

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Harborough Farm TN8 7PP

1.0 History of Harborough Farm

1.1 Historical context

Harborough Farm is a Grade II Listed farmhouse, located within the Metropolitan Green Belt and which is at the heart of a farmstead community of buildings consisting of barns, stables and a more recently added woodshed.

Thirkell's Barn which was part of this group of buildings is now in separate residential use.



Ordnance Survey map 1872-3

This map indicates the Harborough farmstead (noted as Harbrough on the map) including Thirkell's Barn, the stables and barn. Also shown is a detached building immediately to the west of the farmhouse. (Whilst this has been subsequently demolished, we have been informed that this was a barn and outhouse and was in existence in the 1970's. and was shown on the plans submitted for Planning and Listed Building consent in 1975)



Ordnance Survey 1938

This map also indicates the Harbourh site including Thirkell's Barn, the stables and barn. Also shown is a detached building immediately to the west of the farmhouse.

The listing description of January 16, 1975, describes the building as follows:

“18th Century weather boarded elevation concealing 16th Century or earlier timber framed building. 2 storeys, 2 windows, wide proportions. High pitched tiled roof, hipped at left, with compound ridge stack. On right return roughly coursed rubble masonry of chimney base visible below weatherboarding. Sash windows with glazing bars. Plank Door. 17th Century lean-to Sweeping low at back. Inside much exposed timber.



Undated (pre-1944) photograph of Harborough Farm

The timber structure and general appearance of the house is typical of a modest farmhouse of this period in the Kent Weald area.

The farmhouse is thought to be constructed as a dwelling in the 16th century and is built as a two-storey residence in a timber framed construction.

The high pitched clay tiled roof has a gable end to the east and is hipped to the west elevation. There is an original chimney stack to the east elevation with a random coursed stone base with a pair of later chimneys to the west elevation.

The c. 17th century catslide roof to the rear is a feature of the house to the north and includes a brick gable end to the east elevation.

The site area is approximately 9,974 sq. m or 2.47 acres



1957 photograph of Harborough Farm

Following the grant of planning and listed building consent February 1976, a large number of alterations to the building were approved and the resulting construction work very much determined the appearance of the building to this day.

A passage in the publication "Chiddingstone" by Jill Newton (1985) recounts a visit to Harborough Farm in the 1980's and confirms how much the building had changed and as follows:

"..... all this land was called Clinton Lands and was owned in the 15th century by Sir John de Clinton. Just a little way along here at Harborough Farm is the northwestern boundary of the parish. An attractive farmhouse, it has completely changed from the way we knew it in the 1960's. In those days a dear friend, Ethel Thirkell, lived here with her elderly father. There was no electricity to the house and it seemed as if time had stood still sixty years earlier, when you stepped inside."

The timber cladding was removed entirely and replaced with red facing brick at ground floor level with vertical clay tiling at first floor. Windows to the south elevation were added and enlarged and the external door moved.

The dormer extension was added to the north elevation to form a new bathroom.

Windows are predominantly single glazed painted timber casements with some sash windows to the south elevation.

Within the curtilage of the site are 4 detached outbuildings

- i. Weatherboard Barn which possibly has its origins in the 17th century.
- ii. Brick Stables appear to date from the 18th or early 19th century.
- iii. A timber framed open shed which was built after the 1960's.
- iv. Double garage constructed in 1988/89

The special interest of the buildings to the west of the farmhouse (barn and stables) lie in their group value and relationship with the grade II listed dwelling, illustrative of a multi dispersed farmstead and retain some historic features



View of west end of barn and stables



North elevation of the barn



View of east end of barn, stables and woodshed from the farmhouse



View of east end of barn and woodshed



View of south end of barn and woodshed



View of south west corner of barn and woodshed



View of stables



View of outbuildings from the west

The Barn

The weatherboard barn is shown on historic mapping from the early 19th century. The interior of the barn suggests that it may have historically functioned as stables. The barn has a degree of architectural and historic value due to its remnant historic fabric, and the timber frame in particular.

The roof is of machine made clay tiles and, anecdotally, we have been informed that the re-roofing was required after considerable damage caused by the great storm of 1987.

The existing weatherboarding is in poor condition (particularly on the north elevation) and the plinth (part modern brickwork with some stonework) requires repair.

The barn has 2 no. door openings to the north elevation and window openings to the east, south and west elevations.

The internal timber frame is intact and is formed of corner posts with central posts to the east and west elevations and 2 main structural posts to the longer north and south elevations. Intermediate posts and rails support the external timber cladding. There are also timber feeding troughs to the south.

The hayloft is supported on internal timber posts.

The Stables

The brick stables have been heavily altered and adapted throughout the 20th century and now only remnant historic fabric remains and are limited to the red brick wall at the rear and various elements of the timber framing.

The presence of trees, both within and outside the site boundary, have caused substantial historic movement to the building which we assume has resulted in a number of repairs and alterations over the years.

The building has a red brick base with a timber framed roof structure. The roof coverings are of machine-made clay tiles. Internal divisions are constructed in lightweight concrete blockwork built off a concrete slab.

The south elevation has 2 main posts supporting the eaves beam, and infilled with stable doors, timber weatherboarding and painted concrete blockwork.

The Woodshed

The timber framed open shed is a modern addition and it is assumed was constructed in the 1980's. The structure is of no heritage value.

The frame is clad in timber weatherboarding and has a profiled galvanised steel roof sheeting.

2.0 Relevant Planning History

2.1 Internal and external alterations to existing farmhouse to provide bathroom, hall, kitchen, new windows, outer facing brickwork and weatherboarding.
Granted approval February 12 1976 (75/S01068/HIST)

2.2 New Detached Double Garage
Granted approval June 2 13 1988 (SE/88/765)

3.0 Legislation and policy framework

Section **66(1)** of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a Listed Building or its setting, the Local Planning Authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2018 constitutes the Government's current policy regarding development in the historic environment. It is a material consideration and includes a succinct policy framework for the local planning authorities and decision takers.

- Paragraphs **189** to **202** of the NPPF deal with conserving and enhancing the historic environment with much emphasis on 'significance'. The significance of any heritage asset affected by a proposal is to be assessed by four components of its heritage significance: archaeological, architectural, artistic and historic interest. It is the degree of harm rather than the scale of development that is to be assessed

- Paragraph **190** states that in assessing the effects of development on a heritage asset, the weight given to an asset's conservation should be proportionate to its significance. It states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.

- Paragraph **196** address's the balancing of harm against public benefits. The guidance emphasizes that where less than substantial harm will arise as a result of the proposed development, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of a proposal, including its retention in its optimum viable use.

- This guidance emphasizes that conservation and heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance is a core planning principle. It states that conservation is an active process of maintenance and managing change that requires a flexible and thoughtful approach.

4.0 The Proposals

(To be read in conjunction with as existing & proposed drawings no.'s 95-000/28/P.01-13 inc.)

The application is to demolish the existing woodshed, construct a new extension and convert the barn and stables to form an annex ancillary to the existing dwelling.

The proposals seek to conserve, refurbish and provide an active use for the barn and stables, whilst the removal of the utilitarian non-original woodshed and the sensitive siting of the new extension to the barn providing significant heritage benefits to the site and preserves and enhances the character of the existing building and the farmstead as a whole.

Barn Conversion and Extension

The Barn

The proposals include the restoration of the existing barn which is currently in relatively poor condition. A key intention of the works is the retention of the historic fabric and the preservation of the ancillary character of the structure.

The design intention is to carry out the minimum alterations to the timber frame as possible and for the frame to be integral with the interior design. We therefore propose to install the new insulation and cladding outside of the frame in order that the existing retained timber can be exposed internally.

New windows are carefully located to avoid the removal of any major post or beams.

It is proposed to re-tile the roof with handmade Kent peg tiles to match the proposed roofing to the barn and new extension.

It is proposed to repair/partially rebuild the existing plinth and to cast a new ground slab within the Barn. The existing hayloft is to be removed and all timber to be salvaged for possible re-use.

A new oak framed loft is to be installed at the level of the existing eaves beam. The double height space at the western end of the barn is to be retained.

The proposed windows are double glazed powder coated metal. The colour would match the proposed stain to the timber cladding to the extension and the barn.



*Barn interior – existing window opening to south elevation
red box indicates area of new opening to the proposed glazed link*



*Barn interior – existing window opening to east elevation
red box indicates area of new window in existing opening*



*Barn interior – south elevation
red box indicates area of new window*



Barn interior – roof structure

The New Extension

The new extension has been designed to be a small-scale contemporary addition, utilising traditional external materials and is subservient to the barn structure.

The extension is designed with an apparently detached building (18.0 sq. m.), with timber weatherboarding and a pitched roof with handmade Kent peg tiled roof coverings. The pitch of the roof has been designed at 40° which is the minimum pitch for a peg tile roof. The proposed windows are double glazed powder coated metal. The colour would match the proposed stain to the timber cladding to the extension and the barn.

The extension is positioned in the same orientation as the farmhouse and provides a visual 'pivot' between the barn and the house. The topography of the site allows the floor of the extension to be set approximately 375 mm below that of the barn. The ridge of the new extension is some 1400 mm below that of the barn.

The south face of the extension is 21 meters from the road, which itself is sunken below a steep bank and further obscured by the boundary hedge.

The link between the new extension and the barn is positioned carefully and coincides with the existing window opening in the south elevation. The link building contains the internal steps and is formed of frameless glass screens with a standing zinc roof.

The pitch of the zinc roofing is 3°, allowing the connection to the barn to be made below the existing eaves.

The frameless glass emphasises the separation of the new and old buildings whilst the choice of materials places the new extension within the historic group of modest farm buildings.

The footprint of the existing woodshed is 22.6 sq. m. with an external volume of 68.2 m³. It is proposed to demolish the shed and construct a new extension and glazed link with a total footprint of 20.5 sq. m.

The extension has an external volume of 63.0 m³ (although it should be noted that the roof form accounts for 15.7 m³ of this total). The glazed link has an external volume of 7.5 m³.

The extension therefore has a reduced building footprint of 2.1 sq. m and an external volume of 70.5 m³ overall, a modest increase of 2.3 m³ (3.3%) although this is largely due to the incorporation of the pitched roof, designed to be harmonious with the existing barn and stables and reflect the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and outbuildings and set against the reduction in footprint.

The proposed extension has been carefully designed to protect the openness of the Green Belt in accordance with Local and National Planning Policy.

The Stables

The proposal is to conjoin two of the stable bays by removing the concrete blockwork dividing wall. The resultant space will be insulated and lined with plasterboard to form a home office/gym. The third bay will be retained as a store.

The external doors, concrete blockwork and timber weatherboarding is to be removed and replaced with timber double doors and timber weatherboarded panels. The doors act as shutters to the home office space which incorporates double glazed powder coated metal windows and door.

It is proposed to re-tile the roof with handmade Kent peg tiles to match the proposed roofing to the barn and new extension.

No original features will be lost in connection with the new works.

Amenity

The proposed design will not impact upon the light and privacy to the only neighbouring property, Thirkell's Barn, some 52.0 meters to the east of the proposed annex.

It should also be noted that Condition 7 of the planning approval for the conversion of Thirkell's Barn stated that '.....the windows in the western elevation shall be glazed in non-transparent glass and shall be permanently maintained as such'.

5.0 ACCESS STATEMENT

- 5.1 The proposed works incorporate the refurbishment of, and alterations to existing buildings within the curtilage of a Listed building. Access into the buildings will not be altered.
The property possesses a large gravel drive and parking and access to the house is unaffected.

6.0 HERITAGE REPORT

- 6.1 We attach the Heritage Report.

7.0 ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

7.1 Thermal and energy use

The refurbishment and extension of the existing building will not only enhance the appearance of the Barn and Stables but will provide an opportunity to upgrade the fabric and services to current standards.

7.2 Refuse and recycling

Refuse and recycling arrangements remain unaltered.

7.3 Ecology

The Client is aware that there is evidence of bats and they commissioned an environmental consultant to carry out a survey and impact assessment and recommend suitable mitigation methods which are not required in the proposal.

Please refer to Preliminary Bat Roost assessment and Bat Emergence Report by PJC Consultancy
We have incorporated their recommendations for mitigation measures in the design of the barn and stables.

8.0 Summary

The proposed design replaces a largely unsympathetic box like shed of relatively poor construction with a high-quality building utilising materials to match the existing buildings that complements both the character and appearance of the farmhouse and outbuildings.

The buildings form a farmyard group and retain their original form and, by the removal of a discordant, modern shed with corrugated steel roofing, the grain and coherence of the farmstead layout is preserved and enhanced.

The National Planning Policy Framework supports the re-use of buildings in the Green Belt providing they are of permanent and substantial construction; the openness of the countryside is preserved and there is no conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt. Also the NPPF supports the extension of buildings provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

This application complies with these requirements. This is particularly so because of the removal of a significant utilitarian storage building, which will improve the overall setting.

No significant original features will be lost through the new works and the development is of a scale and design to be in harmony with the existing buildings. The proposals will secure the future useful life of the outbuildings and provide significant heritage benefits.