

PLANNING STATEMENT

LEMELL HOOKS BARN
MR AND MRS REDWOOD





Rural Solutions

PLANNING STATEMENT

LOCATION

LEMELL HOOKS BARN, DONNINGTON, MORETON-IN-MARSH

PROPOSAL

CONVERSION AND EXTENSION OF BARN TO CREATE A TWO-BEDROOMED DWELLING

APPLICANT

MR AND MRS REDWOOD

ISSUE DATE

26TH OCTOBER 2021

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AUTHOR	VERSION	DATE
KG	VERSION 1.0	18/10/2021
FT	VERSION 2.0	22/10/2021

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The proposal seeks the conversion and extension of Lemell Hooks Barn to create a two-bedroom dwelling as ancillary accommodation to North Rye House.



POLICY

Local Plan (LP) Policy EC6 permits the conversion of rural buildings to alternative uses.

LP Policy EN5 Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) states that “in determining development proposals within the AONB or its setting, the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the landscape, its character and special qualities, will be given great weight”.

LP Policy EN2 (design of the built and natural environment) permits development that accords with the Cotswold design code contained as Appendix D of the Local Plan. It requires proposals to “be of design quality that respects the character and distinctive appearance of the locality”.

The proposed development complies with the Local Plan Policies.



MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Paragraph 80(c) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides support for the development of housing which would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement of the immediate setting.

The proposed extension will build upon the historic footprint of the barn and retain the architectural integrity of the existing built form.

The proposal will deliver a number of biodiversity benefits such as new hedgerow planting, installation of bird and bat boxes and integral owl loft within the barn (NPPF para 179).

Paragraph 174 of the NPPF states that “planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside”.

I. INTRODUCTION

- I.1: This planning statement is submitted to Cotswold District Council on behalf of Mr and Mrs Redwood, the applicants, in support of a planning application relating to the conversion and extension of Lemell Hooks Barn. The applicants are the owners of North Rye House, the principal house to the south east of the barn. The barn is intended to create a two-bedroomed residential annexe associated with the main house.
- I.2: Lemell Hooks Barn was originally built in the late 19th or early 20th century. The proposed extension to the barn is proposed to be built upon the historic footprint of the earlier built form.

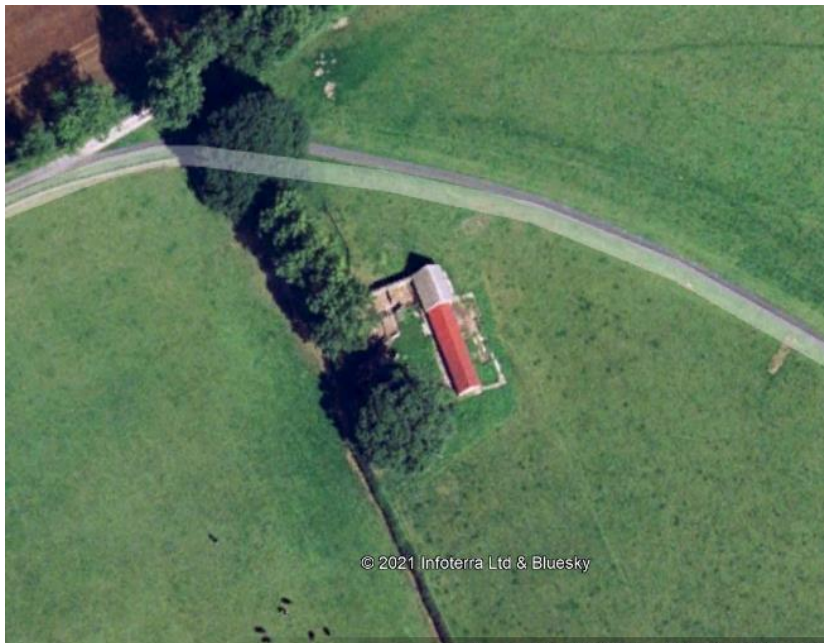


Figure I.1: Aerial image of the barn (Source: Google Earth)

- I.3: The application site is located within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- I.4: The site is accessed via an existing private drive that serves North Rye House.
- I.5: This statement should be read in conjunction with the following plans and documents:
- Drawing packages (Yiangou Architects);
 - Design and access statement (Yiangou Architects);
 - Bat surveys (Cotswold Ecology);
 - Structural Survey (Ian Harban Consulting Engineers); and
 - Tree Survey (MHP Arboricultural Consultants).

1.6: The development proposal will be discussed in further detail in Section 3 of this statement.

2. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

LOCATION

- 2.1: The barn sits within the ownership of North Rye House. Although no longer needed for agricultural use, the barn are worthy of retention as they adds to the overall character of the area.
- 2.2: Lemell Hooks Barn is located circa 1.5km to the north of Broadwell and circa 3.5km to the south of Moreton-in-Marsh.
- 2.3: The barn is located in the Cotswold AONB but is not affected by any other ecological or landscape designation, or heritage designation. The site is located in Flood Zone 1.



Figure 2:1: East elevation of existing barn

PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.4: Following a review of the council's public access records, there is no available planning history for the site.

HISTORY OF THE BARN

- 2.5: The barn is understood to have been built in the late 18th or early 19th century. The barn is shown on the early OS maps from 1885-1900. The barn is then also shown in an extended form on later maps as shown on the map extract at Figure 2:2 overleaf.



Figure 2:2



Figure 2:3

Figure 2:2: OS Map 1885-1900 (Source: National Library of Scotland)
Figure 2:3: OS Map extract 1949-1970 (Source: National Library of Scotland)

2.6: The barn was latterly used as animal pens and for storage. The exterior wall of the northern barn remains.

3. THE APPLICATION

- 3.1: The proposed development seeks the conversion and extension of the existing barn. The extension will reinstate the original built form on the site and allow for a two-bedroom annexe, ancillary to North Rye House.
- 3.2: Full details of the proposed design are set out in detail on the drawings package and within the Design and Access Statement.
- 3.3: The barn is not listed but does add to the landscape and setting of North Rye House. It is therefore considered important that a new use for the building is found to ensure the future longevity of the barn.
- 3.4: The proposed development has been carefully designed, taking the existing character and use of materials into consideration. The increased internal floor area will provide sufficient space to accommodate a kitchen/dining room, living room, two bedrooms and boot room.
- 3.5: The design concept is to restore the original group footprint by reinstating the demolished wing and forming a private contained garden in the former courtyard area. The existing characteristic Cotswold barns will remain the dominant buildings in the wider landscape and outwardly the buildings will look very similar to how they appeared in the 19th century.
- 3.6: The new build elements have been sensitively designed to work with the existing form and preserve the character of the barns. To enhance the connection of the spaces with the yard, a visually lightweight glass and timber contemporary extension has been added. The form of the original barns remains intact. The new extension will be built to complement the original structures and traditional form of a Cotswold barn complex, as seen from the historic mapping set out in Section 2, with stone and pointing to match the existing barns.
- 3.7: Vehicular access and pedestrian access to the site will be improved by an informal, gravel driveway and parking area, and paved areas within the courtyard garden.
- 3.8: The proposal will include design features to enhance the biodiversity value of the site, such as the inclusion of a barn owl loft within the barn, and bird and bat boxes to be located on the existing trees surrounding the barn. New native hedgerow planting is also proposed to create a new residential curtilage around the courtyard. Within the courtyard and on the eastern side of the barn, areas of hardstanding will be removed and replaced with soft landscaping.

BENEFITS

3.9: There are a number of clear benefits which would arise as a result of the proposed development, as discussed throughout this statement. A summary of the key benefits is set out below:

- The re-use of a disused building to provide a two-bedroomed annexe and to provide a long-term, sustainable future for the barn;
- The immediate setting of the building will be enhanced by virtue of a high-quality design and materials which match the existing;
- The proposal will provide for additional planting of native species, with increased biodiversity within the domestic garden area. This will enhance the appearance of the site that is located within the Cotswold AONB; and
- Ecological mitigation and enhancements will be introduced, including the addition of the owl loft, bird and bat boxes set within nearby trees, and a sensitive lighting scheme.

4. ASSESSMENT OF RELEVANT DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

- 4.1: Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Paragraph 2 of the recently revised National Planning Policy Framework in July 2021 (NPPF) explain that the starting point for the determination of planning applications is the development plan and the determination of an application must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.2: Paragraph 2 also qualifies that the NPPF is a material consideration in determining applications.

THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- 4.3: In this case, the Cotswold District Council adopted Development Plan comprises of the Cotswold District Local Plan (2011 to 2031) which was adopted by the council on 3rd August 2018.
- 4.4: The new Local Plan also now includes the 2018 Cotswold Design Code at Appendix D of the Local Plan.
- 4.5: This recently adopted Local Plan is attributed full weight in the determination of this application.

GUIDANCE

- 4.6: In addition to the adopted Development Plan, two guidance documents are relevant to this pre-application proposal, given the site is located in the Cotswold AONB:
- Cotswold Conservation Board - Landscape Character Assessments and National Character Assessments; and
 - Natural England Guidance on Areas of Outstanding National Beauty (AONB).

SITE DESIGNATION

- 4.7: In accordance with the accompanying proposals map for the adopted Local Plan, the site is located in open countryside which is designated as an AONB.

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

- 4.8: Local Plan Policy EC6 (conversion of rural buildings) permits the conversion of rural buildings to alternative uses. The policy criteria stipulate that the conversion of rural buildings will be permitted provided that:
- a) The building is structurally sound, suitable for and capable of conversion to the proposed use without substantial alteration, extension or rebuilding;

- b) It would not cause conflict with existing farming operations, including severance or disruption to the holding that would prejudice its continued viable operation; and
- c) The development proposals are compatible with extant uses on the site and existing and planned uses in close proximity to the site.

4.9: It is acknowledged by the council in the policy wording contained at Paragraph 9.6.2 that the re-use of existing rural buildings, which have become surplus to requirements or are no longer suitable for their original use, can help to reduce demands for a new building in the countryside.

4.10: The policy wording at Paragraph 9.6.6 also states:

Where an extension or significant alteration is proposed, then it will need to be demonstrated that the building is capable of conversion on its own merit. Subject to this, extensions or alterations will be permitted where they do not significantly harm the character of the building, its setting, and/or the character and appearance of the landscape.

4.11: In line with Local Plan Policy EC6, the building is structurally sound and capable of conversion. This is confirmed in the Structural Survey prepared by Ian Harban Consulting Engineers. The existing barn has been maintained and kept in good order by its former owners. Only minor repairs to the stonework are required to facilitate the conversion.

4.12: The design scheme will feature an extension in order to provide an additional bedroom and a better standard of living. The proposal would not conflict with any existing farming operations on the site and there are no other extant planning uses on the site or within close proximity of the site. The extensions will only be visible from within the contained internal courtyard. From the main driveway of North Rye House and beyond, the existing form of the barn complex will be retained in its traditional form.

4.13: The proposed development, therefore, does accord with the provisions of Local Plan Policy EC6.

LANDSCAPE

4.14: The site is located within the Cotswolds AONB and within the Cotswolds National Character Area, as delineated by Natural England; as such Local Plan Policies EN1 (built, natural and historic environment), EN4 (the wider natural and historic landscape) and EN5 (Cotswolds AONB) are all applicable.

4.15: Policy EN1 stipulates that new development will, where appropriate, promote the protection, conservation and enhancement of the historic and natural environment.

4.16: Policy EN4 permits development that does not have a significant detrimental impact on the natural and historic landscape (including the tranquillity of the

countryside). Proposals are to take account of landscape and historic landscape character, visual quality and local distinctiveness. They will be expected to enhance, restore and better manage the natural and historic landscape, and any significant landscape features and elements.

4.17: Policy EN5 specifically relates to the AONB and it states:

In determining development proposals within the AONB or its setting, the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the landscape, its character and special qualities, will be given great weight.

4.18: In respect of the landscape character area, our assessment concludes that the site is located within the Farmed Slopes Landscape Character type within the Landscape Character Assessment.

4.19: The proposed development will utilise an existing building and add a sympathetic extension that is in keeping with the historic built form and structure. The proposed curtilage will utilise the existing courtyard, with no further landscape impact. The site is discrete and is surrounded by trees on its western edge, allowing for limited views in and out of the site. Some tree removal is proposed to allow more natural light into the barn but the existing hedgerow will be retained and extended to contain the courtyard.

4.20: The proposed development will have no greater impact upon this sensitive landscape than the existing built form. Moreover, the proposal will enhance this site due to the removal of the historic areas of concrete and a landscaping scheme will introduce a number of landscape enhancements such as additional planting of native species. The proposals will therefore lead to a betterment of the landscape and will provide for its long-term maintenance.

4.21: The proposed development, therefore, does comply with the provisions of Local Plan Policies EN1, EN4 and EN5. Again, these policies are attributed full weight in the decision-making process.

DESIGN

4.22: Policy EN2 of the Local Plan (design of the built and natural environment) permits development that accords with the Cotswold design code contained at Appendix D of the Local Plan. The policy also states that “proposals should be of design quality that respects the character and distinctive appearance of the locality”.

4.23: The design code encourages high-quality and inclusive design that establishes a strong sense of place and responds to local character. It also acknowledges that it should be used in conjunction with national policy and guidance, including the NPPF and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) which emphasise the importance of good design as a key aspect of sustainable development.

- 4.24: External changes are proposed given the proposal includes a sympathetic extension and modest new openings on the outward-facing (north and eastern elevations). The design has been carefully considered and cohesively designed to maximise the residential amenities of the residents of the annexe. The proposal has been carefully designed to match the existing architectural style and the existing materials which are locally distinct in the Cotswolds. Minimal alterations are also proposed to the outward-facing existing fenestration to ensure that the character of the building is retained.
- 4.25: The proposal, therefore, accords with Local Plan Policy EN2 and the Cotswold Design Code contained in Appendix D.

BIODIVERSITY

- 4.26: Policy EN8 of the Local Plan requires protection for biodiversity and geodiversity: features, habitats and species. A bat survey has been prepared by Cotswold Ecology in support of this planning application.
- 4.27: The bat survey found the buildings to be of low suitability for bats, with low levels of bat activity recorded.
- 4.28: The proposal offers the opportunity for enhancements through the following measures:
- Inclusion of a barn owl loft;
 - Bird and bat boxes paced within the surrounding trees;
 - New native hedgerow planting;
 - Landscape works and removal of hardstanding from around the barn;
 - New planting and opportunity for nectar-rich species; and
 - Low-level lighting schemes to protect dark skies.
- 4.29: The relevant requirements of Local Plan Policy EN8 have therefore been met. Again, this policy is attributed full weight in the decision-making process.

SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

- 4.30: The proposed development accords with all of the relevant Development Plan Policies, EC6, EN1, EN4 and EN5, EN2, EN14 and EN8. In accordance with Paragraph 11 of the NPPF, the proposed development should be approved without delay.
- 4.31: The relevant policies contained within the revised NPPF, which are a material consideration, are discussed in the following Section of this statement.

5. THE NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- 5.1: At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which is seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking. Paragraph 8 (c) of the NPPF explains that this includes an economic, social and environmental objective.
- 5.2: Paragraph 11 of the NPPF explains that planning permission should be approved for development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay.
- 5.3: The proposal will comprise a sustainable form of development through the re-use and conversion of an existing rural building thus, meeting the provisions of Paragraphs 10 and 11 of the NPPF.

NEW HOUSING

- 5.4: In respect of rural housing, Paragraph 78 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs.
- 5.5: Furthermore, Paragraph 80 (c) of the NPPF provides support for the development of housing which would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement of the immediate setting.
- 5.6: The proposal to create a two-bedroomed dwelling from the barn complex will re-use this quality building which is constructed out of Cotswold stone. It will provide a sustainable form of development and result in an immediate enhancement to the site through the introduction of a carefully designed extension and landscape enhancements within the former courtyard of the barn complex.
- 5.7: The proposal, therefore, meets the provisions of Paragraphs 78 and 80 (c) of the NPPF.

LANDSCAPE

- 5.8: Paragraph 176 of the NPPF states that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing the landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas.
- 5.9: Paragraph 174 of the NPPF reinforces the above policy, stating that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

- 5.10: The proposed development will utilise an existing building with a modest extension that is in keeping with the existing structure and its surroundings. The proposal will therefore be of no detriment to the Cotswold AONB. Furthermore, a landscaping scheme and ecological enhancements will be introduced as part of the proposals and this will lead to a betterment of the landscape.
- 5.11: The proposed development will therefore meet the provisions of Paragraphs 174 and 176 of the NPPF.

DESIGN

- 5.12: The NPPF seeks to achieve well-designed places. Paragraph 126 recognises that the creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make the development acceptable to communities.
- 5.13: Through the proposed external alterations and use of high-quality materials to match the existing building, it is clear that the proposal will embody a high-quality design which will subsequently contribute to the overall enhancement and fine design of the local built environment of the site.
- 5.14: The proposal, therefore, complies with Section 12 and Paragraph 126 of the NPPF, meeting the requirements of well-designed places and high-quality buildings as stipulated in the NPPF.

BIODIVERSITY

- 5.15: Paragraph 174 of the NPPF, provides for the contribution and enhancement of the natural and local environment. Criteria (d) of this policy suggests that this could be achieved by “minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures”.
- 5.16: As previously discussed in this statement, a scheme of enhancements is proposed, including provision for wildlife, new planting and restoration of the land through the removal of redundant hard standing. As such, the proposal will comply with Paragraph 174 of the NPPF.

SUMMARY

- 5.17: The proposal represents the effective re-use of this underutilised building alongside enhancements to the immediate setting by virtue of a high-quality design, materials which match the existing and a proposed landscape and ecological enhancements scheme. The proposal meets the provisions of the NPPF as a material consideration.

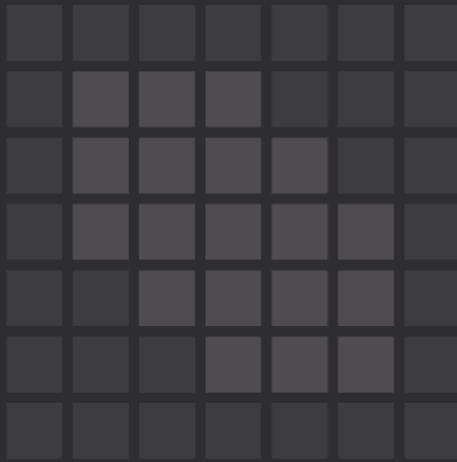
6. CONCLUSIONS AND PLANNING BALANCE

- 6.1: The proposal seeks to utilise this barn to provide a two-bedroomed annexe, ancillary to North Rye House.
- 6.2: Through the proposed external alterations and use of high-quality materials to match the existing building, it is clear that the proposal will embody a high-quality design which will subsequently contribute to the overall enhancement and fine design of the local built environment of the site.
- 6.3: There will be no harmful landscape impact as a result of the proposal given the scheme will facilitate the conversion of an existing barn and replace an old barn that was lost on site but whose external wall still stands. The building is already discreetly positioned on the edge of the North Rye House landholding and will form a residential annexe, accessed off the main driveway. The extension is of a modest nature that will match the existing development. Furthermore, landscape enhancements are proposed which will enhance the appearance of this site that is located within the Cotswold AONB.
- 6.4: Ecological mitigation and enhancements will also be introduced, including the addition of an owl loft within the existing barn, bird and bat boxes set within nearby trees and a sensitive lighting scheme.
- 6.5: The proposed development accords with all of the relevant Development Plan Policies, EC6, EN1, EN4 and EN5, EN2, EN14 and EN8. The proposal also meets the provisions of the NPPF which is a material consideration. In accordance with Paragraph 11 of the NPPF, the proposed development should be approved without delay.
- 6.6: This statement has therefore satisfactorily demonstrated that the proposal represents a sustainable form of development that accords with the adopted Development Plan Policies of Cotswold District Council and the NPPF.

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