

PLANNING STATEMENT
CONVERSION OF A REDUNDANT BARN TO A TWO BEDROOM DWELLING

AT

HOLCOMBE GRANARY

Holcombe Lane, Uplyme, Lyme Regis, DT7 3SN

Prepared for

Mr and Mrs Denning

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CONVERSION OF A REDUNDANT BARN TO A TWO BEDROOM DWELLING

PLANNING STATEMENT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared by Stags on behalf of Mr and Mrs Denning. The statement relates to a redundant barn at Holcombe Granary, Holcombe Lane, Uplyme and has been prepared to support an application for the conversion of this redundant barn to a two-bedroom dwelling. The re-submitted application revises the car parking and surface water attenuation location and sets out additional site landscaping. There is no change to the dwelling proposed.
- 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 redundant barn is situated circa 30 metres south of Holcombe Granary, which was formerly a part of Higher Holcombe Farm until the early 2000's. More broadly the location is circa 600 metres north of Cannington Viaduct and the same distance west of the edge of Uplyme.
- 1.4 This application is concerned with the conversion of this redundant barn to a two-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 Holcombe Granary was formerly a part of Higher Holcombe Farm, the entirety of which was farmed by the Denning family up until the early 2000's. In 2001, Mr and Mrs Denning obtained planning permission for the conversion of a traditional barn to a dwelling (this dwelling is now known as 'Holcombe Granary') and the construction of a new access point. Higher Holcombe Farmhouse, the large agricultural building to the southwest and a portion of the land were subsequently sold, with Mr and Mrs Denning moving to the newly converted Holcombe Granary.
- 2.2 The entrance to Holcombe Granary is just 350 meters south west of the settlement boundary for Uplyme. While the site is located within the East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), it is not subject to any other statutory designations.
- 2.3 In 2006, planning permission was obtained for the erection of an agricultural machinery store/shed (planning reference: 06/0231/FUL) south of Holcombe Granary and adjacent to the former silage pit. It is this building that is subject of this application.
- 2.4 Having been constructed 17 years ago, the building is of modern steel framed construction and measures circa 82 square metres in size. Its walls are variously stone and timber clad and the apex roof is of fibre cement construction with solar panels added to the southern pitch. The building has the benefit of an existing access which spurs from the relatively new access to Holcombe Granary. To the north of the building are landscaped gardens and to the south/east is a yard area (former silage pit) that is generally used for the storage of machinery. A schedule of photographs accompanies this submission. These provide a further impression of the building's construction and suitability for conversion.
- 2.5 Since its construction, the building has generally been used for the storage of agricultural machinery associated with the maintenance of the large amount of land retained by Mr and Mrs Denning, however, with the vast majority of this land now let out to neighbouring farmers, meaning that the barn is now redundant.
- 2.6 Uplyme is a large village and civil parish located approximately 1 mile from the coast, immediately north west of Lyme Regis. The total population is estimated to be circa.1700. The village has an excellent range of services and facilities including a public house, the

Talbot Arms; a village shop; a primary school; a church, a village hall (including adjacent cricket, tennis and croquet facilities) and a caravan and camping park.

- 2.7 The Local Planning Authority is East Devon District Council and the site is within the Uplyme Parish Council area boundary.

3.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The proposal seeks consent for the change of use of the site from an agricultural use to a residential (C3) use.
- 3.2 In order to facilitate the proposed change of use, it is proposed that the redundant barn will be converted to a two-bedroom dwellinghouse. The accompanying plans confirm that all habitable space will meet required standards. The accompanying plans further confirm that all habitable space will receive adequate provision of natural light.
- 3.3 The following external materials are proposed:
- Natural stone (to retain)
 - Vertical timber cladding (to retain)
 - Corrugated sheet roofing (to retain)
 - 1 no. solar array, consisting of 8no. panels (to retain)
 - Installation of glass panelling and grey windows to allow natural light
- 3.4 It is proposed that foul drainage shall be dealt with by way of a package treatment plant, positioned as indicated on the accompanying drawings.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 In 2006, planning permission was obtained for the erection of an agricultural machinery store/shed (planning reference: 06/0231/FUL) south of Holcombe Granary and adjacent to the former silage pit. It is this building that is subject of this application.

- 4.2 The Council provided pre-application feedback in respect of this site in September 2023 (23/0080/PREAPP) and the comments and observations made have been considered as part of the evolution of the design. This pre-application advice confirmed the acceptability of the proposed development in principle.

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 and the Uplyme Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2031. With regards to Planning Policy the Development Plan states as follows:

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 **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)

5.5.4 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...

5.5.5 **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)

5.5.6 Other policies of relevance include: **EN5: Wildlife Habitats and Features; 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**

5.6 **Uplyme Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2031**

5.6.1 The Uplyme Neighbourhood Plan (2017-2031) contains a number of policies relevant to this proposal.

5.6.2 **Policy UHG5 – Rural building conversions for residential use** states that:

Planning applications for conversions of suitable redundant farm and other buildings outside the built-up area boundary will be approved for residential use, providing that:

- the proposals are consistent with protecting the character and landscape quality of the East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- the buildings are not in an isolated location where there is no nearby built development, and are capable of conversion rather than requiring rebuilding or disproportionate extension
- the design approach is appropriate and sympathetic to the building, surroundings and wider context
- traffic, access, landscaping and general amenity considerations are satisfied.

6.0 MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

6.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework was most recently revised in December 2023 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 84** 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 124** 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)

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 900 metres west of the village centre including the Talbot Inn, the Village Hall, Primary School and church. As such, Uplyme 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 regular bus service providing access to Axminster, and Lyme Regis.

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. The plans confirm that other than the intervention necessary to permit the building to function as a dwellinghouse, i.e. the installation of windows, no

external interventions are proposed as part of the scheme. Therefore, the proposed scheme will be 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 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 two-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.*

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 900 metres west of the village centre and the services and facilities mentioned above.

- 7.1.4 Within the Officers Report relating to 22/1909/FUL, the Council notes that *"in an appeal decision at Greenhayes, Shute in relation to applications 22/0041/FUL and 21/2137/FUL the inspector concluded that Policy D8 is out of date as criteria c) requires that "Development is located close to a range of accessible services and facilities to meet the everyday needs of residents". Paragraph 80 of the NPPF on the other hand allows the reuse of redundant or disused buildings where this would enhance its immediate setting and does not apply a criteria in relation to accessibility of services and facilities. Although the Council has successfully defended numerous appeal decisions prior to this where Policy D8 has been applied in full by the inspectorate this decision is considered to be material to this application particularly given the added weight to the argument that D8 is out of date as a result of the Council not currently having a 5 year housing land supply. Within this decision the inspector's interpretation in terms of the required enhancement of the immediate setting as required under para. 80 was considered to be minimal as the building in question was in good condition and needed little work doing to it to facilitate the conversion which is the case with the building which is the subject of this application where the conversion would lead to the enhancement of the immediate setting. A further appeal on application 21/2474/FUL at Goldcombe Farmhouse, Gittisham is also relevant to this application where a holiday let was being changed to an unrestricted dwelling. This site is between Honiton and Gittisham and despite being difficult walking or cycling into Honiton the Inspector concluded that because it was only a 5 minute drive it was acceptable in terms of its access to services and facilities. On the basis of these appeal decisions, it is considered that policy D8 is out of conformity with the NPPF in relation to the requirement to be close to services and facilities. As such, having regard for the fact that the site is located on the edge of Talaton which itself has a community shop, a public house, a village hall and a church coupled with its proximity and driving distance to Whimble which has a train station, a primary school, public house, church and village shop, it isn't considered that an objection can be sustained to this conversion on the basis that it is remote from services and facilities. The facilities available within Talaton would be accessible on foot and wider facilities in adjoining villages would be a short drive away such that it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in sustainability terms."*
- 7.1.6 Overall, it is 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 a redundant 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 subject to the inclusion of the proposed mitigation in relation to bats and nesting birds, 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 an 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.

7.3.3 Proposed landscaping is set out on the block plan and submitted landscaping scheme. This should avoid the need for a condition requiring a landscaping scheme to be submitted.

7.4 Impact on amenity of adjoining properties and future occupiers

7.4.1 Residential uses occur a distance to the north of the site. The design has therefore evolved to ensure that the amenity of existing properties will be preserved and that minimal window space will occur along this elevation. This design will also 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 via the existing private driveway from Cannington Lane which is immediately adjacent to the east 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 24 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 lane in this location is straight and speeds are limited due to its rural nature. The existing access has 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 additional residential dwelling.

7.5.3 The proposed development of a single 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 in proximity to the centre of Uplyme, 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.