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Mr & Mrs Robertson  
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Please ask for: Simon Algar  
Tel No: 01795 417375  
Our Ref: 18-506440-PAMEET  
Your Ref: -  
Date: 5<sup>th</sup> February 2019

Dear Mr & Mrs Robertson,

**18/506440/PAMEET - Request for Pre-application planning advice - Derbies Barn, Stalisfield Road, Stalisfield - Proposed amendments to approved applications: Ref SW/01/0383 and SW/01/0384.**

Please accept my apologies for the delay writing to you following our site meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> January. I set out the matters we discussed on site as following:

#### **Proposed changes to roof covering**

As previously suggested in telephone conversations and further considered at our site meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> January, I can confirm that Officers remain of the view that it would be acceptable in principle to change the required replacement roof covering on the barn from thatch (as per the previously approved scheme) to Kent peg tiles, subject to a sample of these being agreed either as part of required revised listed building consent and planning applications, or in response to a planning condition that would otherwise need to be attached to one or both of the consents for the revised scheme.

For the avoidance of doubt, I would confirm that the roof (as with the previous approved scheme) would need to be altered above the level of the purlins and tie beams to rise to a ridge, as would originally have been the case, prior to the truncated form we see today. Details of how this would be effected must be shown clearly on drawings for any revised scheme.

We touched on the issue of the roofing material for the adjacent outbuilding and I can confirm that if the main barn is to be re-roofed in Kent Peg tiles, then this smaller outbuilding should also be re-roofed in the same manner. Please note for your information (in case you weren't already aware) that this little building is listed in its own right (see list entry number 1069203 on the National Heritage List for England) and was originally constructed as a granary, hence its raised ground floor level on the staddle stones.

#### **Proposed infilling of area set aside for covered parking in previous consent**

As discussed, the preference would be for this aspect of the previously scheme to remain unchanged. However The Council would be willing to consider the enclosing of this space if it can be done in a way that would be in keeping with the character of this later cart store addition to the larger and earlier main barn. As discussed, this might possibly be taken

forward in the form of timber studs set back behind the line of the existing corner and central support posts and their associated brackets. Double glazed panels could be inserted between the studs, and these and the associated glazing would need to sit on a shallow red brick and flint work plinth to match that in use at the far north western end of this single storey addition to the main barn. You would also need to demonstrate in the planning application that there is sufficient car parking and turning space for at least 2 cars.

Please note however that The Council would unlikely be willing to support a new standalone garage proposal in lieu of this proposed change, either now or in the future.

### **Proposed alteration to the fenestration design of the barn conversion scheme**

As discussed, the existing design in this respect was carefully considered at the time and represents a design approach broadly in keeping with the Borough Council's adopted supplementary planning guidance on the Conservation of Traditional Farm Buildings (see: <https://www.swale.gov.uk/assets/Planning-Forms-and-Leaflets/ConservationOfTraditionalFarmBuildings-feb-2011.pdf>). Your suggestion to alter this by effectively placing sheets/panels of glass of varying sizes in front of the studs is unlikely to be acceptable as a wholesale replacement design approach, but if you remain wedded to this idea, favourable consideration could possibly be given to the use of this approach as a feature wall in the relatively discrete location of the northernmost bay of the barn on the rear, NE facing elevation. This would be in lieu of some of the existing weatherboarding to this wall plane, and I would suggest that the panel of glass would need to be fixed to an external dark stained timber frame butted up against a section of weatherboarding at either end and fixed to the sole plate and wall plate using colour-matched wedges, if necessary to ensure that a true vertical plane could be achieved. I would suggest that non-reflective glass should be used for this proposed feature, and should you wish to pursue this idea further, it would need to be presented as part of a revised set of application proposals (along with the aforementioned proposed changes), and supported appropriately by a large scale part elevation and sectional drawing prepared by a conservation architect.

### **Proposed alteration of ground levels to rear/north-eastern side of main barn to enable safer access/egress to and from the barn on its rear/northeast facing elevation**

As discussed, it is not clear why the ground levels are raised as they are towards the door opening on the elevation in question but it may well serve a structural purpose rather than, or possibly in addition to, a practical purpose providing a base on which to step down from the barn onto, and vice versa. My recommendation is that the mounding is not removed but improved to provide a safer and more level access platform without making it look like a heavily engineered structure. Should you wish to remove the mounding and replace it with a simple, dark-stained set of wooden steps and landing platform with associated posts and handrails, then I would advise this would need to be shown in drawings as part of any revised scheme, and supported by a conservation accredited structural engineer's report advising on the potential structural implications for the building arising from this proposed change. The report would need to be informed by some limited test pits dug carefully at the junction between the wall plane and the earth mounding.

### Conversion of the granary building

It is not entirely clear to me whether this building was included as part of the approved 2008 scheme, but I understand it is included with the main and secondary barn buildings as part of

the property for sale. The critical consideration is that any future use of this listed building should work around the existing historic internal bays within the building such that the essential character of the building, in part derived from its plan form, would not be lost or unacceptably compromised. If you wish to make any alterations to this individually grade II listed building as part of your revised scheme, then this will need to be informed by the appropriate drawings (existing and proposed elevations and floor plans, and sections, as appropriate), and also referenced in the Heritage Statement setting out the design rationale behind your revised approach to the conversion of the listed buildings and providing an objective assessment of the impact of the proposals on the heritage significance of the buildings both individually, and as a group.

For the avoidance of doubt, I can confirm that The Council would unlikely be willing to support the erection of a fully enclosed or roof covered linking structure between the main barn and the former granary building. We would however likely be willing to look favourably at proposals for a set of replacement steps to this building.

### Closing remarks

I believe I have covered all the main points you raised with me at our recent site meeting, and I hope the informal (without prejudice) advice set out in this letter helps you to decide whether to proceed with your intended purchase, and if you do indeed go ahead with the purchase, what changes to the previously approved conversion scheme would be likely to be considered favourably by the Borough Council.

It is strongly recommended that if you wish to submit proposals for a revised conversion scheme that you commission the services of an architect or architectural practice familiar with and skilled at developing sensitive development schemes for the historic environment. I cannot legitimately make any specific recommendations in this respect, but if you are not sure where to look, I can certainly advise you of architects/architectural practices of this ilk that we regularly receive applications from, and I would be happy to try and answer any brief follow up questions you may have. Alternatively if you have any questions regarding the planning process concerning your potential revised conversion scheme, then please contact my colleague Alice Reeves (Planning Officer) on (01795) 417387.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Algar', with a large, sweeping flourish underneath.

Simon J. Algar  
Conservation & Design Manager