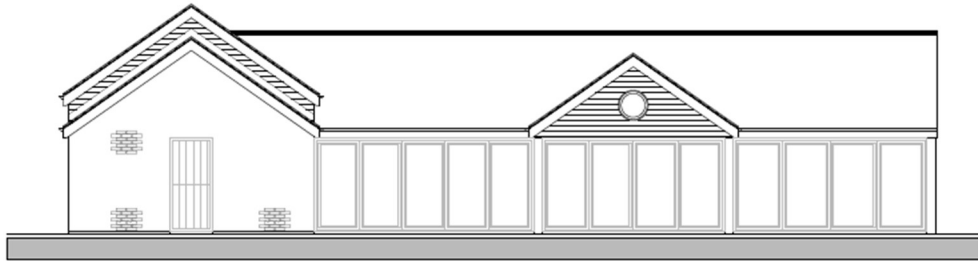




Change of Use of Stables and Alterations to Form Garaging



Ashcroft House, Gray Lane, Halam,
Newark, Notts NG22 8AL

PLANNING STATEMENT

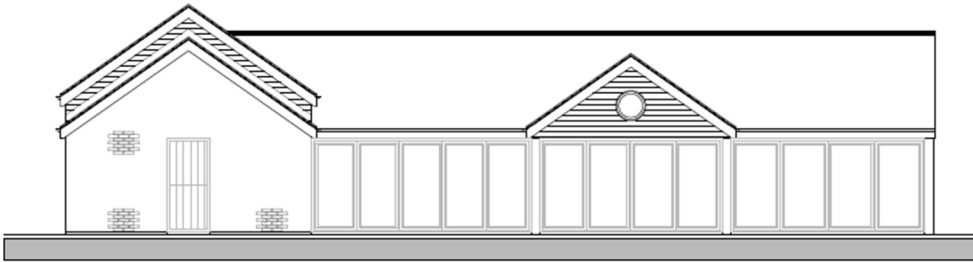
March 2023

The Proposal

The proposal involves the change of use from stables to garaging to house the personal collection of classic vehicles of the owner of Ashcroft House. There are some internal and some minimal external alterations necessary.



Existing South-East Elevation



Proposed South-East Elevation

The internal alterations involve the removal of the individual loose boxes and the insertion of a glazed façade under the existing canopy retaining the current roof supports. A single personnel door is also inserted into the gable end on the south-east. As such there are no structural alterations to the building. Existing carriage double doors allow entry from the existing driveway and existing carriage double doors allow access through to the courtyard. The glazed façade comprises bi-fold doors then will allow the private vehicle collection to enter and exit the building when required from the courtyard.

The Stables

The stables were permitted under 11/01090/FUL, granted on the 30th September 2011. Details to discharge the relevant conditions were submitted in October 2011. The stables were constructed in early 2012 and completed as shown on an aerial photo from May 2012. The adjacent manege predates the stables having been approved under 08/02065/FUL in December 2008.



The Stables and Ashcroft House

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The Stables and Manege

The Site and Surroundings

Ashcroft House is a large property set within grounds of approximately 10 acres, the overall grounds include the stables, the manege, paddocks and lake. In addition, there is a large tractor shed to house necessary machinery to manage the land.

The lake was approved under 10/00493/FUL in June 2010. Ashcroft House was approved under 03/02438/FUL in December 2003 and extended under 14/00657/FUL in May 2014. The tractor shed was given prior notification under 02/02209/AGR.

Gray Lane runs to the west of the village of Halam. It contains a number of individual properties and allotments to the west of the site. Halam is a village with a population of 390 according to the 2021 Census, which is reduced from 426 at the 2011 Census. The village is located around a mile to the west of Southwell.

Ashcroft House has two entrances off Gray Lane. The easternmost gateway is to the house itself and the westernmost gateway provides access to the wider overall grounds. From the latter entrance is a gravel driveway which leads to the side of the property and provides the access to the entire grounds.

The Development Plan

The adopted Development Plan most relevant to the determination of this application are:

Newark and Sherwood Core Strategy (adopted March 2019)

- Spatial Policy 1 (Settlement Hierarchy)
- Spatial Policy 2 (Spatial Distribution of Growth)
- Spatial Policy 3 (Rural Areas)
- Spatial Policy 7 (Sustainable Transport)
- Core Policy 9 (Sustainable Design)
- Core Policy 13 (Landscape Character)

Newark and Sherwood Allocations & Development Management DPD (adopted July 2013)

- Policy DM5 (Design)
- Policy DM8 (Development in the Open Countryside)
- Policy DM12 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development)

Material Planning Considerations

Other relevant material planning considerations include:

- National Planning Policy Framework

Planning Practice Guidance

Planning Considerations

Principle of Conversion

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) promotes the principle of a presumption in favour of sustainable development and recognises the duty under the Planning Acts for planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise, in accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

The NPPF refers to the presumption in favour of sustainable development being at the heart of development and sees sustainable development as a golden thread running through both plan making and decision taking. This is confirmed at the Development Plan level through Policy DM12 of the Allocations and Development Management DPD.

The Adopted Development Plan for Newark & Sherwood comprises the Amended Core Strategy and the Allocations and Development Management DPD. The Amended Core Strategy details the settlement hierarchy which will help deliver sustainable growth and development in the District. The intentions of this hierarchy are to direct development to the Sub-regional Centre, Service Centres and Principal Villages, which are well served in terms of infrastructure and services. Spatial Policy 2 of the Amended Core Strategy sets out the settlements where the Council will focus growth throughout the district. Halam is not an identified settlement in the hierarchy in Spatial Policy 2.

Applications for new development beyond Principal Villages as specified within Spatial Policy 2 will be considered against the criteria within Spatial Policy 3. However, Spatial Policy 3 also confirms that, development not in villages or settlements, in the open countryside, will be strictly controlled and restricted to uses which require a rural setting. Reference is then given to the relevant development management policies in the Allocations and Development Management DPD, namely Policy DM8.

Halam is defined as an 'other village' according to Spatial Policy 1 and Spatial Policy 2, accordingly Spatial Policy 3 is therefore relevant. Spatial Policy 3 identifies that development should be within villages. It states that development outside principal villages should be appropriate to the location and be small scale in nature and should not have a detrimental impact on the character of the location or its landscape setting.

There is no defined settlement boundary for Halam. Therefore, whether or not the site lies ‘in the village’ is a matter of judgment. According to the subtext to Spatial Policy 3, sites in edge of built form locations comprising undeveloped land, paddocks, fields, or open space will not normally be considered as being within the settlement.

In this case, given the location of this site on Gray Lane, some distance to the west of the main core of Halam village the site is considered to fall outside the village and therefore within the open countryside in planning terms. Policy DM8 is therefore applicable.

Spatial Policy 3 says that development not in villages or settlements, in the open countryside, will be strictly controlled and restricted to uses which require a rural setting. Policies to deal with such applications are set out in the Allocations & Development Management DPD. Consideration will also be given to the re-use of rural buildings of architectural merit.

Criterion 5 of Policy DM8 on the conversion of existing buildings states: *“In the interests of sustainability, consideration should be given to the conversion of existing buildings before proposing replacement development. Proposals should investigate and assess alternative uses for buildings in accordance with the aims of the Spatial Strategy and present a case for the most beneficial use. Planning permission will only be granted for conversion to residential use where it can be demonstrated that the architectural or historical merit of the buildings warrants their preservation, and they can be converted without significant re-building, alteration or extension. Detailed assessment of proposals will be made against a Supplementary Planning Document.”*

Policy DM8 reflects the NPPF in containing criteria for considering development in the open countryside, focusing on strictly controlling development to certain types.

The proposed conversion retains the existing building form only requires minor re-building, alteration or extension. The insertion of glazing within existing open-fronted openings is a traditional style of alteration made regularly to the conversion of traditional buildings.

In this case, the building although relatively modern was designed to be of architectural interest involving brick and timber boarding. Its design reflects traditional stable blocks found at country houses, albeit as a modern building it doesn’t have historic merit per se.

The building is considered to possess some architectural merit. Given it is a modern building range the existing structure and modern construction means it is capable of conversion with minor structural alteration. The plans also show that the building would remain as its existing form,

albeit is proposed to be infilled under the existing canopy roof by glazing with the insertion of a further single door.

Conversion to garaging to house the personal collection of classic vehicles of the owner of Ashcroft House is not B8 storage and distribution use as it is not a commercial activity. Neither is it residential use in terms of a dwelling as garaging is a use that is typically incidental to the residential use of a dwelling.

Spatial Policy 3 seeks to restrict development in the open countryside and directs readers to Policy DM8 which also seeks to restrict development in the countryside unless it meets one of 12 exceptions. The proposal doesn't fall neatly into any one of the exceptions listed. Rather, the policy is silent as is the NPPF, so the proposal does not constitute a departure from the Development Plan. The LPA adopted the same position under 22/00213/FUL for the change of use of horse manege and stables to domestic curtilage at Redfields Farm, Greaves Lane, Edingley.

As Policy DM8 is silent, the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies as set out in Policy DM12 and the NPPF.

The proposal doesn't cause any encroachment into the countryside and would bring about a new long-term use for the large stable building. Its conversion would not result in any conflicts in respect of Core Policy 13 (landscape character). It would not result in adverse impacts for sustainability as the building is already within the grounds of the house it would serve, as it does already as stables. The current owners have no need for stabling.

Therefore, no harm arises and this alongside the presumption in favour of sustainable development should be afforded material weight. Although the proposal doesn't fall into one of the exceptions listed within Policy DM8 it does not conflict with the intentions of the policy.

It is worth noting that even if considered as residential use, given the building is considered to be of architectural merit, the conversion of the building to residential use would be supported by Policy DM8. Even if the LPA took issue whether the building has architectural merit, it is necessary to consider the consistency of Policy DM8 to the NPPF.

In 22/02262/FUL for the conversion of former joinery and kitchen workshop into two dwellings at The Dutch Barn, Great North Road, Carlton on Trent, the LPA were mindful that paragraphs 79 and 80 of the NPPF and in particular the exception as set out at paragraph 80 that relates to the re-use of redundant or disused buildings provided the proposal would enhance its immediate

setting. The NPPF does not require buildings to be of architectural or historic merit in order to be supported for conversion and thus the approach of this part of Policy DM8 does not completely align with the NPPF, the latter being the most up to date policy position in this regard.

In light of this, the LPA noted the intention of the amendments to Policy DM8 as part of the plan review process is to omit the restriction of the conversion of existing buildings to only those of architectural or historic merit. On this basis, in determining 22/02262/FUL the LPA concluded that Policy DM8 was out-of-date in relation to the limitation of only supporting residential conversions of buildings of architectural or historic merit; thereby it afforded more weight to the NPPF.

The stable building is not required to be used as stables. It is capable of conversion without significant re-building, alteration or extension. The proposal would retain the high quality immediate setting so the principle of development would be acceptable under paragraph 80 of the NPPF as well.

Design and Landscape

The NPPF states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and new development should be visually attractive. Core Policy 9 states that new development should achieve a high standard of sustainable design that is of an appropriate form and scale to its context complementing the existing built and landscape environments. Policy DM5 of the DPD states that local distinctiveness should be reflected in the scale, form, mass, layout, design and materials in new development. The Council's Conversion of Traditional Rural Buildings whilst not written for relatively modern buildings is nonetheless a helpful guide.

With regard to landscape character impact, Core Policy 13 explains that new development which positively addresses the implications of relevant landscape Policy Zone should be consistent with the landscape conservation and enhancement aims for the area will be supported.

The application building is a modern high-quality building that makes a positive contribution to the site and surroundings. The conversion would not alter the positive contribution the building makes and the alterations follow the principles that would be applied to the conversion of traditional buildings.

As such the alterations respect the original building design whilst making a functional converted building. It is therefore considered that the proposal would comply with Core Policy 9 and Policy DM5.

Living Conditions

Policy DM5 advises that the layout of development within sites and separation distances from neighbouring development should be sufficient to ensure that neither suffers from an unacceptable reduction in amenity including overbearing impacts, loss of light and privacy. Development proposals should have regard to their impact on the amenity or operation of surrounding land uses and where necessary mitigate for any detrimental impact.

Given the existing use of the building as stables, the conversion to garaging is unlikely to result in any material disturbance to existing occupiers over and above the permitted use. There are no nearby neighbours and the proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policy DM5 and the guidance in the NPPF in this regard.

Highways and Access

Spatial Policy 7 of the Core Strategy amongst other things requires proposals to minimise the need for travel through measures such as travel plans or the provision or enhancement of local services and facilities; provide safe, convenient and attractive accesses for all; be appropriate for the highway network in terms of volumes and nature of traffic generated and avoid highway improvements which harm the environment and character of the area. Policy DM5 mirrors this.

Ashcroft House has two entrances off Gray Lane. The easternmost gateway is to the house itself and the westernmost gateway is the access to the wider overall grounds. The existing building is accessed via the westernmost existing access off Gray Lane and the existing internal driveway network that provides the access to the entire grounds. Gray Lane is recorded as being a public highway maintainable by NCC for its entire length, notwithstanding the fact that the metalled surface ends at Middlebeck Farm to the east.

The garaging is for a personal collection of classic cars. As with most collections of this sort, display is the primary objective and they will only be used infrequently for actual driving. The proposed conversion of the barn would result in the access not being subjected to any material difference in use. In fact, lorries previously connected with the stable's use will no longer occur.

The collection of classic cars needs to be stored within garaging for both security and to ensure their long-term preservation. The stable building provides a highly suitable building to convert to meet the security and ambient conditions required. The proposal is considered to accord with Spatial Policy 7 and Policy DM5 in terms of highway safety considerations.

Conclusion

On this basis, in this specific context the principle of development is considered to be acceptable. The proposal will not harm the established architectural character of the building or the landscape character of the surroundings. Taking all matters into account we consider that planning permission should be granted.