

Name of Applicant Type of Certificate	Proposal	Map/Plan Policy	Plan Ref. Expiry Date
<b>Ms. A. Hawker 'A'</b>	Conversion of barn into living accommodation ancillary to Cornerstone (Listed Building Consent)  Adjacent to Cornerstone, Cofton Church Lane, Cofton Hackett, Rednal, B45 8BB	Curtilage LB	<b>11/1032-SG</b> 03.04.2012

**RECOMMENDATION:** that listed building consent be **REFUSED**.

#### Consultations

Cofton Hackett PC	Consulted 13.01.2012, expired 03.02.2012 - no comments received.
EH	Consulted 13.01.2012, expired 03.02.2012 - the applications should be determined in accordance with the national and local policy guidance, and on the basis of your specialist conservation advice.
CO	Consulted 13.01.2012, expired 27.01.2012 -

The property comprises a small barn within the grounds of the Grade II\* listed house previously known as Cofton Hall, and is therefore to be treated as a curtilage listed building.

The guidance on the conversion of barns and other rural buildings is contained in SPG4 'Conversion of Rural Buildings.' Section 2.5 b of the guidance states 'The building should be large enough for the proposed use without the need for significant enlargement or alteration.' Raising the roof to accommodate another floor is a significant alteration. The applicant needs to consider whether a first floor can be created without doing this, perhaps inserting it at the level of the existing hayloft, or just keeping the living accommodation to ground floor level. Raising the roof will significantly alter the appearance of the building. It will be an obvious alteration as it will be very difficult to match the bricks adequately. Section 2.5 states 'Where an existing building is dilapidated, the quality of the original building can be erased where substantial new work is required. It is not the aim of the policy to allow conversion schemes where substantial rebuilding is necessary.'

The main characteristics of Worcestershire Barns are their simple shapes, limited number of openings, solid dominates over voids, and there is an absence of over elaboration. The proposed scheme undermines a number of these characteristics.

It is proposed to insert two dormers in the rear elevation, Section 3.2 of PPG4 states that 'Large unbroken roof slopes are often a characteristic feature of agricultural buildings. These should be respected especially as they are often seen at a distance and can dominate elevations. New roof openings will normally be opposed; dormers and upstanding roof lights can bring about a significant change in the character of a farm

building.' Conservation roof lights have been proposed for the front elevation and these should be as small as possible.

Large patio doors are proposed for the rear elevation where there are currently no openings except for some traditional ventilation holes in a diamond shape. In addition a further window opening is proposed at the other end of this elevation. Section 3.3 of PPG4 states 'Agricultural buildings are characterised by a few window and door openings. The re-use of existing openings is favoured, additional doors and windows should be kept to a minimum and reflect existing patterns. New windows and door openings should preferably be located on the 'inside' elevations away from the public view. Window and door frames should be painted/stained a dark colour to decrease visual impact and should be recessed behind the main face of the brickwork.' The rear elevation is the 'outside' face of the building as this side faces the main driveway, while the other side faces neighbouring farm buildings. The insertion of patio doors would be inappropriate, resulting in a domestication of the building. Possibly a window could be inserted here instead, there is already one window opening, but the applicant has proposed an opening at the far end of this elevation. I consider three windows on this elevation would be unacceptable and should be kept to two.

The window on the south east gable should be replicated if it cannot be repaired.

Finally the applicant has proposed to replace the main barn doors on the rear elevation with a door and wood panel, therefore maintaining the opening itself. Again I consider this will result in a domestication of the barn. There is no specific guidance on barn doors in the guidance, but there is guidance in respect of wagon arches which I think can be applied here. Section 3.4 states that 'wagon arches should be fully glazed..... If glazing is used, the vertical dimension should be emphasised with no obvious signs that the conversion forms two floor levels.' The glazing of wagon arches can often provide illumination to the main internal spaces of the building and borrowed light to other rooms.

In addition to considering applications against local guidance, local authorities need to consider them against national guidance, and in particular PPS5. HE 7.5 of PPS5 states that 'Local planning authorities should take into account the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of the historic environment. The consideration of design should include scale, height, massing, alignment, materials and use.' As this proposal would appear to undermine much of the barn's recognised character, I do not consider that it will make a positive contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of the historic environment.

I would therefore have to recommend that this application is refused.

CBA	Consulted 13.01.2012, expired 03.02.2012 - no comment.
VS	Consulted 13.01.2012, expired 03.02.2012 - no comment.
TCS	Consulted 13.01.2012, expired 03.02.2012 - no comment.
SPAB	Consulted 13.01.2012, expired 03.02.2012 - no comment.
GG	Consulted 13.01.2012, expired 03.02.2012 - no comment.
AMS	Consulted 13.01.2012, expired 03.02.2012 - no comment.
WCC(CA)	Comments received 06.02.2012 - no objection subject to conditions.
Publicity	Site notice posted 18.01.2012 expire 08.02.2012 Press notice 20.01.2012 expire 10.02.2012

1 objection received -

- The large post mature beech trees adjacent, and so close that they could pose a risk to the inhabitants of the conversion.
- The barn is within the curtilage of a listed building, raising the roof of the barn and putting dormers will change character of the barn.
- Concerned that adjacent barns may request similar dormers and raising of roof once precedent is set leading to change in character of the area.

### The site and its surroundings

Cornerstone, formally Cofton Hall, is a detached manor house located at the end of a long drive, south-east off Cofton Church Lane. It sits within a 1.98 hectare site which includes a large number of mature trees adjacent the drive. The house was Grade II\* listed in 1952. The present owners of Cornerstone are the Jesus Fellowship and the building is used as a Christian Community. There is a small brick built barn located within the grounds of the listed house which is the subject of this application. By virtue of its siting within the ground of Cornerstone, the barn constitutes a curtilage listed building. The barn consists of three rooms with a hayloft over the middle room. There is an informal track between the main house and the barn. According to the Design and Access Statement the barn is indicated on the 1884 map of Worcestershire. Adjacent the barn is a timber shed with a roof structure supported off timber posts and enclosed with makeshift infill walls. The nearest residential properties to the barn are Cofton Hall Farm 32 metres to the east and Beech Coppice, a converted rural building, which is 21 metres to the north.

### Proposal

It is proposed to convert the barn into living accommodation and raise the height of the building to include a first floor. A kitchen, lounge and w.c. are proposed on the ground floor with 2 bedrooms and a bathroom on the first floor. The height of the building would be increased by 0.75 metres by raising the walls of the barn with new brick. A new slate roof is proposed to replace the existing tin and asbestos roof. It is proposed that the living accommodation would be used for ancillary accommodation to Cornerstone, which is a community house. Cornerstone is classed a house in multiple occupancy and the barn conversion would be used for permanent residents linked to the main community house providing some independent facilities.

## Relevant Policies

WMSS	QE5, QE6
WCSP	CTC.19, CTC.21, D.16
BDLP	DS13, S39
DCS2	CP3, CP16
Others	PPS1, PPS5

## Relevant Planning History

None relevant to the barn.

## Notes

The main issue in the consideration of this application is the impact of the conversion scheme on the character of the curtilage listed building and setting of the Grade II\* listed building.

## Design Issues and Listed Building Impact

The barn is divided into three sections by full height brick walls; a full height room at the lower end (room 1), a central room with a timber hayloft above (room 2) and the higher end room (room 3) which contains an old chimney. The main opening to the barn into the central section is a modern garage door on the front elevation. Room 1 is a separate area accessed by a timber door in the south-east end elevation. There is an original oak window above this door in the end elevation. Room 3 has an original window with timber shutters on the front elevation and room 2 has a window at the rear which has been in filled with glass. The roof is a mixture of asbestos and tin which has been repaired and replaced over the years. The barn is currently used as storage ancillary to Cornerstone.

The raising of the roof to accommodate another floor is considered to be a significant alteration that would significantly alter the appearance and integrity of the building. It would also be an obvious alteration since it would be very difficult to match the bricks adequately. These works would erase the quality of the original building, which is curtilage listed.

The characteristics of the barn are its simple shape, limited number of openings, solid dominates over voids, and its absence of over elaboration.

The proposed scheme would undermine a number of these characteristics, and would therefore have a harmful effect on the building. The proposal would introduce two dormer windows in the rear elevation that would bring about a significant change in the simple and utilitarian character of a farm building.

Large patio doors are proposed for the rear elevation where there are currently no openings except for some traditional ventilation holes in a diamond shape. In addition a further window opening is proposed at the other end of this elevation. The introduction of new openings is considered inappropriate since the minimalist character of the barn would be altered. The insertion of patio doors, in particular would result in a

domestication of the building. Furthermore, the cumulative impact of three openings on the rear elevation would damage the simple and utilitarian appearance of the barn.

It is proposed to replace the main barn doors on the rear elevation with a door and wood panel that are narrower than the existing opening. As such, these works would require the infilling of brickwork which would appear noticeable and therefore detrimental to the appearance of the building.

HE 7.5 of PPS5 states that 'Local planning authorities should take into account the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of the historic environment. The consideration of design should include scale, height, massing, alignment, materials and use.' As this proposal would appear to undermine much of the barn's recognised character, I do not consider that it would make a positive contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of the historic environment. For this reason I consider the proposed conversion would have a negative impact on the character, historic interest and simple architectural quality on the curtilage listed building and would also be harmful to the setting of the Grade II\* Listed Building. This is contrary to local policy S39 and the provisions of PPS5. Thus, I recommend that listed building consent is refused.

**RECOMMENDATION:** that listed building consent be **REFUSED** for the following reason:

1. By virtue of its design, the proposed conversion would have a negative impact on the character, historic interest and simple architectural quality on the curtilage listed building and would be harmful to the setting of the Grade II\* Listed Building. This is contrary to policy S39 of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan, policy CTC.19 of the Worcestershire County Structure Plan and the provisions of PPS5.