

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

PROPOSED AGRICULTURAL WORKERS DWELLING

AT

GRITT FARM, BODENHAM, HEREFORD

Architectural Design Ltd

April 2014

1. Assessment of the Design Criteria

1.1 Use

The site is located on agricultural land currently in arable production.

1.2 Amount

The proposal is for a 3 bedroom detached dwelling, together with garage and packaged treatment plant/reed bed drainage system.

1.3 Layout

The site has been chosen so that the proposed dwelling is immediately adjacent to the existing pig unit, allowing easy access on foot at all times.

The proposed dwelling has been positioned with the principal elevation facing south towards the unclassified road. The garage is located to the west, with a parking/turning area in front of the dwelling. A new vehicular access has been positioned to achieve maximum visibility in both directions, to meet Highway Authority requirements. The treatment plant has been sited at the rear of the house to allow sufficient gradient for the drainage runs. Outfall from the treatment plant will be to a reed bed and drainage field type ground soakaway system, the area of which has been determined by percolation tests.

1.4 Scale

The proposed dwelling has been designed along the lines of a modest cottage, using natural materials and traditional details

External dimensions are as follows:

Total internal floor area – 120 sq. m

Eaves height – 4.1m and 4.9m

Ridge height – 7.6m

1.5 Landscaping

General

All existing boundary hedges will be retained and additional trees and hedges will be planted within the site, using native species appropriate to the area.

Soft Landscaping

All new trees and hedgerows will be of mixed native species as specified on drawing no. 879/02.

Hard Landscaping

The access drive, parking and turning area will be surfaced with gravel and edged with treated softwood boards. The area between the access gate and highway will be tarmaced

A new post and wire stock-proof fence will be erected around the site and alongside the new drive.

1.6 Appearance

The proposed dwelling will be constructed in traditional materials, with a front elevation of locally quarried stone and all other elevations rendered.

Painted timber windows with flush casements will be set back from the face of the wall a minimum of 50mm with reconstructed stone sub-sills.

The roof will be covered in clay plain tiles with half-round clay ridge tiles.

Traditional details including exposed rafter feet, extended wallplates and barge rafters will be used, together with half-round rainwater gutters and circular downpipes.

1.7 Access

A new vehicular access formed with visibility splays in accordance with Highway Authority requirements.

A turning area will be provided within the site, together with parking for a minimum of three vehicles.

Level access will be provided to the principal entrance door in accordance with the Building Regulations, Approved Document M.

2 **Planning Policy**

2.1 Planning policy aspects of this application are divided into two parts:

1. Dealing primarily with National Planning Policy Guidance.
2. Dealing with Local Planning Policy Guidance.

2.2 National Planning Policy Guidance

Within the NPPF paragraph 7 sets out three dimensions for achieving sustainable development to include economic, social and environmental.

1. Economic – improving the profitability and economic sustainability of the farm, while addressing health and safety and livestock welfare issues, will help support the current generation and future generations.
2. Social – the requirement of farms is that those who work and operate them have to be available 24 hours a day for 12 months of the year to meet the welfare and care requirements of livestock on the farm. The only way in which those requirements can be sustainably met is for those persons responsible for the livestock to be based on the farm, allowing them to be able to reasonably mix family requirements and good livestock management practices.
3. Environmental – the environmental aspect of this application would be the reduced commuting and travel times of those working on the farm. The increasing cost of travel makes a dwelling based on the farm a more environmentally sustainable solution to the material considerations required to be taken into account when considering this application.

These three components for sustainable development need to be considered together, as they are mutually dependent. Improved economic growth can improve higher social and environmental standards to improve the lives of people

working on the farm, together with care of livestock and farm environment. This makes it easier, as set out in paragraph 9 of the NPPF, to improve conditions in which people live, work and travel.

The NPPF requires that development should be approved in accordance with an up to date Local Plan and that material consideration should be taken into account where there is any perceived conflict with the Local Plan. If there are any elements of the application that are outside the policies of the Local Plan these should be taken into account when approving such applications.

Section 3 of the NPPF "Supporting a Prosperous Rural Economy" states that the planning policies and therefore decisions should support economic growth within rural areas in order to create new jobs and prosperity, by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development. This should include:

- The sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprises in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well designed new buildings.
- The development and diversification of agricultural and other land based rural businesses.

Section 6 of the NPPF "Delivering a Wide Choice of High Quality Homes". Paragraph 55 sets out the need to promote sustainable development within rural areas. In particular, that housing should be located where it will enhance and maintain the vitality of rural communities and that the planning authority should avoid isolated new homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances such as:

- The essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside.

A house located at Gritt Farm would fulfill the criteria of sustainable development for economic, social and environmental reasons and enhance and maintain the vitality of the rural community in the surrounding area.

2.3 Local Planning Policy Guidance

Policies within the Herefordshire Council Unitary Development Plan that are applicable to this application include:-

- Policy S1
- Policy DR1
- Policy ER2
- Policy H6
- Policy H7
- Policy H8
- Policy H13
- Policy LA2

Policy S1

As you will see components within Policy S1 “Sustainable Development” are particularly relevant to this application being: -

7. Directing necessary new development to location, settlements and sites that best need the appropriate sustainable development criteria.
10. Seeking more equitable access for all sectors of community to opportunities for homes and livelihoods, natural and historic resources, health, recreation, amenity, education, facilities and services.
11. Supporting sustainable economic activity and high and stable levels of employment.
12. Supporting more sustainable approaches to land use and land management in rural areas.
13. Reducing the need to travel, securing safe and convenient and accessibility between different land uses and maintaining, improving and integrating opportunities to move safely and conveniently by personal modes of transport.
15. Avoiding or minimising adverse impacts of human activities and land uses and development of the physical environment.

Policy DR1

Careful account has been taken in relation to the character and appearance locality in terms of the layout, density, means and access and a closure scale, mass, height and design of the proposed house. The proposed house is of good quality design in keeping with its surroundings.

Policy ER2 – Land Use and Activity

The proposal is closely linked between the resident's occupation and work and meets the objectives of sustainability in so far as being close to where they work as they relate to transportation and other sustainability criteria.

Policy H6

As set out within the UDP, the policy recognises the need for small scale housing growth in wider rural areas to satisfy local housing needs, of which this application fulfills that criteria. The proposed houses fulfill the criteria and precedence set within the County for such houses.

Policy H7

Policy H7 states that proposals for housing development outside of specific settlements are not permitted unless "the development is clearly necessary in connection with agriculture or forestry and cannot be located in the settlement and complies with Policy H8. The proposed development meets the specific provisions that are essential for the operation of rural activities and must be located in the countryside rather than within a village.

Policy H8

Policy H8 requires that agricultural dwellings are only to be permitted where it can be demonstrated that a long term genuine need exists for the dwelling as an essential part of a financially viable business and that such need cannot be met in existing accommodation.

Policy H13 – Sustainable Residential Design

The proposed house will be built using modern design and construction techniques to ensure that it is as energy efficient as possible in a design that is cohesive with the adjoining property and where possible for design features to make it compatible with the sentiments within the policy.

Policy LA2

The choice of position for the proposed dwelling has partially been determined by the need to minimise its impact within the surrounding landscape. There is going to be an appropriate soft landscaping scheme around the house that will eventually mean the property merges into the surrounding landscape with minimal visual impact.

2.4 Planning Obligations

This application is being submitted without a Section 106 Agreement on the understanding that any permission would be subject to a condition requiring commencement within 1 year of approval being granted.

2.5 Section 106 Agreement

The applicants are prepared to consider a Section 106 Agreement tying the occupation of the house and land together. The applicants and their Agents on their behalf are prepared to discuss the details with the Planning Authority at the appropriate time.