



Planning, Design and Access Statement

**For the erection of a building to be used for agricultural
storage and for private commercial storage**

At

Mount Pleasant Farm

Templeton

Tiverton

EX16 8BP

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Introduction

This planning statement has been prepared to support a full planning application submitted to Mid Devon District Council for the erection of a storage building to be used for the storage of agricultural machinery and implements as well as for private commercial storage in association with the applicant's business at Mount Pleasant Farm, Templeton.

The purpose of the planning statement is to provide the local planning authority with relevant background information to the proposal and the necessary objective criteria to address the key development management issues associated with the determination of this application.

This document will outline the site location, the planning history for the site, and the relevant planning policy framework, before justifying the design, access and other material planning considerations for the proposal.

The applicant is seeking the proposed development as since moving to the property approximately 1 year ago they have established that the existing building on the site is in a poor condition and is not viable to repair. They have been advised that the building needs to be replaced. The building is required to safely store new agricultural equipment and machinery that has been purchased including a towable flail mower, trailers, hand tools and shortly a small tractor. Once the land has been prepared (drainage works and fencing etc completed), then the applicants will be bringing rare breed sheep and goats onto the land.

In addition to its agricultural use, part of the building would be used for the storage of equipment associated with the applicant's business, Catering, Logistics and Events Limited. The applicant's business (CLE) is an international event management company that supports trade shows, specifically international aviation trade shows.

The proposed building would be sited on the western side of the existing land at Mount Pleasant (which forms part of the farmstead) and is south of the Mount Pleasant dwelling. It would be erected on the site of the existing building and would be close to the existing access. No new access is required. The building would sit within the previously developed

part of the farmstead and would have the appearance of a modern agricultural storage building.

As this statement will seek to demonstrate, the proposed use of the building for agricultural storage with an element of private business storage presents an appropriate form of rural countryside development in line with local plan policy DM20, with the site readily able to accommodate the proposal which is necessary to support the applicant's agricultural and business requirements.

The Site and Surrounding Area

The application site is within Flood Zone 1. The site is not within a designated landscape, it is not listed, and neither is it closely related to any listed buildings. Due to previous agricultural activities at Mount Pleasant, it is considered that the site is a suitable location for the modest nature of the proposed agricultural development. The buildings at Mount Pleasant Farm are in a rural location and there is a dwelling present on the site. There are other properties and farms in the area although there are no close neighbouring properties.

The site is situated to the north of the public highway and in the western part of the farmstead at Mount Pleasant. There is an existing access into the site and to the site of the proposed building. The building would be accessed from the same track that serves the dwelling and access to a majority of the fields within the holding.

As the building would be erected to the north of the road and in a position that is set back from the public highway and behind intervening vegetation, the building will not be highly visible to passers by on the highway to the south of the site.

The site lies outside of any defined settlement limit, and therefore in policy terms the land is 'countryside' and is characterised by medium sized fields bounded by mature hedgerows and woodland areas/copses. This is reflective of the landscape character of this part of the Mid Devon rural landscape.

The Site Location



Site Location (Image reproduced from Google Maps 2022)

As the aerial map of the proposed site shows, the existing site contains a number of buildings and remains of buildings. Unfortunately none of the existing buildings are large enough or in good enough condition to provide the necessary storage requirements. The proposed building would be sited on the location of the existing building that is considered to be beyond viable repair. The building would continue to be accessed from the existing track to the east/right hand side of the building.

The site is surrounded by an agricultural landscape. There are no near dwellings. Mount Pleasant is a privately owned farm holding. There are interspersed pockets of development in the local area relating to nearby farm buildings, farmhouses and a few more sporadically located rural dwellings.

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The current vehicular/agricultural access to the site is to the south of the proposed building. The access onto the highway was improved when the current dwelling was built approximately 10 years ago. The access is suitable to accommodate the existing traffic generated by use of the site and the minimal traffic that would be generated by the modest private business storage use of part of the building.

The site benefits from a good level of screening through natural tree and hedgerow cover, with the proposed building to be largely screened from view from the highway to the south and with only glimpsed views of the eastern end of the building from the public highway to the south.

Planning History

The relevant planning history is shown below.

21/01408/Full Change of use of land from agriculture to residential, erection of two storey side extension and extension of double garage Approved

16/01890/Full Erection of an agricultural barn Approved

14/01107/Full Erection of dwelling following demolition of existing building Approved

78/01443/Full Change of use from private stables to riding stables Approved

National and Local Policy Context

The following section of this statement highlights the national and local planning policies which are relevant for the determination of the proposed development.

National Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework

The updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published 19th June 2019 and sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be

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applied. This revised framework replaces the previous NPPF published in July 2018, with a presumption in favour of sustainable development remaining at the heart (under paragraph 11).

Paragraph 83 of the NPPF emphasises that planning policies and decisions should enable the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses, both through the conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings. At paragraph 84 it states that: Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads...

Paragraph 127 states that planning policies and decisions should ensure all developments:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
- f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.*

Local Policy Context

Mid Devon District Council has now adopted the Mid Devon Local Plan Review 2013-2033.

The relevant policies for the assessment of this proposal are

S1 – Sustainable development priorities

All development will be expected to support the creation of sustainable communities by:

- d) Supporting a prosperous rural economy through the conversion of suitable existing buildings and well-designed new buildings in suitable locations, diversification of agricultural and other land-based businesses, support for equestrian activities, retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, and the promotion of sustainable rural tourism and leisure development;
- h) Requiring good sustainable design that respects local character, heritage, surroundings and materials, creates safe and accessible environments, designs out crime and establishes a strong sense of place;

S14 - Countryside

Development outside the settlements defined by Policies S10-S13 will preserve and where possible enhance the character, appearance and biodiversity of the countryside while promoting sustainable diversification of the rural economy. Detailed development management policies will permit agricultural and other appropriate rural uses, subject to the following criteria:

- d) Agricultural and equestrian development;

This is also reinforced within the more detailed Development Management Policies.

DM1 - High Quality Design

Designs of new development must be of high quality, based upon and demonstrating the following principles:

- a) Clear understanding of the characteristics of the site, its wider context and the surrounding area;
- b) Efficient and effective use of the site, having regard to criterion (a);
- c) Positive contribution to local character including any heritage or biodiversity assets and the setting of heritage assets;

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- d) Creation of safe and accessible places that also encourage and enable sustainable modes of travel such as walking and cycling;
- e) Visually attractive places that are well integrated with surrounding buildings, streets and landscapes, and do not have an unacceptably adverse effect on the privacy and amenity of the proposed or neighbouring properties and uses, taking account of: i) Architecture ii) Siting, layout, scale and massing iii) Orientation and fenestration iv) Materials, landscaping and green infrastructure
- f) Appropriate drainage including sustainable drainage systems (SUDS), including arrangements for future maintenance, and connection of foul drainage to a mains sewer where available.

DM18 – Rural employment development

Rural employment development In countryside locations, planning permission will be granted for new-build employment development or expansion of existing businesses, provided that the development is of an appropriate use and scale for its location. Proposals must demonstrate that:

- a) The development would not lead to an unacceptable impact on the local road network;
- b) There would not be an unacceptable adverse impact to the character and appearance of the countryside; and
- c) There are insufficient suitable sites or premises in the immediate area to meet the needs of the proposal.

DM20 - Agricultural Development

Agricultural development will be permitted where:

- a) The development is reasonably necessary to support farming activity on that farm or in the immediate agricultural community;
- b) The development is sensitively located to limit any adverse effects on the living conditions of local residents and is well-designed, respecting the character and appearance of the area;
- c) The development will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the environment; and
- d) The development will not have an unacceptable traffic impact on the local road network.

Taking into account the above policy framework, the proposed erection of a new agricultural building on the application site is considered to fully comply with these national and local policy requirements, with no harm or unacceptable adverse impacts.

The Case for Permission

The applicant is seeking the proposed development for the erection of an agricultural storage building as a replacement for an existing agricultural building that it is not viable to repair. The building will also have an element of private business storage for the applicant's international catering business CLE.

The applicants own the land at Mount Pleasant Farm. The applicant's have purchased a series of agricultural implements to help them manage the land and prepare it for some rare breeds animals they are purchasing. The applicants are also trying to improve the quality of the land after previous years of neglect. The applicants need somewhere dry and safe to secure their agricultural implements and machinery. In addition to the agricultural use, the applicants would like to be able to use the building for the storage of equipment associated with their international catering business. Their business is already being run from Mount Pleasant. The applicants attend the international shows when required and manage the business from their Devon residence. CLE provides catering for the international aviation trade show circuit (including two large events in the UK) and other trade shows and they travel across the world in order to provide catering at these events.

The CLE catering equipment is normally moved from location to location following the trade show circuit. When there are longer gaps between show dates the equipment returns to the UK and is stored until it is next needed. The equipment normally only returns to the UK twice in any calendar year. The applicants currently have a storage facility in London; however, they have now relocated to Devon and wish to have a modest secure storage area easily accessible from their home at Mount Pleasant. The whole of the equipment that they store is able to be transported in a 3.5 tonne vehicle. A vehicle of this size would only be required to visit Mount Pleasant twice a year. For smaller shows only a proportion of the equipment is needed, and this is transported either in the back of a normal domestic car or very small van.

There are no other buildings at Mount Pleasant buildings that are suitable to accommodate the secure storage of the agricultural equipment or modest/occasional use by CLE.

In addition to the land at Mount Pleasant being restored, the applicants are also intending to undertake a series of improvements to the condition of the farmstead (and former dwelling area) and to remove some of the dilapidated and older remains of buildings that still exist on the site.

The proposed building is considered to be a necessary form of development to support the management of the land at Mount Pleasant and to replace a sub optimal building with a new agricultural storage building. The building will enable land management and farming equipment to be stored securely and safely, allowing the process of land improvement to begin in earnest, to allow the partially derelict farmstead area to be improved and to allow for the modest storage of non-agricultural equipment associated with the applicant's business CLE. The building will complement and support the applicants' aspirations for the farm holding and allow them to continue to sustainably manage their international business from Mount Pleasant Farm. As such the development is considered to be in accordance with local plan policies S1, S14, DM1 and DM18 and DM20.

The site is not subject to any special landscape designation, not part of an AONB or conservation area, and is located in flood zone 1, presenting a suitable locality to accommodate the development.

With regards to the design and scale of the development, the proposed designs for the agricultural building are standard and traditional for this type of building meeting the required specifications, and therefore reflecting many of the surrounding agricultural buildings that can be seen within the wider locality.

The size and scale of the development is commensurate for its intended purpose and function, with no overbearing impacts or overdevelopment created upon this parcel of land or upon the surrounding landscape. Due to the siting and layout of the site, the proposed new building will be substantially screened from public vantage points due to the existing vegetation on the boundaries of the field and there will be no harm to residential or visual amenity.

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With an agricultural/vehicular access already present on site, the proposed building would be sited on the eastern side of the field where this access can be utilised, and where turning for larger agricultural vehicles provided.

The proposed building would sensitively retain the surrounding grassland, hedgerows and natural tree cover, with the site well screened to ensure there is no reduction in the visual amenity of the site, with the building to be largely out of view from main public vantage points.

The building is easily accessible from the existing access which was upgraded significantly within the last 10 years. The improvements were agreed by the Highway Authority. The continued use of the access would not have any adverse impacts on the adjoining highway or wider highway network in the local area. Moreover, there will be minimal additional journeys made to the site, with the storage use of the building relating to the maintenance of the farmland. The very small additional movements that could be attributed to the storage use for CLE will be minimal and considerably less than when the property was more intensively used for farming.

The proposed dark green external materials allow the development to reflect the rural and agricultural character of the locality and will not detract from the wider landscape nor result in any visually intrusive impacts from its appearance in this location.

The erection of an agricultural building for storage in this location would utilise the site of an existing building. The building would represent an appropriate form of agricultural and very modest rural development to complement and support the existing agricultural use of the land and the applicants existing business. The building is considered to be commensurate in scale for its intended use and need.

Essentially, there is no loss of character or visual amenity of the land, but rather the proposal is a functional and necessary form of development in an appropriate location that would adhere to both the NPPF and Local Plan policies S1, S14, DM1, DM18 and DM20. With no adverse impacts outweighing the benefits of the proposal, the development is considered to be a sustainable form of rural economic development.

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Use

The proposed use for the building is for agricultural equipment storage and for a portion of the building to be used to store catering equipment. There are no other buildings available for use on this holding. The land has always been used for agriculture (there was historically riding stables at the property alongside the agricultural use). The land is not currently used for any intensive agricultural purpose but is to be restored and then used to keep a series of rare species of agricultural animals.

The proposed building will replace an existing one which it is not viable to repair. It will be the only building on the property that is able to provide a secure storage facility for the applicant's agricultural equipment as others are in an even worse state of repair. This part of the property and the wider farmstead area is also due to undergo a series of improvements and restoration.

The building will comprise an enclosed storage area, suitable for the secure storage for agricultural implements and machinery as well as proportion of the building for privately owned catering equipment. The building is considered reasonably necessary to support the applicants ongoing management of the land and their international catering business and presents an appropriate form of rural development that will relate well to its agricultural context and rural surroundings. in accordance with policies DM18 and DM20 of the Mid Devon Local Plan.

Amount and Layout

The proposed amount and layout of the building is shown in greater detail on the accompanying plans. In terms of the site layout, the proposed building will be located as shown above on the aerial image, to the west of the farmyard/farmstead area, on the site of an existing building.

The internal floorplan layout for the proposed building will be an open plan space, suitable for its purpose of providing an area for internal agricultural storage and an area internal

storage of privately owned catering equipment. The design of the building has been led by a combination of the rural location and function for secure storage.

The proposed building measures 17.9m in length and 8.5m in width, therefore providing a total external footprint of 152 square metres. With regards to the height, the ridge height of the building would measure 4.8m, with the height to the eaves being 3.5m. The metal door on the eastern elevation would be 3.43m high.

The proposed layout and size of the development provides a building which is a suitable size and commensurate for its intended uses, with a simplistic and functional layout.

It is considered that due to the site's location and the layout for the development that there will be no adverse impacts. This reflects and complies with the core design principles and makes efficient use of the site in accordance with policies DM1 and DM18 and DM20.

Scale

Local Plan policies S1, S14, DM1, DM18 and DM20 identify that countryside and agricultural development should be appropriately scaled, alongside the design of development demonstrating how it has a clear regard and respect for the existing site, its size, context and surroundings.

It is considered that due to the scale of the proposal that it will not result in over-development of the land, with the building to be situated on the site of an existing building.

The scale of the proposal is commensurate to the amount of land managed and to be farmed by the applicants, and to allow for a modest area of storage for the applicants catering business. The building is therefore appropriately scaled for its intended use and respects the context and size of the site it sits within.

As the accompanying site location and block plans demonstrate, the proposed erection of the agricultural building will utilise a relatively modest part of the western area of the farmyard/farmstead and use the site that is currently occupied by an existing building that is to be demolished.

Whilst the proposal sees a new building and structure erected on site, the development will pose no harm or adverse impacts due to the scale, with no neighbouring dwellings situated in close proximity who could be affected by the proposal. As such the scale of the design results in no loss of residential amenity.

Overall, with no adverse impacts created due to the scale of the proposal, and the scale of the development commensurate for its intended use, the proposal is considered appropriate to provide the storage spaces required, whilst allowing the building to integrate well and remain in keeping with the agricultural context of the site and surroundings to meet the requirements of local policies S14, DM18 and DM20.

Appearance

National and local policy, highlight that design of development should retain local distinctiveness, enhancing the appearance of the rural countryside to integrate well with the existing character of the site and the primary surrounding landscape.

With regards to the proposed materials, scale and overall external appearance of the agricultural building, the development is considered to reflect to rural and agricultural context of the locality, ensuring there is no reduction in the visual amenity of the site, with no intrusive visual impacts as a result of the development.

The proposed materials for the building consist of a portal steel frame, with juniper green profile metal sheeting for both the external walls and roof. The building will be 3.5m high to the eaves and 4.8m high to the ridge.

These are appropriate material choices with regards to the proposed function of the building. The use of these external materials will enable the building to integrate well with the rural site, reflecting the agricultural character of the locality. The building design will also reflect other modern agricultural buildings that have been constructed within the district.

North elevation



East Elevation

The building has been designed with function and practicality at the forefront, reflecting core design principles. The simple agricultural building style does not detract from the visual amenity of the surrounding rural landscape and has been sited toward the western boundary of the site on a level site. Due to its siting the building will remain largely out of view from the adjoining highway, which is the main public vantage point, due to the intervening vegetation.

Overall, the proposed design and appearance represent core design principles and successfully retain the character of the rural and agricultural landscape to ensure there is no loss of visual amenity to the site and meets the requirements of local plan policies S1, S14, DM1, DM18 and DM20.

Landscaping

Due to the level of landscaping/screening already available to the site, no additional landscaping is proposed or considered necessary. The provision of the replacement building provides an opportunity to begin the restoration of the site which would have a positive impact on the overall visual amenity of the site.

The proposal will retain the surrounding agricultural grassland and the established hedge and tree lined boundaries as well as tree cover, all of which will provide natural screening, with no changes proposed. The retention of the surrounding natural features of the site minimises the need for any landscaping in accordance with local plan policies S14, DM1 and DM20.

Access

Local plan policy DM1 requires development to create safe and accessible places. Proposals should also ensure there is no damage to the surrounding area, and that the local road network can adequately support the proposed use.

The proposal will utilise the existing access to the south of the building that serves Mount Pleasant Farm. There are no changes proposed to the access. The access provides a safe access and egress point for agricultural or larger vehicles entering and leaving the site. The use of the building for agricultural storage will not generate any additional movements to and from Mount Pleasant. The provision of an element of private storage to support the applicants international catering business will generate a few additional traffic movements over a calendar year, but the frequency of additional movements is absolutely minimal and will not have any detrimental impact on the surrounding road network.

The proposal allows for sufficient space for vehicles to manoeuvre and ensures safety of the vehicular movements within the site are not compromised.

With no changes proposed to the access arrangements and the use of the access to be retained for agricultural storage and other ancillary storage purposes, there is no additional harm associated with the use of the access. The proposed development is unlikely to result

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in any significant additional journeys to the site and the proposed use of the building will not result in an additional number of vehicular journeys that the adjoining road and surrounding highways networks cannot support. As such, the scheme fully complies with local plan policies DM1, DM19 and DM20.

Conclusion

The proposed development for the erection of an agriculturally styled building on the application site presents an appropriate form and suitably scaled development in this rural location to complement the management of the farmland at Mount Pleasant and to support the applicants international catering business.

The proposed development by virtue of its scale, massing, design and location is not considered to harm the privacy or amenity of the occupiers of another dwelling or building, the future amenities and services of the land or its surroundings.

The proposed design and appearance of the development will reflect the existing rural and agricultural character of the site, enhancing the functional amenity of the land to meet the applicant's needs. The proposed design is straightforward and reflects the common design approach to provision of modern agricultural buildings and the building will relate well to its agricultural context.

Taking these factors into account, the proposal is considered to comply with both national planning policy and local plan policy requirements set out in policies S1, S14, DM1, DM18 and DM20 as it is a functional, necessary and contextually sensitive proposal. With no unacceptable or adverse impacts created that outweigh the benefits of the proposal it is considered that planning permission should be granted.