

JOHN & GEORGE LATIMER

**Proposed Change of Use of The Reindeer Inn,
Main Street, Westbury from mixed use Public
House (Use Class A4) & Residential (Use Class C3)
to purely Private Dwelling House (Use Class C3)**

Planning Support / Design & Access Statement

Reference: ABL00001

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AB Planning & Development Limited
46A Common Road
North Leigh
Witney
Oxfordshire
OX29 6RB

Tel 01993 880 680
Mob 07720 979 630
Email info@abplanninganddevelopment.co.uk

J & G Latimer

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1 INTRODUCTION

1. This combined Planning Support / Design & Access Statement accompanies a planning application for the change of use of The Reindeer Inn Public House, in Main Street, Westbury from a mixed use as Drinking Establishment (Use Class A4) and Residential (Use Class C3) to purely a single use as one private Residential Dwelling House (Use Class C3).
2. The Statement is structure into seven parts, with Section 2 providing details of the Site and Surroundings, Section 3 providing details of the Relevant Planning History, Section 4 describing the Design Proposals, Section 5 setting out the Relevant Planning Policy Background, Section 6 describing the Planning Considerations and finally Section 7 setting out the Conclusions as to why planning permission for a change of use ought to be granted.
3. The purpose of the Design and Access statement is to provide a summary of the rationale for the current planning application in design terms so that the proposals may be clearly and succinctly understood in terms of the principles and concepts that have informed the design process.
4. The Design and Access statement does not form part of the planning application, as stated in DCLG Circular 01/2006.
5. The aim of this statement is twofold. Firstly, to ensure that decision-making is clearly documented in relation to the site-specific opportunities and constraints affecting the development and secondly to demonstrate how the final proposal has been informed by a set of principled objectives, which have stemmed from the preceding analysis and appraisal work.
6. This document also supports, explains and justifies the retained occasional use of the former garden shed and double garage as a Brethren Meeting Hall.

Purpose of the retained development

7. The purpose of the development is to continue to provide occasional Meeting Hall accommodation for Brethren worshipers who meet every week on Sunday morning

(between 6am – 7am) for the Lords Supper and every Monday evening (between 6.30pm – 7.30pm) for prayer, gospel preaching's, Bible readings and discussions. Each meeting on the site for the past three years has been attended by between 13-25 people from the local Brethren community in south Buckingham and Padbury and the application seeks to regularise that activity and formalise the planning use.

8. This statement provides information about the development and its setting with details of construction techniques. It sets out the rationale behind the development proposals in terms of use, amount, layout, scale, appearance and access.
9. The Mallard Drive site and surrounding Bourton Road estate provides residential accommodation for a significant proportion of Buckingham residents in the local community. Within 400m easy walking distance of the site lie properties in London Road to the west, the edge of the Cornwall's Meadow Centre car park to the north, the Badgers Way estate to the southeast and the Great Ouse riverside park to the east. The application site is flat and the surrounding areas generally drop gradually towards the river to the north, London Road to the west and rise very gently from Bourton Road towards the Bypass to the south. Given the flat nature of the site and the only gentle inclines all around, the application site is easily accessible on foot and/or on bicycle to all those who regularly attend. The needs of disabled people are fully incorporated in the design details of the Meeting Hall, with level access available from the street and car parking area onto the site and then into the building.
10. With the exception of one family of four who live in the nearby village of Padbury, all the remaining Brethren members who attend meetings regularly at the site live within a 20m – 550m walking distance of the Hall.

National and Local Policy Context

11. The design principles used in this site are based on National and Local Guidance including:

Design and Access Statements, how to write, read and use them, CABE, 2006, reprinted 2007;

DCLG Circular 10/2006 Guidance on changes Design and Access Statements, how to write, read and use them, CABE, 2006, reprinted 2007;

Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 1: Delivering Sustainable Development, ODPM (February 2005);

Planning Policy Guidance Note 13: Transport;

Better Places to Live – A Companion Guide to PPS3, DTLR and CABE (2001);

Urban Design Compendium, English Partnerships 1 and 2 (August 2000 and September 2007); and

Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan 2002.

12. The Development Plan relevant to this application comprises the Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan 2002.
13. The report is structured on the guidance provided by CABE on Design and Access Statements.

2 SITE & SURROUNDINGS PLANNING APPRAISAL

Site Location

14. The Mallard Drive site covers a total area of 336m² (0.0336 hectares) but the buildings comprising the Hall that is the subject of the application measure just 44.76m² (which is just over 13% of the site area). The remainder comprises a 4-space tarmaced parking driveway, in front of the former garage (about 53m²) and a garden area behind close boarded boundary fencing (about 238m²).
15. The application site lies immediately northeast of No.1 Mallard Drive; about 120m north of Mallard Drive's junction with Bourton Road. The application site is very well connected by road and pathways to the surrounding communities, with the Cornwall's Meadow shopping centre accessible by bridge over the River Great Ouse, just 400m to the north. London Road and its schools lie less than 400m to the west and the riverside walk park with its numerous recreational facilities lies about 400m to the east, between the Badgers Way and Burleigh Piece residential estates. Most of the town and its varied facilities lie within an 800m radius of the Mallard Drive site.
16. The Meeting Hall location is indicated on the accompanying Site Location and Block Plan drawings attached at Appendices 1 and 2. The buildings in which the Hall is located were originally constructed in the early or mid 1990's as part of the original 'Heartlands' estate development (granted permission under 92/02087/APP) and comprised an original double garage and a garden shed that used to serve No.1 Mallard Drive. Some years ago the curtilage was sub-divided and the adjacent property is now served by a separate parking area that was approved early in 2009.
17. The former double garage still retains its external Mahogany stained timber doors but the wall behind has been filled in and a new entrance door created through to the adjoining former garden shed. In all other respects the former garage retains its original structure and appearance, retaining 2.2m high red multi stock brick walls and grey concrete roof tiles on a 35° roof pitch that extends to a ridge height of 3.9m. The Meeting Hall has external dimensions of 5.6m width and 6.0m depth. It has no windows, so is artificially illuminated internally and is air conditioned.

18. The former garden shed, which measures 3.05m wide by 3.66m deep, still retains its traditional external timber boarding appearance with a 35° pitch felted roof. Internally it has been provided with mortared screen walls and now forms a reception entrance porch to the Meeting Hall, with cloakroom.
19. The whole building is accessed through a lockable wooden gate in the 1.8m high close-boarded garden fence, with 0.6m high trellis above that runs along the west side of the 4-space parking driveway. The remainder of the garden is laid to lawn and is surrounded by 2.0m high close boarded garden fencing along the common western boundary with No.1 Mallard Drive, by a 1.8m high close boarded fence along the common northern boundary with Nos.7 and 9 Mallard Drive and by a 1.8m high close boarded fence with 0.6m high trellis above along the common eastern boundary with a small landscaped Public Open Space area.

History

20. The Mallard Drive residential estate was constructed in the 1990's in accordance with planning permission 92/02087/APP. Two years ago, planning permission was obtained for the extension of No.1 Mallard Drive to convert it from a bungalow to a dormer bungalow and those works are now nearing completion. Some years prior to that development, the plot was sub-divided into two parts. The lost garaging parking space has been re-provided within the curtilage of No.1, as part of the recently approved development. Very little change has been implemented within the estate development since its original construction some 15-18 years ago.
21. Just over three years ago, the Brethren converted the former garage and the attached shed into an occasional Meeting Hall, to supplement their principal meeting Hall facility in the town, at Western Avenue. The Meetings which take place at Western Avenue take place early each Sunday morning and on Friday evenings, with occasional extra gospel and Bible meetings (on a 3-weekly cycle) on Monday evening's and Sunday afternoon's. That Meeting Hall has operated successfully without causing nuisance to any of its neighbours for well over forty years. The Western Avenue Hall is highly accessible for attending Brethren worshipers who live in the northern part of the town but less so for those living in the southern part, who have tended to drive to that site.

22. In order to provide a supplementary facility, more accessible to those living in the southern part of town, the Brethren Trustees decided to convert the garage and shed and make it available for occasional use as a Hall. However, because of the other main facilities at Western Avenue, the Mallard Drive Hall has only been used for hour-long meetings each Sunday morning and Monday evening, with very occasional extra gospel meetings on Sunday afternoon's and Bible meetings on Friday evenings.
23. Throughout the duration of its use, it has been unnoticed by surrounding residents and, therefore, had no impact on their amenities. Prior to submission of the application, the Brethren notified immediate neighbours living opposite at No.2 Mallard Drive and at the rear of the garden, at Nos7 and 9 as to their intention to submit this application and of the rationale behind it. All three immediate neighbours confirmed that the use had no impact upon their residential amenities and two had not even noticed its prior existence. One neighbour at No.9 had noticed some occasional activity around the building on some Monday evenings but he had not been concerned in any way by it. The Brethren also gave advance notice to Buckingham Town Council of the Hall's existence and their intention to seek formal planning permission for its continued use.

Character and built form

24. Despite being used as a Meeting Hall, the character and built form of the site has remained unchanged and continues to appear as a residential garage and garden shed.
25. This retention of character and built form, coupled with the low level of its occasional use has contributed significantly towards the use this past three years having not been noticed.

Access and movement to the site

26. Access to the site continues to be via the existing access off Mallard Drive.
27. An extensive array of pathways provide easy access to all those using the Meeting Hall. Much of the Badgers Way estate and properties in Bourton Road and London Road lie within 400m of the Meeting Hall.

28. The Burleigh Piece estate, large parts of Page Hill and properties as far as the University to the west and Moreton Road to the north all lie within 800m of the Meeting Hall. Consequently, therefore, the Meeting Hall occupies a highly sustainable central location that is within easy walking distance of the majority of Brethren users.
29. All but one family of four of the 13-25 regular users of the Hall (that comprises just six local families) live within 20m – 550m of the site (see Appendix 5). Consequently, the majority of regular users can and indeed do walk to the site. Because of the 2 mile distance, one family from Padbury drive to meetings regularly but they are able to use one of the four available off-street parking spaces on site.
30. Insofar as public transport accessibility is concerned, regular bus services travel along London Road, less than 400m to the west along Bourton Road and also through the town centre, which is accessed via the bridge crossing over the River Great Ouse and through the Cornwall's Meadow Shopping Centre, some 600m to the north. These bus services run throughout the day and evenings on a half hourly basis and provide connections to Aylesbury to the south, Milton Keynes to the east and Brackley to the west.

3 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Use

31. The use of the Hall is to continue to provide an occasional meeting facility for Brethren worshipers, who meet for 1 hour on Sunday mornings for the Lords Supper and for 1 hour on Monday evenings for prayer and Bible reading. The level of use is set out in the attendance records attached at Appendix 5 and is described in the sworn declarations attached at Appendix 7.
32. The site has been used by the Brethren for over three years and is therefore well established on site; with no discernable impact upon nearby surrounding residents. This has been confirmed to the Brethren Trustees by the owner occupiers of the three immediate neighbours at Nos.2, 7 and 9 Mallard Drive.

Location

33. The Hall is located on the north-western side of Mallard Drive about 22m northeast of No.1, 90m west of No.2, 34m southeast of No.3 and about 120m north of the junction with Bourton Road (see Appendix 1).

Amount

34. The use made of the Hall results in no new amount of development as it is contained entirely within structures previously erected in the mid 1990's. The proposal relates directly to the specific operational requirements of the Brethren, who normally have between 16-22 people attending, sitting in two concentric circles in the centre of the Hall. The minimum numbers that have attended meetings at the Hall during the past three years is thirteen and the maximum number attending has been twenty-five.

Design

35. Outwardly, the Hall appears simply as a double garage and an attached garden shed, which is what they were originally constructed as. The Hall design appears exactly as it did when originally constructed in the 1990's as a garage with an attached garden shed set back behind a boundary fence (see Appendices 3 & 4).

36. No new openings have had to be created other than an internal link door between the former garage and the former shed.
37. To all intent and purpose, the Hall design still appears as a garage and therefore blends in entirely with the surrounding residential development that was all built at the same time and in the same design style.

Access & Parking

38. Vehicular and pedestrian access to the Hall is north along Mallard Drive from Bourton Road and then in via the existing driveway and path. The existing driveway provides a dedicated off-road space for up to four vehicles, even though very few regular attendees drive to the site.
39. A 3-space parking lay-by is located 38m south of the site, on the west side of Mallard Drive. This can serve as an occasional supplementary visitor parking area, although it is rarely used as such.
40. Although it has not been required, there are no parking restrictions along Mallard Drive, so cars could if necessary park along the roadside, which is 6.0m wide and therefore easily capable of accommodating on-street parking. The fact that the use has existed for so long without notice demonstrates that there has been no discernable traffic or parking impact resulting from the Hall's use.
41. As the site is so accessible to the local Brethren community that it serves, the majority of attendees are able to walk from their nearby homes in the surrounding local community on Mallard Drive, Bourton Road, London Road, Badgers Way and Chandos Road.

4 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY BACKGROUND

Use

42. The use of the Hall is to continue to provide an occasional meeting facility for Brethren worshipers, who meet for 1 hour on Sunday mornings for the Lords Supper and for 1 hour on Monday evenings for prayer and Bible reading. The level of use is set out in the attendance records attached at Appendix 5 and is described in the sworn declarations attached at Appendix 7.
43. The site has been used by the Brethren for over three years and is therefore well established on site; with no discernable impact upon nearby surrounding residents. This has been confirmed to the Brethren Trustees by the owner occupiers of the three immediate neighbours at Nos.2, 7 and 9 Mallard Drive.

Location

44. The Hall is located on the north-western side of Mallard Drive about 22m northeast of No.1, 90m west of No.2, 34m southeast of No.3 and about 120m north of the junction with Bourton Road (see Appendix 1).

Amount

45. The use made of the Hall results in no new amount of development as it is contained entirely within structures previously erected in the mid 1990's. The proposal relates directly to the specific operational requirements of the Brethren, who normally have between 16-22 people attending, sitting in two concentric circles in the centre of the Hall. The minimum numbers that have attended meetings at the Hall during the past three years is thirteen and the maximum number attending has been twenty-five.

Design

46. Outwardly, the Hall appears simply as a double garage and an attached garden shed, which is what they were originally constructed as. The Hall design appears exactly as it did when originally constructed in the 1990's as a garage with an attached garden shed set back behind a boundary fence (see Appendices 3 & 4).

47. No new openings have had to be created other than an internal link door between the former garage and the former shed.
48. To all intent and purpose, the Hall design still appears as a garage and therefore blends in entirely with the surrounding residential development that was all built at the same time and in the same design style.

Access & Parking

49. Vehicular and pedestrian access to the Hall is north along Mallard Drive from Bourton Road and then in via the existing driveway and path. The existing driveway provides a dedicated off-road space for up to four vehicles, even though very few regular attendees drive to the site.
50. A 3-space parking lay-by is located 38m south of the site, on the west side of Mallard Drive. This can serve as an occasional supplementary visitor parking area, although it is rarely used as such.
51. Although it has not been required, there are no parking restrictions along Mallard Drive, so cars could if necessary park along the roadside, which is 6.0m wide and therefore easily capable of accommodating on-street parking. The fact that the use has existed for so long without notice demonstrates that there has been no discernable traffic or parking impact resulting from the Hall's use.
52. As the site is so accessible to the local Brethren community that it serves, the majority of attendees are able to walk from their nearby homes in the surrounding local community on Mallard Drive, Bourton Road, London Road, Badgers Way and Chandos Road.

5 DESIGN PROPOSALS

Use

53. The use of the Hall is to continue to provide an occasional meeting facility for Brethren worshipers, who meet for 1 hour on Sunday mornings for the Lords Supper and for 1 hour on Monday evenings for prayer and Bible reading. The level of use is set out in the attendance records attached at Appendix 5 and is described in the sworn declarations attached at Appendix 7.
54. The site has been used by the Brethren for over three years and is therefore well established on site; with no discernable impact upon nearby surrounding residents. This has been confirmed to the Brethren Trustees by the owner occupiers of the three immediate neighbours at Nos.2, 7 and 9 Mallard Drive.

Location

55. The Hall is located on the north-western side of Mallard Drive about 22m northeast of No.1, 90m west of No.2, 34m southeast of No.3 and about 120m north of the junction with Bourton Road (see Appendix 1).

Amount

56. The use made of the Hall results in no new amount of development as it is contained entirely within structures previously erected in the mid 1990's. The proposal relates directly to the specific operational requirements of the Brethren, who normally have between 16-22 people attending, sitting in two concentric circles in the centre of the Hall. The minimum numbers that have attended meetings at the Hall during the past three years is thirteen and the maximum number attending has been twenty-five.

Design

57. Outwardly, the Hall appears simply as a double garage and an attached garden shed, which is what they were originally constructed as. The Hall design appears exactly as it did when originally constructed in the 1990's as a garage with an attached garden shed set back behind a boundary fence (see Appendices 3 & 4).

58. No new openings have had to be created other than an internal link door between the former garage and the former shed.
59. To all intent and purpose, the Hall design still appears as a garage and therefore blends in entirely with the surrounding residential development that was all built at the same time and in the same design style.

Access & Parking

60. Vehicular and pedestrian access to the Hall is north along Mallard Drive from Bourton Road and then in via the existing driveway and path. The existing driveway provides a dedicated off-road space for up to four vehicles, even though very few regular attendees drive to the site.
61. A 3-space parking lay-by is located 38m south of the site, on the west side of Mallard Drive. This can serve as an occasional supplementary visitor parking area, although it is rarely used as such.
62. Although it has not been required, there are no parking restrictions along Mallard Drive, so cars could if necessary park along the roadside, which is 6.0m wide and therefore easily capable of accommodating on-street parking. The fact that the use has existed for so long without notice demonstrates that there has been no discernable traffic or parking impact resulting from the Hall's use.
63. As the site is so accessible to the local Brethren community that it serves, the majority of attendees are able to walk from their nearby homes in the surrounding local community on Mallard Drive, Bourton Road, London Road, Badgers Way and Chandos Road.

6 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Use and Amount

64. Based on an appraisal of the site and its immediate context, the following design principles were derived.
65. The Meeting Hall (Class D2) use was created from an internal conversion only of a former double garage and adjoining garden shed, which were ancillary buildings to the former residential (Class C3) use of the site. Outwardly, the buildings still appear that they could be used for their original purpose.
66. The amount of floor space now used for the Meeting Hall (33.6m²) and Entrance Cloakroom (11.16m²) remains unchanged from the previous original garage and shed uses.

Location, Layout & Appearance

67. The location, design layout and appearance of the Meeting Hall stems entirely from the location, layout and appearance of the original former garage and shed.
68. The location of the Meeting Hall is unchanged from that of the original buildings, as the built footprint remains unchanged.
69. The layout of the Meeting Hall and entrance lobby is mostly unchanged from that of the original buildings, with the only changes comprising the insertion of an internal link doorway between the former shed and garage and the former garage doors now having been bricked up behind those doors.
70. Outwardly, the appearance of the Meeting Hall is unchanged from that of the original double garage and garden shed. The Hall is still constructed of the same red multi-stock bricks with grey concrete roof tiles that were used on the original garage and on all of the surrounding properties built along Mallard Drive. Also, the entrance lobby still appears outwardly as a traditional timber garden shed.

Size, Scale & Massing

71. The size and configuration of the building especially its scale is considered to have a bearing on its sustainability, and its relationship with its surroundings. The Meeting Hall design echoes precisely its original form as a residential garage and adjoining garden shed. Its size, scale and massing remains unchanged from when the garage and shed were originally constructed in the 1990's.

Access

72. Vehicular access to the Hall continues via the original driveway off Mallard Drive, with parking space available on site for up to four cars. Pedestrian access continues along the western side of the driveway, through a lockable wooden gateway in the garden boundary fence and then in via another gateway into the former shed. The shed now comprises a small entrance hallway/cloakroom off which is a standard doorway on its right hand (east) side into the enclosed Hall.
73. The Hall is accessed from the main road (Bourton Road, 120m to the south) utilising Mallard Drive, which serves approximately one hundred other dwellings. In addition to the 4-space off-street driveway parking on site, space exists for up to 3 cars to park in a small parking lay-by on the west side of Mallard Drive, immediately south of No.1 and only 38m south of the site. Pedestrian routes to the Meeting Hall follow the existing pavements alongside Mallard Drive and Bourton Road and then beyond towards London Road to the west and Badgers Way to the east.

Materials

74. As the Meeting Hall has been converted with the absolute minimum of alteration, the external materials used for the Hall and entrance continue to use the same red multi-stock brick and concrete roof tiles used on the original garage and the same timber cladding with felted roof on the original shed.

Sustainability

75. The location of the converted Meeting Hall is highly for sustainable for its regular users who are mostly able to walk to it rather than travel to the more distant Meeting Hall in Western Avenue. In order to minimise alterations to the building and maintain privacy for both Brethren members and the surrounding residential community, no new window openings were created and the Hall is therefore artificially lit and ventilated.

Landscape

76. The Meeting Hall is only readily visible on its southern frontage and eastern side elevations. Outwardly from the front it still appears as a double garage set back about 9m-12m from the roadside and on the side elevation facing a small Public Open Space area it presents a blank brick wall. The remainder of the Meeting Hall site is screened by a combination of 1.8m and 2.0m high close boarded fencing or by 1.8m high close boarded fencing with 0.6m high trellis above. Screening to neighbouring properties is further enhanced by hedges and trees in the adjoining gardens of Nos. 1, 3, and 7 Mallard Drive and the trees on the open space area. The trees are all over 5m high and the hedging almost 4m high.

Signage, Way Finding & Public Information

77. The Brethren circulate information as to Meeting Hall whereabouts and meeting regularity amongst information sheets circulating within their own community of worshipers. There is therefore no need for any additional signage, way finding or public information pertaining to the building and its use.

7 CONCLUSIONS

78. The proposal complies with the policy set out in the Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan.
79. The use made of the buildings provides enhanced meeting facilities for Brethren members, in an accessible and sustainable location but without any outward impact upon surrounding residential amenities, as evidenced by the complete lack of recognition of the Hall's existence for over three years.
80. All but one of the family groups that regularly attend are able to conveniently walk from their homes, which are within 20m – 550m of the site and the remaining family group who have to drive two miles from the neighbouring village of Padbury can easily park in one of the four available off-street parking spaces on the driveway.
81. The building's design remains unchanged from its original appearance, which matches that of the surrounding estate buildings.
82. Accordingly, Aylesbury Vale District Council is respectfully requested to grant planning permission for this retrospective change of use to facilitate its continued occasional use as a Brethren Meeting Hall.

APPENDIX 1

SITE LOCATION PLANS OF THE REINDEER INN, WESTBURY

APPENDIX 2

BLOCK FLOOR PLANS OF THE REINDEER INN, WESTBURY

APPENDIX 3

ELEVATION DRAWINGS OF THE REINDEER INN, WESTBURY

APPENDIX 4

PHOTO IMAGES OF PUBLIC HOUSE SITE & SURROUNDINGS

APPENDIX 5

EVIDENCE OF LACK OF BUSINESS VIABILITY OF PUBLIC HOUSE

APPENDIX 6

EVIDENCE OF THE SALES MARKETING OF THE REINDEER INN PUBLIC HOUSE