

Business Re-Use Assessment

For

**Potential alternative uses of
redundant agricultural barn**

At

Land at Penyworld Farm

Penhow

Caldicot

Monmouthshire

NP26 3AJ

Site: Barn on land at Penyworlod Farm, Penhow, Caldicot, Monmouthshire, NP26 3AJ

Applicant: Mr S. Gadsby

Description: Conversion of Existing Redundant Agricultural Building to provide residential accommodation

Introduction

In accordance with the Newport Local Development Plan, Policy H10 (Conversions in the Countryside) details the criterion in which conversion of rural buildings should be assessed. Criterion (i) states;

“The applicant has made every reasonable attempt to secure a suitable business re-use, and the application is supported by a statement of the efforts that have been made.”

It is proposed to convert the subject barn at land at Penyworlod Farm to provide residential accommodation with associated amenity curtilage including parking. This report provides an assessment of the potential business reuse of the property in line with criterion i) above.

This report has been prepared by Isobel Thomas BSc (Hons) Graduate Surveyor on behalf of David James.

Location

The land and barn was formerly part of Penyworlod Farm and is situated on the outskirts of the small rural village of Penhow, approximately 0.8 miles distant. The barn is located 7.7 miles distance from Usk, 9.1 miles south east of Chepstow Town and 9.3 miles north east of the nearest city being Newport.

The site is situated approximately 0.8 miles from A48 which provides access to both the A449 and Junction 24 of the M4 which is located 4.7 miles distant. The site itself is accessed via narrow country lane, with Penyworlod Lane being a single-track lane with limited passing places.

Background

The land comprises of approximately 4.08 acres (1.65 ha) of pasture with a small traditional stone barn extending to approximately 592ft² (55m²).

The subject barn has historically been utilised for agricultural purposes including housing of livestock and various agricultural paraphernalia. The barn comprises of a single storey traditional stone masonry construction beneath a pitched corrugated sheet roof. The barn has 2 no. access points and a small concrete apron to the eastern elevation. The barn is not considered suitable for modern agricultural practices.



The Gross External Area (GEA) of the barn subject to conversion extends to approximately 592ft² (55m²).

It is not considered the parcel of land to be sufficient to operate a viable agricultural enterprise from. The barn is not suitable for modern farm vehicles to access and there is limited ventilation for livestock.

The barn has not been utilised for agricultural purposes for in excess of 10 years and is currently redundant.

A plan identifying the property in question has been attached at **Appendix 1**.

A copy of the proposed elevation drawings is attached at **Appendix 2**.

Potential alternative Uses

As part of this appraisal, full consideration has been given to the conversion of the existing traditional barn for alternative uses, in particular business/commercial and tourism reuse of the buildings.

While we are unable to comment on the soundness of the existing structure, it is clear from our inspection and above photographs that there are some structural works required to the building prior to any conversion works being undertaken. The building does have restricted potential to be converted to alternative uses due to the size of the barn, this would be limited to extremely small commercial uses such as storage or a holiday let. I would suggest that the commercial viability of the building is extremely limited due to its size, therefore we have disregarded this as an alternative use.

We have therefore appraised these alternative uses below;

Business/Commercial Uses

In recent years there has been a polarisation towards the best locations and major economic hubs with outlying areas and tertiary property declining dramatically. This is due to the demand for high standard properties with high speed, reliable internet, good access, ample parking and other important facilities which will better service modern businesses. This being said, the recent pandemic has seen changes to working practices which has led to a shift in perspective of how remote working can be configured and, in many instances, successfully.

COVID-19 has led to increased flexible working practices and working from home, with many reporting improved well-being and productivity. This has resonated with many businesses who are now seeking to reduce overhead costs and downsize which has inevitably led to a reduction in occupier demand and increased numbers of available office properties on the market for both sale and to let. However, the size of the barn in question would not provide sufficient office space for any business.

Our past experience in marketing traditional barns for this type for commercial and business uses have been unsuccessful due to the obvious preference from purchasers and tenants for more modern, purpose-built units on site which offer the ability to extend or alter and install purpose built technologies to suit their specific requirements. Generally, feedback from prospective purchasers or tenants is that properties with better access provisions and fast broadband are desired, alongside those which are fully furnished and require little investment.

Ready to occupy office premises (77 results) remain unlet within easy driving distance of the property (10 miles radius) and includes both serviced rural business parks such as Langstone Park and Beaufort Park Way as well as inner town centres including Newport, Chepstow and Pontypool. Current market activity for unconverted commercial premises is extremely low. The high availability of ready to occupy commercial units throughout the South, combined with relatively low demand is proving a considerable barrier in letting these types of premises.

The buildings existing condition is not waterproof or secure as a basic storage facility. The building is single storey and as such does not lend itself well for storage facilities and would require additional height in order to operate as a functional space. There is no vehicular access to the building therefore is not considered to be a viable option.

Penyworld Lane is a single-track lane with few passing places, soft verges and poor surfacing. Issues with erosion from traffic using the lane will be exacerbated if utilised for commercial purposes as general TRICS Trip rates for commercial are far greater than residential journeys.

Standard costs for a conversion of this type in accordance with Building Cost Information Service (BCIS) dependent upon use, building type and specification, can range between £1,400/m² to £2,000/m² (£130/ft² - 185/ft²). Costs accelerations over the last 12 months has also seen an increase of approximately 24% on building materials as stated by The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). The returns are likely to be in the region of £10.00/ft² to £12.00/ft² for offices or £6/ft² to £8/ft² for light industrial.

Due to the setting of the property, size and access, we do not believe that there is a viable commercial opportunity for the property. We would consider the size of the barn to limit alternative potential uses. The costs involved with re-developing the barns for commercial uses or business would outweigh the expected return should the property be leased or sold. There would be further implications of VAT on conversion costs together with any other related costs.

It is also worth taking into consideration other additional charges which would be payable such as management fees, insurance and maintenance costs which would further negatively affect the viability of such a project.

The conversion of the building to provide small scale retail i.e. a farm shop, could be considered as a form of rural diversification. However, it is not considered to be feasible as such alternative use. As required by National Planning Policy TAN 6, produce sold from the farm shop should primarily be sourced upon the holding which is only extends to 4.08 acres. Issues arising from sustainability, access, parking and return on capital invested also negatively impacts upon the opportunity to convert the subject building to provide an alternative retail use.

Tourism Uses

Conversion of the property for tourism purposes would be restricted given the siting of the barn. We have also undertaken a search of alternative tourism accommodation including hotels, Bed and Breakfasts, Air B&B's and caravan/glamping sites within both a mile radius and a 4-mile radius of the property.

Tourism Accommodation	Within 1 Mile	Within 4 Miles
Hotels		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Old Barn - Ty Hotel Magor - Coldra Court - Holiday Inn - Celtic Guest House
Bed & Breakfast/Self Catering Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Medieval Manor - Rock and Fountain Inn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Riverwood Retreat - Blossom Lodge - New Inn Motel
Air B&B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Castle Farm Cabin - Cosy Cottage - Beech Cottage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Old Dairy, Bishton - Top Lodge - Highview House - Train in Kemeys Inferior - Mulberry Cottage - Cottage in Llanvaches - The Sheiling
Camping/Glamping Site		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Salisbury Farm - Penhein Glamping

Please refer to **Appendix 3** which illustrates the location of tourism accommodation within the immediate vicinity of barn formerly part of Penyworlod Farm.

In total there are 22 tourist accommodation facilities within 4 miles of the subject property, 10 Air B&B's, 5 hotels, 2 camping/glamping sites and 5 B&B's/self-catering sites. It is therefore considered that there is a high level of supply within the immediate vicinity of the site and therefore the conversion of the barn to provide tourism accommodation would not be a suitable change of use.

Conclusion

The subject barn is not considered to be suitable for alternative business/commercial or tourism uses due to the limiting factors stated above. The demand for business/commercial space is lacking and larger properties with better access and situated within primary locations are preferred. In our experience the building would easily be converted for residential use contributing to the housing supply within the county.

Isobel Thomas BSc (Hons)

November 2022

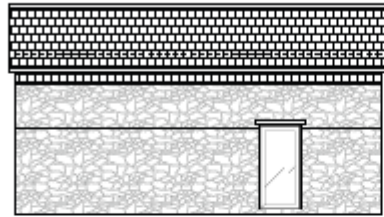
APPENDIX 1
Site Plan of Barn at
Penyworldod Farm Barn



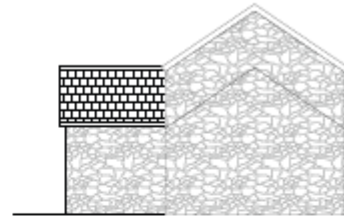
W. J. F. Architects
 10 New Road,
 Colchester, Suffolk, CO1 1JG
 Tel: 07427657573
 WJF@wjfarchitects.co.uk
 www.wjfarchitects.co.uk

PROJECT
Land at Reynolds Farm, Peabrook, Colchester, Suffolk, CO1 1JG
DRAWING TITLE
Site layout
SCALE
1:200 @ A2
DATE
Nov 2022
DRAWING NO.
WT 65-006

APPENDIX 2
Proposed Elevation
Drawings



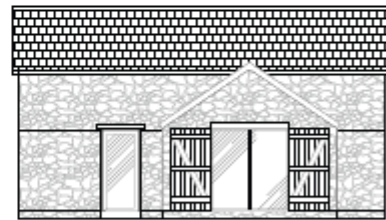
REAR ELEVATION



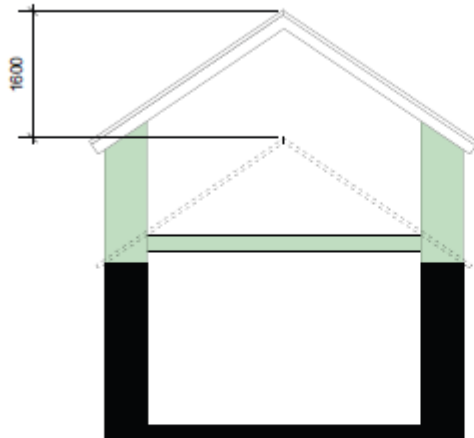
SIDE ELEVATION



SIDE ELEVATION



FRONT ELEVATION



Werfesteria LLP.
10 New Road,
Caldicot, NP26 4HG
Tel: 07427657573
info@werfesteria.co.uk
www.werfesteria.co.uk

PROJECT

Land at Pennywood Farm,
Panthow, Caldicot, NP26 3AJ

DRAWING TITLE

Proposed conversion
elevations / section

SCALE

1:100 / 1:50 @ A3

DATE

Oct 2022

DRAWING NO.

W165-07

APPENDIX 3
Local Tourist
Accommodation

Properties within 1 mile radius of barn formerly part of Penyworld Farm



