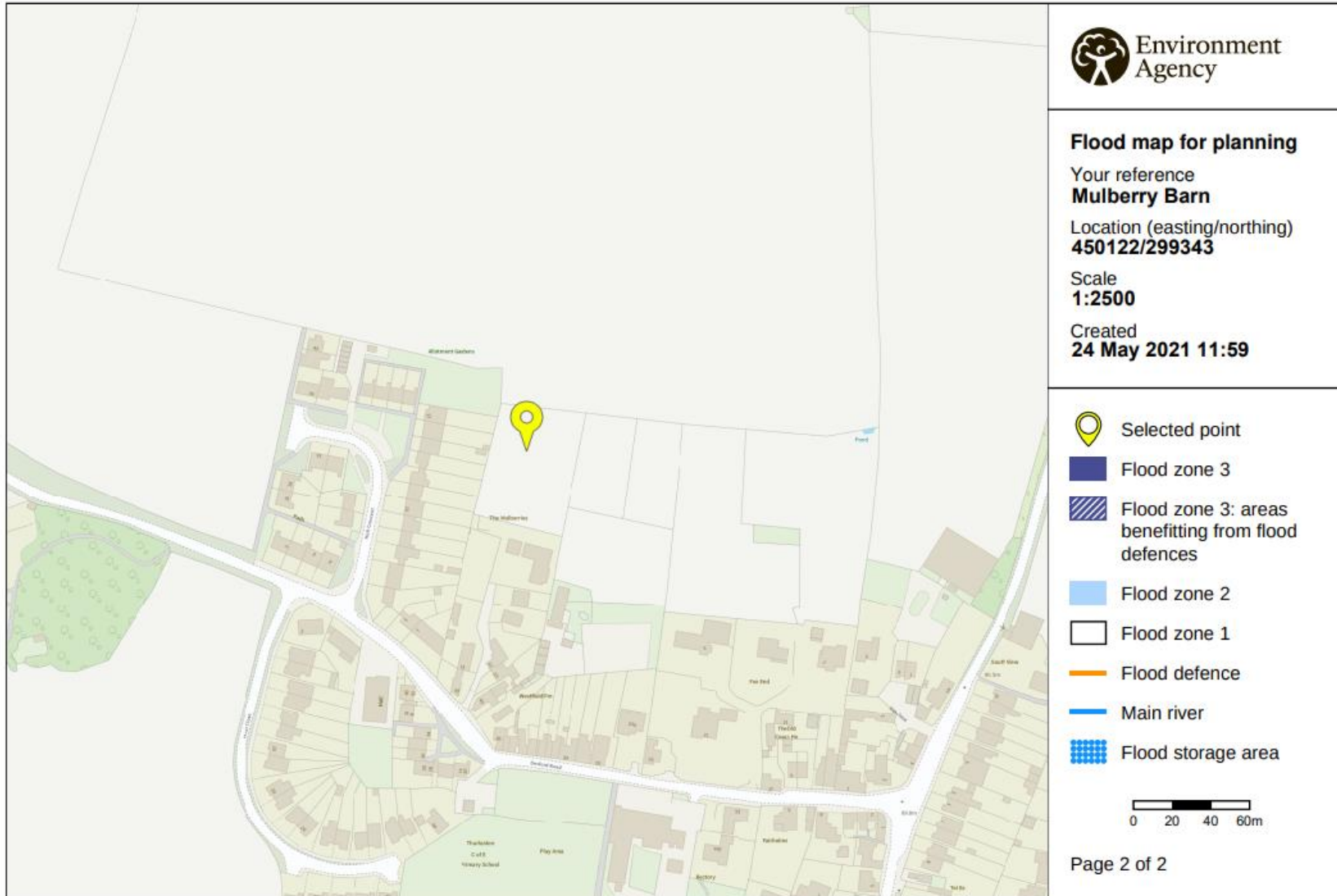
Extent of flooding from surface water

● High ● Medium ● Low ● Very low ⊕ Location you selected



Extent of flooding from rivers or the sea

● High ● Medium ● Low ● Very low ⊕ Location you selected



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2.1.11 Access, Egress, Movement Patterns

Pedestrian and vehicular access to the proposed dwelling would be via the private driveway off Desford Road.

The parking provision for the existing dwelling will remain as existing.

There is parking proposed for the proposed dwelling the in the form of two internal spaces integrated into the property and a large driveway suitable to accommodate a further 3 spaces with enough room to manoeuvre

There is a bus stop a few minutes' walk away from the site along Main Street which serves the X55 bus route.

2.1.12 Social Impact

The proposal for residential development at this scale is unlikely to have any significant social impact to people in the locality.

From the applicants perspective, the dwelling is designed to suit the special needs of one family member, allowing improved social impacts through easier living and better familial connection.

Further, the applicant regularly invites guests with the guest bedroom accommodation improving their ability to enjoy social activities within the home.

Further commentary on social impacts is not considered to be required to support the proposal.

2.1.13 Economic

The introduction of a new house will bring a positive economic impact both in the construction works, use of local materials and in bringing an additional property into the housing stock.

There would be an insignificant economic impact in the longer term.

3.0 Planning Policy Context

3.1 Local Development Plan

Section 38(6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires that the determination of planning applications must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

For this planning statement The Blaby District Local Plan (Core Strategy) Adopted February 2013 and the Fosse Villages Neighborhood Plan 2018-2029 have been considered.

3.1.1 Core Strategy Introduction

Core strategy policy guidance relevant to the determination of this application is provided by the Blaby District local Plan (2013).

Directly relevant policies within the Core Strategy were considered as follows;

- CS2 – Design of new development
- CS18 – Countryside
- CS24 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development

3.1.2 Policy CS2 – Design of new development

The proposal seeks to create a high-quality dwelling in a barn style that respects and reflects the rural character of Thurlaston to seamlessly blend with the landscape. The proposal also aims to be constructed close to a passive standard to encourage a greener and more environmentally conscious standard of living. Therefore, the proposal supports the strategic objectives of Policy CS2.

3.1.3 Policy CS18 – Countryside

As per the Thurlaston policies map, the site is currently shown to be within the designated countryside zone.

This policy rightly restricts development and states that development will not normally be granted where it has an adverse effect on the appearance or character of the landscape.

The proposal is brought forward with an agricultural flavour to respect the countryside designation and is noted to be on the very edge of the designation, forming a 'infill' plot of sorts with residential development on 2 sides.

Existing and new vegetation will aid the process of allowing the barn to blend into the countryside vista and provides a long-term resident of the village with opportunity to create an elegant dwelling which is proposed to respect the site character.

It is therefore considered to avoid adverse effect to the countryside and can therefore be considered acceptable.

3.1.4 Policy CS24 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development

The scheme has identified the importance of minimizing energy use and consumption of natural resources. Therefore, the dwelling is to incorporate the latest building and environmental considerations to provide an environmentally conscious and energy efficient home with the target of passive standards being the minimum that will be achieved. On a wider scale, the energy strategy of the dwelling can act as a precedent to the local area on what should be aspired to.

3.2 National Policy

The latest NPPF under which this application is submitted was published in February 2019 and sets out central government policy for England and how they should be applied in developing policy and making decisions at the local level.

Paragraph 2 states that "*Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan*" and that the NPPF "*is a material consideration in planning decisions.*"

3.2.1 Achieving Sustainable Development

Paragraph 8 sets out three interdependent dimensions to sustainable development which are: an economic objective, a social objective, and an environmental objective.

The construction of a new dwelling inherently brings economic benefit.

The construction of a bespoke dwelling, allowing the applicant to meet the special needs of a family member, facilitating their ability to remain in the village in which they have lived for an extended period and allowing them to enhance their social activities within the home provides a proportionate social benefit.

The paddock forms part of the extended garden of their existing home and its use for their new home makers better use of land. The property will be designed with inclusion of a series of sustainable materials, technologies and sets out to achieve near passivehaus standards, thus providing environmental benefit.

On that basis, the proposal is considered to represent sustainable development.

3.2.2 Decision-making

Paragraph 38 sets the expectation for local authority to approach decisions positively and creatively, to look for solutions rather than problems and states (our emphasis added): "*Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development **where possible.***"

The provision of a barn styled home in this location does not appear impossible, therefore it is possible and it is expected that the LPA will work with the agent to seek to approve the application through the process.

3.2.3 Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes

Paragraph 59 sets out the government's objective of (our emphasis added) "***significantly boosting the supply of homes***".

Paragraph 68 states the importance of small and medium sized sites in meeting housing requirements and demands that support be given to the development of windfall sites, with "**great weight**" to be given to the development of suitable sites within existing settlements for homes. The site is attached to the village settlement and represents an extended garden area and is therefore considered to provide opportunity for development as a windfall site.

3.2.4 Making effective use of land

Paragraph 117 sets out the importance of effective land use in meeting the needs for homes and promotes the use of previously developed land.

Paragraph 118 states that decisions should

"promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings"

The land currently provides an extended garden space and could be better utilized as inclusion within the village settlement.

3.2.5 Achieving well-designed places

Paragraph 124 sets out the importance of creating high-quality buildings and identifies good design as a key aspect of sustainable development. It places responsibility on local authority to be clear about design expectations and promotes engagement between applicants and local authority.

Paragraph 127 sets out that decisions should ensure developments function well, add to the quality of an area through an attractive architectural approach whilst remaining sympathetic to the locality, whilst not preventing innovation or change such as increased densities, and to create places that are safe, inclusive and promote health and well-being. The proposal for a barn styled contemporary home represents reasonable innovation and provides a small increase in density to the site. The proposal is presented as one with an attractive architectural solution which respects the character through its rural flavour.

Paragraph 131 places responsibility on local authority to place *"great weight"* to outstanding or innovative design which promotes high levels of sustainability or help raise design standards

generally in an area. The proposal reflects a high quality home to add to the quality of the built environment architecturally with exceptional levels of environmentally responsible design features to be included, thus providing high levels of sustainability.

4.0 Consultation

4.1 Consultation with LPA

The applicant set out to engage with the LPA through the usual pre-application advice service. Regrettably, the LPA have withdrawn this service and advised in March 2021 that they did not have the resource capacity to provide such a service and had no currently known date by which it would return.

On that basis, the opportunity to consult with the LPA was not available and could not therefore be undertaken. A decision was made to bring forward a formal application as no other route was available.

5.0 Design

5.1 Policy

The design of this proposal has been developed in accordance with all relevant policy within the National Planning Policy Framework and the Local Development Plan.

5.2 Context

The site is of no significant importance in terms of its heritage or architectural status and is not subject to any special development constraints beyond its inclusion with the wider countryside.

It is sited within an established residential settlement with existing infrastructure and amenities to support such development.

The site is surrounded by a mixture of houses in both style and scale.

Given, the considerations in respect of the design of the proposed development, it appears reasonable to suggest that the location of the application site and the proposal would be entirely suitable for this type of residential development.

5.3 Consultation

No pre-application advice service was advisable for this application although it was sought. Therefore, the applicant proceeded with the proposal on the basis of good design principles generally in the absence of any ability to obtain formal pre-application advice.

The applicant has undertaken some informal consultation locally which has seen the proposal generally supported although this is not a matter of formal record.

5.4 Use

The proposed development will provide 1no. 5-bedroom bespoke home

A single dwelling will provide the following accommodation:

Ground Floor

- Open Plan kitchen/dining/Living
- Porch
- Pantry
- Utility/Cloak/Boot Room
- Bedroom with en-suite
- WC
- Garage

First Floor

- Master Bedroom with en-suite and walk in wardrobe
- 1no. Accessible Bedroom with en-suite and dressing area
- 2no. Guest Bedrooms with en-suites
- Lounge

5.5 Concept

The barn concept for the development was derived from hitting the clients brief of providing a new family home to better suit their needs and requirements whilst respecting the natural constraints of the site, the rural context and minimising the impact of the proposal.

5.6 Appearance

The development has been designed so that it appears as a single form Dutch barn. The brief called for a simple form and an aesthetic that respected and blended with the rural character of

the landscape. The two-storey structure is to be clad in vertical weathered timber with a red brick plinth around the perimeter and topped with a standing seam dark zinc finished roof. The main living space of the lounge/dining/kitchen room and master bedroom is to be finished with full height glazing to take advantage of the expensive views of the countryside to the north and east.

5.7 Layout

The design has been developed and located to take account of the locality and neighbours in terms of overlooking/privacy risks, car parking, amenity space, access to and around the building, sun path and maximization of daylight penetration.

5.8 Scale

The proposal presents a house which is large in footprint but lower in overall height which has been slightly recessed into the sloped terrain of the site and sunk to keep the ridge height as low as possible and to avoid any risk of appearing monolithic. The large internal living space has been refined to ensure that it meets the requirements of the family as a whole and also a family member who has restricted mobility.

5.9 Landscaping

The site around the dwelling will benefit from a new driveway and parking as well as general maintenance and upkeep to make presentable. New trees will be introduced to the site to provide further natural screening and privacy. The parking area will also benefit from soft and hard landscaping to the borders to improve the presentation of the site further.

5.10 Construction (Design & Management) Regulations

The scheme has been designed to take account of the latest CDM regulations and the safe construction of the building will be always considered as the design develops.

6.0 Access

There is direct vehicular access to the site via a shared private driveway off the highway. The highway entrance has good visibility in both directions.

There is ample space provided to allow for turning of vehicles within the site to ensure the public highway can be entered and exited in a front facing direction.

7.0 Site Sustainability

7.1 Location

The site is within an established residential settlement with the proposal site sitting on an established residential street. The proposal is in a sustainable location.

7.2 Site Context

Refer to [2.0 Site Appraisal](#)

7.3 Public Transport Links

The site is within walking distance of public transport links.

7.4 Flood Risk

Refer to [2.0 Site Appraisal](#)

8.0 Building Sustainability

8.1 Materials

To combat the effects of climate change, the development will provide the following to minimise its environmental impact;

- It will achieve better than required U-values as prescribed by the Building Regulations through the specification of insulation to the highest standards.
- It will achieve high levels of air tightness to maximise the efficiency of insulation
- Maximise natural daylight usage and natural ventilation through the design of window openings.
- Be constructed from locally sourced materials wherever possible
- Be tendered to local contractors and seek to use local sub-contractors and suppliers to reduce embodied energy
- All timber used in the development will be from sustainable sources
- Insulation will be selected from appropriate sustainable options (recycled fibre, cellulose or similar).
- All waste arising from site to be directed away from landfill without exception

8.2 Biodiversity

The site contains soft landscaping, trees, and various other vegetation however it is not considered that this encourages significant biodiversity. The introduction of a number of /saplings trees to the site will have a biodiversity benefit.

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