

Design and Access Statement

In respect of:

**Full Planning Application (Retrospective) for a
new Stable Block, Sand Paddock and associated
earthworks and landscaping at Will Hey Farm,
Watford Lane, New Mills, Derbyshire**

On behalf of:

Mr. and Mrs. Wilson

By:

e*SCAPE Urbanists Ltd.

March 2012

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u r b a n i s t s



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1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application (retrospective) for a new stable block, sand paddock and associated hard-standing and earthworks at Will Hey Farm, New Mills, Derbyshire. It has been prepared by e*SCAPE Urbanists on behalf of Mr. and Mrs. Wilson, owners of the site, in connection with two local businesses based at Will Hey Farm.
- 1.2 As part of the wider planning application, this Design and Access Statement should be read in conjunction with the following reports and drawings;
- Planning Statement prepared by e*SCAPE Urbanists
 - Landscape Appraisal prepared by e*SCAPE Urbanists

 - Site Plan and General Arrangement drawing Ref: 12-001-P001_RevB
 - Site Cross-Sections Ref: 12-001-P003_RevA
 - Streetscene along Watford Lane Ref: 12-001-P004_RevA
 - Stable Building Plans and Elevations Ref: 12-001-P005
 - Landscape Proposals Drawing Ref: 12-001-006
- 1.3 This statement is structured in four parts which are designed to reflect the guidance on design and access statements set out in circular 01/06 DCLG. Chapter 2 sets out the site context, Chapter 3 sets out the relevant design policy and design responses, whilst Chapter 4 explains the development parameters and access arrangements for the development.

Background to Development



Fig 1: Will Hey Farm B&B and horses

- 1.4 This is a retrospective planning application. The application is designed to support a small equine business operating from Will Hey Farm and a tourist Bed and Breakfast facility.
- 1.5 Kirsty Wilson Equine is concerned with the breaking and schooling of horses. The current stable facilities on site are too small for competition horses of 15 hands or larger. Thus new stable facilities are required to allow the business to grow. Currently the business operation is split between facilities Will Hey Farm and stables at Pott Shrigley. The design of the new stables is designed to specifically respond to the requirements (size and space) for larger horses.
- 1.6 Will Hey Farm Bed and Breakfast is another local business that provides for the local tourist trade. Given Will Hey Farm's proximity to the Pennine Bridleway and extensive network of bridleways in the area, the business models seeks to offer Bed and Breakfast with overnight livery for those exploring the Peaks on Horseback. Extra stable provision is required for the business to offer this service as the new stables will free up the existing stables (currently used by Kirsty Wilson Equine) specifically for this use.
- 1.7 The accompanying planning statement outlines further the sustainability and economic development credentials of this planning application, as well as the acceptability of these uses in planning terms.

Brief Site Description



Fig 2: Site location plan and views onto site from Watford Lane

- 1.8 The development site occupies 0.85 hectares of agricultural land currently used for the grazing of horses on the western edge of Will Hey Farm, New Mills. Will Hey Farm occupies a position at the northern-most point of Watford Lane as it runs northwards out of the settlement of New Mills.
- 1.9 The application site is situated just within the Green Belt along and is designated as Open Countryside. Will Hey Farm is one of a number of farmstead and other rural residential / agricultural premises set within a landscape of pastoral farming along the New Mills fringe.
- 1.10 The site does not lie within any area of special landscape value or nature conservation. The application site and wider farm sit on the hillside, with the ground level falling eastwards away from Will Hey Farm towards the Sett Valley. The site boundaries are marked by hedgerows, dotted with mature trees and local stone walling.

Development Scheme

- 1.11 The application seeks to deliver a single block of four stables and associated facilities to compliment those already provided at Will Hey Farm, to enable the growth the Equine Business. Drawing no. 12-001-P001_RevB; Site Plan and General Arrangement shows the planning application proposals in relation to the existing buildings and uses at Will Hey Farm.
- 1.12 The new stable block will be capable of accommodating 4 large horses, which will be set into the landscape to the west of Watford Lane behind a newly surfaced stable yard. There will also be associated groundwork's including the provision of an earthen ramp running up to a proposed sand paddock for breaking horses and isolating them when deemed necessary. This is positioned directly behind the stable but at an upper level.
- 1.13 To the north of the stable complete a new area of hardstanding is to be created. This will allow for the storage for 20 hay bales and provide a turning area for vehicles using both the Will hey Farm facilities, but also to the benefit of other users of Watford Lane. This is NOT a car parking area.

2.0 Site Context

Site and Situation



Fig 3: Interrelationship of the site with pre-existing buildings at Will Hey Farm

- 2.1 The application site has been chosen because of its interrelationship with the pre-existing buildings at Will Hey Farm (specifically the existing stables). The new development has been designed to relate to existing facilities (including the Bed and Breakfast opposite) but also to benefit from the existing accesses provided by Watford Lane. The site sits adjacent to residential and commercial development arranged along Watford Lane.
- 2.2 Will Hey Farm and the application site are located at the northern fringe of New Mills. New Mills provides the necessary social, community and economic infrastructure to support both businesses associated with this development. The Farm and the site are directly and visually connected to the northern edge of the settlement.
- 2.3 Neighbouring land uses include:
- Residential dwellings - specially a number of properties along Watford Lane.
 - A number of commercial and industrial buildings both accessed off Watford Lane and along the Valley floor to the east;
 - Bed and Breakfast (C1 Use Classes Order)
 - Surrounding agricultural landscape of open fields and pastures associated with the surrounding farmsteads, many used for the grazing of horses or sheep.

- 2.4 Will Hey Farm sits on the western slope of the Sett Valley and is approximately half way between the valley floor (and the river) and the ridge that is occupied by settlements - High Lees and Whitle - to the west. Further east the land rises into the Peak District National Park. The surrounding landscape also includes a number of electricity powerlines on both wooden poles and large pylons.
- 2.5 The site is within close proximity to tourist attractions such as; The Torrs Riverside Park, Sett Valley Trail, Waterside and Goytside Meadows Nature Reserves, Millennium Walkway and Heritage Centre. The site is **not** within or in close proximity to any area of area designated as having any landscape or ecological importance. The Whitle Conservation Area lies approximately 0.5 km to the west of the site, but as a result of the topography is not visible from the site or vice versa.



Fig 4: Neighboring Land Uses

Opportunities and Constraints offered by the Site

- 2.6 The site and its situation offer some significant design and landscape opportunities beyond those associated simply with ensuring sustainable economic development outlined in the Planning Statement. These include:
- The development sits within the visual envelope of the farmstead and other development along Watford Lane and the New Mills fringe;
 - The slope of landform allows for the development to be set below ground level, significantly minimising the effect on visual amenity;
 - The existing farmstead allows for range of agricultural diversification complimenting suitable rural development;
 - The existing access (Watford Lane) means that the development will not require any construction of additional routes or access points; and;
 - The bridleway and public footpaths make a tourism use appropriate and provide for the potential business growth.
- 2.7 The site, and design proposed, offers some constraints that have had to be overcome in developing the design. In summary these include:
- The open countryside and greenbelt location requires careful design and landscape solutions to be developed to limit visual/landscape impact;
 - Significant groundworks are required to ensure that maximum benefit can be taken from the topographical position; and the subterranean design;
 - Additional drainage will be required to create the sand paddock at the upper level;
 - There is a change in level from the stable block to the sand paddock and main field, which is not ideal in operational terms, but better reflects the landscape fabric.

3.0 Relevant Design Policy

- 3.1 This is not designed to be an exhaustive account of the plans and policies affecting this site, but rather, to highlight the key policies that are relevant to the design of this development. It is considered that this proposal accords with all relevant design guidance. This assessment focuses on Local and National Policy understanding that the East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy will soon be abolished. This study will also consider the emerging Draft National Planning Policy Statement where relevant.

National Policy

- 3.2 **Planning Policy Statement 1; Delivering Sustainable Development** states that where design fails to take account of its surroundings and opportunities to improve the area it should be refused.
- 3.3 *This application takes into full consideration the constraints and opportunities offered by the site, endeavouring to carefully integrate the stable development into the surrounding landscape alongside enhancing the local landscape features. The PPS1 statement, "Good design is indivisible from good planning", is particularly important for this proposal – where the scheme is able to respond effectively to the planning requirements through high quality design.*
- 3.4 **Planning Policy Guidance 2; Green Belts** outlines the history and context of Green Belts and explains their purposes. Green Belt land-use objectives are outlined and the presumption against inappropriate development is set out. The accompanying planning statement explains that an equine business of this type may be treated as agricultural development and is therefore viewed as appropriate. This policy guidance also states that the visual amenity of the Green Belt should not be injured by proposals for development within, or conspicuous from, the Green Belt which might be visually detrimental by reason of their siting, materials or design.
- 3.5 *It is considered that the development use as an equine business is appropriate for the character of the surrounding countryside and as it is set below the level of the landform will have limited detriment to visual amenity of the greenbelt. The accompanying landscape appraisal details how the landscape character and visual qualities of this landscape will not be undermined by the development.*

3.6 Planning Policy Guidance 7; Sustainable Development in Rural Areas states that all development in rural areas should be well designed and inclusive, 'in keeping' and at an appropriate scale for its location, and sensitive to the character of the countryside.

3.7 This development seeks to replicate the local landscape character. Landscape proposals will improve the appearance of the site by screening glimpsed views and including native plant species. The design of the proposed stable building is in keeping with the existing structures on the Farm in terms of layout, design and materials (stone and timber) and in addition is partly built as a subterranean structure. The scheme will improve and replace dry stone walling on the site, a key feature of the local landscape character.

Local Policy

High Peak Borough Local Plan (March 2005)

3.8 There are a number of Local Plan policies that are relevant in the design process. Many of these have been covered in depth within the Planning Statement and therefore are not repeated in full here. For clarity, and in the avoidance of doubt, this application seeks to accord with design and layout guidance provided in the following Saved Policies: GD4, GD5, GD6, OC1, OC4, OC6, BC1 and EMP7. The following bullet points summarise the key design objectives from these policies, many of which are repeated within more than one policy.

- The scale, proportion and layout of the development must be appropriate to its surroundings;
- External materials, colour and materials must be appropriate to the local character and appearance;
- A high standard of hard and soft landscape proposals will be required for all proposals;
- The privacy and residential amenity of neighbours must be protected at all times;
- The open character and distinctiveness of the local landscape character must not be undermined by proposals; and;
- The development should be designed for a specific need, scale and size.

3.9 It is considered that this development accords with all the policy objectives outlined above. This is a small scale development that is well

related to the existing buildings along Watford Lane. The scale of the stable building has been significantly reduced by its subterranean design which has also limited the buildings overall impact on the open nature of the countryside. A survey of the site reveals that there are no other obvious or practicable sites for this stable building and that in its current position it will not injure any private amenity.

- 3.10 *Externally the building is to be clad in timber stained a natural colour which will blend well with the new boundary treatments, a mixture of wooden post and rail fences and reinstated stone walls. Additional landscape planting will further enhance the quality of the proposal and integrate it with the surrounding landscape character. A landscape appraisal has been undertaken in support of this application to ensure that in respect of landscape character and visual impact there is negligible impact to the wider landscape.*
- 3.11 **High Peak Borough Landscape Character SPD (March 2006)** classifies the development site as being within National Character Area 51: the Dark Peak. Locally, the Landscape Character Supplementary Planning Document designates the site as within the "Settled Valley Pastures". The document offers some limited guidance on design within this designation in order to assist in assimilating new development into the local landscape.
- 3.12 Within the Settled Valley Pastures area, the landscape character includes isolated farmsteads and cottages arranged along roads, often associated with small groups of amenity trees. Areas of hard standing are also considered to potentially undermine the character, however, where views can be limited and the colour and brightness of these areas toned down they can be accommodated within the local character. New development should be contained within low stone walls where possible.
- 3.13 *This planning application is able to respond positively to the local landscape design characteristics. The new buildings and associated works are positioned along a Watford Lane and therefore are in accordance with the landscape settlement patterns. The area of hard standing to the north of the stable building is constructed of road planings which is neither bright nor reflective. This, coupled with the walling planting around the edges of this area will help integrate this within the landscape. Finally, there are a number of stone walls on the site, all of which will be repaired and replaced to ensure that the general appearance of development surrounded by low stone walls is preserved.*

4.0 Development Parameters

Use and Quantum

- 4.1 The additional stable block is comprised of 4 individual stalls / units. This will be used for ensuring the horses are kept in better condition. The number is defined by current demand accommodated at the Pott Shrigley facility with some limited expansion.
- 4.2 An area of 110 square meters of concrete hard standing is proposed in front of the block. This will be used as a fenced off area for grooming and tacking horses and contain the mature heaps.
- 4.3 An area of 200 square meters of gravel (road planings) is proposed to the north of the stable complex. This will be used for the storage of wrapped hay bales and will also provide a turning area for cars, deliveries and occasionally trailers.
- 4.4 A sand paddock of around 250 square meters is proposed which will be used for turning out the horses during winter months, specialist one-to-one breaking and for temporary isolation in the case of injury, illness or for dietary reasons.
- 4.5 A ramp and sloped track are proposed as a means of accessing the sand paddock and the adjacent field.



Fig 5: Front Elevation of Proposed Stables

Layout



Fig 6: Site Layout and General Arrangement

- 4.6 The new stable block is proposed adjacent to, and at a right angle to the existing block. Behind this, at the upper level, will be the sand paddock, with the ramp and track on the right hand side providing access to this and the adjacent field. The concrete area will be located directly in front of the new stable block. The gravel turning area will be located, to the north, in front of the main field, on the opposite side of the sloped ramp / track.
- 4.7 The stable block is cut into the landform by around 2.8 meters and supported by necessary retaining walls. The gravel area is cut into the land form by around 0.75 metres. The ramp will provide access from the lower level (stables and storage area) to the sand paddock and upper field entrances, bridging the level change at a gradient of approx 1:3.
- 4.8 The additional building will not extend beyond the built curtailage of the original farm or the adjacent residential properties to the south west of the development site. Development will not go beyond the visual enclosure of the farm and the other developments along Watford Lane. Farmsteads of this kind are part of the visual character of the area.

Scale

- 4.9 The total area of the groundwork's (now mainly retrospective) is approximately 560 square meters. This will comprise of the elements outlined in paragraph 4.1 - 4.5. This includes some limited terracing.
- 4.10 The stable block will be 13.8 meters long and 4.6 meters deep. The height at the rear is 2.8 meters and the height at the front is 2.3 meters - the pitch slopes from the rear to the front.
- 4.11 A front awning or veranda overhangs by 0.9 metres at the front. The building is set into the ground at the rear so heights given are not values above ground. Only to the front of the stable building is all of the elevation above ground level. See drawing 12-001-P004 (Sections) and 005 (Elevations) for more information.

Appearance

- 4.12 The stable block is to be constructed of blocks and concrete on the unseen elevations some of which is already in place. The visible frontage will be faced with naturally stained wood. The colour is to be agreed with the LPA but it is recommended that this is similar to that of the existing block. The roof will be a dark grey/black Bitumen Corrugated Sheet. The Landscape Character SPD makes reference that a darker coloured roof materials assisting in reducing the scale and mass of a building and therefore this is used as opposed to clear or transparent material. This involves introducing small windows in the frontage to allow appropriate light.
- 4.13 The sand paddock will be surfaced with sand and encircled by a post and rail fence. The graveled turning/storage area will be surfaced in dark grey gravel road planings and the area in front of the stables will be concrete.
- 4.14 All areas are set within new landscape proposals set out in the paragraphs below as advised by the landscape appraisal.

Landscape

- 4.15 There will be minimal visual impact from the proposals as a result of the stable design, the position of the stable building and proposed landscape works. The structure mainly sits below ground level, with the highest point below the form of the land.
- 4.16 In terms of boundaries, existing stone walls will be repaired or replaced, maintaining the traditional visual characteristics of the landscape. In addition post and rail fences coupled with naturalistic planting will be introduced, using native species, in the form of new mixed hedgerows and small clusters of trees. This planting will help to screen views, particularly of the hay bale storage area.
- 4.17 Where possible Sustainable Drainage solutions have been employed. The turning and storage area is permeable and will allow surface water to percolate through whilst the sand paddock, is to be drained using gravel filled 'French' style drains.

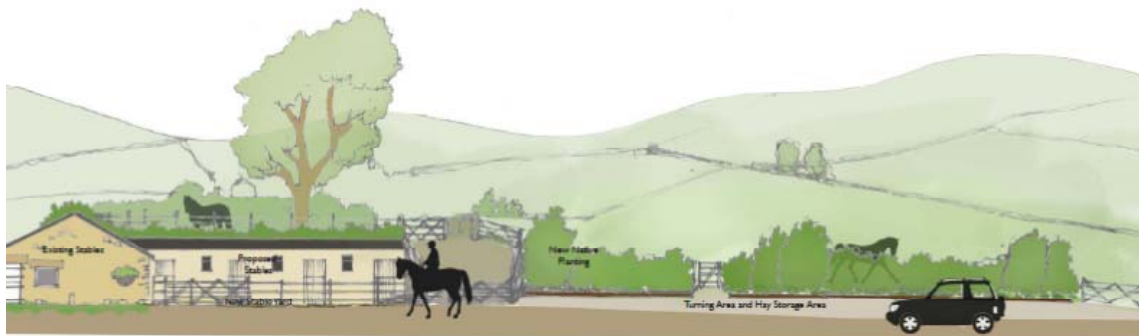


Fig 7: Extract from Street Scene along Watford Lane

Access

- 4.18 Access to the site will continue to be along Watford Lane with specific access to the stables shared with the existing. Watford Lane has recently seen investment to fill pot-holes with aggregate, tarmaced in some areas and cut back the verge where it has encroached.
- 4.19 A new turning area will be created to the north to create a small turning circle. This area is also sufficient for a 3 point turn with a refuse vehicle or small horse box. This will be not only be of benefit to the applicants but also for other neighbours and residents along Watford Lane. The proposed ramp and track will provide access to sand paddock and main field at a grade of 1 in 3.

- 4.20 There are two public footpaths which are adjacent to, or run through the site. The route along Watford Lane itself will be untouched by the application, however, the footpath which runs east - west will now pass between the storage area and the turning area, before passing through the boundary fence some 10 metres further into the field. Any changes to the gradients and surfacing will be negligible and it is likely that the quality of the route will be improved as a result.

5.0. Conclusions

- 5.1. This Design and Access Statement demonstrates, in line with guidance set out within DCLG circular 01/06, how the design of this development has responded to the opportunities and constraints offered by the site's context, alongside the design requirements set out in national and local design policies, specifically policies OC1 and OC2 of the High Peak Local Plan.
- 5.2. The scheme is designed to respond to the existing urban form and stable facilities on the site as well as provide a new turning and storage area for the wider complex. The turning area will be of benefit to the two local business and other properties along Watford Lane. The main stable building is also buried into the landscape in order to lessen its visual and physical impact on the landscape.
- 5.3. Care has been taken to ensure that the materials used in both the construction of the stables and the boundary features are reflective of the local landscape character. These coupled with the soft landscape proposals, including native planting, have ensured that the development blends effectively with the surrounding landscape features and characteristics.
- 5.4. The resultant scheme therefore fulfills the functional requirements of the facilities required for the stabling, rearing and breaking of horses, thus supporting the growth of two local businesses, whilst maintaining the visual characteristics of the landscape at the settlement fringe.