

PLANNING STATEMENT
CONVERSION OF A BARN TO A ONE BEDROOM DWELLING

AT

MOOR FARM

Talaton
Exeter
EX5 2RF

Prepared for
Mrs E M Pascoe

Dated August 2022



Stags Planning Services
21 Southernhay West
Exeter
Devon EX1 1PR

01392 286 905 / planning@stags.co.uk

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CONVERSION OF A BARN TO A ONE BEDROOM DWELLING

PLANNING STATEMENT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared by Stags on behalf of Mrs E M Pascoe. The statement relates to a redundant barn at Moor Farm, Talaton and has been prepared to support an application for the conversion of this barn to a one-bedroom dwelling.
- 1.2 This statement provides an assessment of the proposals against the relevant planning policy framework. The statement focusses on the provisions of Section 38(6) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, which requires decisions to be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Such material considerations include the National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Practice Guidance.
- 1.3 The barn is situated on the eastern side of the cluster of buildings associated with Moor Farm on the southern edge of Talaton.
- 1.4 This application is concerned with the conversion of this barn to a one-bedroom, one-storey residential dwelling.
- 1.5 The statement should be read in conjunction with the other supporting information submitted with the planning application.

2.0 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 Talaton is a small village and civil parish located approximately 2 miles to the west of Feniton and 2 miles to the east of Whimple. The total population is estimated to be circa 600. The village has a public house, the Talaton Inn; a village shop; a manor house; a church, and a village hall.
- 2.2 Moor Farm is an equestrian smallholding of approximately 4.5 acres located at the southern end of the village, within a small cul-de-sac. The farm is just 80 metres east of the village hall and 300 metres south of the village centre including the Talaton Inn, the Village Shop and church.
- 2.3 The farm is comprised of several buildings arranged around a small farmyard. The buildings are of typical construction for use in agriculture, however throughout their recent history, these buildings have been used for stabling and agricultural/equestrian storage.
- 2.4 The building that is subject of this application is a single storey blockwork structure under a mono-pitched galvanised steel roof. It is located on the eastern side of the farm complex and measures approximately 9m by 7.5m with a height of 2.5-3m.
- 2.5 The site can be directly accessed from the small cul-de-sac.
- 2.6 The site lies within open countryside as defined by the East Devon Local Plan, and is not subject to any other statutory or sensitive designations.
- 2.7 The Local Planning Authority is East Devon District Council and the site is within the Talaton Parish Council area boundary.

3.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 This application seeks full planning permission for the conversion of the barn to a one-bedroom dwelling. The applicant has lived at Moor Farm for 38 years and keeps four horses at the property. She lives in the large farmhouse alone and is now looking to downsize to a smaller dwelling that better fits her needs, while remaining in Talaton where she has strong links to the local community and of course keeps her horses. The conversion proposed will provide such a dwelling, while freeing up the large farmhouse for a family or similar whose needs it would be better suited to.
- 3.2 The design proposed is a one-bedroom, single-storey dwelling of circa 67 sq metres of gross internal floor area. The key external materials and finishes incorporated within the design are white render to walls (black rendered plinth); grey Sarnafil type roof; a slate roof to the porch; white UPVC windows; and grey SBD doors. These are in keeping with other residential properties in the surrounding area. The applicant is keen to incorporate sustainable design measures in to the construction process wherever possible. In particular, she intends to install solar panels, however these may be located on one of the existing outbuilding to maximise solar gain, so this element is not included within this planning application.
- 3.3 The proposal includes use of an existing access on to the adjacent cul-de-sac as illustrated by the submitted plans. Two car parking spaces are proposed to be provided on site.
- 3.4 The drawings submitted demonstrate that the dwelling will be converted from a redundant rural building to provide a high-quality unit of residential accommodation. The block plans demonstrate that appropriate provision is allowed for amenity space and parking for the property. The garden will extend to the north west and east.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 As far as we are aware, there is no planning history relevant on the site that is specifically relevant to this application.

- 4.2 The Council provided pre-application feedback in respect of this site in February 2022 and the comments and observations made have been considered as part of the evolution of the design.

5.0 THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the provisions of the Development Plan (DP) unless material considerations indicate to the contrary.

5.2 In this case, the DP comprises the East Devon Local Plan 2013-2031.

5.3 Emerging plans have the status of material considerations, the weight to be attached to them dependent upon the stage of their preparation.

5.4 Material considerations include amongst other matters the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework).

5.5 East Devon Local Plan (EDLP) 2013-2031

5.5.1 The East Devon Local Plan (2013-2031) contains a number of policies relevant to this proposal.

5.5.2 **Strategy 7 - Development in the Countryside** sets out the development strategy outside of defined settlement limits as follows:

"...Development in the countryside will only be permitted where it is in accordance with a specific Local or Neighbourhood Plan policy that explicitly permits such development and where it would not harm the distinctive landscape, amenity and environmental qualities within which it is located, including:

- 1. Land form and patterns of settlement.*
- 2. Important natural and manmade features which contribute to the local landscape character, including topography, traditional field boundaries, areas of importance for nature conservation and rural buildings.*
- 3. The adverse disruption of a view from a public place which forms part of the distinctive character of the area or otherwise causes significant visual intrusions"*

5.5.3 **Strategy 28 - Sustaining and Diversifying Rural Enterprises** states that:

"The Local Plan will provide for developments that will help sustain and diversify agricultural and traditional rural enterprises and add value to rural produce. The reuse of

rural buildings to provide jobs and accommodate business start ups and expansions will be encouraged."

5.5.4 Policy D1: Design and Local Distinctiveness sets out that:

"...Proposals should have regard to Village and Design Statements and other local policy proposals, including Neighbourhood Plans, whether adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance or promoted through other means. Proposals will only be permitted where they:

- 1. Respect the key characteristics and special qualities of the area in which the development is proposed.*
- 2. Ensure that the scale, massing, density, height, fenestration and materials of buildings relate well to their context.*
- 3. Do not adversely affect:*
 - a. The distinctive historic or architectural character of the area.*
 - b. The urban form, in terms of significant street patterns, groups of buildings and open spaces.*
 - c. Important landscape characteristics, prominent topographical features and important ecological features.*
 - d. Trees worthy of retention.*
 - e. The amenity of occupiers of adjoining residential properties.*
 - f. The amenity of occupants of proposed future residential properties, with respect to access to open space, storage space for bins and bicycles and prams and other uses; these considerations can be especially important in respect of proposals for conversions into flats.*
- 4. Have due regard for important aspects of detail and quality and should incorporate:*
 - a. Secure and attractive layouts with safe and convenient access for the whole community, including disabled users.*
 - b. Measures to create a safe environment for the community and reduce the potential for crime.*
 - c. Use of appropriate building materials and techniques respecting local tradition and vernacular styles as well as, where possible, contributing to low embodied energy and CO2 reduction.*
 - d. Necessary and appropriate street lighting and furniture and, subject to negotiation with developers, public art integral to the design.*

- e. *Features that maintain good levels of daylight and sunlight into and between buildings to minimise the need for powered lighting.*
 - f. *Appropriate 'greening' measures relating to landscaping and planting, open space provision and permeability of hard surfaces.*
5. *Incorporate measures to reduce carbon emissions and minimise the risks associated with climate change. Measures to secure management of waste in accordance with the waste hierarchy (reduce, reuse, recycle, recovery, disposal) should also feature in proposals during the construction and operational phases.*
 6. *Green Infrastructure and open spaces should be designed and located in a way that will minimise any potential security concerns for users.*
 7. *Mitigate potential adverse impacts, such as noise, smell, dust, arising from developments, both during and after construction."*

(own bold)

5.5.5 **D8 – Re-use of Rural Buildings Outside of Settlements** states:

"The re-use or conversion of buildings in the countryside outside of Built-up Area Boundaries will be permitted where:

1. *The new use is sympathetic to, and will enhance the rural setting and character of the building and surrounding area and is in a location which will not substantively add to the need to travel by car or lead to a dispersal of activity or uses on such a scale as to prejudice village vitality.*
2. *The building is structurally sound and capable of conversion without the need for substantial extension, alteration or reconstruction and any alterations protect or enhance the character of the building and its setting;*
3. *The form, bulk and general design of the building and its proposed conversion are in keeping with its surroundings, local building styles and materials;*
4. *The proposed use would not harm the countryside by way of traffic, parking, storage, pollution or the erection of associated structures;*
5. *The proposal will not undermine the viability of an existing agricultural enterprise or require replacement buildings to fulfil a similar function.*

For residential proposals it must be established that:

- a) *the building is no longer required for agricultural use or diversification purposes;*
and

- b) *that its conversion will enhance its setting - e.g. through removal of modern extensions and materials, outside storage, landscaping etc.*
- c) *Development is located close to a range of accessible services and facilities to meet the everyday needs of residents*

Residential use will be expected to comply with the affordable housing and, open space and education provision policies of the Plan..."

5.5.6 **Policy EN5: Wildlife Habitats and Features** states:

"Wherever possible sites supporting important wildlife habitats or features not otherwise protected by policies will be protected from development proposals which would result in the loss of or damage to their nature conservation value, particularly where these form a link between or buffer to designated wildlife sites. Where potential arises positive opportunities for habitat creation will be encouraged through the development process.

Where development is permitted on such sites mitigation will be required to reduce the negative impacts and where this is not possible adequate compensatory habitat enhancement or creation schemes will be required and/or measures required to be taken to ensure that the impacts of the development on valued natural features and wildlife have been mitigated to their fullest practical extent."

5.5.7 **Policy TC2: Accessibility of New Development** states that:

*"New development should be located so as to **be accessible by pedestrians, cyclists and public transport** and also well related to compatible land uses so as to minimise the need to travel by car..."*

(own bold)

5.5.8 **Policy TC9: Parking Provision in New Development** states that:

*"Spaces will need to be provided for Parking of cars and bicycles in new developments. As a guide at least 1 car parking space should be provided for one bedroom homes and **2 car parking spaces per home with two or more bedrooms**. At least 1 bicycle parking space should be provided per home."*

(own bold)

5.5.9 Other policies of relevance include: **Strategy 5: Environment; Strategy 5B: Sustainable Transport; Strategy 38: Sustainable Design and Construction; Strategy 47: Nature Conservation and Geology; Strategy 48: Local Distinctiveness in the Built Environment; Policy D2 Landscape Requirements; Policy EN14: Control of Pollution; and EN22: Surface Water Run-Off Implications of New Development**

6.0 MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

6.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework was most recently revised in July 2021 and sets out the Government's planning principles and policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

6.1.2 The Framework's message is clear in that it provides a clear "*presumption in favour of sustainable development*" (paragraph 10).

6.1.3 **Paragraph 80** states that "*Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:*

...

c) the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting;

...

(Own bold)

6.1.4 **Paragraph 120** refers to planning policies and decisions and recommends the following for local planning authorities;

"Planning policies and decisions should:

a) encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains – such as developments that would enable new habitat creation or improve public access to the countryside;"

b) recognise that some undeveloped land can perform many functions, such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, cooling/shading, carbon storage or food production;

c) give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate

opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land;

- d) ***promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively (for example converting space above shops, and building on or above service yards, car parks, lock-ups and railway infrastructure);...***

(Own bold)

6.2 Neighbourhood Plans

6.2.1 Talaton Parish Council are not currently producing a Neighbourhood Plan.

7.0 DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 Principle of Development

7.1.1 The site is located within open countryside as defined by the East Devon Local Plan. Consequently, in relation to the principle of development, Strategies 7 (Development in the Countryside) and 28 (Sustaining and Diversifying Rural Enterprises) and Policy D8 (Re-use of Rural Buildings Outside of Settlements) apply.

7.1.2 Strategy 7 only permits development within areas of open countryside where it is in accordance with a specific Local or Neighbourhood Plan policy that explicitly permits such development and where it would not harm the distinctive landscape, amenity and environmental qualities within which it is located.

7.1.3 In this instance, the specific local plan policy that explicitly permits the re-use of rural buildings outside of settlements is Policy D8. Policy D8 states as follows (with commentary in **Bold**): *"the re-use or conversion of buildings in the countryside outside of Built-up Area Boundaries will be permitted where:*

1. *The new use is sympathetic to, and will enhance the rural setting and character of the building and surrounding area and is in a location which will not substantively add to the need to travel by car or lead to a dispersal of activity or uses on such a scale as to prejudice village vitality.*

The building proposed to be converted is at the end of a small residential cul-de-sac. The proposed residential use of the building is entirely consistent with the surrounding uses. The location of the site is circa 80 metres east of the village hall and 300 metres south of the village centre including the Talaton Inn, the Village Shop and church. As such, Talaton contains all of the basic services and facilities that you would expect of a village and the proposed dwelling is well located for access to these without relying on the need to travel by car. It should also be noted that the village has a semi-regular bus service providing access to Whimble, Sidmouth and Exeter. Furthermore, a further dwelling in the village of Talaton will concentrate further activity within the village, adding to village vitality rather than prejudicing it.

2. *The building is structurally sound and capable of conversion without the need for substantial extension, alteration or reconstruction and any alterations protect or enhance the character of the building and its setting;*

A structural survey has been undertaken and is submitted in support of the application. This shows that the building is structurally sound and capable of

conversion. While a small extension is proposed to form a porch, this is certainly not substantial for the purposes of Policy D8 and due to the buildings utilitarian natural, the proposed alterations will result in significant enhancement to the character of the building and its setting, again in full accordance with policy D8.

3. *The form, bulk and general design of the building and its proposed conversion are in keeping with its surroundings, local building styles and materials;*

The form and bulk of the building will remain virtually unchanged and is in keeping with other similar buildings within the area. The design of the building, in particular the materials and finishes proposed, have again been chosen to match those found elsewhere within the local area.

4. *The proposed use would not harm the countryside by way of traffic, parking, storage, pollution or the erection of associated structures;*

The conversion proposed is a one-bedroom dwelling which will lead to a negligible increase in traffic and parking. No associated structures are proposed, as a number of existing outbuildings already provide adequate storage. Parking is provided entirely within the site.

5. *The proposal will not undermine the viability of an existing agricultural enterprise or require replacement buildings to fulfil a similar function.*

No agricultural enterprise is currently being run from the site/building. The building is used for stabling and the applicant has sufficient other buildings to use for this purpose.

For residential proposals it must be established that:

- a) *the building is no longer required for agricultural use or diversification purposes; and*

As above, the building is no longer required for stabling.

- b) *that its conversion will enhance its setting - e.g. through removal of modern extensions and materials, outside storage, landscaping etc.*

The conversion will result in a more attractive finish than the current exposed blockwork. Overall it is considered that the proposals will result in a far more attractive building and will give the opportunity to secure further landscaping through condition, should this be considered necessary.

- c) *Development is located close to a range of accessible services and facilities to meet the everyday needs of residents"*

The location of the site is circa 80 metres east of the village hall and 300 metres south of the village centre including the Talaton Inn, the Village Shop and church. As such, Talaton contains all of the basic services and facilities that you would expect of a village and the proposed dwelling is well located for access to these without relying on the need to travel by car. It should also be noted that the village has a semi-regular bus service providing access to Whimble, Sidmouth and Exeter where further services and amenities are available.

7.1.4 Additionally, Strategy 28 outlines that the Local Plan will provide for developments that will help sustain and diversify agricultural and traditional rural enterprises and add value to rural produce. The reuse of rural buildings to provide jobs and accommodate business start-ups and expansions will be encouraged. As discussed above, the main farm house is now too large for the applicant and the proposed development will allow her to downsize, free up the existing farmhouse for a family needing a house of that size, while allowing her to continue with her small equine business – which undoubtedly benefits the local economy, in full accordance with Strategy 28

7.1.5 Overall, it is therefore considered that the development proposed is in full accordance with Strategy 7, Policy D8 and Strategy 28 of the East Devon Local Plan and is acceptable in principle. Further weight is added to this by the proposals broad accordance with the intentions of paragraph 80 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which lends support to the conversion of redundant and disused buildings where it would enhance their immediate setting.

7.2 Ecology

7.2.1 The application is for the conversion of an existing barn. An assessment of the potential impacts of the development proposed on habitats and species has been carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist.

7.2.2 The ecological appraisal concludes that there would be no significant habitat losses and no unacceptable impacts on protected or priority species, should the application be approved in accordance with Strategy 5 (Environment) and Policy EN5 (Wildlife Habitats and Features) of the East Devon Local Plan.

7.3 Design

7.3.1 The design proposed is sympathetic to the character and style of the existing residential development which surrounds the site and will secure a significant improvement on the

design of the current building. The positioning of windows and doors, are conscious of residential amenity and the privacy of existing and future occupiers.

7.3.2 On this basis it is considered that the development is acceptable in terms of its design and visual impact, in accordance with Policy D1 (Design and Local Distinctiveness) of the East Devon Local Plan.

7.4 Impact on amenity of adjoining properties and future occupiers

7.4.1 Residential uses border the site to the north and as such the proposed design has evolved to ensure that there are no windows within the northern elevation of the dwelling in order to avoid any potential issues of overlooking. This will afford future occupiers of the development proposed a greater degree of privacy and amenity in accordance with Policy D1 (Design and Local Distinctiveness) of the East Devon Local Plan.

7.4.2 Overall it is considered that the design set out above are in accordance with Policy D1 in respect of their acceptable impact on the amenity of both adjoining residential properties and the future occupiers of the development proposed.

7.5 Highways Impact

7.5.1 The proposed dwelling will be accessed from the small cul-de-sac via an existing entrance which is immediately adjacent to the north of the site. The point of access is well established and the Crashmap.co.uk website reports there have been no incidents in the vicinity (including at the junction with the main road) in the last 23 years (the entirety of data available). A large number of properties appear to use similar access points in this area without issue.

7.5.2 The alignment of the main road in this location is straight and speeds are limited due to the proximity of the village. The existing accesses have good visibility and it is considered that there is no need for these to be amended or improved in order to serve the level of traffic associated with a single residential dwelling.

7.5.3 The proposed development of a single one-bedroom residential dwelling will give rise to a negligible increase in traffic over and above the existing situation. Paragraph 111 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that "Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe". In this instance, the increase in traffic attributable to a single dwelling is not considered

to have an unacceptable impact on highways safety, nor is it considered to have a severe impact on the highways network either alone or in combination with existing development.

7.6 Flood Risk and Surface Water Drainage

7.6.1 Based on the Environment Agency flood map for planning, the building is situated within Flood Zone 1 and so has a low risk of flooding.

7.6.2 Surface water and foul drainage will be managed as shown on the submitted plans. The proposals result in no increase in the risk of flooding. Consequently, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policy EN22 (Surface Run-Off Implications of New Development).

8.0 PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

8.1 Policy Compliance

8.1.1 In all regards it is considered that the proposals are compliant with policy and relevant guidance.

8.2 Benefits

8.2.1 The scheme will secure the provision of an additional dwelling near to the centre of Talaton, an undoubtedly sustainable location where a full range of everyday services and facilities are available within walking distance. Additionally, the proposed development will result in an enhancement to the building being converted and its immediate setting.

8.2.2 As set out in detail within this planning statement, it is the contention of the applicant that the development of the site in question would not give rise to any significant adverse impacts, environmental or otherwise.

8.3 Conclusion

8.3.1 For the reasons outlined in this report it is respectfully requested that full planning permission be granted.