

COMBINED PLANNING AND DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

ERECTION OF SINGLE STOREY, OAK FRAMED
ORANGERY EXTENSION TO THE REAR OF EXISTING
BUILDING USED AS A FARM SHOP, CAFÉ AND ICE
CREAM PARLOUR AT NABBS FARM, ROWLANDS ROAD,
BURY



Prime Oak Ltd,
Whitehouse Farm,
Whitehouse Lane,
Swindon,
South Staffordshire,
DY3 4PE

May 2022

Introduction

This combined Planning and Design & Access Statement has been prepared by Prime Oak Ltd to accompany a full planning application for a proposed oak framed orangery extension to the rear of Falshaw's Farm Shop.

Falshaw's Farm Shop is currently an extension of a successful agricultural business, aiming to sell local produce to local people. This is facilitated through the provision of the farm shop, café and ice cream parlour based at Nabbs Farm. The site is located to the north of Bury and falls within the Greater Manchester Green Belt. As a rural business, its surroundings are reflective of that, comprising the fields associated with Nabbs Farm and the residential properties along Rowlands Road and Walmersley Road. The proposal includes the creation of an orangery to provide additional seating and a shop display area to the rear of the building.

This statement should be read in conjunction with the drawings enclosed with the accompanying application, including:

- Location Plan (drg. 51657/01);
- Proposed Block Plan (drg. 51657/02);
- Existing Elevations & Floor Plan (drg. 51657/03);
- Existing Roof Plan (drg. 51657/04);
- Proposed Elevations & Floor Plan (drg. 51657/05);
- Proposed Roof Plan (drg. 51657/06).

Prime Oak will be designing and constructing the proposal on behalf of the land owners. Prime Oak are one of the country's leading specialists in the design and construction of oak framed buildings for all kinds of uses, utilising traditional mortise and tenon pegged joint carpentry techniques.

The Proposal and Site Description

The proposal is to provide an orangery extension that would be situated on the rear of the existing farm shop. The new development will be an oak framed structure with large portions of glazing, creating a lightweight appearance. The intended use of the proposed development is to provide additional seating and a shop display area for the current business. The successes of Falshaw's Farm Shop during the Covid-19 pandemic where people tended to shop locally and support local businesses saw Falshaw's Farm Shop's customer base grow. As a result, a temporary marquee was erected on the proposal site during 2020 in order to provide covered seating for the customers. It is the land owners aim to have somewhere for these customers to sit that is more aesthetically pleasing and in keeping with the rural surroundings than this marquee.

It is intended that the new structure would therefore enable the business to continue to thrive through providing a more permanent solution to seating the volume of customers which the café and ice cream parlour receive. A shop display area would also allow customers to browse the products,

enabling Falshaw's Farm Shop to have improved in-shop marketing where seasonal produce could be displayed. The orangery is therefore an extension related to the existing use of the building.

Policy Considerations

The following provides a summary of the key policies that are relevant to this proposed development and both a local and a national scale.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021)

The NPPF makes it clear that its very purpose is to contribute to sustainable development (*para. 7-10*). In terms of determining applications this means that applications that accord with an up-to-date development plan should be considered favourably and approved without delay. If the localised development plan is not up-to-date or there are no relevant policies then applications should also be approved unless they go against policies outlined within the NPPF that seek to protect individual assets or they go against the policies within the NPPF on the whole.

A prosperous rural economy is focused on as an element of Chapter 6. Guidelines for local authorities are outlined. It is indicated in paragraph 84 that planning policies and decisions should enable:

- The sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;
- The development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;
- Sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and
- The retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

Paragraph 85 recognises that these sites which meet local business and community needs may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements and in locations not well served by public transport.

Chapter 13 focuses on the protection of Green Belt Land. Paragraph 138 outlines the five principal purposes which the Green Belt serves:

- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

As covered by paragraph 147, inappropriate development is by definition harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved without very special circumstances. New buildings are inappropriate development within the Green Belt as detailed under paragraph 149. Nevertheless, seven exceptions to this are listed, the relevant one to this proposal being:

- Buildings for agriculture and forestry.

Planning Practice Guidance (2019)

This document seeks to provide advice on contentious planning issues, the Green Belt being a key example of this. It is explained that the impact of development on the Green Belt is both spatial and visual (*para. 64-001-20190722*). Openness can therefore be impacted by both of these factors, alongside many others. When proposing development, the degree of activity likely to be generated, for example, in terms of traffic should be considered.

Bury Local Plan (2018)

Policy GB6: Agricultural Diversification in the Green Belt

Policy GB6 supports agricultural diversification within the Green Belt provided that it satisfies particular criteria. This is justified since the diversification of agricultural businesses into non-agricultural activities can help maintain the commercial viability of such critical farm enterprises. This helps the broader rural economy, ensuring profitable agricultural uses are retained.

Nevertheless, this is not an excuse to damage the countryside by unrestrained and inappropriate development. It is therefore still required that in order for development proposals to abide by this policy, they should be appropriate to the scale and nature of their location, satisfactorily integrating into the rural landscape.

Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF) (2020)

Policy GM-G10: The Greater Manchester Green Belt

This policy states that the Greater Manchester Green Belt will be offered the greatest protection, in accordance with the NPPF. It will be managed to serve the same fundamental five purposes as that outlaid in the NPPF Paragraph 138. It is expanded on how this will be achieved in the Greater Manchester area, detailing how positive and beneficial use of the Green Belt will be supported provided that no harm will be caused to its openness, permanence or ability to serve its five key objectives. One of the areas that the GMSF targets is the improvement of the green infrastructure functions through the provision of improved public access and habitat restoration. This will provide environmental and social benefits through connecting communities with nature. Furthermore, high quality green spaces will facilitate economic growth.

Use

The planned use is a continuation of the existing farm shop, café and ice cream parlour. This is ancillary to Nabbs Farm and as per the conditions on the approval for this in 2006 (*ref. 45559*), more than 85% of the produce sold is from the farm directly or from other farms within a 5-mile radius. This is also the case with food served in the café and ice cream parlour where over 85% of the volume of the produce is from Nabbs Farm itself or other farms within a 5-mile radius. This has therefore been

compliant with Policy GB6 of the Bury Local Plan, representing a successful form of agricultural diversification. In terms of use, the proposal is therefore fully in accordance with local and national planning policy.

Amount

The amount of development proposed occupies an almost identical area to the marquee erected in 2020. Whilst this is only a temporary structure, the current impact on openness of the Green Belt will be the same as if the building was extended to this extent. Furthermore, if the application is refused, the land owner could keep a marquee up during winter months as a solution to the number of customers that they receive as detailed in the recent revision to the General Permitted Development Order which saw the permanent introduction of Class G in Part 2 – moveable structures. A more suitable and long-lived solution is therefore sought. As stated in the planning practice guidance (*para. 64-001-20190722*), the impacts of development on the Green Belt are visual in addition to spatial. As the proposal is predominantly glazed, it will be perceptibly lightweight in appearance. The proposed design incorporates natural materials with oak framing which are much more befitting and visually pleasing relative to the rural setting when compared to the existing marquee which is made of a white plastic (*see below photos*).



Photos showing the site at present, covered by a PVC marquee.

It is also worth noting that a covered seating area in the same location as the proposed orangery was included on the approved application for Falshaw's Farm Shop (*ref. 45559*). The owners decided at the time however to leave it uncovered in order to provide outdoor seating. Nevertheless, whilst the outdoor seating area was very useful during the summer months, the success of the business has resulted in additional customers annually which are difficult to accommodate for in winter when the weather is cooler. Whilst the marquee has provided a temporary solution to this, a permanent one is now necessary. The scheme in principle is therefore something that the Council have previously considered acceptable and conformable with local and national planning policies.

The development itself is a modest addition to the existing farm shop building at 4m in height comparative to the 5.9m height of the existing. It is the same width as the section of the building which it adjoins at 12.7m and its depth is not excessive at 5m. In terms of the amount of development proposed the new orangery would therefore not harm the rural setting and would not be an unreasonable addition.

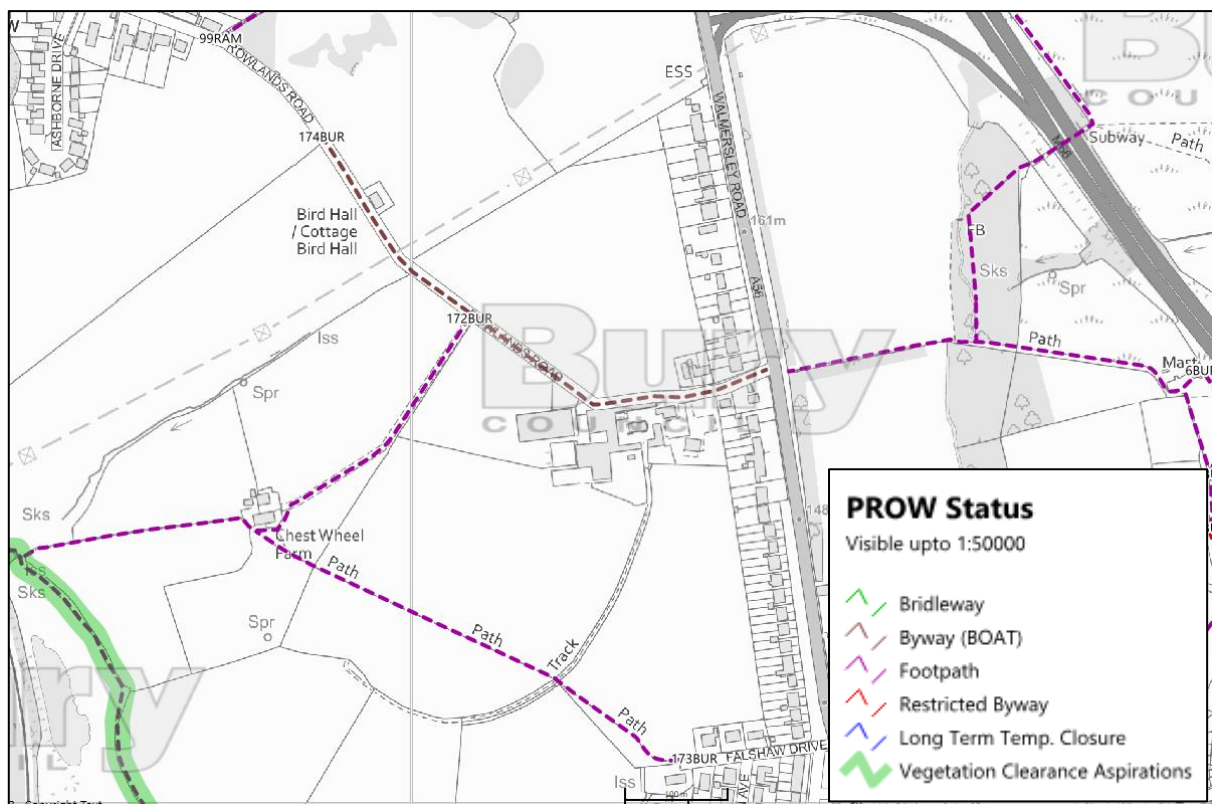
Layout

The proposed extension would be sited towards the rear of Falshaw's Farm Shop which is currently used as an outdoor seating area. This is occasionally covered by a marquee, as discussed previously. The general layout of the site would therefore not change.

The location of Falshaw's Farm Shop relatively centrally, behind the dwellings along Walmersley Road enables it to act as a gathering place for local residents, with many regular customers who frequent the café. This is therefore compliant with the aims outlaid in paragraph 84 of the NPPF which encourages the retention and development of local shops and community facilities. As the proposed orangery is to the south of the building, the position would provide customers with views across Nabbs Farm and the surrounding countryside.

Access and Parking

Access to the site is provided via Rowland's Road which adjoins Walmersley Road to the east. To the west, Rowland's Road finds itself in the village of Summerseat. There are also a series of public footpaths which make Falshaw's Farm Shop a popular destination to walk from nearby settlements. A bus route which receives frequent service is sited nearby on Walmersley Road ensuring that Falshaw's Farmshop is also accessible to those without private vehicles from as far as Burnley or Blackburn. There would be no alterations to the existing access arrangements to the site as a result of the proposal.



Extract from Bury Council's Public Rights of Way Map.

Parking facilities are provided to the north of Falshaw's Farm Shop. There is already sufficient parking to accommodate for the number of vehicles which visit the site. Room for 20 vehicles is provided. As the area where the orangery would be sited is currently used as seating, the orangery would merely put a cover over this, so no additional vehicular traffic would be generated as a result of the proposal. There would be no intensification of the use of the site.

Scale

As described above, the proposed structure is a modest development of which a similar design was approved under the initial application (*ref. 45559*). It would be single storey and subservient to the existing Falshaw's Farm Shop.

Additionally, the perceived scale of the new orangery would be reduced by the use of natural materials like oak, and large areas of glazing. This would give the orangery a perceptibly more lightweight appearance than a fully brick-built structure and would not dominate the appearance or character of Nabbs Farm and the surrounding rural landscape.

Appearance

The proposed orangery would be a high-quality structure that would be oak framed, with coursed stone to match the rest of the building around the base. The roof would be clad in reclaimed slates to match that of the farm shop and would be adorned with a glazed lantern. This would result in a structure which internally appears light and spacious whilst externally blends seamlessly in with elements of Falshaw's Farm Shop. The use of high-quality, sustainable materials would provide a long lifespan.

Furthermore, when considering the previously mentioned recent amendments to the General Permitted Development Order under Part 2, if this application is refused then it is likely that the land owners could continue to have a marquee or other moveable structure on site provided that it fulfils this criterion. This would likely be a heavier looking structure and if similar to the marquee which is currently on site, would be white PVC and therefore not befitting of the rural surroundings where these materials would make it highly noticeable. A subservient structure that is predominantly glazed would be preferable and would blend in seamlessly with the nature of the landscape.

The proposal has therefore been designed to complement and be sympathetic to Falshaw's Farm Shop and its rural setting. The new orangery would appear distinct and visually lightweight, providing a traditional form of extension in terms of materials and carpentry, but executed in a contemporary way.

Landscape

No landscaping is specifically proposed as part of this relatively minor proposal for an extension of an existing building. There are no trees in close proximity to the building and since the area where the orangery would be sited is already paved, then no vegetation would have to be removed as a result.

The immediately surrounding land is grass which is mown or grazed and is therefore of low ecological value.

As the farm shop infills the area between Nabbs Farm and the residential properties along Walmersley Road, Falshaw's Farm Shop is not an isolated development within the countryside. It is instead part of this cluster of buildings. Nevertheless, its surroundings are rural and the wider character of the area is critical to protect. This is why the proposed extension is not excessive and its materials are reflective of the broader environment.

Any impacts would therefore be minimal in landscape terms on the appearance, character and setting of the locality.

Sustainable Development

The proposed orangery would be a sustainable form of development constructed from oak sourced from well managed sustainable and renewable forests, whilst the slates used on the roof would be reclaimed. The traditional construction method relies less on the use of modern power tools and would allow the structure to be more easily dismantled and the materials re-used elsewhere in the future if necessary. Therefore, the construction method and materials to be used are in themselves highly sustainable.

Design details such as wide opening bi-fold doors provide natural and flexible ventilation which is more environmentally sustainable than air conditioning for example. This will enable the area to be kept cool in summer months in a way that meets the ambitions of the NPPF as outlined in Chapter 14. Furthermore, argon filled double glazing will provide a high level of insulation, preventing heat loss during the winter. These measures will ensure that the development is less reliant upon greenhouse gases as encouraged by paragraph 152 of the NPPF.

Surface water drainage would employ sustainable methods, including the installation of soakaways if ground conditions allow. This would enable excess runoff to easily infiltrate the water table.

As discussed above, the site is readily accessible to the public despite its rural location, being well connected via public transport and through the extensive public right of way network. Therefore, whilst the NPPF accepts in paragraph 85 that essential areas that contribute to local business needs in rural areas may not necessarily be readily accessible to the public, this is not the case here. For a rural location, Falshaw's Farm Shop is well connected and successful as a result of this. The proposed extension will help this level of success continue, supporting a local business and fundamental part of the rural economy.

Conclusions

The above assessment demonstrates that the nature of this proposed orangery extension is appropriate in principle in this location and that the design, layout, construction and appearance of the proposal would not unduly harm the character, appearance or setting of this site within the wider rural area. The use of natural materials like timber would be appropriate to this location.

The proposed use of the orangery is a continuation of the existing Falshaw's Farm Shop business which has provided a successful form of agricultural diversification as encouraged through relevant development plan policies and the NPPF. The site is well placed in a sustainable location to enable customers to travel from further afield whilst still playing a role in and supporting the local community.

The existing off-road parking area is already sufficient enough to cater for the customers which Falshaw's Farm Shop receives and it is unlikely that the proposed development would result in an intensification of the site. There would be no undue harm caused to the setting with no areas of planting removed. Furthermore, the proposed development would provide a sightlier permanent solution to a temporary marquee erected in 2020 as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic which has seen many local residents supporting Falshaw's Farm Shop and thus Nabbs Farm.

This is a sustainable form of development that fully accords with Local Plan Policy GB6 and the requirements of the NPPF. In accordance with the presumption in favour of such development as outlaid by paragraph 11 of the NPPF, and the significant weight afforded to aiding the rural economy in paragraph 84, it is respectfully requested that this application be approved.