

Class Q Conversion of Agricultural Building to a Single Dwellinghouse

- **Project:** Class Q Conversion of Agricultural Building to a Single Dwellinghouse
- **Site:** Craigmores Farm, Merrylees Road, Newbold Heath, LE9 9NR
- **Applicant:** Carl Tranter (Urbane Management LLP)
- **Date:** April 2026



Executive Summary

Proposal Overview

Objective

Prior Approval for the change of use of an agricultural building to one dwellinghouse (Class C3) under **Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q** of the GPDO.

The Site

An active agricultural unit with a confirmed lawful use for sheep rearing (CLEUD Ref: 22/01128/CLE). A separate location and block plan have been uploaded to highlight the access to the public highway (In red on the location plan) and then clear demonstration of the development curtilage (In red on the block plan).

The Scheme

Conversion of the majority of the existing structure into a 3-bedroom dwelling, with a section retained as storage to ensure compliance with dwelling size limit

Key Metrics

- **Dwelling Count:** 1.
- **Residential GIFA:** 146 m² (< 150 m² upper class Q dwelling limit).
- **Retained Storage:** 15m² (Physically separated from dwelling).
- **Structural Strategy:** Retention of the existing primary structure (conducting a true conversion).



Site & Agricultural History

Proving Eligibility

Established Agricultural Unit

The site was part of an established agricultural unit on **24th July 2023** (the statutory test date).

Evidence of Use

A **Certificate of Lawful Existing Use (CLEUD)** was granted in Jan 2023 (Ref: 22/01128/CLE), legally confirming the buildings have been used for **agricultural purposes (sheep rearing)** since 2012.

No Exclusion Zones

The site is not located in a Conservation Area, AONB, or SSSI. The building is not Listed.

The Existing Buildings

Structural Capability

Current Condition

The buildings comprise permanent, substantial structures with blockwork walls, timber framing, and concrete hardstanding foundations.

Structural Assessment

A Structural Inspection has confirmed the buildings are **structurally capable of functioning as a dwelling**.

Conversion Scope

- Existing primary load-bearing walls and posts are retained.
- Roof structure to be repaired and strengthened (not replaced).
- No new structural walls are required to support the building.
- *Note: This proposal does not involve "substantial reconstruction" or "fresh build".*

Compliance with Class Q (2026 Rules)

Meeting the 150m² Limit

The proposal has been rigorously designed to strictly adhere to the "Smaller Dwelling" criteria:



Maximum Floor Area (Compliant)

The Gross Internal Area (GIA) of the proposed dwelling is **146 m²**. To ensure strict compliance with the 150m² cap, a section of the existing building (labelled "External Store") has been physically separated from the residential unit. This area is not accessible from the dwelling and will remain as storage.



Building Dimensions (Compliant)

The development does not extend beyond the external dimensions of the existing building. No extensions are proposed.



Curtilage (Compliant)

The proposed residential curtilage (garden) is no larger than the footprint of the building itself.



Highways Access (Compliant)

The site utilises the existing established access onto Merrylees Road.



Design & Layout

Internal Quality & Space Standards



NDSS Compliance

The dwelling exceeds the **Nationally Described Space Standards** for a 3-bedroom dwelling (Min: 74m²).



Layout

- **Living Zone:** Open-plan Kitchen/Dining area utilising the central barn volume.
- **Sleeping Zone:** Master Bedroom with En-suite and two further bedrooms.
- **Separation:** The "Lounge/Store" section will remain sealed off from the residential envelope to maintain the GIA limit.



Natural Light

All habitable rooms are served by existing window openings or new windows inserted into non-structural infill panels.

Technical Considerations

Addressing Local Constraints



Transport & Highways

Good visibility at the existing access point. Parking is provided on existing hardstanding (no new engineering required).



Contamination

Given the previous use (sheep rearing/stables) and a concrete floor being present, the risk of heavy contamination is low. If contamination is found during development, then a remediation strategy will be submitted. A precautionary "watching brief" condition is suggested if required.



Flood Risk

The site is located in **Flood Zone 1** (Lowest Risk).



Noise

The dwelling is sited away from significant noise sources. Residential use is compatible with the surrounding rural context.

Highways & Access Safety



No Material Increase in Trips

The conversion of the agricultural building to a single dwelling (C3) will generate approximately 6–8 daily vehicular movements. This is consistent with, or lower than, the baseline movements associated with the established husbandry and rearing of sheep at the site.



Safety Enhancement

The proposal will result in a reduction of slow-moving agricultural traffic (e.g., tractors with trailers, livestock transport, and heavy feed deliveries), which improves the overall safety of Merrylees Road compared to the current agricultural use.



Local Precedent (Chater Farm)

The Local Planning Authority has recently approved both Class Q residential conversions and equestrian yard uses at the neighbouring Chater Farm, directly opposite and with inferior splay visibility. These approvals establish that the visibility and road capacity at this specific location are suitable for the intensity of use proposed.



Visibility Standards

While a 2.4m x 215m splay is the 60mph standard for LHDG, the precedent set by Case 24/01016/P3CQ (close by on Bagworth Road) confirms that where no material intensification occurs, existing access is deemed acceptable for conversion. The referenced application was also granted for two dwellings as opposed to one with this application. The road only just switches to 60mph in the Newbold Heath direction upon the approach to the site, changing from a 30mph limit, so vehicles are unlikely to be reaching 60mph prior to the access being visible.



Movement & Traffic Analysis

Comparative Assessment of Vehicular Impact

To further reinforce the minimal impact on highways safety, we've conducted a comparative analysis of daily vehicular movements. This table illustrates that the proposed single dwelling will generate fewer or similar movements than the site's historical agricultural use, and is well within the thresholds established by recent local planning precedents.

Use Category	Est. Daily Movements (In/Out)	Vehicle Type Profile	Status/Precedent
Existing: Agriculture (Sheep Rearing)	6–12 movements (seasonal peaks)	Tractors, livestock trailers, 7.5t feed deliveries.	Lawful Baseline (CLEUD 22/01128/CLE).
Proposed: Class Q (1 x Dwelling)	6–8 movements	Standard domestic passenger vehicles.	Compliant with LHA "No Material Increase" policy.
Precedent: Chater Farm (Equestrian)	10–15+ movements	Horseboxes, trailers, multiple visitor cars.	Approved directly opposite the site access.
Precedent: Bagworth Road (Class Q)	12–16 movements (for 2 units)	Domestic passenger vehicles.	Approved with existing sub-standard splays.

As demonstrated, the proposed Class Q dwelling results in a favourable reduction in vehicle movements compared to the previous agricultural use, and aligns with, or is less intensive than, other approved developments in the immediate vicinity. This confirms the proposal's compatibility with the local road network.

Structural Methodology

Conversion vs. Rebuild

Retention Strategy

The proposal retains the existing external envelope.

Wall Treatment

Existing single-skin walls will be retained and lined internally with an independent timber stud and insulation system. This lining is **non-load bearing** and purely for thermal performance.

Roofing

Existing roof covering will be replaced with lightweight materials (e.g., slate/profiled sheet) to minimise load increase. Existing trusses will be retained and repaired where necessary.

Conclusion

The works constitute "reasonably necessary" operations for conversion under Class Q(b), not a rebuild.

Comparative Structural Analysis

Precedent and the "Hibbitt" Conversion Test

Approved Precedent: 45 Bagworth Road

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council recently approved a conversion at **45 Bagworth Road (24/01016/P3CQ)**. This precedent explicitly accepted that a lightweight, steel-framed/timber-clad agricultural building was "fully suitable for conversion... without any extensive demolition or rebuilding".

Craigmore Farm: Superior Structural Envelope

Craigmore Farm offers a **more substantial structural envelope** than the building approved in the Bagworth Road case. Specifically, Unit 5 demonstrates a slenderness ratio of **24**, which is well within the statutory safety limit of 27.

The "Hibbitt" Conversion Test

Following the logic already established by the council's own precedent, this proposal constitutes a **true conversion** as defined by High Court precedent (*Hibbitt v Secretary of State*), requiring no extensive rebuilding.

TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Technical Considerations

Ecological Compliance: Bat Surveys

Although not a statutory requirement of the Class Q Prior Approval process, the applicant has proactively completed bat surveys to confirm that the conversion will have **no adverse impact** on protected species, ensuring compliance with wider ecological legislation. These are available upon request should they be needed by the LPA.



Conclusion

Summary of Merits

Legal Compliance

The scheme strictly adheres to the Town and Country Planning (GPDO) Order 2015 (as amended).

Proven Use

Agricultural status is legally certified (CLEUD).

Sustainable Housing

Provides a high-quality, modest family home utilising redundant rural building stock.

Minimal Impact

No extension, no change to access, and visual improvement of the existing agricultural site.