



DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Barn conversion to dwelling and proposed stables

at:

Yew Tree Lane
Holmbridge
Holmfirth
HD9 2NR

for:

Mr T. and Mrs W. Yates

job nr:

23041

date:

April 2025

Introduction

This design and access statement has been prepared by **ADP Architecture and Design Ltd** on the instructions of Mr and Mrs Yates and provides information to accompany a planning application for the proposed barn conversion to form single dwelling and new stable buildings at Yew Tree lane, Holmbridge.



The site

The site lies on the outskirts of Holmbridge, to the northeast, and is on land allocated within the Kirklees Local Plan as green belt, see below;



The site location within the green belt

Holmbridge is predominately made up of rows of terraced housing along the main road of Woodhead Road, with multiple larger detached properties, ranging from agricultural farms to domestic dwellings populating the outskirts of the village. The proposed site sits adjacent to a cluster of large cottages, one of which is Grade II Listed.

The site consists of the main stone-built barn located towards the upper, northern corner, with an outshoot to the rear having a catslide roof and providing a link to the old single storey stable block. A single storey, monopitch roof outbuilding abuts the boundary to Yew Tree Lane, the height and form of the building follows the natural slope of the land as it heads up towards Cold Well Lane. The combined footprint of the existing buildings is approximately 201m².

Existing Use

The existing barn currently provides stable accommodation for the applicant's horses which vary in age and size and each with their own requirements. It also provides storage for the equipment and food necessary in their upkeep. The large barn double doors on the northeast elevation provide the only means of access for deliveries and manoeuvrability of the larger pieces of equipment, including hay and straw which is required to be moved frequently. This form of access leads directly onto Yew Tree Lane, with the barn doors opening outwards onto the highway, it is also located at a critical junction to the adjacent road. The existing highway visibility and the frequent use of this access raises safety concerns for the applicant.

Although the existing buildings have been adapted to house them, they do not meet the spatial requirements and welfare conditions as set out by the British Horse Society. There are currently five existing stables, consisting of four 7ft x 13ft and one 10ft x 10ft which are not in accordance with BHS recommendations. Due to limited space, the stable doors currently open inwards which reduces manoeuvrability, whilst doorway widths of 2ft and 3ft are also below the recommended. The existing roof formation and overall height result in an internal height of 6ft with no apex offering additional space. One of the stables is currently accessed through another, which is also not ideal for useability.

Space for general equipment and feed is also limited as the solid stone wall construction cannot be easily altered to utilise or increase useable floor area. The interior spaces of these buildings are not fit for purpose, as stables require an even, non-slip surface that allows for drainage, making these buildings unsuitable for this use without significant cost and expense.

The adjacent yard, with direct access off Yew Tree Lane, currently acts as storage and parking for the applicant's horse boxes and other agricultural equipment used to maintain the surrounding fields and woodland. These types of equipment are seen as high-risk items for theft. The yard is open and visible and provides a limit level of security.

There is currently no provision to allow the clients to live on site, therefore looking after the horses and surrounding land is made increasingly difficult, more so in the winter months when travel to the site is required more often. Currently, the clients visit the yard at least three times a day (summer) and up to four times during winter.

Proposed Use

The proposal is to convert the existing stone barn and attached outbuildings into a single dwelling, which will allow the applicant to live permanently on site and ensure the welfare of the animals and upkeep of the surrounding land is maintained throughout the year.

The new detached stable barn will allow for the relocation of the main stables towards the lower end of the site, accessible from Yew Tree Lane and from the proposed converted barn, providing a more efficient means of animal and land management. The stable barn will also incorporate the necessary storage for equipment, feed and general agricultural machinery for the stewardship of the surrounding land in a single convenient place. The building will provide security for the equipment, which is currently stored outside, in full view from the main road.

Design, Appearance and Layout

The proposed internal layout of the converted barn will consist of three well-proportioned bedrooms, each provided with their own separate en-suite and dressing rooms, reflective of the size of the barn. A large open plan kitchen, dining and lounge will form the main social hub of the barn, with an additional snug and sitting area to offer more private break-out areas. The existing single storey stable block will be retained and converted as part of the proposal and will be utilised to form a new entrance with direct access to a utility and plant store.

The existing lean-to section of the barn, currently surfaced in metal sheet roofing, will be carefully taken down to allow for the construction of a replacement, single storey extension, built to modern standards. By lowering the roof pitch and floor level internally, this will allow the design to be more sympathetic to the main barn and adjacent out-buildings.

The materiality and appearance of the converted barn will stay predominately the same, with the existing openings utilised to retain the barn like aesthetic and character. Various repairs and alterations will need to be made to the existing barn to make it suitable for residential use, the current structural condition is discussed in the accompanying Structural Condition Survey report, provided by Skyhooks Engineering.

In addition to the above, additional measures will be incorporated into the scheme, please see accompanying Preliminary Ecological Appraisal report by JCA Ltd.

The proposed stable barn will be of an agricultural style and appearance that is typical to the surrounding areas of Holmbridge and beyond. This will be achieved with the use of a natural stone base with timber cladding above that will look to reflect and respect the local vernacular of this area. It is noted from the pre-application enquiry response that the stable barn roof should harmonise with the roof of the existing barn and that if a different material is proposed that it should be coloured to match. Due to the intended construction type of the stable barn building, a stone slate roof (to match that on the converted barn) would deter from the characteristics of an agricultural barn of this style and therefore the roof is proposed as profiled metal sheet roofing finished in anthracite grey. There will also be photovoltaic solar panels to the south-east and south-west facing elevations, but these will remain largely unseen from street view.

The stable buildings will be located toward the lower end of the site, making use of the existing access from Yew Tree Lane and to the rest of the surrounding fields for maintenance. The existing topography of the land allows the position of the proposed stable barns to be set down and remain unobtrusive, following the natural gradient of the site.

The arrangement and size of the stable buildings have been reduced following the pre-application advice, rotating one of the buildings 90° and parallel with the adjacent road. This will result in less of a visual mass when viewed from Yew Tree Lane, whilst also ensuring minimum excavation and alterations to the existing ground levels are required. This arrangement will have less of an impact on the green belt and will sit more naturally on the site.

Scale

The scale of the existing stone barn will remain largely unchanged as a result of the proposed conversion. However, the re-building of the existing lean-to section of the building will assist in reducing the overall mass of the barn.

The scale of the new stable buildings will be modest in size, specifically designed to accommodate the necessary requirements of their use and function. The overall scale of the upper yard building has been based on the recommended stable dimensions of 3.65m x 3.65m for large ponies, that are to be housed within, as set out by The British Horse Society.

Large horses (17hh+): 3.65m x 4.25m (12ft x 14ft)
 Horses: 3.65m x 3.65m (12ft x 12ft)
 Large ponies (13.2hh+): 3.05m x 3.65m (10ft x 12 ft)
 Ponies: 3.05m x 3.05m (10ft x 10ft)

Therefore, the individual stables are proposed to exceed minimum standards to allow for improved welfare conditions for the horses and provide greater flexibility in their management. The remaining internal areas are to provide a storage area for straw which cannot be stored outside, and hay. There is also additional space to allow for the manoeuvrability and operation of equipment in a dry and sheltered environment that is protected from the elements. Typically, two horses can require up to one bale of straw every 4-6 weeks and one bale of hay every 1-2 weeks, depending on their weight, age and breed. Therefore, capacity to store at least three bales of straw and six to seven of hay at a time would assist in minimising deliveries to site and maintain a continuity of supply. These areas are indicated on the general arrangement plans.

The lower building is to provide a secure store for the applicant's tractor and various implements used in the stewardship of their 5.5 acres of land, including grass and tree management and the general operation of the horse livery. To ensure the user's welfare and safe operation of the

equipment, the store areas have been sized appropriately to account for sufficient circulation space. See below list of equipment and approximate sizes:

- Compact tractor: 2.3m (w) x 4m (l) x 2.3 (h) + 2m bucket
- Muck trailer
- Grass Mower
- Grass topper
- Trailer: 1.2m x 1.8m
- Small Baler
- Baler spike for Tractor: 0.66m (w) x 1.25m (l) x 0.5m (h)
- Fencing materials, including wooden stakes, electric tape & posts, replacement fittings.

The natural slope of the site has been considered to minimise the visual impact of the buildings when viewed lower down from Yew Tree Lane. To assist with this, the stables and stores have been separated into two buildings in order to better follow the natural slope of the adjacent field and provide a lower-level access for agricultural machinery.

Landscaping and trees

Existing trees within the application site are to be protected and retained, with new vegetation planted around the site to soften new areas of hard landscaping and maintain the natural characteristics of the setting. New orchards will be planted adjacent the existing public footpath (outside of the application site but within the applicant's ownership boundary) that runs adjacent to the top of the site, this will enhance an existing footpath from which the public will benefit. The existing hard standing to the yard will be improved to provide a turning and parking area between the new dwelling and stable barns which will act as a yard for general upkeep of the land, using the existing cluster of mature trees as a focal point on the site. The area will be resurfaced in a permeable surface to aid with the natural drainage of the site. Although some areas will be hard landscaped and a small number of trees removed, new planting will be introduced to minimise the impact of this, maintaining a natural green appearance.

The current yard will be improved by the incorporation of new planted / grassed areas to encourage potential habitats and floral variety, maintaining the natural hierarchy within the site. The main yard and parking areas will be surfaced in an EcoGrid or similar permeable surfacing with two types of infill (grass and gravel), this will subtly demarcate the domestic and agricultural areas within the site and help to create a balance between the two uses.

In addition to the above, additional measures will be incorporated into the scheme, please see accompanying Preliminary Ecological Appraisal report by JCA Ltd.

The existing drystone boundary walls will be retained as part of the scheme, to maintain the natural appearance of the site and respect the local vernacular. Where new boundaries are to be incorporated to differentiate the domestic curtilage, these will be 1.2m high and constructed out of timber in a post and rail style to maintain the openness of the land but subtly mark the boundaries.

The existing mixture of cobbles and stone flags adjacent the barn will be utilised to reflect its proposed domestic use, new areas of hard landscaping such as the rear patio areas will be surfaced in stone flags to match.

Access

Two existing accesses are provided to the site, both from Yew Tree Lane, which will be retained as part of the proposed scheme. The lower site entrance will provide access to the yard and parking to the dwelling, whilst the upper will provide a form of direct access to the front of the dwelling for general pedestrian use. It is envisaged that this access will not be vehicular due to existing site and spatial constraints. By providing a separate building for the storage of equipment, hay and straw, that can be accessed from within the yard area, there would no longer be a functional need for the double barn doors on the northeast elevation of the barn. Therefore, this would eliminate safety issues as mentioned above in the existing use.

Kirklees Highways Development Management were consulted as part of the pre-application enquiry and made multiple comments in relation to the access. Firstly, that the width of the site access should be a minimum of 4.5m and that any gates should open into the site. The proposed scheme intends on retaining the existing access which measures at 7.250m, and relocating the gates further into the site so as to create a pull-in area straight off the highway. This will significantly improve the existing arrangement by providing an area for the applicant or visitor to park up and operate the gate, without obstructing the highway. Vehicles will also be able to enter and exit the site in a forward gear, presenting a safer means of access. The gated access will be reduced to a single gate, which will provide more than sufficient access for domestic vehicles entering and exiting the site, whilst maintaining a level of security. It has been noted on the drawing that these will open inwards so to not obstruct the highway.

Secondly, it was stated that sight lines of 2.4 x 43 metres should be achievable and demonstrated on the site. It is worth mentioning that Yew Tree Lane is a narrow country lane, with high drystone walls to either side of the road that restrict visibility in both directions due to the level difference between the highway and adjacent fields. This will be difficult to improve as they sit outside of the applicant's ownership but would require significant engineering works in order to achieve the required 2.4m x 43m as set out in the Manual for Streets for a 30mph zone. Although there is limited street lighting, there are multiple road signs that assist in slowing down road users as they approach the existing entrance to the site. Due to the existing topography of the road and adjacent site, in addition to the position of the existing barn and outbuilding, the desired sight lines indicated cannot be achieved, please refer to drawing **23041D-20 GA as proposed (Stables)**.

The existing site entrance has been used by the applicant for several years and whilst there is some visibility, to provide the full 43 metres is simply not viable without the full demolition of the existing outbuilding and significant alterations to the main barn. The proposed conversion and change of use of the existing detached barn will not further contribute to the amount of traffic entering and leaving the site, but instead improve it, when compared to that currently experienced as a working livery.

Currently, the applicant is required to visit site a minimum of three times a day during the summer months and up to four times during the winter due to the necessary feeding patterns of the horses, operating on regular small amounts of food throughout the day. This would be significantly reduced if the applicant had the facilities to live on site.

The current lack of security means that horse boxes and other large pieces of maintenance equipment need to be stored off site, requiring regular transportation and manoeuvrability to and from the proposed site. These regular visits already contribute to the majority of the traffic attending site, likely increasing the chances of an accident. By providing a means for the secure storage of vehicles, equipment and the capability to live on site through the building of the detached stable barn and conversion of the detached barn, this will drastically reduce the frequency of traffic entering and leaving the site from the highway. Improvements can be made to the existing site access and therefore it is proposed that a vehicle pull-in area is formed and sections of the drystone boundary wall abutting the highway, for which are under the client's ownership, are lowered in order to improve visibility.

The conversion of the existing detached barn will create a three-bedroom dwelling, for which the internal layout of the site will provide off-street parking for two cars with the capacity for additional visitor parking.

Summary

Horses require regular attention and checks for their welfare, stable horses requiring more visits than those turned out to grass. Their digestive systems are designed to operate with regular small amounts of food throughout the day, a well-run livery yard will feed hay up to four times a day and therefore require regular visits. The proposals look to provide accommodation and facilities which meet current standards for the welfare of the applicant's horses, whilst allowing them to live on site, ensuring necessary care is maintained and any problems with animal welfare addressed more efficiently.

The proposals will not only bring a new use to the existing stone barn which isn't fit for purpose for its current use but also assist in rejuvenating the adjacent woodland and fields within the application site. It will ensure that the barn and outbuildings do not further deteriorate causing potential harm to the local heritage assets and surrounding landscape.

ADP Architecture and Design Ltd