

Design & Access Statement,

For

A New Dog Grooming Business

Hall Farm, Church Lane, Bedfield, Suffolk IP13 7JJ



Prepared by Tim Moll Architecture Ltd
File ref :1621

INTRODUCTION

This Design and Access Statement (DAS) accompanies an application to convert a disused farm building into a dog grooming salon.

The DAS has been written to meet the requirements of Article 4C of the town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 (as amended).

As this is a proposal for a single building, some aspects such as the social and economic context are of limited applicability.

SITE ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

Hall Farm is an agricultural unit with associated farmyard, buildings and silos. The proposal relates to a redundant agricultural building adjacent to the farmyard. The site is accessed via Church Road, a narrow single track public road, which runs to the west of the site and leads to The Hall. There are agricultural buildings to the north, south and west of the site. The nearest residential neighbours are The Gig House and Grade II* listed The Hall to the east. St Nicholas's Church to the southeast is Grade I listed. There are public footpaths within proximity of the site.

Planning permission was granted in November 2021 under DC/21/04692 for 1no. single storey building for use as a dog grooming salon. This application seeks to convert a redundant agricultural building instead. The site for the approved development is adjacent to the building proposed for conversion.

CURRENT STATUS AND HISTORICAL TIMELINE

The applicant has actually converted the building already so this is a retrospective application. Events leading to the current position are as follows:

A builder was lined up and Orwell Structural Engineers had completed the Building Regulation drawings. The applicant contacted the builder late January 2022 to confirm his start date only to have him pull out of the project.

5 other contractors were contacted and 2 simply didn't respond, the others were quoting very high quotes (e.g. £96,000) and/or very long lead times owing to a Covid rush of undertaking home improvements and a backlog.

This prompted the concept of reusing a disused farm building which is directly adjacent to the original location. The applicant was not aware that permission would be required to convert a building.

A pre application enquiry was made (ref DC/23/00507). The written report was prepared by Averil Goudy and dated 17th February 2023. The conclusion / planning balance was favourable for the proposed conversion under the provisions of Local Plan Policy E11.

The building which is the subject of this application was built in the 1960s for the pigmen and feed. When the farm ceased to keep pigs at that location, it was re-clad in the late 1990s using cement board and corrugated tin and insulated with white boards on the inside to keep it completely watertight and sealed and was then used to store seed. It continued with that use until the farm was split in 2007 between family members.

EXTRACT FROM THE PRE APPLICATION REPORT

Principle of Development

Planning permission was granted for the erection of 1no. single storey building for use as a dog grooming salon and associated works under DC/21/04692 in November 2021. This permission is extant until November 2024. This is a material consideration. Evidently, the considerations for a conversion differ to a new-build proposal. Local Plan Policy E11 supports the re-use and adaption of agricultural or other rural buildings for industrial or commercial use:

In the countryside, applications for the industrial or commercial use of agricultural and other rural buildings, including parts of dwellings and buildings within domestic curtilages will be permitted subject to the following:-

- the building structure should be in sound condition and should be appropriate for its intended use without significant structural alteration;*
- the design of any conversion should be sympathetic to the character of the building and its setting;*
- the proposed use of the building should not adversely affect residential or rural amenity, highway safety, wildlife features or cause pollution or potentially harmful effects on rivers, groundwaters and watercourses;*
- the proposal should not involve the conversion of recently constructed agricultural buildings. The district planning authority will remove permitted development rights under the general (permitted development) order 1995 if this is considered necessary to avoid conflict with any of the above criteria.*

Further development will only be considered if the district planning authority is satisfied that the nature and scale of the activity would not conflict with its surroundings or any of the above criteria.

Proposals for associated external storage should, where necessary, be accompanied by a scheme of landscaping to ameliorate any visual impact.

In appropriate circumstances the district planning authority will impose conditions governing the height, and areas to be used for, open storage, warehousing and haulage uses will not normally be permitted unless the above criteria are met and the activity is principally to provide a service for nearby villages and communities.

The enquiry submission does not provide sufficient information to comment on the structural soundness of the building. A structural survey should be submitted alongside an application to evidence that the building is capable of conversion.

The number of new openings within the building to facilitate the proposed use should be kept to a minimum to ensure that the character of the building is retained.

Given the proximity of this proposal to the previous consent, Officers do not foresee that the proposal would have a detrimental impact on residential or rural amenity, highway safety, wildlife features or cause pollution, etc. in light of the previous assessments. Compliance with the aforementioned policy is imperative to receive support for the proposal.

As the extant consent has been implemented, the Council would need to ensure that only one dog grooming salon is provided. A Unilateral Undertaking (UU) would need to be completed and submitted with a future application. The UU will need to secure that only one dog groom salon would be provided. The Council's Legal Team would review the UU and confirm that it is satisfactory. The application could not be determined until this is confirmed.

Design

The submission is only accompanied by a red line site plan. Officer advice regarding design is limited at this stage.

Policies CS5 and GP1 would be relevant to the design considerations. Policy CS5 requires development to be of a high-quality design that respects the local distinctiveness and the built heritage of Mid Suffolk, enhancing the character and appearance of the district. Policy GP1 of the Local Plan states that proposals comprising poor design and layout will be refused, requiring proposals to meet a number of design criteria including maintenance or enhancement of the surroundings and use of compatible materials.

Compliance with the aforementioned policies would be required in order to receive support in this respect.

The Historic Environment

A proposal that includes the curtilage or setting of a Listed Building or works to a Listed Building must respond to this significant consideration. The duty imposed by the Listed Buildings Act 1990 imposes a presumption against the grant of planning permission which causes harm to a heritage asset. A finding of harm, even less than substantial harm, to the setting of a listed building must be given "considerable importance and weight*" (*Bath Society v Secretary of State for the Environment [1991] 1 W.L.R. 1303). The application site is not a designated heritage asset but is within proximity of Grade I listed St Nicholas's Church to the southeast and Grade II* listed The Hall to the east. No harm was identified to these assets under application reference DC/21/04692. As the proposal seeks to utilise an existing building and would not introduce any additional built form within the setting, no further harm is envisaged.

The Natural Environment

A preliminary ecological appraisal was submitted in October 2021 under the previous application. Conditions were imposed to the permission to secure the recommendations within the ecological appraisal and reasonable avoidance measures for great crested newts. The latter was discharged in December 2021 as it was a pre-commencement condition.

Ecological surveys typically have a 'shelf-life' of 12 months. As this date has now elapsed and the proposal now relates to a building (that has the potential host bats and birds) a new/updated report is required to accompany a future application. Should the survey identify the requirement for further surveys, these must be provided with a future application. Place Services Ecology would be consulted with any future application, and should an objection be raised this would be sufficient to warrant refusal of the application.

Highways, Access and Parking

In respect of policies T09 and T10 and Paragraph 111 of the NPPF, development should not adversely affect the highway network and associated safety.

The previous highways assessment remains relevant to this proposal: *The proposal seeks to utilise the highway of Church Road, a narrow single track public road, which runs to the west of the site and leads to The Hall. Whilst it is noted that the road is narrow, it already serves the farm, approximately 12 dwellings and St Nicholas's Church. There are some opportunities for passing along the highway. The intensification of use is not considered sufficient to warrant refusal of the application.*

The proposed development makes provision for three parking spaces to the south of the building on an area of existing hardstanding. The Highways Authority have been consulted and have confirmed that they have no objection subject to the implementation of a condition to secure the parking and manoeuvring area.

It is understood from the submission that the parking spaces have already been provided on site in accordance with the previous consent. This is likely to be sufficient for the revised proposal. They should be illustrated on the plans for a future application. The Highways Authority would be consulted on any future application where an assessment would be made.

Landscaping

There are no protected (TPO) trees on or adjacent to the site and the site is not situated within a Conservation Area. No additional landscaping was proposed as part of the previous proposal, thus it is considered that a landscaping plan is not required.

Residential Amenity, Safe and Secure Communities

The previous residential amenity assessment remains relevant for the proposed development:

There are no nearby residential properties that would be affected by the proposed development. Sufficient distance is considered to be afforded to prevent any noise disturbance. Whilst the proposed development would result in a minor increase in vehicular traffic along Church Road, the dwellings are set back from the highway and are predominantly at the beginning of the highway, close to the junction with Southolt Road, such that any impact is minimal, if at all.

No harm is considered to arise from the proposed conversion in this respect.

DESIGN

Grey materials have been used to blend in to the farmyard setting. Kingspan insulated panels have been used owing to the production of condensation during the grooming process and the energy efficiency of these panels. They are Anthracite Grey on the sides and back and Black on the roof. The floor is floating as shown in the pictures (photos are at the end of this document) and insulated too. The front is also insulated, covered in shiplap and painted grey. The disabled access ramp is painted grey also. The colours blend in to the surroundings and there has been no physical change to either the footprint of the building or the height.

The 3 required car parking spaces from the original granted planning permission will be in exactly the same place and the applicant has organised private commercial business waste collection.

USE

The proposal is for a dog grooming salon.

SIZE OF DEVELOPMENT

The building has a footprint of around 40m².

This proposal is for the conversion of an existing building.

LANDSCAPING

Pursuant to the Ecology report undertaken by Abrehart and the subsequent RAMS, the applicant has far exceeded their recommendations. 106 hornbeam have been planted along the pond line and 10 hazel and 10 silver birch trees on the grass next to the pond. 20 wild cherry trees have been planted and there will also be 20 oak trees planted. There is also the log pile that was recommended.

ACCESS

Car provision. There is space for car parking to the front of the building; no further provision is necessary.

There are no issues with gradients. A level access is provided from the ramped approach to the front door.

The design and layout of the proposed building has been designed with disabled access in mind. It would be possible for wheelchairs to gain access via the front doors.

There is a suitably wide entrance into the building as evident from the photographs.

The scheme will accord with Part M of the Building Regulations.

Emergency vehicles would be able to gain access to the building.

The environment agency website has been checked. This shows that there is no risk of flooding.

Environmental Measures

The building is well insulated.

There is no foul water from the building. Grey water is stored in a 5000 litre buried tank. When full, the tank is emptied by a specialist firm.

Consultations

Averil Goudy was consulted in the pre app process.

PHOTOS



The finished building from the front



Pre conversion



Progress



Progress



Progress



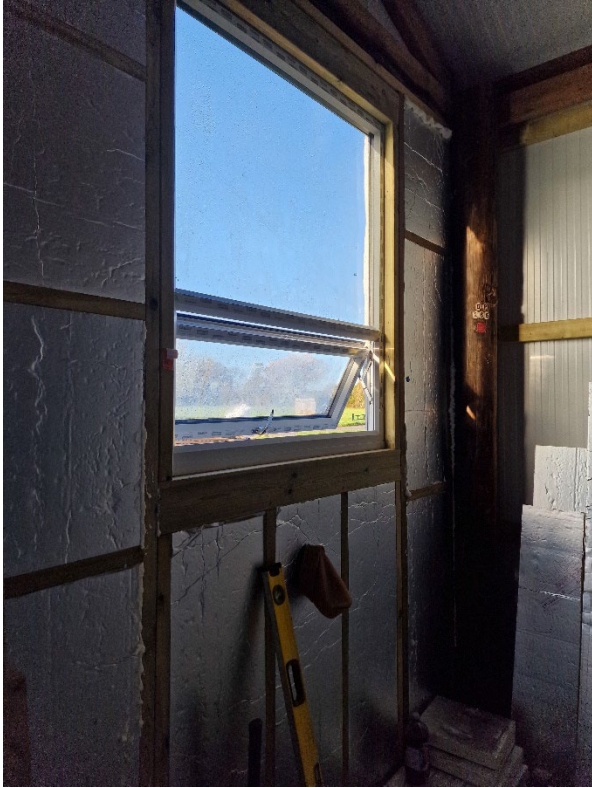
Progress



Progress



Progress



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New planting



New planting



Grey water holding tank location. There is no foul waste from the building and the tank is emptied by a specialist firm when full.