

PLANNING JUSTIFICATION STATEMENT
RELATING TO
LAND TO THE REAR OF GRANGE FARMHOUSE,
CHURCH ROAD, HARGRAVE
ON BEHALF OF
MR & MRS C JONES

Prepared by: Henry H Bletsoe & Son LLP
Chartered Surveyors
Thrapston
Kettering
Northants NN14 4LJ

Dated: September 2021

1. Introduction

This Statement is prepared in support of the resubmission of a Full Planning Application for Mr & Mrs C Jones, in respect of the proposed erection of a single detached dwelling on land to the rear of Grange Farmhouse, Church Road, Hargrave. This Statement will set out the basis of the planning submission, and provide a supporting Planning Justification, with explanation of the changes that have been made to the scheme to address the concerns raised by the case officer in relation to previous applications.

2. Hargrave

Hargrave is situated just north of the B645, and lies close to the Northamptonshire/Cambridgeshire/Bedfordshire border. Hargrave is approximately 5½ miles west of Kimbolton and 6 miles east of Higham Ferrers. The village has a population of around 250 people, and is primarily a linear village centred on Church Road and Church Street.

All Hallows Church dates back to the 12th Century and the village was recorded in the Domesday Book as Haregrave.

3. Local Setting

The application site is situated on the southern edge of the village, and forms part of the curtilage of Grange Farmhouse, incorporating a range of outbuildings ancillary to Grange Farmhouse and used for residential purposes. The Property can currently be accessed off Church Road, via a private driveway shared with adjacent properties to the north which were formerly agricultural buildings associated with Grange Farm but which were converted into residential dwellings in the early 1980's, but also via a private driveway to the rear which comes off the B645. It is this separate access which will be used by the proposed development. This access was originally the main access to the property when it was a farmstead.

The nature and character of properties within the village is varied, including both modern and traditional. The properties immediately to the north retain a rural character associated with their former use as agricultural buildings and are laid out in a courtyard arrangement typical of a farmstead. These dwellings are built predominantly in brick under slate roofs and include both single and two storey built elements. Grange Farmhouse retains its position as a substantial property consistent with its former use as the main farmhouse in the range, and is a two storey building built in stone under a concrete pantile roof.

4. Site Description

The application site lies immediately to the rear of Grange Farmhouse and in line with The Old Granary, 3 Grange Farm, which is one of the converted former farm buildings lying to the north. The site is currently occupied by a substantial residential storage building built in around 2000 and used for purposes ancillary to the main dwelling. The building is of timber frame construction on a dwarf brick wall and is weatherboarded under a slate roof. The site is also occupied by a number of sheds and greenhouses also forming part of the curtilage of Grange Farmhouse. A double garage, also built in around 2000, and lying between the application site and The Granary is to be retained with Grange Farmhouse. The site has a sloping topography rising from east to west. As indicated above, the property is to be accessed from an existing driveway off the B645 which lies to the rear. This is a private driveway which will only be used by the proposed dwelling. The area of the site including the access drive is approximately 1718 m². A public right of way crosses the entrance at the point of access to the highway and this will remain unaltered. The application site also incorporates an area of lawned garden which is currently used in conjunction with Grange Farmhouse but which will become the private garden area to serve the proposed new dwelling.

5. Planning History

The existing storage building and garage were consented in November 2000 (00/00792/FUL) as part of a planning application which also included a two storey side extension to Grange Farmhouse.

This application is the resubmission of an application submitted in May 2021 (NE/21/00732/FUL). This application was refused permission on 23 July 2021 for the following reasons:

1. Policy 11 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) 2016 supports residential development within the countryside where special circumstances set out in Policy 13 of the JCS and the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 are met. The proposed development would be located within the countryside and represents no special circumstances in line with Policy 13 or the NPPF. Subsequently, the principle of development is unacceptable in accordance with the aforementioned policies.

2. Policy 8(d) of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2016 and Paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 seek for new developments to not cause harm to the character of the local area. The associated works of the proposed development i.e. access, parking, curtilage, residential paraphernalia and change of use of land would be sited within the countryside where it would introduce urbanised and intrusive form of development, to the detrimental impact of the rural character of the area. As such, the proposed development would fail to comply with the aforementioned policies.

3. Policy 8 (e) of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) 2016 seeks for new developments to not cause adverse harm to the residential amenity of future occupants and that of the neighbouring properties. Policy 8(d) of the JCS and Paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 seeks for new developments to provide quality design and environments. The rear amenity space of the host dwelling (Grange Farm House) would be diminished by virtue of being overlooked by the first-floor windows on the southern elevation of the proposed dwelling. Also, the future occupants of the proposed dwelling would have a poor outlook from the habitable rooms resulting in a diminished amenity space. By reason, the proposal would result in severely poor residential amenity and design to the detriment of the local character. Thus, the proposal fails to comply with the aforementioned policies.

4. Policy 8(b) of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2016 seeks for new developments to not cause adverse harm to highway users and the Highway network. The proposed development fails to demonstrate that it would not cause adverse harm to highway users and the network. As such, the proposed development fails to comply with the aforementioned policies.

An earlier application submitted in November 2020 was withdrawn in January 2021 as a consequence of concerns expressed by the case officer over access and parking arrangements and a need to assess the relationship of the proposed dwelling to neighbouring properties. The May 2021 application sought to address those concerns, and this further resubmission addresses outstanding concerns raised in the July decision notice.

Grange Farmhouse is not a Listed Building and the site is not within a Conservation Area

6. Development Proposals

This resubmitted application is presented in detailed form and accompanied by floor plans and elevations. The proposed development will involve the demolition of the existing

residential storage building and ancillary sheds and greenhouses and the erection of a new stand alone dwelling for occupation by the applicants. The Applicants have no desire to move away from Hargrave but recognise that their existing property may not be entirely suitable for them in old age, as the layout of the traditional farmhouse does not make accessibility easy and all bedroom accommodation is on the first floor. They therefore wish to construct a new dwelling within the curtilage of Grange Farmhouse which will meet their long term needs. One of the principal reasons for this application is that Mr Jones, has an eye condition which will ultimately result in him losing his sight. The overall design and layout of the accommodation will ensure a more convenient and accessible living space, for Mr Jones. The dwelling is also approximately two thirds of the size of the existing property reflecting a requirement to downsize in later life.

The design of the dwelling, remains unchanged from the May 2021 submission. It will have 4 bedrooms, with 3 on the first floor and one on the ground floor to provide flexibility for their lifetime needs. It is being built using the sloping topography, with height being respectful of the adjoining properties. The property is to be built in a traditional manner incorporating materials consistent with the character of the area, and incorporating elements of weatherboarding consistent with the existing building, which the new dwelling will replace. A palette of materials incorporating brick, slate and pantiles intend to reflect the character of a traditional farm style building which will remain subservient to the adjoining farmhouse. The previous application drew no objections from neighbours or local residents.

In order to demonstrate the relationship between the new dwelling and neighbouring properties, sectional details are submitted showing the relationship with Grange Farmhouse and The Granary. In the officer's report on application NE/21/00732/FUL, there was judged to be no harm on the character, setting or amenity of The Granary, as a result of overlooking. The application was refused for reasons including alleged impact on the amenity of users of Grange Farmhouse and also amenity concerns for the occupants of the new dwelling. These issues have been addressed with a reconfiguration of the application site to ensure that the amenity area for the proposed dwelling, and over which it looks, will be for the exclusive use of that property. Grange Farmhouse will be left with a large, more than adequately sized private garden commensurate with the size, style and character of that property.

The dwelling will be accessed from the existing driveway to the rear and an area of private parking for the dwelling will be set out, which is independent of any other property. The driveway will exclusively serve the new property and will include a vehicle turning area. The access onto the highway will utilise the existing entrance and will be a minimum 4.5 m wide as required by the highway authority. Thereafter the driveway will be a minimum of 3.7 m wide along its length. The entrance has good access visibility and was historically the main entrance to the property when it was a farmstead. Further drawings are submitted with this application to demonstrate achievable access visibility splays measuring 2 m x 120 m in both directions in accordance with Highways requirements. Its use as a private driveway serving a single residential dwelling will not represent a significant intensification of usage. It is crossed at its entrance point by a public right of way but the limited use of the access will not give rise to any safety issues for users of that right of way. The access complies with the requirements of the Highways Authority set out in pre-application discussions which took place prior to submission of the May 2021 application.

The property will still benefit from a means of pedestrian access to Church Street via the existing driveway. This will be used by pedestrians to access the village and will be used to enable the occupants to present their bins on the public highway on waste collection days.

This access can also be used by emergency vehicles and in particular is accessible for a Fire Engine to attend to an emergency at the property.

The application site area has been amended to address concerns that the scheme extended into open countryside (Reasons for Refusal 1 & 2). With the exception of the access which is already in situ and a proportion of the proposed parking area, the application site has been contained within the parameters of what is regarded as the built up area of the settlement and utilises the site of a building which is used lawfully for ancillary residential purposes and an existing area of residential garden land.

7. National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which was revised in July 2018. The NPPF sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It also sets out the objective of *significantly boosting the supply of homes*, and states that *it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.*

The NPPF also recognises that local authorities should provide for those who wish to commission or build their own homes and also acknowledges the need for specialist accommodation for the elderly.

8. Development Plan Policy

The Development Plan Policy for East Northamptonshire is predominantly set out in the Core Spatial Strategy which was adopted in July 2016. Hargrave is one of a network of small villages across the District where development *will be limited to that required to support a prosperous rural economy or to meet a locally arising need, which cannot be met more sustainably at a nearby larger settlement* (Policy 11). Within the village *Small scale infill development will be permitted on suitable sites within Villages where this would not materially harm the character of the settlement and residential amenity or exceed the capacity of local infrastructure and services.* (Policy 11).

Policy 8 of the Core Spatial Strategy sets out Place Shaping Principles which all development should follow.

The Joint Core Strategy also acknowledges the role to be played by specialist housing for the elderly and custom build housing (Policy 30)

9. Planning Justification

The application site is located within the village of Hargrave, forming part of the curtilage of Grange Farmhouse. The application site area has been amended to ensure that it is predominantly within the built up area of the settlement in accordance with Policy 11 of the Core Spatial Strategy and not therefore to be considered against Policy 13. The changes that have been made respond directly to Reasons for Refusal 1 & 2 on the July 2021 decision notice. The application site does not include any agricultural land or buildings, and contrary to the officers report on the earlier application the main building which is to be redeveloped is a residential storage building and not an agricultural building.

The proposed development is small scale, consistent with the Core Strategy approach to allowing small scale infilling within villages such as Hargrave. The main issues which this resubmission seeks to address is the relationship of the new property to Grange Farmhouse, in terms of amenity. The previous application satisfied any concerns about adverse impact upon other nearby properties, including The Granary which is separated from the proposed dwelling by a distance of approximately 15 metres and is partially screened by the existing garage which is to be retained with Grange Farmhouse. The relationship between the two properties is shown on the two sectional drawings submitted with this application (Drg 20/43/7)

The reconfiguration of the site boundary not only addresses the principle concerns that development would extend into open countryside, but it also addresses the concern about the relationship between the proposed property and Grange Farmhouse in amenity terms (Reason for Refusal 3). The previous scheme suggested that principal windows in the southern elevation of the new dwelling would look directly over an area of garden land which was not associated with the property but which was to be retained with Grange Farmhouse. This was never the ultimate intention but it is accepted that the plans implied this. The revised application site area and amended site layout make it clear that the area of garden land that this elevation will overlook will be utilised exclusively by the new dwelling. This will remove any amenity concerns for occupants of the new dwelling or indeed Grange Farmhouse. Grange Farmhouse will retain a more than adequate private garden commensurate with its size and character.

The dwelling has been designed to be in keeping with the traditional vernacular of a farmstead range, with the Farmhouse retaining its position as the dominant building and the proposed new dwelling adopting a more subservient design. The dwelling will be built into the slope of the site to limit its impact and overall scale. The choice of materials reflects traditional character, and introduces a palette of materials which offer interest as well as compatibility with existing built form. Other than the relationship with Grange Farmhouse in amenity terms, the design of the dwelling was not a reason for refusal of the previous application. The proposal can be further assessed under the following headings:

Use

The land is already in residential use, forming part of the residential curtilage of Grange Farmhouse. Its use for residential purposes is therefore compatible with adjoining uses and as a site predominantly within the built up area of the village, residential development is appropriate.

Amount

The erection of a single dwelling is consistent with the Core Strategy which limits development to small scale infilling.

Layout

The layout of the development has been amended to address concerns expressed in relation to earlier schemes with regard to loss of amenity, access and the layout of car parking. The submitted scheme achieves a coherent layout utilising an existing access and an existing garden area to accommodate a new dwelling located on the site of an existing residential building.

Scale

The scale of the building is intended to be subservient to the principle dwelling being Grange Farmhouse. Whilst larger than the existing storage building which is being replaced, the overall scale of the new dwelling is intended to be similar and the slope of the land will be utilised to minimise impact.

Landscape

The development will not result in the loss of any existing landscaping on what is a pre-existing built site. The opportunity exists to carry out new planting within the garden area as an enhancement.

Appearance

The design of the dwelling is intended to reflect the traditional vernacular of rural buildings typical for the area using a palette of sympathetic and traditional materials, including weatherboarding.

Access

The property will be accessed off an existing access drive to the rear, which was originally the main entrance to the former farmstead. The existing entrance point is 7.2 m wide which exceeds the Highways requirement for a 4.5 m wide entrance. The driveway will then be a minimum 3.7 m wide along its length. Submitted plans demonstrate that access visibility splays measuring 2 m x 120 m can be met wholly within the public highway without interference and obstruction. Although these plans were submitted in relation to the last application, they were not considered and this resulted in Reason for Refusal 4. The information submitted with this application seeks to address those highway concerns. The entrance and driveway will be exclusive to the new dwelling and the scheme makes provision for adequate private parking and turning facilities. The proposal utilises an existing access which has historically been the main access to the property when it was a farmstead and the scale of development proposed does not result in intensification of use.

10. Conclusion

The proposal involves the development of a single dwelling within the built form of the village consistent with Planning Policy which directs development towards small scale infilling. The dwelling is intended to meet a specific need of the applicants and will represent a custom build involving accommodation designed for lifetime needs.

The dwelling has been designed to be sympathetic to its surroundings using materials compatible with the setting. The orientation and layout of the development will ensure that there is no loss of amenity for neighbouring properties and access will be via an existing private driveway which will be exclusive to the new dwelling. The further detail submitted with this application has addressed the concerns raised in connection with the previously submitted schemes and addresses the reasons for refusal given on application NE/21/00732/FUL.