Climate Change Statement – The conversion of two outbuildings to form ancillary accommodation, including installation of new windows, internal alterations and addition of new staircases to access loft spaces (refs: AVA/2025/0528 & AVA/2025/0529) at Firs Farm, Nether Lane, Hazelwood, Derbyshire

This Climate Change Statement demonstrates how the proposal responds to the requirements of Amber Valley Borough Local Plan Policy EN1: Climate Change by reducing carbon emissions and supporting climate change mitigation and adaptation. The assessment draws upon the submitted plans, heritage information and ecological appraisal.

Reducing embodied carbon through the reuse of existing buildings and materials

The reuse of existing buildings represents an inherently sustainable form of development, significantly reducing embodied carbon compared with demolition and replacement or the construction of new ancillary accommodation.

A repair-led approach has been adopted, retaining the existing structural framework, walls and historic fabric wherever practicable. Bringing these redundant buildings back into active use secures their long-term maintenance and conservation whilst avoiding the carbon impacts associated with replacement development.

The proposals seek to retain key elements of historic fabric, including existing stone flag floors, original walling and significant architectural features. Existing stone flooring will be carefully lifted and re-laid as part of the conversion, preserving historic materials whilst reducing the need for new construction products.

Use of sustainably sourced materials

The development has been designed to preserve the traditional character and significance of the listed outbuildings through the retention and repair of existing materials wherever possible.

Where new materials are required to facilitate the conversion, including new windows, internal alterations and associated repair works, these will be selected to complement the existing buildings and sourced sustainably where practicable. The use of durable, high-quality materials will support the longevity of the development and reduce future maintenance and replacement requirements.

Reducing travel demand through the reuse of an existing site

The development makes efficient use of an existing building within the built framework of Hazelwood, reducing the need for additional land take, infrastructure and associated construction impacts. The accommodation will remain ancillary to the main dwelling and support the continued use of the wider site.

Reducing energy consumption through building design

The conversion provides an opportunity to improve the usability and operational performance of the outbuildings whilst retaining their heritage significance.

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The conversion has also been designed to improve thermal performance through the use of appropriate insulation measures and breathable construction techniques.

Existing external walls are proposed to be insulated internally using breathable methods, whilst exposed historic masonry will be retained and repaired using traditional lime-based materials. This approach improves energy efficiency whilst allowing the historic fabric to remain vapour permeable and avoiding moisture-related deterioration.

The roof construction incorporates mineral wool insulation and a breathable roof build-up designed to improve thermal performance without altering the external appearance of the listed buildings. Given the heritage significance of the buildings, these measures provide appropriate energy efficiency improvements whilst ensuring the historic fabric continues to function effectively.

Renewable energy and net-zero readiness

Whilst the listed status of the buildings requires a sensitive approach to the installation of renewable energy technologies, the proposed insulation measures, breathable construction techniques and refurbishment works will improve operational energy performance and ensure the buildings remain adaptable to future energy efficiency improvements where compatible with their heritage significance.

Retention of existing trees and hedgerows

The proposal does not require the removal of significant trees, hedgerows or other landscape features. Existing vegetation surrounding the site will be retained, continuing to provide biodiversity, landscape and climate resilience benefits.

Protecting biodiversity and carbon storage habitats

The proposal does not result in the loss of woodland, priority habitats or other significant carbon storage habitats.

Ecological assessments undertaken for the site confirm that no bats were recorded using the buildings for roosting or hibernation purposes and no hibernating bats were identified during dedicated winter surveys. Whilst bats were recorded foraging within the surrounding area, the surveys conclude that the development will not adversely affect the favourable conservation status of local bat populations.

Biodiversity enhancement measures, including bat bricks, bird bricks and other habitat features, will provide additional opportunities for wildlife and contribute positively to local ecological networks and environmental resilience.

Conclusion

The proposed conversion of the listed outbuildings responds positively to the objectives of Policy EN1: Climate Change. By reusing and conserving existing buildings, retaining historic materials, incorporating low-carbon construction techniques, improving energy efficiency and delivering biodiversity enhancements, the scheme represents a sustainable form of development.

The proposal is therefore considered to accord with the objectives of Policy EN1 by reducing embodied carbon, supporting climate change mitigation and adaptation, and securing the long-term sustainable use of important heritage assets.