

**Planning Statement (including Water Management Statement and Heritage Statement) by [AddisonRees Planning Consultancy Ltd](#)**

**Description:** Home Office/Gym Outbuilding

**Location:** Top Farm, Watery Lane, Yieldingtree, Broome, Worcestershire, DY9 0EJ

**Applicant:** Mr J Morse

**November 2023**

## 1.0 Introduction:

1.1 This is a householder application for the construction of a single storey rear detached domestic outbuilding consisting of a double car port, garden store, home office and gym used in association with the existing property, at Top Farm in Broome. The proposals would replace the existing shed/summerhouse outbuilding on the site.

1.2 The property is located off Watery Lane , between Blakedown and Belbroughton, in what is a mixed residential and agricultural environment.

## 2.0 Drawings and Plans/Technical Documents Submitted

2.1 This statement should be read in conjunction with the plans and information submitted by S R Davis Architects.

## 3.0 Planning History and Background of Development

3.1 The existing property is a detached two storey house located off Watery Lane located between the villages of Blakedown and Belbroughton. As can be appreciated in the aerial photograph below, the site is located between neighbouring properties to the north and south, albeit enjoys a private separate access and grounds. Further neighbouring properties are located to the east and west, together with open agricultural fields.



3.2 The proposals seek permission for a single storey detached outbuilding, consisting of a low dual-pitched timber clad building to provide a suitable home office and gym area, together with a double car port and garden store for use in association with the main house. The proposed outbuilding would replace the existing outbuilding, located in the south-east corner of the associated curtilage.

3.3 The main house is a grade II listed building, but not located within the Broome Conservation Area. The site is also washed over by the Green Belt.

## 4.0 Policy Background

4.1 The development plan consists of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan.

4.2 In this case, the proposed outbuilding seeks to provide suitable home working and home gym area to create a more useable and flexible family home, as well as secure undercover parking for vehicles and secure storage for garden implements. Given the nature and listing of the main house, it is not possible to provide such facilities within the main building. The proposed outbuilding is clearly subservient to the main house and domestic in scale; and would utilise external materials typical of such a domestic outbuilding. The proposed domestic scale ancillary residential proposal is acceptable in principle in this semi-rural location.

4.3 Policies SP.20 and DM.24 seeks to secure high design quality in new development. The proposed outbuilding would form a 'L' shape and consist of timber framed and clad low-level dual-pitched domestic outbuilding. The proposals have been specifically designed to reflect a high-quality ancillary domestic outbuilding that respects the setting of the listed building and surrounding natural and built environment.

4.4 The proposed outbuilding is to adopt a typical converted stable or out-house appearance, using a locally sourced oak frame. This would be typical of the out-houses the farm would have previously featured. The proposed outbuilding is to utilise all original clay tiles for the roof to match the existing house; with original oak to be used to match beam effect of house. The waney edge timber on the outside seeks to create a 'stable effect', with windows and doors to be oak made to match the existing house windows and painted in same Farrow and Ball Drop cloth colour to match existing. The proposed gravel driveway in front of the carport would match the existing drive.

4.5 The proposed outbuilding has been specifically designed and sited to minimise visual impact on the main house, but at the same time ensure that it is within suitable proximity to the house to ensure ancillary use. Whilst the proposed outbuilding could have been sited further from the house within the site, for example in the south-west corner of the plot, it would have created an impractical domestic outbuilding; would require larger expanse of driveway; reasonably have a greater visual impact on the listed building and greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt. The proposals seek to strike the balance between practical proximity to the main house, whilst ensuring that the outbuilding does not compete with, or detract from the significance and setting of the listed building.

4.6 Such domestic outbuildings are not untypical of the local area, and are becoming increasingly popular in order to provide suitable home-working environments. The need for such has increase exponentially over recent years given the various 'lock-downs' and 'work from home advice' issued by the Government during the COVID pandemic. The proposals would specifically provide a suitable home working area for the applicants, as well as an area for some gym equipment, promoting health and well-being. Furthermore, the proposed outbuilding, that replaces the existing shed/summerhouse, also seeks to provide suitable secure undercover parking for vehicles and secure store for garden maintenance equipment.

4.7 The proposed outbuilding seeks to provide a commensurately sized domestic outbuilding for ancillary domestic purposes in association with the main house. The proposed development would

help support the local economy through the creation of construction jobs, likely for a local building firm using local suppliers given the scale of the works, and creating an attractive flexible family home for the applicants and future occupiers.

4.8 Policy DM.25 is concerned with the design of extensions and alterations. Whilst this is not strictly relevant to these proposals, the proposed development would fully comply with the criteria of this policy.

4.9 Paragraph 3.53 of the Design Guide SPD confirms that *“outbuildings should not unduly diminish the amenity space around the property and should not prejudice the outlook from neighbouring properties.”* The proposed domestic outbuilding would be sited to the side of the main house in the south-east corner of the plot, in a discrete position that does not seek to compete with the visual character and dominance of the main house. The main amenity space serving the property would remain unaffected. The proposed outbuilding is commensurate in size and scale to the main house. The outbuilding is single storey only in nature, incorporating a low dual-pitch roof. The outbuilding would be obscured from views from outside of the site by the existing boundary landscaping and retaining wall.

4.10 The proposals would fully comply with Policy SP.20 and Policy DM.24 of the local plan, as well as the Design Guide SPD. The proposed outbuilding would not have any discernible impact on the amenity of any neighbouring properties, given the nature, scale and position of such.

#### Green Belt

4.11 Paragraph 149 of the NPPF confirms the types of development that are considered appropriate in the Green Belt, which includes the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building the replacement of a building provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces.

4.12 One of the other stated ‘circumstances’ that represent appropriate forms of development in the Green Belt as set out in paragraph 149 of the NPPF is *‘limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development.’* Given the location of the property, it would constitute previously developed land in accordance with the definition within the NPPF. The proposals involve the removal of the existing shed / summerhouse at the property. The proposals would not have a greater impact on the visual openness of the Green Belt than the existing development, and as such would reasonably constitute an appropriate form of development in the Green Belt in accordance with paragraph 149 of the NPPF.

4.13 Paragraph 138 of the NPPF confirms the five purposes the Green Belt serves:

- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

4.14 Notably the proposals do not conflict with any of the five purposes. The most relevant purpose to these proposals – safeguarding the countryside from encroachment – is adhered to. The proposals do not seek to encroach on to the surrounding agricultural land, outside of the established and well defined garden land associated with the property.

4.15 In the Turner v SSCLG [2016] EWCA Civ 466 judgement, the Judge found that the concept of openness in the Green Belt is not narrowly limited to the volumetric approach and visual impact is also a factor. In this case, there is no detrimental visual impact on the openness of the Green Belt. The proposed single storey replacement outbuilding would be visually contained within the site and not visible from outside or from public views, given the established boundary / retaining walls and landscaping around the perimeter of the site.

4.16 Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 64-001-20190722 of the Planning Practice Guidance has been updated to reflect relevant judgements, and confirms that assessing the impact of a proposal on the openness of the Green Belt, where it is relevant to do so, requires a judgment based on the circumstances of the case. By way of example, the courts have identified a number of matters which may need to be taken into account in making this assessment. These include, but are not limited to:

- openness is capable of having both spatial and visual aspects – in other words, the visual impact of the proposal may be relevant, as could its volume;
- the duration of the development, and its remediability – taking into account any provisions to return land to its original state or to an equivalent (or improved) state of openness; and
- the degree of activity likely to be generated, such as traffic generation.

4.17 With regards to the above matters, the proposed replacement outbuilding would not be visible from outside of the site, or extend the domestic use or curtilage of the residential plot. The proposed outbuilding would represent a high-quality design and represent a suitable ancillary outbuilding that harmonises with the character and appearance of the main house. The proposals would not generate any increase in activity to and from the site.

4.18 Notwithstanding the above, there are also a number of material considerations that would demonstrate very special circumstances as set out below:

- Noted that under application 12/0096/FULL a much larger domestic outbuilding associated with the property was approved as a swimming pool and enclosure, which was on balance considered acceptable in the Green Belt given what is reasonably permitted development, notwithstanding that this is a listed building and there was no permitted development fall-back position.

- Necessity to have a carport to provide secure undercover parking for vehicles as there is no longer a garage serving the site due to the fact that this had to change usage as not in-keeping with house to have a 1970's style electric door. All parties agreed to this change. This modern addition garage extension to the original house approved for conversion to habitable accommodation under application 23/0343/HOU.

- Electric cars need to have charging area hidden from view of the main house, so the proposals enable the provision of a electric charging points within the proposed car port area, in order to encourage more environmentally friendly forms of travel.
- Carport to be left open to minimise visual impact on openness, and retain the existing established landscaping that visually screens the site
- The proposed outbuilding would not be seen by anyone, as screened by the existing boundary treatments and established landscaping, so not visible from outside of the site.
- The proposals would enable vehicles to safely turn on site and leave in a forward gear. Currently the driveway is too small for a large family house, and necessitates vehicles having to reverse out of the narrow driveway onto Watery Lane. The proposals would therefore result in highway safety improvement.
- The applicant's mother is disabled and when visiting needs to park at front of house to enable ease of movement inside, which is not possible currently with the family cars parked on the driveway.
- Notably a neighbour built a carport next door only 1 metre from this house, which was constructed without planning permission and subsequently permitted at appeal.
- Neighbouring property also has planning permission granted to covert stable/store in full view of this listed house, whereas the proposals would be visually discrete and unobtrusive to the main house.
- There is no area within the house suitable for home office. Applicant runs a global recruitment business and works USA hours, necessitating to be based away from house so as not to disturb young children as often working until at least midnight.
- Footprint of the proposed outbuilding is relatively small as carefully designed to replace rotten foliage area which is poorly kept and replacing existing shed / summerhouse which is in situ
- Following discussions with others in the area and Parish Council, the original application submission was withdrawn and the proposed outbuilding dramatically scaled back and reduced in size and scale taking into account the impact on others. The height has been reduced by 60% and associated reduction in the front print to only cover what is required as minimal once the shed / summer house is replaced.
- There is a need to provide suitable secure, covered and visually discrete parking for applicant's cars, which would otherwise be visible from Watery Lane if parked on the driveway.
- Proposals have no physical change to the existing driveway opening or appearance

4.19 In light of the above, the proposals would overall represent an appropriate form of development and would not harm the openness of the Green Belt.

## 5.0 Access and Highways

- 5.1 The proposed development would not necessitate the alteration of the existing site access and off-road parking areas, or result in any increase in vehicular traffic to and from the property.
- 5.2 The existing parking and turning facilities associated with the property would be retained as part of the proposed development. However, the proposals seek to provide betterment to highway safety, by enabling vehicles to turn on site and leave in a forward gear, which currently they are unable to do and are forced to reverse down the driveway onto the public highway.
- 5.3 The provision of the proposed development would not have an adverse impact upon the surrounding highway network; generate significant levels of vehicular movement; or result in any harm to highway safety.

## 6.0 Landscape and Biodiversity

- 6.1 The proposed single storey detached outbuilding would have no impact on any existing landscape feature, or indeed the landscape character of the surrounding area. The established existing trees and hedgerows at the property would remain. The lightweight nature of the proposed outbuilding would ensure that there is no harm to the root system of the trees along the western boundary of the site, in accordance with Policy SP.22.
- 6.2 The proposals have been subject to a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, submitted as part of this application. This confirms that the majority of the site for the proposed replacement outbuilding is of low ecological value consisting of improved grassland. The recommendations of the appraisal are to be adhered to throughout the development, to ensure suitable biodiversity net gain in accordance with Policy SP.23.

## 7.0 Water Management Statement

- 7.1 The site is not located in any designated high or medium flood risk zone as set out in the EA Flood Maps. The proposed outbuilding would not result in any significant increase in the amount of impermeable surfaces on the site, and as such, there would be only minimal increase in surface water run-off. The property has an established drainage system for both surface water and foul water. The proposed outbuilding would include the use of a water butt to collect surface water run-off, for reuse in the garden area, with overflow to an on-site soakaway, in accordance with Policy SP.32.

## 8.0 Heritage Statement

- 8.1 Top Farmhouse is a grade II listed building which was first listed on 18<sup>th</sup> March 1987.
- 8.2 The list description for the property is as follows:

*BROOME CP YIELDINGTREE SO 87 NE 7/12 Top Farmhouse - II Farmhouse. Mid-C18 with some late C20 alterations. Brick with tile roof, gable-end stacks. Two storeys, brick coped verges, stepped brick cornice. Five windows: 2-light casements under segmental heads. Central entrance has flat canopy*

*on scroll brackets, door of six raised-and-fielded panels, upper two glazed.*

*Listing NGR: SO8996977551*

8.3 The proposed outbuilding incorporates a low duo-pitched roof, and incorporates a timber frame and clad finishes. The proposed outbuilding has been specifically designed to be 'low-key' so as not to visually compete with or detract from the main listed house.

8.4 As discussed above, the proposed siting for the outbuilding has been chosen in order to have as minimal visual impact, and conversely impact on the setting of the listed building, as possible. The proposed location is to the south-east of the house, adjacent the established perimeter landscaped boundary, which would help screen the proposed outbuilding. As can be seen from the photograph below, the proposed site for the outbuilding is considered to have the minimum visual impact, whilst maintaining suitable proximity to the main house as ancillary outbuilding.



*View from Watery Lane, main house visible, site for replacement outbuilding entirely screened from view*

8.5 The proposed siting for the outbuilding is considered the most practical and visually inconspicuous. The proposed outbuilding would be screened by existing landscaping, and would not be highly visible from outside of the site. The proposed outbuilding has been specifically designed and sited so as to appear wholly commensurate in scale and ancillary to the main house, whilst not seeking to visually compete with the listed house.

8.6 Policy SP.21 and Policy DM.23 of the Local Plan seeks to ensure that development does not harm the significance of heritage assets. The proposed development has been carefully designed to ensure that the character and significance of the listed building is retained, in accordance with both national and local policy.



8.7 Given the distance to the Broome Conservation Area (to the north), and the nearest neighbouring listed building (to the east), the proposals would not reasonably have any impact on the setting of these existing local heritage assets.

## **9.0 Conclusion**

9.1 The proposals seek permission for the construction of a single storey ancillary outbuilding to the existing residential property Top Farm. The proposals seek to create a flexible, forever family home.

9.2 The proposed outbuilding has been sympathetically designed to harmonise with the character and appearance of the existing property, whilst remaining a subservient feature to the main house and retaining the significance of the listed building. The proposals have no detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties, highway safety, landscape character, ecology, or site drainage. The proposals are reasonably considered to constitute an appropriate form of development in the Green Belt.

9.3 The proposed development fully complies with the relevant policy criteria of the Local Plan and Supplementary Guidance.