

PLANNING CONSULTANCY



Planning and Design and Access Statement

Change of Use of Former Agricultural Building Currently Used as A Private Aircraft Hangar to One Residential Unit

**Tredunnock Farm
Llangarron
Ross on Wye
HR9 6PG**

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1.0 The Proposal

1.1 This application, which has been submitted following detailed discussions with the Planning Officer through a Pre Application Inquiry, seeks planning permission for a change of use of a former agricultural building to a single dwelling. Details of the proposed elevations and layout are attached for information. This building was initially subject to an application under Part MB of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment and Consequential Provisions) (England) Order 2014. This application was refused on two grounds:

"1. The Local Planning Authority are not satisfied that this Prior Approval submission relates to an agricultural building, and certainly not a building used **solely** for agricultural purposes, and as such the proposal cannot represent permitted development under Class MB of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment and Consequential Provisions) (England) Order 2014.

2. In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority the change of use of this building would be undesirable as it would conflict with the core planning principles in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 17) and would represent an unsustainable form of isolated development in the countryside in an unsustainable location contrary to paragraph 55 of the National Planning Policy Framework. As a consequence, the proposed development would not accord with all relevant provisos contained within paragraphs MB.2 and N of Part 3 of the GPDO."

1.2 The applicant has lived and worked in the village for over 20 years and now wishes to reuse his existing building to create a contemporary 3 bedroomed dwelling built to high sustainability levels on a single level to meet his lifetime needs.

1.3 In policy terms following the adoption of the Herefordshire Core Strategy, Llangarron village has been identified as a sustainable village suitable for limited residential development. In sustainability terms, Tredunnock Farm is located on a well used main public highway some short distance from the village centre and certainly within 5 minutes walking distance. Llangarron village is a well established village and supports a village hall, a church and recently constructed community centre which is used for social occasions, various regular functions, community meetings regular coffee morning and other benefits such as extra curricular educational activities. The consultation responses for the Llangarron Parish Neighbourhood plan which is at its draft stage clearly recognises the importance of the community facilities in the village. There is a bus service through the village, albeit limited, the bus stop being a mere 5 minutes' walk away and the local village school bus picks up and drops off outside the entrance drive. The high school bus picks up and drop off again is within 3 minutes walking distance. This is a key issue in demonstrating sustainability in any rural location.

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The village of Llangrove with its pub, church and village hall lies within 3 minutes drive away and Whitchurch with its shop 8 minutes away with the local shop and post office at St Weonards only 4 miles away. With regards to employment there are various businesses with the village and it should be noted that within the adjacent barn complex itself 90% of the occupants work from home. Indeed, these adjacent barns were previously used for employment purposes employing up to 150 people. One of the key characteristics of the village is that there are a high proportion of people working from home and effectively creating a sustainable working environment, again promoted by the NPPF.

1.4 There is existing electricity, water and sewerage adequate to serve the proposed dwelling, no new services are required and as part of the Fastershire project the applicant has recently given BT a way leave to install fibre in the centre of the complex within 50 meters of the barn to serve all dwellings in the complex. This will further facilitate the ability to work from home

1.5 This barn is not isolated. The submitted site plan and attached aerial photograph clearly demonstrates the juxtaposition of this building with the 9 adjacent residential properties which lie within 50m to 100m of the agricultural building and are viewed against this back drop.

1.6 In design terms the proposal is to utilise the existing steel frame building to generate a 3 bedroomed dwelling with double garage which can also be used for the storage of the applicant's aircraft when it is not being stored at the airfield in Gloucester. Given the size of the building there will be no need for additional storage buildings as ample room is provided within the building for storage. There is already an existing hard surfaced area and oil tank outside the building and a link to a septic tank. The materials have been carefully chosen to provide an attractive contemporary design and lift the appearance of a rather bland functional building.

1.7 In sustainability terms, the proposal is to include a high level of sustainable features which the building lends itself to, including, solar panels, ground source heat pump, high levels of insulation and glazing over and above normal standards.

2.0 Planning Policy

National

2.1 The starting point for planning policy is set out the National Planning Policy Framework which has the presumption in favour of sustainable development running through as the main thread but reiterates that Local Authorities should determine planning applications in accordance with the statutory development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The current development plan is the recently adopted Core Strategy Herefordshire Local Plan 2011 to 2031.

2.2 The Government published the National Planning Policy Framework in March 2012 to set out the principles for determining planning applications and plan making.

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At the heart of this document is a **presumption in favour of sustainable development**, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking. The Government recognises that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These roles should not be undertaken in isolation, because they are mutually dependent. Economic growth can secure higher social and environmental standards, and well-designed buildings and places can improve the lives of people and communities. Therefore, to achieve sustainable development, economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system. The planning system should play an active role in guiding development to sustainable solutions. Pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life.

2.3 Para 47 requires that Local Authorities identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years' worth of housing against their housing requirements with an additional buffer of 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. Where there has been a record of persistent under delivery of housing, local planning authorities should increase the buffer to 20% to provide a realistic prospect of achieving the planned supply and to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites.

2.4 Following the adoption of their Local Plan, Herefordshire Council maintain that they can now demonstrate a 5 year supply of land, although a very recent appeal decision has indicated that there is currently a small shortfall. In addition, sites for development in the Rural Areas have yet to be identified.

2.5 The National Planning Policy Framework requires that the planning system should play an active role in guiding development to sustainable solutions and states that pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life, including widening the choice of high quality homes. It sets out 12 core principles including the requirement of the Local Authority to always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings and to take account of the different roles and character of different areas, by promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting the Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it.

2.6 It states further that in order to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. For example, where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby. Local planning authorities should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances such as the exceptional quality or innovative nature of the design of the dwelling. ***Such a design should amongst other things help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas, reflect the highest standards in architecture; significantly***

enhance its immediate setting; and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.

2.7 The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people. The NPPF requires that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development; respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation;
- create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion; and
- are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.

2.8 The NPPF requires that Local planning authorities should look for solutions rather than problems, and decision-takers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible. Local planning authorities should work proactively with applicants to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.

2.9 Furthermore it requires planning policies to support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development.

Local

2.10 The adopted Core Strategy for Herefordshire proposes that approximately 5,300 houses should be developed across all rural Housing Market Areas during the plan period. The Councils SHLAA indicates that there is potential for this level of development in Herefordshire's rural villages. The primary focus for this housing will be in the villages which are the most suitable and sustainable to accommodate such new development.

2.11 Llangarron is identified as a village which is suitable for limited residential development, the scale of which should be suitable to the scale of the village. For example the parish of Llangarron is expected to accommodate a minimum of 14% growth in housing numbers up to the year 2031. Policy RA1 states that development should ideally be located within or adjacent to the main built up area(s) of the settlement. This will ensure that unnecessary isolated, non-characteristic and discordant dwellings do not arise which would adversely affect the character and setting of a settlement and its local environment. New housing will be expected to contribute to the housing needs of the area by providing an appropriate mix of dwelling types to reflect the lifelong housing needs of the community.

Policy RA1

In Herefordshire's rural areas a minimum of 5,300 new dwellings will be provided between 2011 and 2031 to contribute to the county's housing needs. The development

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of rural housing will contribute towards the wider regeneration of the rural economy. New dwellings will be broadly distributed across the county's rural areas on the basis of seven Housing Markets Areas (HMA) and as illustrated in Figure 4.13 This acknowledges that different areas of Herefordshire have different housing needs and requirements. The 5,300 dwellings will be delivered throughout the rural HMAs as set out in the table below. The indicative housing growth targets in each of the rural HMAs will be used as a basis for the production of neighbourhood development plans in the county. Local evidence and environmental factors will determine the appropriate scale of development.

2.12 In effect this policy puts the focus for new development on the development of Neighbourhood Plans. In February 2015, there were 88 designated neighbourhood areas in the county. These plans will be the principal mechanism by which new rural housing will be allocated. The proportional growth target within policy RA1 will provide the basis for the minimum level of new housing that will be accommodated in each neighbourhood development plan. The target represents a level of growth for parishes, as a percentage, that is proportionate to existing HMA characteristics. The main focus for development will be within or adjacent to existing settlements and the relevant neighbourhood development plan will have appropriate flexibility to apportion the minimum housing requirement between the settlements concerned. This will allow for a locally flexible approach that will respect settlement characteristics, the distribution of local facilities and other local factors. This approach will accord with paragraph 55 of the NPPF which indicates that where there are groups of smaller settlements in rural areas, the development in one location may support services in a location nearby. The adoption of this approach will allow distinctive solutions which reflect the varied geographies in the county. However, where Parish Councils are not producing a Neighbourhood Plan the Local Authority will be required to identify suitable sites through the production of Rural Areas Sites Allocation DPD

2.13 2 Policy RA2 states that housing growth will vary between villages in a proportionate manner and will be permitted where the development proposal is considered appropriate by;

- ensuring the proposal reflects the size, role and function of the village is located within or adjacent to the main body of the village
- giving priority to suitable brownfield sites
- reflecting the character of the village and surrounding environment
- providing an appropriate mix of dwelling types including affordable housing and by demonstrating community support either through a Neighbourhood Plan or undertaking community consultation.

Policy RA2 – Herefordshire's villages

Housing in settlements outside Hereford and the market towns. To maintain and strengthen locally sustainable communities across the rural parts of Herefordshire, sustainable housing growth will be supported in or adjacent to those settlements identified in Figures 4.14 and 4.15. This will enable development that has the ability to bolster existing service provision, improve facilities and infrastructure and meet the needs of the communities concerned. The minimum growth target in each rural Housing Market Area will be used to inform the level of housing development to be delivered in

the various settlements set out in Figures 4.14 and 4.15. Neighbourhood Development Plans will allocate land for new housing or otherwise demonstrate delivery to provide levels of housing to meet the various targets, by indicating levels of suitable and available capacity.

Housing proposals will be permitted where the following criteria are met:

1. Their design and layout should reflect the size, role and function of each settlement and be located within or adjacent to the main built up area. In relation to smaller settlements identified in fig 4.15 proposals will be expected to demonstrate particular attention to the form, layout, character and setting of the site and its location in that settlement and/or they result in development that contributes to or is essential to the social well-being of the settlement concerned;
2. Their locations make best and full use of suitable brownfield sites wherever possible;
3. They result in the development of high quality, sustainable schemes which are appropriate to their context and make a positive contribution to the surrounding environment and its landscape setting; and
4. They result in the delivery of schemes that generate the size, type, tenure and range of housing that is required in particular settlements, reflecting local demand. Specific proposals for the delivery of local need housing will be particularly supported where they meet an identified need and their long-term retention as local needs housing is secured as such.

2.14 Of particular relevance is Policy RA5 Of the adopted Core Strategy which recognises that the re-use of existing rural buildings has an important role to play in promoting economic prosperity and sustainable development in rural areas. Such proposals can result in the creation of local accessible jobs, the provision of premises for business start-ups and/or expansions, improving business networks and supporting farming through diversification schemes. The re-use of buildings can also provide environmental benefits by making use of existing resources

The sustainable re-use of individual and groups of redundant or disused buildings, including farmsteads in rural areas, which contributes to residential development, or is essential to the social well-being of the countryside, will be permitted where:

1. design proposals respect the character and significance of any redundant or disused building and demonstrate that it represents the most viable option for the long term conservation and enhancement of any heritage asset affected, together with its setting;
2. design proposals make adequate provision for protected and priority species and associated habitats;
3. the proposal is compatible with neighbouring uses, including any continued agricultural operations and does not cause undue environmental impacts and;
4. the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction; and
5. the building is capable of accommodating the proposed new use without the need for substantial alteration or extension, ancillary buildings, areas of hard standing or development which individually or taken together would adversely affect the character or appearance of the building or have a detrimental impact on its surroundings and landscape setting

3.0 Design

3.1 The Building in question is an existing steel framed building which was erected in the 1980's and has been used for a mixture of agricultural purposes and for the standing of the applicant's private aircraft. The building is currently clad in a blue/grey profile sheeting with a fibre cement roof and whilst located in close proximity to the existing Tredunnock farm complex is prominent when viewed from sections of the surrounding footpath network and when approaching the site from Kilreague to the north west.

3.2 The building is a typical steel framed building however having been designed to contain silage it is of heavier construction than the standard building designed to house cattle. The primary steelwork is in good condition having been well maintained by cleaning and painting. The secondary steelwork is also in good condition as, like the main frame, it has not been subjected to the elements or to the corrosive effects of a farming atmosphere for some considerable time. The roof cladding is asbestos cement over clad with single skin steel sheeting on a spacer system. The wall cladding is single skin steel on timber sheeting rails. The existing structure is sound and could support the proposed development without any significant additions or modifications providing the intention is to support the new floor and walls with traditional timber and blockwork methodologies. Such works would enhance and strengthen an already perfectly adequate structure

3.3 The building will provide residential accommodation all at one level to provide a three bedroomed dwelling with open plan kitchen/living and dining area with a large outside deck. The floor will be raised to provide a utility room, storage space and plant room at ground floor level with two bays remaining for use as a garage and hangar.

3.4 In design terms the proposal seeks to significantly lift the appearance of the building by using horizontal larch boarding on the walls with large aluminium powder coated triple glazed windows. The roof will be a dark grey profile sheeting which will replace the existing fibre cement roof. This design has been produced after lengthy discussions with the Planning Officer through a Pre application inquiry.

3.5 In terms of sustainability, the nature of the building allows the opportunity to provide extremely high levels of insulation in the floors, walls and ceiling and the windows are to be triple glazed. The applicant proposes the use of a ground source heat pump.

3.6 Externally large areas of hard standing will be removed to create an attractive landscaped area with traditional planting to the west and the reinstatement of a pond to the north east which will also be used to take the surface water drainage. A new porous gravel drive is proposed adjacent to the pond with trees planted along its route. The existing 3m hedge along the northern boundary will be retained.

4.0 Ecology

4.1 A detailed ecology report was carried out in February of this year and concluded that the building due to its nature had little opportunity for supporting bat habitat and the local ponds were highly unlikely to provide a suitable habitat for great crested newts. The report supported the planting of a small traditional orchard with species approved by Natural England and identified on historical maps that there had been evidence of small traditional orchards in the locality. A copy of this report is attached.

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 The application has been produced after much discussion with the Planning Officer and seeks to create an attractive contemporary 3 bedroomed conversion of a modern farm building to high sustainability standards, in a village identified as being suitable for limited residential development. The proposal fully accords with Policy RA5 of the Herefordshire Core Strategy demonstrating that:

1. the design proposals respect the character and significance of any redundant or disused building
2. design proposals make adequate provision for protected and priority species and associated habitats;
3. the proposal is compatible with neighbouring uses, including any continued agricultural operations and does not cause undue environmental impacts and;
4. the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction; and
5. the building is capable of accommodating the proposed new use without the need for substantial alteration or extension, ancillary buildings, areas of hard standing or development which individually or taken together would adversely affect the character or appearance of the building or have a detrimental impact on its surroundings and landscape setting.

5.2 In terms of sustainability the site lies adjacent to 9 existing residential units and is within a few minutes walking distance of the local village hall, community building, church and bus stop. The high school bus to John Kyrle in Ross pick up at the bottom of the road some 3minutes walking distance and the mini bus for the local village school drop off and pick up directly outside the site access.

5.3 The NPPF promotes a presumption in favour of sustainable development and defines sustainability in 3 ways, economic, social and environmental. The proposal meets all three definitions by providing a sustainable barn conversion in a village location in which further housing is required through the adopted Local Plan thus supporting local services. The economic benefits of new development are recognised and are considered to be a material consideration.