

Conservation Officer comments for: 23/00518/FUL

Proposal: Barn conversion to form new dwelling, erection of new dwelling, extension of existing dwelling to provide an annex, replacement roof and associated works

Site: 102 Main Street, Nailstone

Date Submitted: 25/08/2023

This proposal is located at 102 Main Street, Nailstone. The southern half of the site is located within the Nailstone Conservation Area.

The barns and dwelling (no. 102 Main Street) comprise a rectangular farm complex consisting of a farmhouse and ranges including a threshing barn, store and stables, likely to date from the early 19th Century. The eastern range consists of a two storey farmhouse stepping down to single storey former barns now converted into residential accommodation. This range is constructed of brick, now rendered, with clay tile roofs and a number of axial chimney stacks with terracotta pots. The northern range consists of an impressive threshing barn, loose boxes and store constructed of red brick with clay tiled roof and features a king post truss and rough brick segmental arches. The southern range consists of storage and is constructed of red brick with two tones clay tile, slate and asbestos roof coverings. The dental eaves courses and brick piers provide an attractive wall facing Main Street. The rectangular complex retains a traditional pattern of enclosure with an intimate courtyard which also adds to the significance of the conservation area.

For these reasons and as identified within the Nailstone Conservation Area Appraisal (NCAA) (2015) the buildings upon the application site are key unlisted buildings within the conservation area that contribute positively to the character and appearance of the area and thus its significance.

Nailstone is predominantly an agricultural village which was established and developed historically around a number of farmsteads. The paddock to the north of the application site is associated with such historical uses and is typical of the character at the urban and rural fringe of the village. The semi-rural character of the northern section of the site contributes positively to the significance of the conservation area and assists in defining the approach to the village from the north along Ibstock Road which is set within farmed countryside with wide grass verges and green hedgerows. This view north along Ibstock Road, which takes in the application site, is identified as an important component of the conservation area within the NCAA.

When considering a development proposal Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

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Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides the national policy on conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Paragraphs 199-202 of the NPPF require great weight to be given to the conservation of designated heritage

assets when considering the impact of a proposed development on its significance, for any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset to have clear and convincing justification, and for that harm to be weighed against the public benefits of a proposal.

Policies DM11 and DM12 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (SADMP) DPD seek to protect and enhance the historic environment. Development proposals should ensure the significance of a conservation area is preserved and enhanced.

The proposal seeks to convert the threshing barn to form one new dwelling, create an extension to the existing dwelling 102 Main Street to provide an annex, replace the roof upon the southern barn, erect a new dwelling in the northern half of the site, and implement associated works.

The conversion of the threshing barn seeks to respect its architectural and historic interest with relatively limited interventions required to significant historic fabric. Through the conversion the scale of the range remains the same and the grand central opening of the threshing barn with king-post truss is retained within the scheme. An open internal plan form has been respected to a considerable extent. All proposed doors and windows utilise existing or re-open previous apertures on each elevation to ensure the buildings retain their character. Where new openings are required they are limited in number and replicate the style and character of the openings on the existing barn or rural buildings more generally. The materials proposed (being timber) reflect the rural and agricultural context of the site.

An effort has been made to ensure that the layout of the courtyard remains and hard surfacing materials proposed provide an informal character rather than a formal subdivision of each plot with excessive boundary treatments. To create a new vehicular access into the courtyard (and to allow for the annex, as explained below) the existing loose box stables will have to be demolished, so whilst a minimal amount of historic fabric will be lost, however, the negligible impact of this loss will be outweighed by the retention of more significant features within the scheme and sustaining the overall character of the range of buildings through sympathetic conversion and repair.

As above the looseboxes are proposed to be lost to allow for courtyard access and the construction of a single storey extension to the existing house to form an annex. The annex extension has a rectangular plan with two dual pitched roofs. Overall, the scale, form, architectural detailing and construction materials of the extension closely matches that of the existing dwelling and surrounding built form, whilst the orientation and layout of the extension retains the plan form of the agricultural courtyard.

The central section of the southern range consists of a shallow mono-pitched roof covered by profile metal sheeting. This section faces the conservation area street scene and the form and materials of the roof of this section clearly stand out as uncharacteristic compared to the dual pitched roof form and natural clay tile roof covering of the flanking sections of the range. The proposal is to alter the roof form and covering within this section to match that of the flanking sections, resulting in an enhancement to the character and appearance of the southern range.

The proposed new dwelling located to the north of the 102 Main Street is sited in an area currently utilised in part as a paddock with some ancillary stable buildings which are proposed to be relocated. The dwelling has an L-shaped plan form, designed to define a secondary agricultural style courtyard to the north of the proposed barn

conversion and annex and using the same site access. This arrangement of built form is considered to not be out of keeping with the area and would provide an appropriate layout of linear ranges which also reflects the arrangement of the recently approved and under construction development on land to the rear of the Bulls Head, which is immediately to the east of the application site.

The west-east range of the proposed new dwelling is two storeys in height and seeks to provide the appearance and scale of a former threshing barn that would be the dominant building within an agricultural complex. The attached north-south range is single storey in scale and provides mainly garaging. It is considered that the proposal reflects the varied heights and scale of buildings located within agricultural complexes within the village and elsewhere and they have a traditional form. Agricultural style openings are proposed for the fenestration which provides each dwelling with an appropriate organic appearance which would be appreciated in both intimate views from within the courtyard and when viewed from the wider countryside to the north where the scale, form and appearance of the dwelling would complement the adjacent development on land to the rear of the Bulls Head. The dwelling is to be constructed of red brick for the facing walls, a clay tile for the roof and timber windows and doors, all of which are appropriate traditional materials that respect those used in the local area. Timber cladding is also proposed for the walls which reflects the rural character of the site.

The site plan indicates that there will be short rear garden to serve the new dwelling, defined by a 1.2m post and rail fence. This would provide a relatively tight rather than extended curtilage which is closely related to the existing built form and ensures that the current open and rural character of the northern paddock, which is to be turned into a wildflower meadow. The existing hedgerow along Ibstock Road is to be retained and flanked by a new hedgerow to subdivide a track providing access to the paddock further to the north. These boundary features would maintain the setting and rural character of the northern approach to the conservation area so there would be no adverse impact upon the view identified within the NCAA.

In summary, the conversion of the existing threshing barn is sympathetically designed and respects the architectural and historic interest of this building of local interest within the conservation area. The negligible impact resulting from the loss of the loose boxes attached to the threshing barn to allow for access to the farm courtyard is outweighed by the retention of more significant features within the scheme and sustaining the overall character of the range of buildings through sympathetic conversion and repair and additions, including the appropriately designed annex extension off the northern range of the farmhouse. The replacement of the incongruous sheet metal roofed section of the southern range with a pitched roof finished with clay tile will be a minor but positive enhancement to the character and appearance of the conservation area street scene. The new dwelling is appropriately sited and its scale, form, appearance, architectural detailing, landscaping and materials to be used within its construction are considered appropriate resulting in a development that will preserve the character and appearance and thus significance of the Nailstone Conservation Area. Consequently, the proposal complies with Policies DM11 and DM12 of the SADMP, section 16 of the NPPF and the statutory duty of Sections 66 and 72 of the of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

As per the previous approval on the site (17/00367/FUL) and for the same reasons I would request that pre-commencement conditions are placed on any subsequent approval concerning:

- Details and/or samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the development
- The undertaking of a historic building survey of the historic buildings on the site
- A detailed landscaping and boundary treatments scheme (if the current proposal does not contain sufficient detail)