



**PROPOSED REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING DWELLING AND CONVERSION  
OF BARNs TO TWO DWELLINGS AND DEMOLITION OF MODERN  
AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS AND ADDITIONS AT DUTTON PARK FARM,  
LODGE LANE, DUTTON, WA4 4HL**

**SUPPORTING PLANNING STATEMENT**

**BY**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Goodwin Planning Services have been instructed by Mrs S Gleave to submit a planning application for the proposed replacement of existing dwelling, conversion of barns to two dwellings and demolition of modern agricultural buildings and additions at Dutton Park Farm, Lodge Lane, Dutton, WA4 4HL.

1.2 The application is also accompanied by the following documents:-

- Ecological Assessment prepared by Leigh Ecology;
- Structural Survey prepared by Platt White;
- Ground Investigation Report prepared by REFA;
- Acoustic Assessment prepared by Hepworth Acoustics.

1.3 This Planning Statement therefore concentrates on the acceptability of the proposals in principle and assesses the proposals against relevant planning policy at national and local level.

1.4 The Statement is in four parts as follows:-

1. Introduction;
2. Site and Proposals;
3. Assessment Against Planning Policy;
4. Conclusions.

## 2. SITE AND PROPOSALS

### i) The Site

2.1 The application site comprises the existing farmhouse known as Dutton Park Farm together with a range of agricultural buildings. There are a mix of brick barns forming roughly an 'L' shape with additional steel framed agricultural buildings.

2.2 The intention is to retain the existing brick barn and the remaining agricultural buildings which are more modern additions will be demolished.

2.3 The site is accessed from Lodge Lane.

2.4 An examination of the Environmental Agency Flood Mapping Service indicates that the site is in Zone 1 (low probability of flooding). As the site is under 1ha in area no Flood Risk Assessment is therefore required.

### ii) The Proposals

2.5 In summary these involve the following:-

- Replacement of Existing Farmhouse;
- Demolition of steel framed barns to the north east of the farmhouse;
- Conversion of 'L' shaped brick barns to two dwellings and erection of garages (one for the replacement dwelling and one each for the two dwellings created from the barn conversion).

2.6 In terms of size, the Architects have prepared a table setting out a

comparison of the floorspace and volume of the existing dwelling and outbuildings compared to the proposed dwelling and proposed detached garage for the dwelling. They have also set out the floorspace for the barn conversions and garages. The table is reproduced below:-

	Gross Internal Floor Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Gross External Floor Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	External Volume (m <sup>3</sup> )
<b>PROPOSED REPLACEMENT DWELLING</b>			
Existing House	-	432	1288
Rear Outbuilding	-	77	206
Proposed Dwelling	-	379	1081
Proposed Detached Garage	-	43	129
<b>PROPOSED CONVERSION</b>			
Existing Traditional Building in total	678	757	-
Proposed Conversion Unit 1	337	382	-
Proposed Unit 1 Garage	58	64	-
Proposed Conversion Unit 2	321	314	-
Proposed Unit 2 Garage	58	64	-

2.7 The proposed dwelling is therefore 53sq metres smaller than the dwelling being replaced (a 12.3% reduction in floorspace). In volume terms the reduction is 207 cubic metres or 16.1%. The replacement dwelling is therefore materially smaller than the dwelling being replaced.

2.8 The rear outbuilding to be demolished measures 77sq metres in floorspace and 206 cubic metres in volume. The proposed garage measures 43sq metres in floorspace and 129 cubic metres in volume. The proposed garage is therefore 44% smaller in terms of floorspace and 37.4% smaller in terms of volume than the outbuilding being replaced.

2.9 The reduction in the size of the dwelling and the outbuilding compared to the

replacement dwelling and garage in total are 87sq metres smaller than the existing dwelling and outbuilding. The new garage to unit 1 measures 64sq metres and is therefore still less than the floorspace as existing.

- 2.10 The garage to unit 2 measures 64sq metres but is a replacement of an existing structure attached to the existing barn and is significantly smaller as can be seen from drawing number 0964-02 (Existing) and 0964-08 (Proposed). Overall the conversion of the barns, erection of the garages and the replacement dwelling result in less built form on the site than existing (note: this excludes the floorspace and volume of the large steel framed agricultural building in the south of the site which is also to be demolished).
- 2.11 The scheme therefore results in a substantial reduction in built form on the site.

### **3. ASSESSMENT AGAINST PLANNING POLICY**

3.1 In this section we will assess the proposal against relevant policies at the local and national level.

#### **a. The Development Plan**

3.2 The Development Plan for the area comprises the Cheshire West and Chester Council Local Plan (Part 1) Strategic Policies and the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part 2) Detailed Policies and Allocations.

3.3 The site lies within an area defined as open countryside and Green Belt.

3.4 The most relevant policy of the Part 1 Plan is policy STRAT9 which deals with developments within the open countryside and Green Belt. It is important to acknowledge that the reason behind policy STRAT9 is to protect the intrinsic character and beauty of the open countryside. Where a proposal has a positive impact on the intrinsic character and beauty of the Cheshire Countryside this is therefore a positive characteristic when it is assessed against policy STRAT9. Policy STRAT9 sets out a range of types of development which are acceptable in the open countryside and Green Belt. These include the reuse of existing rural buildings where they are of permanent construction and can be reused without major reconstruction. The policy indicates that the use will be encouraged particularly for economic purposes although it does not rule out other purposes. Policy STRAT9 therefore does not rule out the conversion of existing rural buildings to residential so long as the buildings are of permanent construction and can be reused with major reconstruction. The Structural Survey demonstrates that this criterion is appropriately met. The reuse of the buildings is therefore fully in accordance with policy STRAT9 of the Part 1 Plan.

- 3.5 In the Green Belt the policy refers the reader to National Policy in the NPPF which (as set out below) allows the reuse of existing buildings provided they are of permanent and substantial construction and replacement buildings provided the replacement is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces (paragraphs 149 and 150 of the NPPF). The Structural Survey demonstrates that the barns to be converted are structurally sound and the assessment above demonstrates that the replacement dwelling (either including or excluding outbuildings) is materially smaller than the dwelling/buildings being replaced. These policy requirements are therefore clearly met in this case.
- 3.6 More detailed policies are set out in the Part 2 Plan. Policy R1 deals with development in the rural area and indicates that for development proposals in the countryside the relevant policy is STRAT9 of the Part 1 Plan. We have already assessed above that the proposal is consistent with policy STRAT9. The proposal is therefore also consistent with policy R1 of the Part 2 Plan.
- 3.7 Policy DM3 deals with design, character and amenity and indicates that developments will be expected to achieve a high standard of design which respects the character and protects visual amenity of the local area.
- 3.8 Policy DM19 deals with proposals for residential development. In the countryside, outside of identified settlements it indicates that residential development will only be supported where it meets one of a number of types of development. These include the replacement of an existing dwelling in line with policy DM21 and the change of use or conversion of a building in line with Local Plan policy DM22.
- 3.9 Policy DM21 allows replacement dwellings so long as the dwelling is not of recognised architectural or historic value (which the current dwelling is not); There will be no adverse impact on residential amenity of nearby residential

properties (there would be none adversely affected); In the Green Belt it is not materially larger than the dwelling being replaced (the explanation to the policy uses 10% as a guide and the proposal is actually smaller than the existing and therefore complies with this element of the policy). The proposal therefore complies with each of the criteria in policy DM21.

3.10 Policy DM22 deals with the change of use of existing buildings in the countryside to dwelling houses. It indicates that, in the countryside, these will be supported where they meet a number of criteria. These criteria are met in this case as follows:-

- i) The buildings are currently redundant and disused;
- ii) The Structural Survey demonstrates that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction and are suitable and capable of conversion to residential use without significant loss of existing fabric, or major or substantial reconstruction;
- iii) The existing building (especially that to be retained) does not have any adverse visual impact;
- iv) The conversion would lead to a significant enhancement of the character of its immediate setting. This will result from a substantial reduction in built form on the overall site (through the demolition of a range of unsightly steel framed barns);
- v) The proposal will not be in conflict with existing uses in the locality.

3.11 The proposed conversion of the barns is therefore fully supported by policy DM22 of the Part 2 Plan.

3.12 The proposal is therefore entirely consistent with, and supported by, the relevant policies of the Development Plan.



**b. National Planning Policy**

3.13 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Where proposals are in accordance with the relevant policies of the Development Plan (as above) the presumption in favour of granting planning permission applies and planning permission should be granted without delay.

3.14 Paragraph 8 of the NPPF also sets out 3 overarching objectives of sustainable development. The application proposals have a positive impact on all 3 of these as follows:-

- i) In terms of the economic objective the proposal will lead to investment during construction as well as additional spending in the local area after completion which will support local businesses and the Council through contributions to New Homes Bonus and Council Tax;
- ii) In terms of the social objective it will assist in boosting the supply of housing through the conversion of redundant buildings;
- iii) In terms of the environmental objectives it will enhance the openness of the area (through the removal of considerable existing unsightly buildings), it will enhance the character and setting of existing buildings, it will reuse currently redundant buildings and it will bring into use a site which has been underused and unsightly for some time.

3.15 Section 13 deals with Green Belt. It advises that new buildings should be treated as inappropriate development other than for a number of exceptions including:-

- The replacement of a building so long as it is for the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces (paragraph 149);

- The reuse of existing buildings provided they are of permanent and substantial construction (paragraph 150).

3.16 The NPPF does not define what is considered to be materially larger as this is left to individual Development Plans. As set out above, the Cheshire West and Chester Part 2 Plan uses a guide of 10%. In this case the replacement is smaller than the existing dwelling and therefore falls squarely within the exception.

3.17 The application is accompanied by a Structural Survey which shows that the barns to be converted are of permanent and substantial construction.

3.18 The proposals are not therefore inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

#### **4. CONCLUSIONS**

- 4.1 The proposals involve the change of use of an existing 'L' shaped brick barns to two dwellings and the replacement of the existing farmhouse. These proposals are achieved by removing substantial more modern buildings within the site. The proposals comply with the relevant policies of the Development Plan in terms of both its Green Belt location and in terms of the protection of biodiversity etc.
- 4.2 The proposals provide substantial benefits in terms of enhancing the character and value of the site and its surroundings and the use of redundant/underused buildings and economic benefits.
- 4.3 The proposals are consistent with the relevant policies of the Development Plan and National Policy. In accordance with the NPPF the development should be treated as sustainable development, the presumption in favour of granting planning permission applies and planning permission should be granted without delay.