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TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
CONVERSION OF STABLE BUILDING TO TWO HOLIDAY LETS
LOWER FARM, BARROW ROAD, GREAT SAXHAM.

PLANNING STATEMENT
Incorporating
LOCAL VALIDATION STATEMENT

Ref: 2517
July 2021

INTRODUCTION

1. This statement has been produced in support of a planning application proposing the conversion of a stable building to two holiday lets. The application site is at Lower Farm, Barrow Road, Great Saxham.

2. The application consists of this statement together with the following documents:
 - Application Form and Certificate;
 - Site Plan;
 - Location plan;
 - Drawings 4512-01, 02 and 03;
 - Drawings TSES-20195-806-MBS-00, 01, 02 and 03.
 - Photographs;
 - Land Contamination Report;
 - Copy of EA Flood Map;
 - Preliminary Ecology Appraisal; and,
 - Bat Survey.

3. The following statement is in two parts. The first part deals with the Council's local validation requirements for planning applications. The second part is a Planning Statement which sets out the relevant planning policies and other material considerations.

LOCAL VALIDATION STATEMENT

BIODIVERSITY

4. The application is accompanied by a Preliminary Ecology Appraisal and a Bat Survey. The documents confirm that the development can be undertaken without causing harm to wildlife interests. The Bat Survey makes recommendations in respect of a lighting strategy during the construction and operational phases of the development. The provision and implementation of such a strategy could be controlled by way of a planning condition.

HERITAGE

5. Lower Farmhouse, which is located approximately 35m to the south-east of the application site is a grade II listed building. The listing entry for the building states:

"Farmhouse, late C18, 2 storeys, attics. Flint walls with red brick quoins and strings. Slated hipped roof, slated gabled dormers. Axial red brick chimneys. Sash windows. 6-panelled entrance door with swept-gabled metal roofed entrance porch on open wrought-iron trellis frame."

6. It is evident from the short listing description that the significance of Lower Farmhouse arises from its age, architecture, and method of construction.
7. As the proposed development involves the reuse of an existing building, it will not materially affect the setting of the listed farmhouse. It is acknowledged that the scheme will result in some domestication, however the scheme of conversion retains the agricultural character of the building and is sympathetic to the local setting.
8. The application building is not listed. It occupies a space which is separate and distinct from Lower Farmhouse and so is unlikely to be considered as being curtilage listed. Nevertheless, the building is a non-designated heritage asset.
9. The scheme of conversion has been carefully and sensitively designed to respect the architecture and character of the building. The conversion includes the demolition of an unsightly blockwork addition and includes only two new openings in the building where small bedroom windows are proposed on the rear elevation.
10. The proposed holiday use represents the optimal viable use of the building, and its conversion will safeguard its future. The significance of the stable building arises from its age, appearance and materials used in its construction. The proposed development would not cause material harm to any of the elements which contribute to the building's significance.

LAND CONTAMINATION

11. The application is accompanied by a Phase 1 Land Contamination Report which concludes that no intrusive investigation is considered necessary prior to commencement of development. The report recommends a watching brief for visual and olfactory signs of contamination is kept during groundworks, and if identified, work should stop and a risk assessment be carried out. The watching brief may be implemented and controlled by way of a planning condition.

PLANNING POLICY

12. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (As amended) requires planning decisions to be made in accordance with development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
13. In this case, the development plan for the area consists of the St Edmundsbury Core Strategy 2010, the Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury Local Plan Joint Development Management Policies Document 2015, the St Edmundsbury Local Plan Policies Maps 2015, and the St Edmundsbury Rural Vision 2031.
14. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material consideration.

ST EDMUNDSBURY CORE STRATEGY 2010 (CS)

15. The CS sets out the Council's strategic policies for the delivery of development across the borough. The CS contains no policies which deal specifically with holiday accommodation. Policy CS13 deals with development in rural areas and states in part that in the countryside development "*will be strictly controlled, with a priority on protecting and enhancing the character, appearance, historic qualities and biodiversity of the countryside while promoting sustainable diversification of the rural economy*".
16. This proposal protects the character and historic qualities of the countryside by retaining and reusing a traditional rural building. The scheme also represents diversification and will benefit the rural economy. The scheme accords with the objectives of policy CS13.

JOINT DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES DOCUMENT 2015

17. Policy DM18 concerns new uses for historic buildings, it states in part that permission for the adaptation of a historic building to sustain a new use will be permitted where the proposal will protect the special significance of the building, and would not have a detrimental impact on its character, appearance or significant elements of the building's historic fabric. This proposal accords with the requirements of policy DM18. The scheme of conversion retains the character of the building and involves minimal change to its historic fabric.
18. Policy DM28 states that proposals for farm diversification will be approved subject to certain criteria. This proposal accords with the relevant criteria for the following reasons:

- i. The proposal is a subsidiary component of the existing enterprise and will provide new employment opportunities.
 - ii. The small-scale nature of the proposal is appropriate to the site's rural location and will not create significant vehicular movements to and from the site.
 - iii. The proposal involves the re-use of an existing building which is suitable for the intended use. The proposal also includes the removal of an inappropriate and derelict lean-to.
 - iv. The proposal would not have any material impact on the amenity of nearby residents, the surrounding landscape, biodiversity or geodiversity.
19. Policy DM33 deals specifically with proposals involving the reuse or replacement of dwellings in the countryside. Tourist accommodation is one of the uses which is acceptable under policy DM33. The proposal accords with the relevant criteria of policy DM33 for the following reasons.
- i. The building is structurally sound and capable of conversion without the need for any extensions or reconstruction.
 - ii. The proposed alterations to the building, its proposed use, and its associated operational area would not harm its appearance or adversely affect the setting of the building in the rural locality.
 - iii. The nature and intensity of the proposed use would be compatible with the site's rural location.
 - iv. The proposal would not create a significant number of jobs and therefore there is no requirement for the site be reasonably accessible by public transport.
 - v. The private curtilages of each holiday let will be modest enclosed courtyards. The proposal would not lead to prominent domestic paraphernalia which would have a harmful effect on the character of the site or the surrounding area.
 - vi. The provision of two holiday lets will not lead to unacceptable levels or types of traffic and will not require highway improvements which would harm the character of rural roads in the area.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK 2019 (NPPF)

20. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 of the NPPF describes the objectives of sustainable development as providing economic, social, and

environmental benefits. This proposal fulfils each of the three objectives of sustainable development for the following reasons.

21. Firstly, the development will meet the economic and social objective of sustainable development by helping to sustain local shops and pubs in nearby Barrow and visitor attractions in the area.
22. The proposed development also accords with the environmental objective of sustainable development as it involves the reuse of an existing building and consequently, the proposal will place less demand on natural resources. The scheme will also safeguard the future of a traditional rural building which contributes to the character of the area.
23. Paragraph 84 of the NPPF is also relevant. It states that planning decisions should enable all types of business in rural areas through conversion of existing buildings including tourism developments which respect the character of the countryside.

CONCLUSIONS

24. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (As amended) requires planning decisions to be made in accordance with development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
25. The preceding paragraphs clearly illustrate that the proposal accords with the relevant development plan policies and will cause no material harm to any interest of acknowledged importance.

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