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Design Statement

Submitted to
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Table of Contents

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Context	4
	Barr Lane Character	5
3.	Site Description	6
4.	Proposal	7
	Use	7
5.	Amount, Scale and Massing	8
	As existing	8
	Massing	10
6.	Layout	11
7.	Landscaping	11
8.	Appearance	12
	Materials	12
	Contextual References	13
	Brick Details	13
	Brick Plinths	13
	Windows	13
9.	Access	14
10.	Summary	15

1. Introduction

This Design statement has been prepared by Hayward Architects on behalf of the applicant:

Mr & Mrs Angus of Cottage Farm,
Barr Lane,
Higham on the Hill
CV13 6AW

It is submitted in support of an application for **Full Planning Approval** for the conversion of existing out buildings situated within the grounds of an existing dwelling to create a separate dwelling.

It is to be read alongside the drawings as submitted.



The existing dwelling, to be retained

2. Context

Higham On the Hill is a small village north east of Nuneaton.

The history of the settlement is not included in the domesday book but is believed to have been established prior to 1086

The main occupation in the village until modern times was agriculture, and some farms still remain around the periphery of the village

The village is almost entirely residential, with just a small number of local amenities including a primary school, community centre and a church.

Older development is chiefly located along the brow of the hill to either side of Main Street. Post war development has grown in two distinct clusters to both the north and south of the street

Higham on the Hill Main Street has been identified as a conservation area

The Character appraisal describes Higham:

"..... the prevailing image is that of an agricultural settlement."

And describes the traditional materials:

"Traditionally plain tiled roofs and red brick walls with occasional stone plinths are dominant. However, there are some slate roofs and many brick frontages have been rendered. Windows were traditionally Yorkshire sliding sash windows or casement....."



Barr Lane Character

The site is located on Barr lane and is not in the conservation area.

Barr Lane has a notably different appearance to the conservation area which generally runs along Main Street.

Main street itself is lined on both sides by dwellings of varied ages and sizes, which are set close to the back of footpath.

The entrance to Barr Lane is flanked by houses with large front gardens which quickly give way to trees and hedges, and is unassuming in character

The edges of the street offer some low level brick walls and a distinctive cobbled footpath, creating a more rural feel than Main Street

Houses along Barr Lane have evolved in two loose clusters: either to the north, where the road begins on Main Street, or to the south where the road terminates at a farm.

They are generally very large detached houses on large plots. They are set well back in their plots and many are screened from view by mature planting

As a result, the setting of the proposal is more rural than the general character of Higham on the Hill



3. Site Description

The proposal site is one of a small number of residential and agricultural properties at the end of Barr Lane, south east of Higham on the Hill and has direct vehicle access from the highway.

To the opposite side of Barr Lane is a single storey stable building which is part of a livery yard

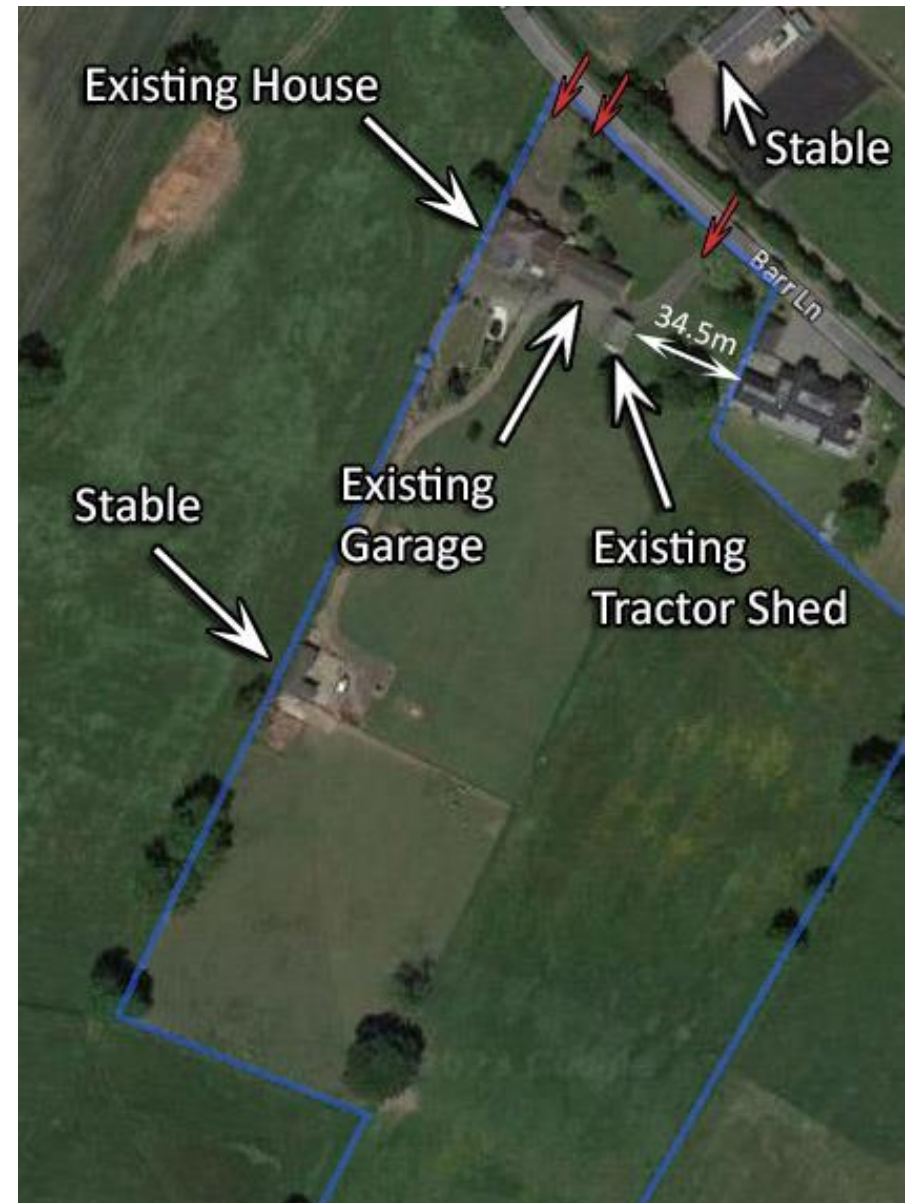
The existing buildings on the proposal site comprise of a detached house, a 5 bay garage and a tractor shed.

The site enjoys very long views to the north, south and west. The nearest neighbour to the east is over 34 metres away.

The existing site benefits from a large drive with three separate vehicle access points.

The applicant owns a small pasture to the rear of the proposal site which is occupied by horses and is to remain so. It is not part of this proposal

Separate access to this pasture must be incorporated into the proposed site layout so that the separate use can be continued by the future occupant of the existing house



4. Proposal

The current owner-occupiers of Cottage Farm are in need of a disabled friendly M4(2) or M4(3) dwelling. A search for such a dwelling in Higham on the Hill has been unsuccessful as these types of homes are few and far between.

However, the client do have the land, finances and the will to create a new dwelling to fit their needs.

Previous consultation with Hinckley and Bosworth Planning dept has suggested that a conversion and extension of the existing outbuildings would be acceptable in planning terms and this application seeks approval for that option.

Use

The existing use of the proposal site is residential in its entirety. It is set over two storeys and is not suitable for occupation by people with impaired mobility

The existing outbuildings are ancillary to the existing dwelling and used only for storage

The existing house is to remain as a detached dwelling and will be occupied separately to the proposed new dwelling.
The existing garden will be divided into two private gardens.

The proposed dwelling is designed to incorporate full disabled sanitary facilities on ground floor as well as a study which can be used as a private ground floor bedroom as the need arises in future.



5. Amount, Scale and Massing

As existing

The existing site contains 3 separate buildings:

- a 2 storey dwelling
- a 5 bay garage
- a tractor store

Previous planning advice suggested that it would be acceptable to convert the existing outbuildings into a dwelling by way of linking the two to form an 'L' shaped floor plan. The existing outbuildings do not provide functional internal accommodation without this link.

The application site is approximately 0.49ha and currently accommodates only one dwelling, giving a development of 2 dwellings per hectare. The proposal to add one dwelling will provide a development of 4 dwellings per hectare. Whilst still below the Local Authority's development density aspirations, this does represent a significant improvement on the current situation

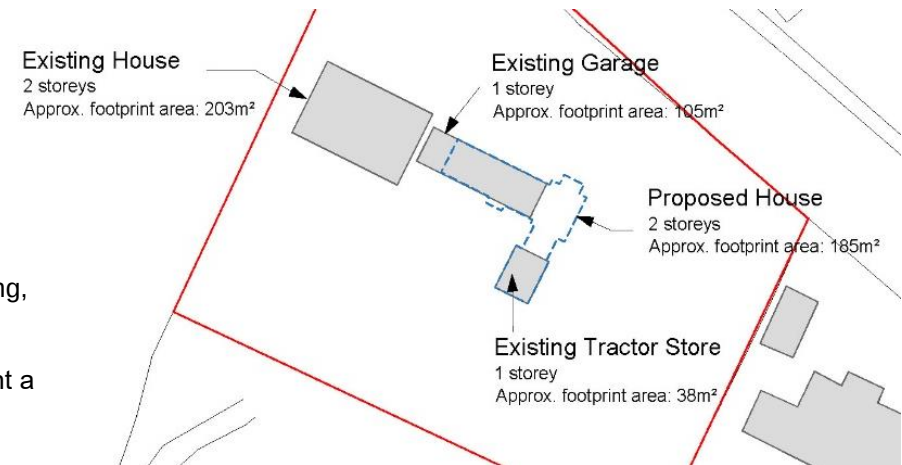
The neighbouring buildings along Barr lane can be divided very neatly into two categories:

1. Agricultural storage
2. Detached dwellings.

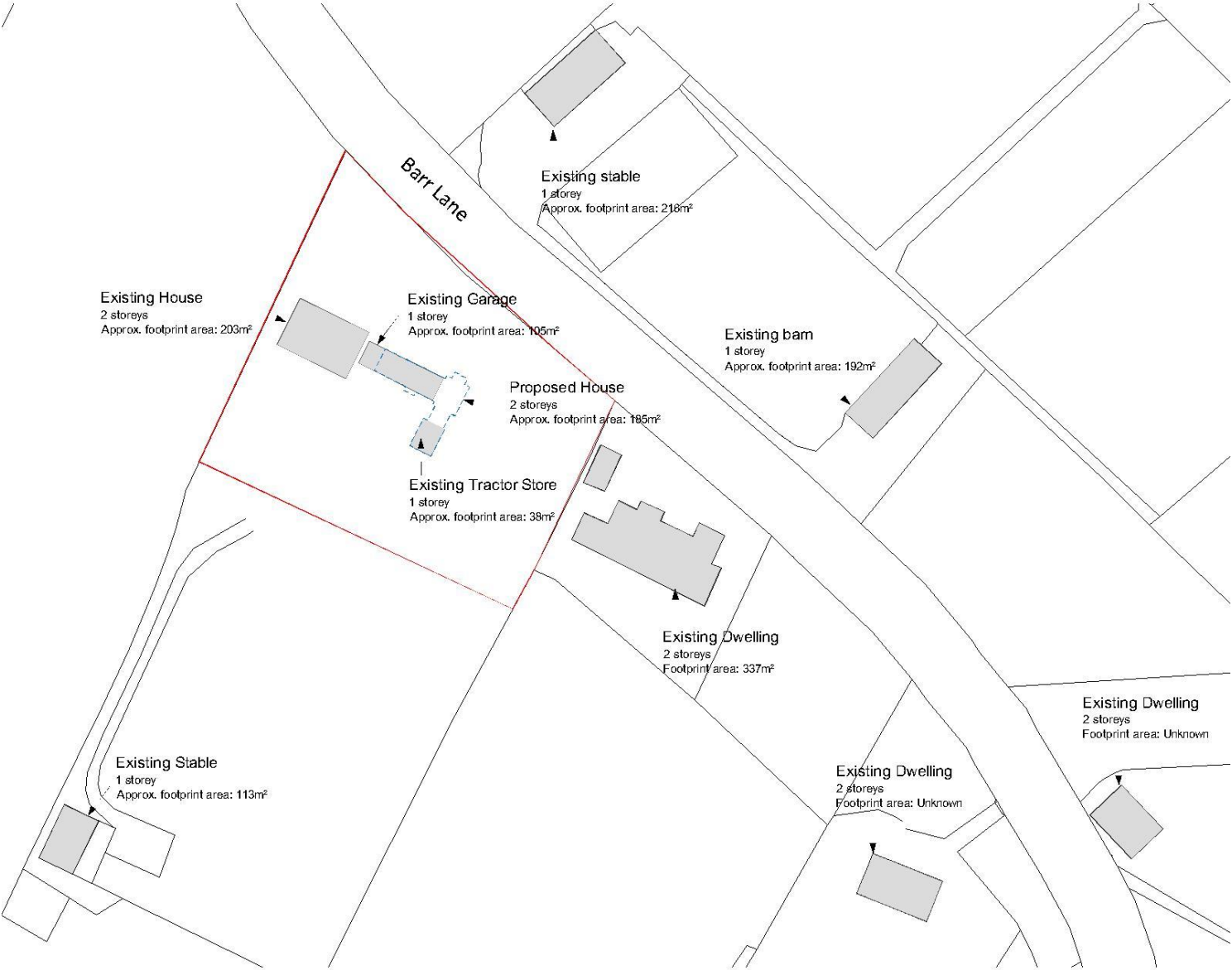
The existing buildings are all of a similar scale and massing to the others within their category:

- All dwellings are large, two storey and sit on substantial plots, well set back from the road.
- All agricultural buildings have a large footprint but are single storey

These consistencies of scale contribute to the distinctive character of Barr Lane and must be continued to achieve good design quality, therefore any ancillary buildings which are being converted must also offer an increased massing to the street scene to achieve continuity



22-05-DS-A: Proposed conversion of buildings at Barr Lane, Higham on the Hill



Massing

Good design of buildings includes an architectural language. This language can be found in both the building itself and in its setting.

The massing of buildings communicates their function and their hierarchy on the street scene. Whereas it is appropriate for an ancillary building such as a garage or tractor store to be diminutive and subservient to a dwelling, it is not appropriate for a single dwelling to be noticeably diminutive and subservient in an entire street scene. If we did not increase the mass of this ancillary buildings, this would exhibit the architectural language of an ancillary building when in fact, it is not.

This approach is essential if the dwelling is to 'sit well in its setting' and is to achieve 'good design'

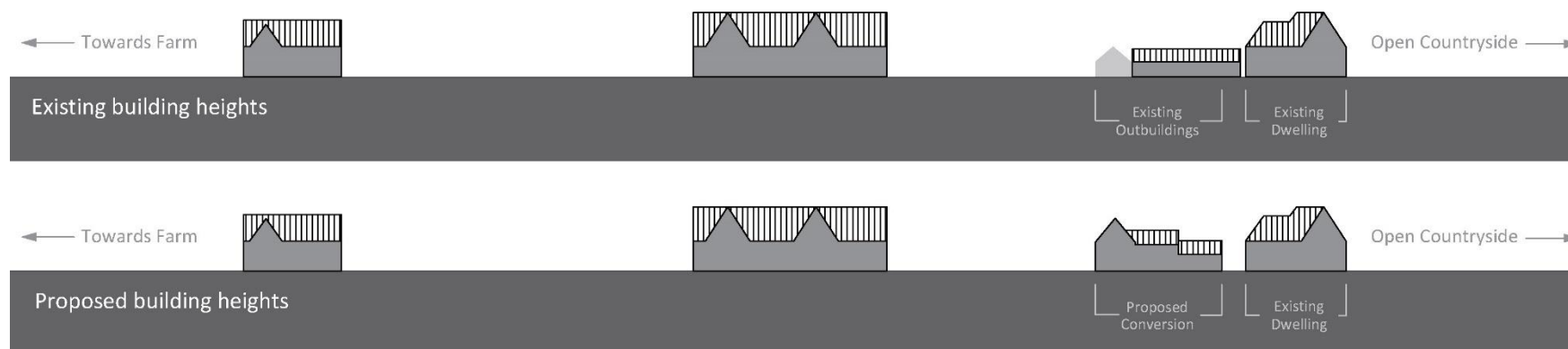
The existing ancillary buildings are single storey. It is proposed that the addition of another half storey above, gradually increasing in height towards the corner of the new dwelling, will offer an appropriate massing, scale and height which will fit into the street scene in the most suitable and pleasing way.

The existing footprint of the neighbouring buildings, whether they be agricultural or domestic, is still larger than that of the proposed building.

The proposed ridge heights are deliberately stepping up from the existing house to the west, towards the higher and substantially larger dwelling next door to the east.

This will enable these two existing homes to sit together better on the street scene than they do at present.

Additionally, the internal spaces meet Nationally Described Space Standards



6. Layout

Access to the stables and paddock to the rear is currently achieved through the gap between the garage and the tractor shed. The closing of this gap will necessitate the need for another access to be established.

The site is to be divided to provide 2 separate dwelling curtilages with an independent access to the paddock at the rear. Please refer to proposed site plan for details.

7. Landscaping

Each dwelling is to have a private garden as indicated on the proposal drawings. These will not be professionally landscaped.

A tree survey is submitted to support the planning application. All trees and hedges are proposed for retention.

8. Appearance

The appearance of the existing outbuildings is appropriate to their current function and architectural language but would not be appropriate once converted to a dwelling.

The proposed conversion seeks to enhance the aesthetic appeal of these buildings in a manner which sits well in its setting by making visual references to the built context.

As a conversion of existing structures, this proposal must knit together the existing aesthetic with the new, in a way which is cohesive within its setting and is appropriate to its purpose.

The existing garage and tractor shed have no historic value which could be enhanced or preserved.

Materials

The material palette of the existing buildings is to be retained where possible but additions and amendments are required to make the building fit for purpose and compliant with all current regulations.

The existing garage is of red brick and grey tiled roof. These materials will be retained and insulation added to the walls and ceilings internally. The existing tractor shed is of breeze block and open slatted timber construction. This is less visually appealing and not appropriate for a dwelling. While these walls are to be retained, they are to be insulated on the outside, giving the opportunity to improve their appearance. The corrugated panel roof needs to be removed and replaced entirely with a slate roof to match the rest of the house.

Proposed bricks will be red. Type to be confirmed. New roofs will be of grey tile to match the existing. Materials are arranged to be mindful of brick and mortar matching challenges.

Windows and doors will generally be U-PVC in anthracite colour.

The rear, full height feature windows to the tractor shed will be of timber construction and finish.

In order to communicate the scope of extension coherently, a new material, cement fibreboard, is used to accentuate certain added volumes.

Cement Fibreboard has been chosen partly for its barn like impression, which will enable the dwelling to sit very comfortably in the rural setting, but also for its performance: it is a zero maintenance product, as is necessary for more senior inhabitants.

Specific material types are to be agreed by condition at a later date when supply can be assured, but will generally follow the principles described in this application.

Contextual References

There are no distinctive architectural details which are recognised in the conservation area character appraisal which are characteristic of Higham on the Hill.

The existing buildings exhibit an array of different approaches to domestic building design and are generally representative of their age.

This proposal is intended to be representative of its age whilst including some references to the other buildings in Higham.

Brick Details

The style of brick detailing is unashamedly representative of other properties which can be found on Higham Main street.

The eaves, verge and corbel details can be found on 100 & 102 Main street.

The proposal utilises these details further by using them for a string course with corner corbelling. The purposed of which is to provide a base for the cladding which will need to sit slightly proud of the masonry elevation.

Brick Plinths

The character statement mentions the presence of stone plinths, and although not ubiquitous in Higham village, brick plinths can be also found at the base of some houses and garden walls. This detail is a useful addition to the proposed dwelling which serves to physically connect the old and new elements to each other, assisting the overall visual and physical cohesion.

Windows

The proposed windows have a strong vertical emphasis. Whilst this approach sits well amongst the other buildings of Higham, it is intended to represent the vertical slatted timber of the existing tractor shed, which will be lost in the conversion.

This is another element in which the proposal respects the past character of the original buildings.



100 & 102 MAIN STREET



Plinths in Higham Village

9. Access

The existing site benefits from three vehicle access points from Barr Lane. The proposal seeks to retain all three, using the northernmost two for the existing house and the southernmost one for the conversion.

No gates are proposed



10. Summary

This proposed conversion of two existing ancillary buildings offers the opportunity for Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council to increase its housing stock in a meaningful and appropriate way.

The UK has an ageing population but also has a critically low supply of housing which is suitable for older people. This proposal seeks to create an M4 (2) home

The design of the proposal offers a unique, well designed dwelling which has been developed by fully qualified and experienced Architects, and will enhance the character of the surrounding area.

The site is located amongst other residences and thus is appropriate for the proposed C3 use.

The proposal will sit well in its setting by making reference to other buildings in the village as well as it's semi-rural location. Its proposed massing is necessary to the appropriateness of use.

This document is accompanied by a Planning Statement which explains how the proposal is supported by both local and national planning law and guidance.