

## 3581 Reddish Farm

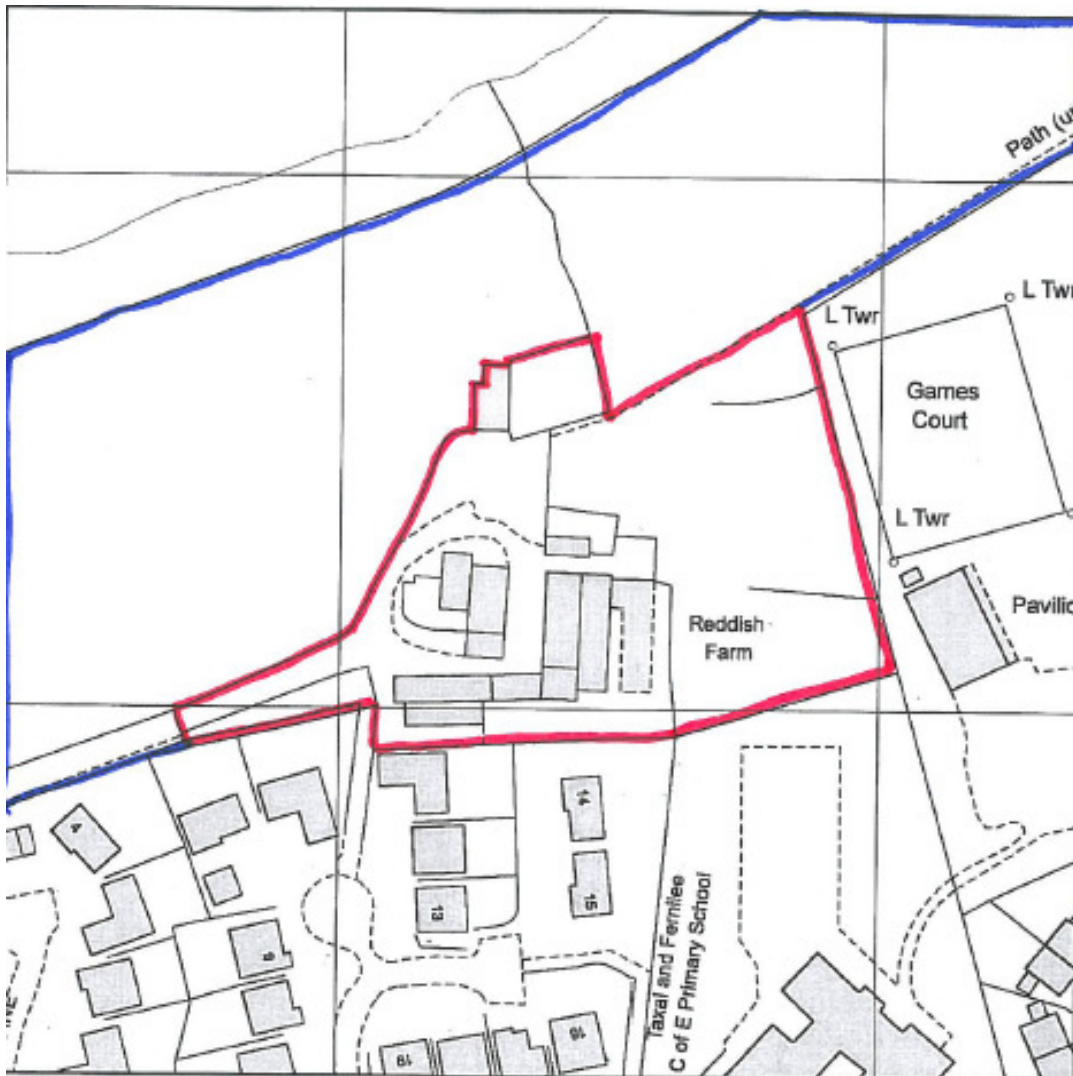
### Design and Access Statement

This report has been prepared to support of planning application for barn conversions and four new dwellings at Reddish Farm, Reddish Lane, Whaley Bridge.

#### Location

The site falls within the built-up area of Whaley Bridge adjacent to open countryside and overlooking Toddbrook Reservoir. It sits adjacent to a residential housing estate and close to a primary school and recreational ground.

Between the farm buildings and the recreational area is an area of open grassland which is also within Whaley Bridge built-up area.



Site Location

## Site - Context

### History

Reddish Farm ceased operating as a farm for many years. The original farm was a dairy farm, with a small dairy which processed milk on site for delivery to the local community. Since the 1960s the farm ceased operating as a dairy farm and was used as a base for Slack's Dairy where imported milk was processed.

There is a history of residential development on the site. The fields surrounding the farm were sold off to the council in the 1960s for housing land. Later, in the 1980s, the fields immediately around the farm buildings were granted permission for residential development.

The farmhouse was occupied by Mr Slack throughout his life. The farm has been unoccupied since Mr Slack's death. There have been no previous planning applications for the site.

### Existing Site

The farm is in a beautiful setting with views stretching across the open meadows. It provides a walking route from the local area to the town centre along footpaths leading to the recreational area. Reddish Lane is a Public Right of Way which forms part of the Mid Shires Way. There is a public right of way from Mereside Gardens, which leads via a stile onto the side of Unit 6. This path will be reconfigured to lead forwards to join the access road, giving access to the existing right of way.

The site is approached via Reddish Lane, which opens onto meadows with views of the reservoir and hills beyond. The road is single track, bounded by a stone wall and mature trees to the left, and a ditch to the right. The proposals include filling of this ditch to widen the access road without removing the wall or causing damage to the trees.

The farm is bounded by residential development and included within the boundary of Whaley Bridge. The farmhouse and buildings form an isolated agricultural group within a residential area. The area of land associated with the farm is 4.26 hectares which is not enough land to support a farm business. This land is currently used by Overton Hall Farm for summer grazing.

The existing barns are all "tied" shippens, in that they require the cows to be tied at the neck – these do not meet current animal welfare standards. There are no modern agricultural buildings on the site. The barns are not large enough to store farm machinery. The close proximity of houses to the farm (20ft away) precludes the keeping of livestock due to flies, noise and smells

which would upset the residents. A well used public footpath also runs though the farm yard. Therefore the farm is unviable.

- The buildings are not listed
- The site is not in a conservation area.
- The site is not in a flood zone.
- There are no Tree Protection Orders affecting the site.
- The site is connected to mains sewerage and power supplies.

## **Existing Buildings**

The existing buildings on the site comprise a stone farmhouse and a series of barns and outbuildings built in coursed natural gritstone with stone tile, slate or corrugated roof sheeting. The barns vary in height with some two storey structures enclosing the courtyard with single storey additions beyond. The barns are nineteenth century or older with traditional agricultural features, including stone steps and stone tile roofs. A small two-storey barn has evidence of residential use with the provision of stone chimneys at the gable ends.

The existing farmhouse is constructed in natural coursed gritstone with a stone tile roof. It occupies a central position within the farmyard and is surrounded in part by a low stone wall which defines its curtilage.

The farmhouse is a utilitarian dwelling and does not take advantage of views towards the reservoir, but faces the farmyard. It has not been updated since the 1960s. The house is entered off the narrow space between the house and the barns through a lean-to building which also houses the dairy. This lean-to further compromises the narrow space between the buildings. The single storey barns to the South of the house had been used as residential storage and garages for the house.

The farm buildings also include a separate stone garage/implement shed situated towards the reservoir, which sits within the curtilage of the farmyard, but falls outside the built-up area boundary into open countryside. There is a large open hayloft behind the barns which will be removed.

## **Supporting Information**

A Structural Survey of the barn buildings has been completed and the report is included with this submission.

An Ecological Survey of site has been completed and the report is included with this submission. There was no evidence of bat roosting activity in the buildings.

The recommendations will be incorporated into the development. Bat boxes and bird boxes will be installed and mature trees and hedges will be maintained. Plants and shrubs which encourage insects and birds, noted in Appendix 3 of the Ecologist's report, will be included in the soft landscaping scheme for the communal areas.

A Tree Survey has been completed and the report is included with this submission.



## Design Approach

### Site

A distinctive quality of this site is the setting with views across the meadows towards the reservoir beyond. New openings have been inserted into the house and barns, positioned to take advantage of the views and direct interest away from adjoining properties.

The new dwellings have been positioned to allow each dwelling to enjoy the best views possible of the surrounding setting while allowing existing views from the houses beyond the development to be maintained.

The existing complex has a strong sense of enclosure provided by the buildings themselves and existing traditional stone boundary walls. This sense of enclosure has been retained and enhanced within the proposed conversion and created within the area of the new dwellings.

The courtyard between the Farmhouse and Barns is deemed to be too narrow for regular vehicle use, so a road has been provided to give access to garaging at the rear. This allows the courtyard to remain open as a shared pedestrian access for the barns.

The new barn outbuildings and new dwellings form a second courtyard, with a shared surface for pedestrians, access and parking. This will be wide enough to allow for views across the landscape and prevent problems of overlooking but should have an agricultural character similar to that of a mews or stable yard. Hard landscape textures will delineate areas of different use, such as parking, entrances, paths to gates etc.

Garages are accommodated beside garden stores to form a stable like building with a less domestic appearance, in response to planning officer comments. This linked outbuilding screens the private gardens from view maintaining the agricultural feel of the common areas. This same approach has been used in the setting out and design of the new dwellings. The proposals include linked houses with attached garages rather than detached dwellings to retain the sense of enclosure and the agricultural character of the complex.

The road leading to the site will be tarmac with rows of stone setts to mark the entrance of the site and to from transition strips to slow vehicles down on approach. The access route within the development will be finished in crush gritstone with amenity areas provided with stone flags and the courtyard areas provided with stone setts, as noted on the proposed site plan, drawing no. 3581/06. The courtyards between the barns and the farmhouse and the barns and the new dwellings will use differing textures of hard landscaping to demarcate entrances, parking areas etc. to form a non-uniform organic surface. These hard landscaped enclosed area will be softened by shrubs in stone troughs or beds.

With regard to the other local residents, the proposals seek to maintain the enjoyment of the public routes though the site, while introducing some screening and higher boundary walls for the privacy of the dwellings. The existing stone boundary stone walls will be maintained at 1.2m where views are required from rear gardens and 1.8m high stone walls will be used where privacy is required. A landscaped strip will be retained against boundary walls of gardens to soften the development.

### Existing Farm Buildings

As the farm buildings are closely spaced, with a relatively small central courtyard, it was deemed more appropriate to provide six small dwellings with modest gardens, rather than two or three

larger ones. While the design respects the character of the original buildings, the conversions take a contemporary approach in some areas. The agricultural feel and character is maintained within the courtyard setting while the treatment of the areas facing away from the courtyard have more glazed areas and rooflights. The same materials are used in the extensions and alterations as the existing buildings, with stone walls and slate or stone tile roofs.

New openings are proposed where required to avoid conflicts of overlooking, provide good natural light and views to habitable rooms. Care has been taken that these add to, rather than detract from, the character of the development.

### **Unit 1**

The existing walled orchard adjacent to Unit 1 will be retained and incorporated as a private garden. A detached garage is to be incorporated into the boundary wall and contained within the orchard to reduce the impact on the countryside.

All other land around the rear of the barn, beyond the built-up area boundary is retained as agricultural land, although access would be required to maintain the building. The remains of a pump house to the rear of this unit is to be retained and reused as a garden store with roof deck adjacent to the living area above.

### **Unit 2**

Unit 2 is a charming two storey stone building which appears to have been built as a small cottage. It has a chimney and stone steps leading to the first floor. A large lean-to shelter runs along the rear and side of the building, which has been incorporated into the new dwelling as a glazed garden room. The existing features will be retained in the conversion and extension scheme.

The proximity of Unit 3 has caused a careful approach to the space between the two dwellings.

### **Units 3 and 4**

A new cat-slide roof is to replace the rear pitched roof of Units 3 and 4 to avoid the valley gutter. The ridge of the existing barn has been raised slightly to achieve an adequate pitch on the adjoining cat-slide. The rooms below the new roof at the rear will be contemporary in feel with large glazed areas and roof glazing. Garages have been introduced at the rear within blocks of outbuildings, providing walled gardens for the barns.

### **Unit 5 and 6**

Unit 5 is a two storey dwelling with a detached single garage to the rear accommodated in the corner barn. Unit 6 is single storey, with a single detached garage accessed from the front of the dwelling although the existing footpath access will be diverted to allow a private parking area to the side.

## **Farmhouse**

With the conversion of the barn buildings, the objective of the alterations for the farmhouse was to 'turn the house around' and focus the activity within the house away from the barns, towards the private garden to the east. The living and dining rooms will face the rear garden; the windows onto the farmyard will be obscured glass to prevent overlooking between the house and the barns. New windows are proposed with views towards the reservoir; a garden room has been added to provide a sunlit room.

The lean-to dairy which includes the house entry will be removed to improve the space outside the barns. A new attached garage and new entrance will reduce the need for access to the 'front' of the house which is overlooked by the barns. There will be no door on the barn side.

These additions and amendments could be deemed to be permitted development, as they do not extend beyond the principal elevation of the house. However, as the main approach to the development is from the rear of the farmhouse, the proposals for the house have been included in this submission.

The existing stone wall will be retained on the boundary and raised where required to achieve a private amenity space to the rear of the house.

## **New Dwellings on Adjacent Land**

The land adjacent to the farm buildings is also within the built-up area of Whaley Bridge therefore, there should be no objection to the new dwellings in principle. The new-build elements of the proposals draw references from the existing barns and farmhouse to create a consistent character, with an agricultural feel and are designed to look like an extension of the farmyard rather than new detached dwellings.

The houses are grouped together around a shared courtyard space, with paving textures highlighting ownership boundaries. The narrow footprint of the houses refer to barn buildings, being attached in rows with simple gabled roofs.

The materials proposed are traditional and will match the converted farm buildings with similar details, such as a simple eaves, braced and ledged doors and oak framed glazing.

As the access to the new dwellings will be through the farmyard, the total number of dwellings is limited to four, constructed in two blocks. The access to these houses is shared with Units 2-5. A small amount of extra parking space will be enclosed within the new courtyard, but the sense of enclosure between the houses should discourage members of the public from parking within the development.

## **Residential Amenity**

Within the development care has been taken to avoid overlooking and provide private amenity areas for each dwelling.

The position of the habitable rooms within the barns and the farmhouse help to avoid overlooking and enhance privacy. Bathrooms and circulation spaces are directed towards the courtyard while bedrooms face onto private gardens wherever possible. New window openings have been formed in a staggered arrangement between dwellings to allow plain glazing to be used in some courtyard windows.

The southern boundary of the site is adjoined by residential properties on Mereside Gardens. Proposed Unit 6, has a common boundary with No.11, is single storey and will have a 1.8m high boundary fence and therefore should not cause as loss of privacy or amenity to the existing dwelling.

## **Landscape**

The existing landscape of the farm and buildings is a mixture of hard surfaces with lawned areas, with stone field boundaries. Mature trees line the unadopted access road and are grouped around Unit 1.

The large mature trees along the access road will be retained, while a selection of self-seeded trees immediately adjacent to Unit 1 will be removed and the orchard beside it will be thinned.

An indicative hard and soft landscape scheme is shown on the proposed Site Plan 3581/06, using the existing landscape elements to maintain the agricultural character of the approach and the common areas of the development. Private gardens will be enclosed by stone walls or screened by garages. The new stone boundary walls will be softened by grass verges and shrub planting.

## **Access**

### **Existing Access**

The access to the site is via Reddish Lane, which is unadopted and single vehicle width.

The Public Right of Way WHA 470 shares this access and forms part of the Mid Shires Way. Public Right of Way WHA 471 runs to the side of Unit 6 to connect to Mereside Gardens.

The farmyard provides turning space for vehicles.

### **Proposed Access**

The access road to the farmyard is an important amenity for local residents, providing access to a footpath along the side of the reservoir to a recreational area. The footpath is to be retained as existing without diversion; the boundary walls of the dwellings bordering the footpath have been drawn back to retain some of the existing openness.

The proposals includes the filling of a ditch to widen the access road without removing the wall or causing damage to these important landscape trees. This is to retain as much of the existing character of the site as possible, while creating adequate means of access to the new dwellings.

The proposals will comply with requirements set out Part M of the building regulations, with at least one level threshold per dwelling and ground level toilets.

## **Planning Policies**

### **Affordable Housing – H9**

As Whaley Bridge has a population greater than 3,000, the threshold for provision of affordable housing is an area of 0.5 hectares or more of 15 dwellings or more.

Permission is sought for the creation of 10 new dwellings. The area of the development for change of use, excluding the farmhouse and garden curtilage is 4660sqm (0.46 hectares), which is under the affordable housing threshold.

Therefore no affordable housing is required under the terms of policy H9. It should be noted that the conversions include a mix of smaller dwelling sizes, including two and three bedroom units.

### **Sustainability**

The development site is within the built up area of Whaley Bridge, close to schools and recreational area, within walking distance of the town centre and close to local bus stops. Therefore the re-use of these buildings for residential purposes in this location is considered to be a good use of existing resources to provide housing in a sustainable location close to existing services and transport routes.



## Impact on Open Countryside

As the development site is on the boundary of open countryside, measures have been included within the design to reduce the impact of the conversions and the new buildings. The existing mature trees lining the access road and the side and rear boundary of Unit 1 will not change as a result of the development. Therefore the impact on the countryside should be minimal.

## Consultation

### Local Planning Authority

A pre- application meeting was held on 19 October 2011 with Principal Planning Officer, Mrs Elizabeth Pleasant. The meeting was followed by letter, EP/PAD/2010/0087 setting out conclusions and advice in response to the proposals tabled. The comments and advice given have been taken on board in the design development of the proposals and incorporated in this report.

### Proposals in Principle

Elizabeth Pleasant (EP) confirmed that as barns 2-6 are within the built-up area boundary of Whaley Bridge and on previously developed land, she had no concerns with the proposals to convert the barns to residential units. Barn 1 is outside the built-up area of Whaley Bridge but EP confirmed that it makes logical sense to include this unit within the proposals, although more care should be taken in the treatment of this unit.

EP confirmed that there are no objections to the proposals to the farmhouse, comprising removal of extensions and the addition of a new attached double garage and garden room.

EP confirmed that as the land adjacent to the farm building is also within the built-up area of Whaley Bridge and in a sustainable location, there should be no objection to new dwellings in principle. The number of dwellings would be constrained by the highways access and substantial improvements to the access would be required to take account of the additional traffic.

### Highways – Initial Comments

Elizabeth Pleasant (EP) confirmed that she had reviewed the proposals with Highways. She noted that there was adequate parking on the site for the units but questioned the need for separate visitor parking bays. *These have been removed from the scheme.*

The Highways Officer advised that passing spaces should be provided on the access route to the site. EP suggested that the stone walling and the trees should be retained along the access road and that new passing spaces be located away from existing trees. *The proposals include the widening of Reddish Lane along its length in lieu of passing spaces.*

Planning consent exists for the construction of garages on land adjacent to the access road. Approval was given for 8 garages, only one of which has been built. The applicants have offered to exchange this planning consent for garages attached to the new dwellings.

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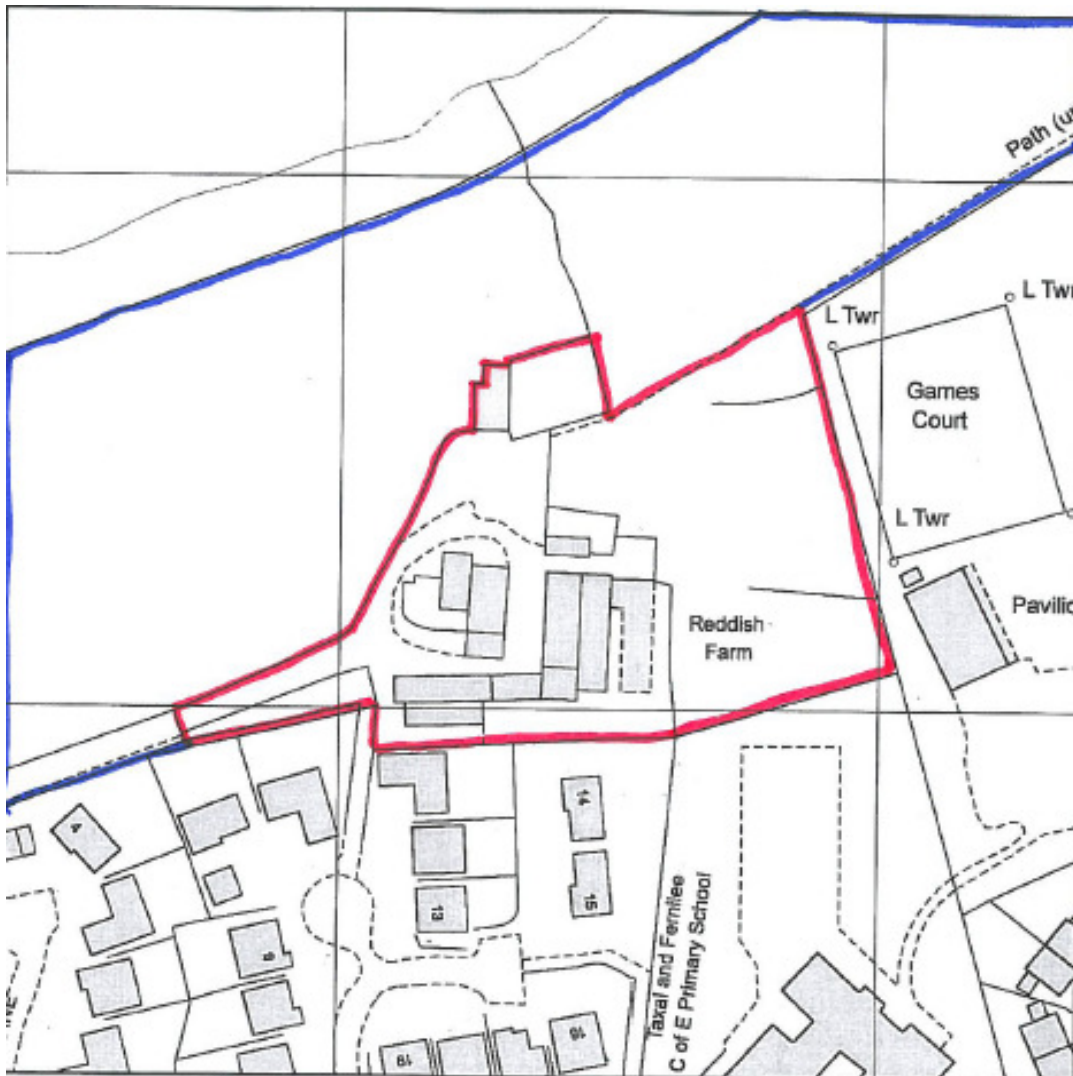
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#### Location

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Between the farm buildings and the recreational area is an area of open grassland which is also within Whaley Bridge built-up area.



Site Location

## Site - Context

### History

Reddish Farm ceased operating as a farm for many years. The original farm was a dairy farm, with a small dairy which processed milk on site for delivery to the local community. Since the 1960s the farm ceased operating as a dairy farm and was used as a base for Slack's Dairy where imported milk was processed.

There is a history of residential development on the site. The fields surrounding the farm were sold off to the council in the 1960s for housing land. Later, in the 1980s, the fields immediately around the farm buildings were granted permission for residential development.

The farmhouse was occupied by Mr Slack throughout his life. The farm has been unoccupied since Mr Slack's death. There have been no previous planning applications for the site.

### Existing Site

The farm is in a beautiful setting with views stretching across the open meadows. It provides a walking route from the local area to the town centre along footpaths leading to the recreational area. Reddish Lane is a Public Right of Way which forms part of the Mid Shires Way. There is a public right of way from Mereside Gardens, which leads via a stile onto the side of Unit 6. This path will be reconfigured to lead forwards to join the access road, giving access to the existing right of way.

The site is approached via Reddish Lane, which opens onto meadows with views of the reservoir and hills beyond. The road is single track, bounded by a stone wall and mature trees to the left, and a ditch to the right. The proposals include filling of this ditch to widen the access road without removing the wall or causing damage to the trees.

The farm is bounded by residential development and included within the boundary of Whaley Bridge. The farmhouse and buildings form an isolated agricultural group within a residential area. The area of land associated with the farm is 4.26 hectares which is not enough land to support a farm business. This land is currently used by Overton Hall Farm for summer grazing.

The existing barns are all "tied" shippens, in that they require the cows to be tied at the neck – these do not meet current animal welfare standards. There are no modern agricultural buildings on the site. The barns are not large enough to store farm machinery. The close proximity of houses to the farm (20ft away) precludes the keeping of livestock due to flies, noise and smells

which would upset the residents. A well used public footpath also runs though the farm yard. Therefore the farm is unviable.

- The buildings are not listed
- The site is not in a conservation area.
- The site is not in a flood zone.
- There are no Tree Protection Orders affecting the site.
- The site is connected to mains sewerage and power supplies.

## **Existing Buildings**

The existing buildings on the site comprise a stone farmhouse and a series of barns and outbuildings built in coursed natural gritstone with stone tile, slate or corrugated roof sheeting. The barns vary in height with some two storey structures enclosing the courtyard with single storey additions beyond. The barns are nineteenth century or older with traditional agricultural features, including stone steps and stone tile roofs. A small two-storey barn has evidence of residential use with the provision of stone chimneys at the gable ends.

The existing farmhouse is constructed in natural coursed gritstone with a stone tile roof. It occupies a central position within the farmyard and is surrounded in part by a low stone wall which defines its curtilage.

The farmhouse is a utilitarian dwelling and does not take advantage of views towards the reservoir, but faces the farmyard. It has not been updated since the 1960s. The house is entered off the narrow space between the house and the barns through a lean-to building which also houses the dairy. This lean-to further compromises the narrow space between the buildings. The single storey barns to the South of the house had been used as residential storage and garages for the house.

The farm buildings also include a separate stone garage/implement shed situated towards the reservoir, which sits within the curtilage of the farmyard, but falls outside the built-up area boundary into open countryside. There is a large open hayloft behind the barns which will be removed.

## **Supporting Information**

A Structural Survey of the barn buildings has been completed and the report is included with this submission.

An Ecological Survey of site has been completed and the report is included with this submission. There was no evidence of bat roosting activity in the buildings.

The recommendations will be incorporated into the development. Bat boxes and bird boxes will be installed and mature trees and hedges will be maintained. Plants and shrubs which encourage insects and birds, noted in Appendix 3 of the Ecologist's report, will be included in the soft landscaping scheme for the communal areas.

A Tree Survey has been completed and the report is included with this submission.



## Design Approach

### Site

A distinctive quality of this site is the setting with views across the meadows towards the reservoir beyond. New openings have been inserted into the house and barns, positioned to take advantage of the views and direct interest away from adjoining properties.

The new dwellings have been positioned to allow each dwelling to enjoy the best views possible of the surrounding setting while allowing existing views from the houses beyond the development to be maintained.

The existing complex has a strong sense of enclosure provided by the buildings themselves and existing traditional stone boundary walls. This sense of enclosure has been retained and enhanced within the proposed conversion and created within the area of the new dwellings.

The courtyard between the Farmhouse and Barns is deemed to be too narrow for regular vehicle use, so a road has been provided to give access to garaging at the rear. This allows the courtyard to remain open as a shared pedestrian access for the barns.

The new barn outbuildings and new dwellings form a second courtyard, with a shared surface for pedestrians, access and parking. This will be wide enough to allow for views across the landscape and prevent problems of overlooking but should have an agricultural character similar to that of a mews or stable yard. Hard landscape textures will delineate areas of different use, such as parking, entrances, paths to gates etc.

Garages are accommodated beside garden stores to form a stable like building with a less domestic appearance, in response to planning officer comments. This linked outbuilding screens the private gardens from view maintaining the agricultural feel of the common areas. This same approach has been used in the setting out and design of the new dwellings. The proposals include linked houses with attached garages rather than detached dwellings to retain the sense of enclosure and the agricultural character of the complex.

The road leading to the site will be tarmac with rows of stone setts to mark the entrance of the site and to from transition strips to slow vehicles down on approach. The access route within the development will be finished in crush gritstone with amenity areas provided with stone flags and the courtyard areas provided with stone setts, as noted on the proposed site plan, drawing no. 3581/06. The courtyards between the barns and the farmhouse and the barns and the new dwellings will use differing textures of hard landscaping to demarcate entrances, parking areas etc. to form a non-uniform organic surface. These hard landscaped enclosed area will be softened by shrubs in stone troughs or beds.

With regard to the other local residents, the proposals seek to maintain the enjoyment of the public routes though the site, while introducing some screening and higher boundary walls for the privacy of the dwellings. The existing stone boundary stone walls will be maintained at 1.2m where views are required from rear gardens and 1.8m high stone walls will be used where privacy is required. A landscaped strip will be retained against boundary walls of gardens to soften the development.

### Existing Farm Buildings

As the farm buildings are closely spaced, with a relatively small central courtyard, it was deemed more appropriate to provide six small dwellings with modest gardens, rather than two or three

larger ones. While the design respects the character of the original buildings, the conversions take a contemporary approach in some areas. The agricultural feel and character is maintained within the courtyard setting while the treatment of the areas facing away from the courtyard have more glazed areas and rooflights. The same materials are used in the extensions and alterations as the existing buildings, with stone walls and slate or stone tile roofs.

New openings are proposed where required to avoid conflicts of overlooking, provide good natural light and views to habitable rooms. Care has been taken that these add to, rather than detract from, the character of the development.

### **Unit 1**

The existing walled orchard adjacent to Unit 1 will be retained and incorporated as a private garden. A detached garage is to be incorporated into the boundary wall and contained within the orchard to reduce the impact on the countryside.

All other land around the rear of the barn, beyond the built-up area boundary is retained as agricultural land, although access would be required to maintain the building. The remains of a pump house to the rear of this unit is to be retained and reused as a garden store with roof deck adjacent to the living area above.

### **Unit 2**

Unit 2 is a charming two storey stone building which appears to have been built as a small cottage. It has a chimney and stone steps leading to the first floor. A large lean-to shelter runs along the rear and side of the building, which has been incorporated into the new dwelling as a glazed garden room. The existing features will be retained in the conversion and extension scheme.

The proximity of Unit 3 has caused a careful approach to the space between the two dwellings.

### **Units 3 and 4**

A new cat-slide roof is to replace the rear pitched roof of Units 3 and 4 to avoid the valley gutter. The ridge of the existing barn has been raised slightly to achieve an adequate pitch on the adjoining cat-slide. The rooms below the new roof at the rear will be contemporary in feel with large glazed areas and roof glazing. Garages have been introduced at the rear within blocks of outbuildings, providing walled gardens for the barns.

### **Unit 5 and 6**

Unit 5 is a two storey dwelling with a detached single garage to the rear accommodated in the corner barn. Unit 6 is single storey, with a single detached garage accessed from the front of the dwelling although the existing footpath access will be diverted to allow a private parking area to the side.

## **Farmhouse**

With the conversion of the barn buildings, the objective of the alterations for the farmhouse was to 'turn the house around' and focus the activity within the house away from the barns, towards the private garden to the east. The living and dining rooms will face the rear garden; the windows onto the farmyard will be obscured glass to prevent overlooking between the house and the barns. New windows are proposed with views towards the reservoir; a garden room has been added to provide a sunlit room.

The lean-to dairy which includes the house entry will be removed to improve the space outside the barns. A new attached garage and new entrance will reduce the need for access to the 'front' of the house which is overlooked by the barns. There will be no door on the barn side.

These additions and amendments could be deemed to be permitted development, as they do not extend beyond the principal elevation of the house. However, as the main approach to the development is from the rear of the farmhouse, the proposals for the house have been included in this submission.

The existing stone wall will be retained on the boundary and raised where required to achieve a private amenity space to the rear of the house.

## **New Dwellings on Adjacent Land**

The land adjacent to the farm buildings is also within the built-up area of Whaley Bridge therefore, there should be no objection to the new dwellings in principle. The new-build elements of the proposals draw references from the existing barns and farmhouse to create a consistent character, with an agricultural feel and are designed to look like an extension of the farmyard rather than new detached dwellings.

The houses are grouped together around a shared courtyard space, with paving textures highlighting ownership boundaries. The narrow footprint of the houses refer to barn buildings, being attached in rows with simple gabled roofs.

The materials proposed are traditional and will match the converted farm buildings with similar details, such as a simple eaves, braced and ledged doors and oak framed glazing.

As the access to the new dwellings will be through the farmyard, the total number of dwellings is limited to four, constructed in two blocks. The access to these houses is shared with Units 2-5. A small amount of extra parking space will be enclosed within the new courtyard, but the sense of enclosure between the houses should discourage members of the public from parking within the development.

## **Residential Amenity**

Within the development care has been taken to avoid overlooking and provide private amenity areas for each dwelling.

The position of the habitable rooms within the barns and the farmhouse help to avoid overlooking and enhance privacy. Bathrooms and circulation spaces are directed towards the courtyard while bedrooms face onto private gardens wherever possible. New window openings have been formed in a staggered arrangement between dwellings to allow plain glazing to be used in some courtyard windows.

The southern boundary of the site is adjoined by residential properties on Mereside Gardens. Proposed Unit 6, has a common boundary with No.11, is single storey and will have a 1.8m high boundary fence and therefore should not cause as loss of privacy or amenity to the existing dwelling.

## **Landscape**

The existing landscape of the farm and buildings is a mixture of hard surfaces with lawned areas, with stone field boundaries. Mature trees line the unadopted access road and are grouped around Unit 1.

The large mature trees along the access road will be retained, while a selection of self-seeded trees immediately adjacent to Unit 1 will be removed and the orchard beside it will be thinned.



An indicative hard and soft landscape scheme is shown on the proposed Site Plan 3581/06, using the existing landscape elements to maintain the agricultural character of the approach and the common areas of the development. Private gardens will be enclosed by stone walls or screened by garages. The new stone boundary walls will be softened by grass verges and shrub planting.

## **Access**

### **Existing Access**

The access to the site is via Reddish Lane, which is unadopted and single vehicle width.

The Public Right of Way WHA 470 shares this access and forms part of the Mid Shires Way. Public Right of Way WHA 471 runs to the side of Unit 6 to connect to Mereside Gardens.

The farmyard provides turning space for vehicles.

### **Proposed Access**

The access road to the farmyard is an important amenity for local residents, providing access to a footpath along the side of the reservoir to a recreational area. The footpath is to be retained as existing without diversion; the boundary walls of the dwellings bordering the footpath have been drawn back to retain some of the existing openness.

The proposals includes the filling of a ditch to widen the access road without removing the wall or causing damage to these important landscape trees. This is to retain as much of the existing character of the site as possible, while creating adequate means of access to the new dwellings.

The proposals will comply with requirements set out Part M of the building regulations, with at least one level threshold per dwelling and ground level toilets.

## **Planning Policies**

### **Affordable Housing – H9**

As Whaley Bridge has a population greater than 3,000, the threshold for provision of affordable housing is an area of 0.5 hectares or more of 15 dwellings or more.

Permission is sought for the creation of 10 new dwellings. The area of the development for change of use, excluding the farmhouse and garden curtilage is 4660sqm (0.46 hectares), which is under the affordable housing threshold.

Therefore no affordable housing is required under the terms of policy H9. It should be noted that the conversions include a mix of smaller dwelling sizes, including two and three bedroom units.

### **Sustainability**

The development site is within the built up area of Whaley Bridge, close to schools and recreational area, within walking distance of the town centre and close to local bus stops. Therefore the re-use of these buildings for residential purposes in this location is considered to be a good use of existing resources to provide housing in a sustainable location close to existing services and transport routes.

## Impact on Open Countryside

As the development site is on the boundary of open countryside, measures have been included within the design to reduce the impact of the conversions and the new buildings. The existing mature trees lining the access road and the side and rear boundary of Unit 1 will not change as a result of the development. Therefore the impact on the countryside should be minimal.

## Consultation

### Local Planning Authority

A pre- application meeting was held on 19 October 2011 with Principal Planning Officer, Mrs Elizabeth Pleasant. The meeting was followed by letter, EP/PAD/2010/0087 setting out conclusions and advice in response to the proposals tabled. The comments and advice given have been taken on board in the design development of the proposals and incorporated in this report.

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Elizabeth Pleasant (EP) confirmed that as barns 2-6 are within the built-up area boundary of Whaley Bridge and on previously developed land, she had no concerns with the proposals to convert the barns to residential units. Barn 1 is outside the built-up area of Whaley Bridge but EP confirmed that it makes logical sense to include this unit within the proposals, although more care should be taken in the treatment of this unit.

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Elizabeth Pleasant (EP) confirmed that she had reviewed the proposals with Highways. She noted that there was adequate parking on the site for the units but questioned the need for separate visitor parking bays. *These have been removed from the scheme.*

The Highways Officer advised that passing spaces should be provided on the access route to the site. EP suggested that the stone walling and the trees should be retained along the access road and that new passing spaces be located away from existing trees. *The proposals include the widening of Reddish Lane along its length in lieu of passing spaces.*

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## 3581 Reddish Farm

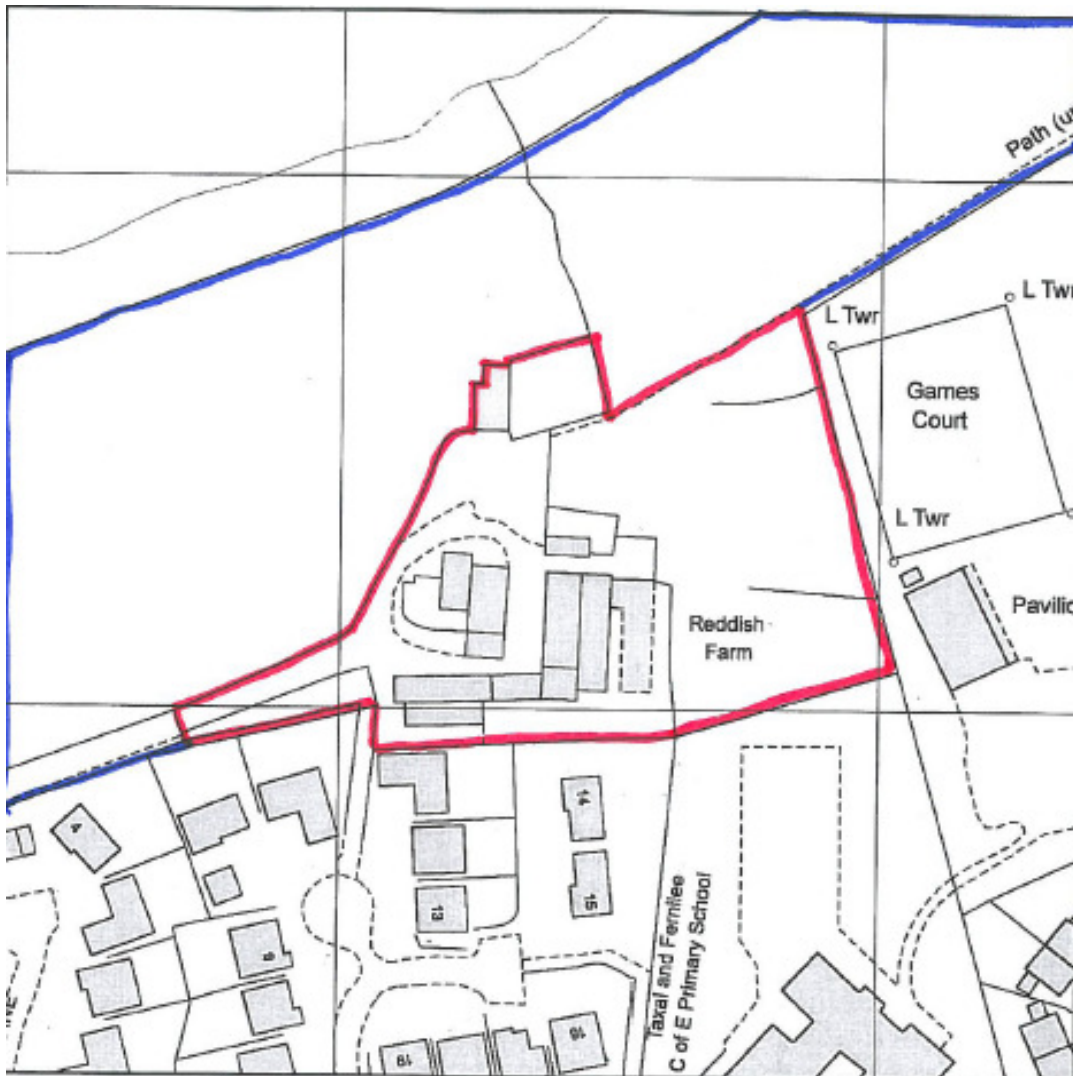
### Design and Access Statement

This report has been prepared to support of planning application for barn conversions and four new dwellings at Reddish Farm, Reddish Lane, Whaley Bridge.

#### Location

The site falls within the built-up area of Whaley Bridge adjacent to open countryside and overlooking Toddbrook Reservoir. It sits adjacent to a residential housing estate and close to a primary school and recreational ground.

Between the farm buildings and the recreational area is an area of open grassland which is also within Whaley Bridge built-up area.



Site Location

## Site - Context

### History

Reddish Farm ceased operating as a farm for many years. The original farm was a dairy farm, with a small dairy which processed milk on site for delivery to the local community. Since the 1960s the farm ceased operating as a dairy farm and was used as a base for Slack's Dairy where imported milk was processed.

There is a history of residential development on the site. The fields surrounding the farm were sold off to the council in the 1960s for housing land. Later, in the 1980s, the fields immediately around the farm buildings were granted permission for residential development.

The farmhouse was occupied by Mr Slack throughout his life. The farm has been unoccupied since Mr Slack's death. There have been no previous planning applications for the site.

### Existing Site

The farm is in a beautiful setting with views stretching across the open meadows. It provides a walking route from the local area to the town centre along footpaths leading to the recreational area. Reddish Lane is a Public Right of Way which forms part of the Mid Shires Way. There is a public right of way from Mereside Gardens, which leads via a stile onto the side of Unit 6. This path will be reconfigured to lead forwards to join the access road, giving access to the existing right of way.

The site is approached via Reddish Lane, which opens onto meadows with views of the reservoir and hills beyond. The road is single track, bounded by a stone wall and mature trees to the left, and a ditch to the right. The proposals include filling of this ditch to widen the access road without removing the wall or causing damage to the trees.

The farm is bounded by residential development and included within the boundary of Whaley Bridge. The farmhouse and buildings form an isolated agricultural group within a residential area. The area of land associated with the farm is 4.26 hectares which is not enough land to support a farm business. This land is currently used by Overton Hall Farm for summer grazing.

The existing barns are all "tied" shippens, in that they require the cows to be tied at the neck – these do not meet current animal welfare standards. There are no modern agricultural buildings on the site. The barns are not large enough to store farm machinery. The close proximity of houses to the farm (20ft away) precludes the keeping of livestock due to flies, noise and smells

which would upset the residents. A well used public footpath also runs though the farm yard. Therefore the farm is unviable.

- The buildings are not listed
- The site is not in a conservation area.
- The site is not in a flood zone.
- There are no Tree Protection Orders affecting the site.
- The site is connected to mains sewerage and power supplies.

## **Existing Buildings**

The existing buildings on the site comprise a stone farmhouse and a series of barns and outbuildings built in coursed natural gritstone with stone tile, slate or corrugated roof sheeting. The barns vary in height with some two storey structures enclosing the courtyard with single storey additions beyond. The barns are nineteenth century or older with traditional agricultural features, including stone steps and stone tile roofs. A small two-storey barn has evidence of residential use with the provision of stone chimneys at the gable ends.

The existing farmhouse is constructed in natural coursed gritstone with a stone tile roof. It occupies a central position within the farmyard and is surrounded in part by a low stone wall which defines its curtilage.

The farmhouse is a utilitarian dwelling and does not take advantage of views towards the reservoir, but faces the farmyard. It has not been updated since the 1960s. The house is entered off the narrow space between the house and the barns through a lean-to building which also houses the dairy. This lean-to further compromises the narrow space between the buildings. The single storey barns to the South of the house had been used as residential storage and garages for the house.

The farm buildings also include a separate stone garage/implement shed situated towards the reservoir, which sits within the curtilage of the farmyard, but falls outside the built-up area boundary into open countryside. There is a large open hayloft behind the barns which will be removed.

## **Supporting Information**

A Structural Survey of the barn buildings has been completed and the report is included with this submission.

An Ecological Survey of site has been completed and the report is included with this submission. There was no evidence of bat roosting activity in the buildings.

The recommendations will be incorporated into the development. Bat boxes and bird boxes will be installed and mature trees and hedges will be maintained. Plants and shrubs which encourage insects and birds, noted in Appendix 3 of the Ecologist's report, will be included in the soft landscaping scheme for the communal areas.

A Tree Survey has been completed and the report is included with this submission.



## Design Approach

### Site

A distinctive quality of this site is the setting with views across the meadows towards the reservoir beyond. New openings have been inserted into the house and barns, positioned to take advantage of the views and direct interest away from adjoining properties.

The new dwellings have been positioned to allow each dwelling to enjoy the best views possible of the surrounding setting while allowing existing views from the houses beyond the development to be maintained.

The existing complex has a strong sense of enclosure provided by the buildings themselves and existing traditional stone boundary walls. This sense of enclosure has been retained and enhanced within the proposed conversion and created within the area of the new dwellings.

The courtyard between the Farmhouse and Barns is deemed to be too narrow for regular vehicle use, so a road has been provided to give access to garaging at the rear. This allows the courtyard to remain open as a shared pedestrian access for the barns.

The new barn outbuildings and new dwellings form a second courtyard, with a shared surface for pedestrians, access and parking. This will be wide enough to allow for views across the landscape and prevent problems of overlooking but should have an agricultural character similar to that of a mews or stable yard. Hard landscape textures will delineate areas of different use, such as parking, entrances, paths to gates etc.

Garages are accommodated beside garden stores to form a stable like building with a less domestic appearance, in response to planning officer comments. This linked outbuilding screens the private gardens from view maintaining the agricultural feel of the common areas. This same approach has been used in the setting out and design of the new dwellings. The proposals include linked houses with attached garages rather than detached dwellings to retain the sense of enclosure and the agricultural character of the complex.

The road leading to the site will be tarmac with rows of stone setts to mark the entrance of the site and to from transition strips to slow vehicles down on approach. The access route within the development will be finished in crush gritstone with amenity areas provided with stone flags and the courtyard areas provided with stone setts, as noted on the proposed site plan, drawing no. 3581/06. The courtyards between the barns and the farmhouse and the barns and the new dwellings will use differing textures of hard landscaping to demarcate entrances, parking areas etc. to form a non-uniform organic surface. These hard landscaped enclosed area will be softened by shrubs in stone troughs or beds.

With regard to the other local residents, the proposals seek to maintain the enjoyment of the public routes though the site, while introducing some screening and higher boundary walls for the privacy of the dwellings. The existing stone boundary stone walls will be maintained at 1.2m where views are required from rear gardens and 1.8m high stone walls will be used where privacy is required. A landscaped strip will be retained against boundary walls of gardens to soften the development.

### Existing Farm Buildings

As the farm buildings are closely spaced, with a relatively small central courtyard, it was deemed more appropriate to provide six small dwellings with modest gardens, rather than two or three

larger ones. While the design respects the character of the original buildings, the conversions take a contemporary approach in some areas. The agricultural feel and character is maintained within the courtyard setting while the treatment of the areas facing away from the courtyard have more glazed areas and rooflights. The same materials are used in the extensions and alterations as the existing buildings, with stone walls and slate or stone tile roofs.

New openings are proposed where required to avoid conflicts of overlooking, provide good natural light and views to habitable rooms. Care has been taken that these add to, rather than detract from, the character of the development.

### **Unit 1**

The existing walled orchard adjacent to Unit 1 will be retained and incorporated as a private garden. A detached garage is to be incorporated into the boundary wall and contained within the orchard to reduce the impact on the countryside.

All other land around the rear of the barn, beyond the built-up area boundary is retained as agricultural land, although access would be required to maintain the building. The remains of a pump house to the rear of this unit is to be retained and reused as a garden store with roof deck adjacent to the living area above.

### **Unit 2**

Unit 2 is a charming two storey stone building which appears to have been built as a small cottage. It has a chimney and stone steps leading to the first floor. A large lean-to shelter runs along the rear and side of the building, which has been incorporated into the new dwelling as a glazed garden room. The existing features will be retained in the conversion and extension scheme.

The proximity of Unit 3 has caused a careful approach to the space between the two dwellings.

### **Units 3 and 4**

A new cat-slide roof is to replace the rear pitched roof of Units 3 and 4 to avoid the valley gutter. The ridge of the existing barn has been raised slightly to achieve an adequate pitch on the adjoining cat-slide. The rooms below the new roof at the rear will be contemporary in feel with large glazed areas and roof glazing. Garages have been introduced at the rear within blocks of outbuildings, providing walled gardens for the barns.

### **Unit 5 and 6**

Unit 5 is a two storey dwelling with a detached single garage to the rear accommodated in the corner barn. Unit 6 is single storey, with a single detached garage accessed from the front of the dwelling although the existing footpath access will be diverted to allow a private parking area to the side.

## **Farmhouse**

With the conversion of the barn buildings, the objective of the alterations for the farmhouse was to 'turn the house around' and focus the activity within the house away from the barns, towards the private garden to the east. The living and dining rooms will face the rear garden; the windows onto the farmyard will be obscured glass to prevent overlooking between the house and the barns. New windows are proposed with views towards the reservoir; a garden room has been added to provide a sunlit room.

The lean-to dairy which includes the house entry will be removed to improve the space outside the barns. A new attached garage and new entrance will reduce the need for access to the 'front' of the house which is overlooked by the barns. There will be no door on the barn side.



These additions and amendments could be deemed to be permitted development, as they do not extend beyond the principal elevation of the house. However, as the main approach to the development is from the rear of the farmhouse, the proposals for the house have been included in this submission.

The existing stone wall will be retained on the boundary and raised where required to achieve a private amenity space to the rear of the house.

## **New Dwellings on Adjacent Land**

The land adjacent to the farm buildings is also within the built-up area of Whaley Bridge therefore, there should be no objection to the new dwellings in principle. The new-build elements of the proposals draw references from the existing barns and farmhouse to create a consistent character, with an agricultural feel and are designed to look like an extension of the farmyard rather than new detached dwellings.

The houses are grouped together around a shared courtyard space, with paving textures highlighting ownership boundaries. The narrow footprint of the houses refer to barn buildings, being attached in rows with simple gabled roofs.

The materials proposed are traditional and will match the converted farm buildings with similar details, such as a simple eaves, braced and ledged doors and oak framed glazing.

As the access to the new dwellings will be through the farmyard, the total number of dwellings is limited to four, constructed in two blocks. The access to these houses is shared with Units 2-5. A small amount of extra parking space will be enclosed within the new courtyard, but the sense of enclosure between the houses should discourage members of the public from parking within the development.

## **Residential Amenity**

Within the development care has been taken to avoid overlooking and provide private amenity areas for each dwelling.

The position of the habitable rooms within the barns and the farmhouse help to avoid overlooking and enhance privacy. Bathrooms and circulation spaces are directed towards the courtyard while bedrooms face onto private gardens wherever possible. New window openings have been formed in a staggered arrangement between dwellings to allow plain glazing to be used in some courtyard windows.

The southern boundary of the site is adjoined by residential properties on Mereside Gardens. Proposed Unit 6, has a common boundary with No.11, is single storey and will have a 1.8m high boundary fence and therefore should not cause as loss of privacy or amenity to the existing dwelling.

## **Landscape**

The existing landscape of the farm and buildings is a mixture of hard surfaces with lawned areas, with stone field boundaries. Mature trees line the unadopted access road and are grouped around Unit 1.

The large mature trees along the access road will be retained, while a selection of self-seeded trees immediately adjacent to Unit 1 will be removed and the orchard beside it will be thinned.

An indicative hard and soft landscape scheme is shown on the proposed Site Plan 3581/06, using the existing landscape elements to maintain the agricultural character of the approach and the common areas of the development. Private gardens will be enclosed by stone walls or screened by garages. The new stone boundary walls will be softened by grass verges and shrub planting.

## **Access**

### **Existing Access**

The access to the site is via Reddish Lane, which is unadopted and single vehicle width.

The Public Right of Way WHA 470 shares this access and forms part of the Mid Shires Way. Public Right of Way WHA 471 runs to the side of Unit 6 to connect to Mereside Gardens.

The farmyard provides turning space for vehicles.

### **Proposed Access**

The access road to the farmyard is an important amenity for local residents, providing access to a footpath along the side of the reservoir to a recreational area. The footpath is to be retained as existing without diversion; the boundary walls of the dwellings bordering the footpath have been drawn back to retain some of the existing openness.

The proposals includes the filling of a ditch to widen the access road without removing the wall or causing damage to these important landscape trees. This is to retain as much of the existing character of the site as possible, while creating adequate means of access to the new dwellings.

The proposals will comply with requirements set out Part M of the building regulations, with at least one level threshold per dwelling and ground level toilets.

## **Planning Policies**

### **Affordable Housing – H9**

As Whaley Bridge has a population greater than 3,000, the threshold for provision of affordable housing is an area of 0.5 hectares or more of 15 dwellings or more.

Permission is sought for the creation of 10 new dwellings. The area of the development for change of use, excluding the farmhouse and garden curtilage is 4660sqm (0.46 hectares), which is under the affordable housing threshold.

Therefore no affordable housing is required under the terms of policy H9. It should be noted that the conversions include a mix of smaller dwelling sizes, including two and three bedroom units.

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