



PLANNING STATEMENT

for

Demolition of Existing
Buildings and
Erection of 3 No. Detached Dwellings
with Detached Garages

at

Brook Hall Farm Buildings
Church Road
Crowfield
Ipswich
IP6 9TG



RICS

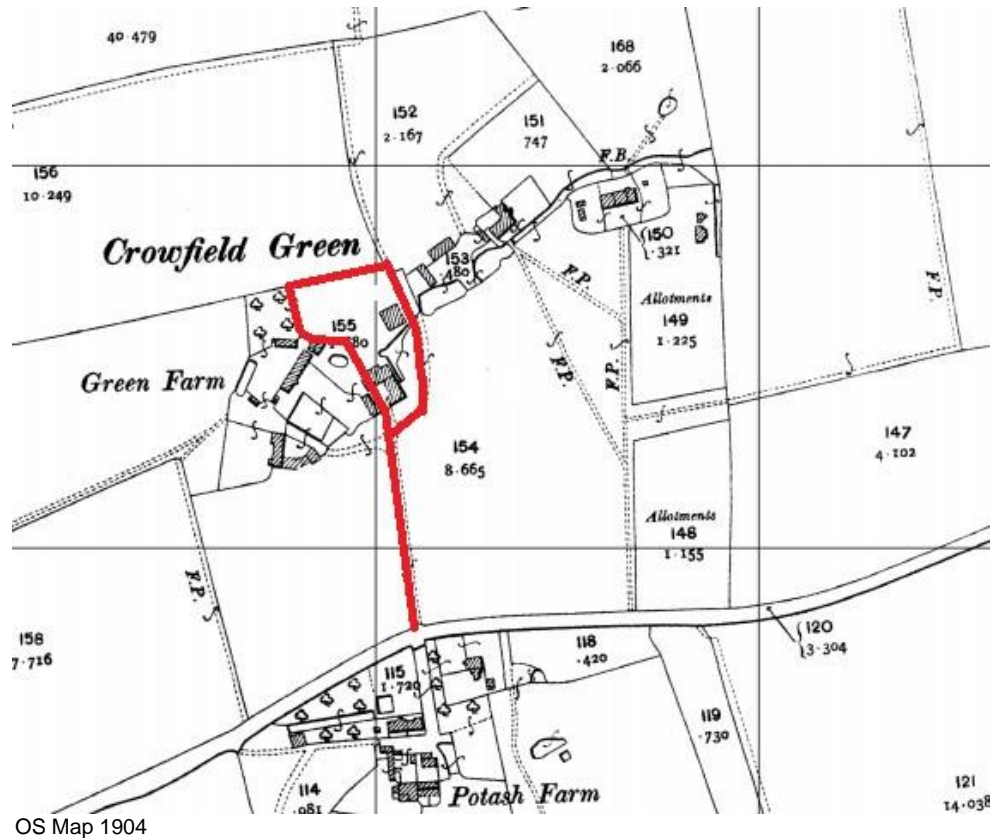
14, Cornard Road
Sudbury
Suffolk CO10 2XA

1. **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This Statement accompanies an application for the demolition of existing buildings forming the former farmyard and erection of 3 No. detached dwellings with detached garages at Brook Hall Farm Buildings, Crowfield.
- 1.2 Proposal involves demolition of the 3 No. existing buildings on site and a redundant silo. The buildings are referred to as Barn A, Barn B and Store/Workshop on drawing No 19/070 - 103
- 1.3 Barn A already has the benefit of planning permission for conversion to 2 No. dwelling houses conveyed by Prior Approval under Class Q ref. DC/20/02093 dated 18th September 2020.
- 1.4 Barn B also has benefit of planning permission for conversion to a single residential dwelling conveyed by Prior Approval under Class ZA, ref. DC/20/05385 dated 19th March 2021.
- 1.5 This proposal is an alternative to those approved schemes.
- 1.6 Opposite the entrance to this site permission has recently been granted for replacement of a former agricultural building with new residential dwelling using similar fallback position as on this proposal ref. DC/18/00598 – Potash Farm, Church Road, Crowfield

2. **SITE DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION**

- 2.1 The land and buildings subject of this application are shown on the site and location block plan drawing No. 19/070-101.
- 2.2 The site is adjacent Brook Hall Farmhouse, the main residential property. There is a separate driveway from the public highway to the site from Church Road. This also serves 2 other residential dwelling and the modern current farm yard.
- 2.3 The wider site owned by the applicant does not include the full access driveway to the public highway which is owned by the adjoining landowner/farmer. The applicant has full rights of access to the buildings and the site.
- 2.4 The entire site including driveway access extends to 0.32 hectares.
- 2.5 Investigation of historical Ordnance Survey maps revealed on the 1904 series map there was a defined settlement around the farm designated Crowfield Green, see below:



At this time Brook Hall Farm was known as Green Farm and there are clearly a number of other buildings including residential properties in the immediate vicinity.

3. **EXISTING BUILDINGS**

- 3.1 The existing buildings comprise three former agricultural buildings and an unused silo.
- 3.2 Barn A is a relatively modern mid C20 grain store building of precast concrete frame construction clad with fibre cement sheets. It has been unused and redundant for agricultural purposes since the previous owners sold the site many years ago.
- 3.3 Barn B is a more modern late C20 building, steel portal framed with fibre cement sheet cladding and block walling. Although built as an agricultural storage building it has in recent years been used as a workshop for business purposes.
- 3.4 The other building on site is a small single storey storage building used by the applicant for domestic purposes.

3.5 Summary of existing floor areas;

Building	Floor area
Barn A	401m ²
Barn B	245m ²
Storage building	85m ²
Total	731m²

4. **PROPOSAL**

- 4.1 The proposal is to demolish all existing buildings on site and construct 3 No. new detached residential dwellings.
- 4.2 These dwellings are illustrated on drawing Nos. 19/070 – 201, 202, 203 and 204, and are of traditional design and materials intentionally to be in keeping as sympathetic to the adjacent listed building, Brook Hall Farmhouse and wider village context.
- 4.3 The site itself is separated from Brook Hall Farmhouse by a detached garage structure and mature tree and hedge planting. The Farmhouse is 30+ metres from the application site.
- 4.4 The dwellings are designed to accord with the Technical Housing standards - nationally described space standards, March 2015 which is the minimum for the non-adopted required standard.
- 4.5 Plot 1 is a 4 bedroomed property with a floor area of 207m² and has a total plot size of 0.12 hectares and a private rear garden area of 254m².
- 4.6 Plot 2 is also a 4 bedroomed property with a floor area of 185m² with a plot arear of 0.05 hectares and private rear garden area of 272m².
- 4.7 Plot 3 is a 4 bedroomed property with a floor area of 215m² with a private rear garden area of 266m².
- 4.8 Each property has a double garage of 40m² complying with Suffolk County Council parking requirements.
- 4.8 The southern part of the site, principally Plot 1, has mature tree planting. The main bulk of the tree group will remain and its visual aspect from the public highway will not be affected.
- 4.9 All new dwellings are provided with double garages sized in accordance with Suffolk County Council's current standards to

accommodate two car parking spaces with space for a further two cars for each plot on driveway and external areas.

- 4.10 The total proposed floor area amounts to 727m². This includes both ground and first floor area so equates to a significant reduction in footprint area.
- 4.11 All new properties have ridges height approximately 8m above ground level. This compares to 7.5m for the existing building barn A, and 8m for barn B.
- 4.12 Overall a significant reduction in mass and built form compared with the existing buildings on site.

5. **PLANNING POLICY**

National Policy

- 5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), July 2021, promotes a more flexible approach to development and achieving sustainable development within the three defined performance roles; social, economic and environmental.
- 5.2 The NPPF requires Local Authorities to boost housing supply, supports the principles of rural housing and the efficient use of land which includes the conversion of existing buildings.
- 5.3 In this case the buildings already have Planning Permission for conversion to residential use. This proposal is an alternative scheme to those existing consents.
- 5.4 The NPPF also goes on to recognise that small scale and windfall sites make an important contribution to housing supply figures as they can often be secured and built out much quicker.

Local Plan Policy

- 5.5 The new Babergh Mid Suffolk District Council's Joint Local Plan is currently awaiting examination so can only be given limited weight in these circumstances.
- 5.6 Mid Suffolk District Council retains a number of saved policies from the Adopted Local Plan 1998 and First Alteration 2006. These policies deal generally with design, layout and amenity considerations.

Validation Requirements

Affordable Housing

- 5.7 The proposal is for three new dwellings which is defined as minor development and there is below the Government's policy threshold for affordable housing and/or any other contributions.

Biodiversity

- 5.8 A bat and barn owl survey was conducted, submitted and accepted with the recent application for Barn B and confirmed the existing buildings do not provide suitable habitat for protected species.
- 5.9 It is acknowledged that there a number of mature trees on site and these may in fact provide some habitat. Due account will be taken of this when carrying any development should permission be granted. In this regard a suitably worded condition for mitigation measures or further investigation would be acceptable.

Flood Risk Assessments

- 5.10 Investigation of the Environment Agency's flood map data confirms the site is located within Flood Zone 1 where all types of development are acceptable. Accordingly, a Flood Risk Assessment is not required in this instance.

Heritage Statement

- 5.11 Although the buildings to be removed are not listed buildings nor in a designated Conservation Area, the adjacent building Brook Hall Farmhouse is a listed building.
- 5.12 Given the distance of the site and existing buildings from that property and the fact that all the buildings are modern C20th design and construction, it is not considered they form part of an historic curtilage or farmstead associated with Brook Hall Farm.
- 5.13 English heritage Advice Note 10 – Listed Buildings and Curtilage, advises, that were the listed farm house stands in its own ground and is in separate ownership to the farmyard, particularly were the buildings are all modern, as in this case, the farmyard would not be considered farm of the curtilage of the listed building.
- 5.14 Brook Hall was listed in 1987 and an extract of the statutory entry list description for is below:

CROWFIELD CHURCH ROAD TM 15 NW 3/10 Brook Hall II Former farmhouse; late C16 with early C17 and C19 alterations. 2 storeys. Originally of 2-cell end-chimney plan with cross-entry, extended in C17. Timber-framed and rough-cast. Plaintiled roof with axial chimney of red brick; a C19 external chimney to left. Small-pane casements, C19 at 1st storey and late C20 at ground storey. Small-paned glazed C20 entrance door. In the hall is an exposed late C16 1st floor structure with bar-stop chamfers; a blocked rear cross-entry doorway has evidence for an arched head. Wind-braced clasped-purlin roof; a diamond mullioned window beside the chimney at attic level gives evidence for original 2-cell form. Altered C17 lintelled back-to-back open fireplaces. An early C17 addition to right was of 1½ storeys, with wind-braced butt-purlin roof; it was heightened and reroofed in C19.

Listing NGR: TM1476258092

- 5.15 Brook Hall also appears on the Suffolk Heritage Register (HER), ref CRO 034. Summary description below:

Brook Hall Farm (Green Farm), Crowfield. 19th century farmstead and 16th century farmhouse with converted buildings. Regular courtyard U-shaped plan formed by working agricultural buildings with a dispersed multi-yard element. The farmhouse is set away from the yard. Significant loss (less than 50%) of the traditional farm buildings. Located within a hamlet.

Land Contamination

- 5.16 A Phase One Desk Study Report was prepared and submitted for the conversion of Barn B. This was prepared in June 2020 and covered the entire site. This is resubmitted with this application.

Fallback Position Created by the Prior Approvals

- 5.17 The principle of a fallback position has been established through the Courts with the leading case **R(Mansell) v Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council (2019) PTSR1452 and EWCA CIV1314**. This was an application for judicial review of the grant of Planning Permission for residential development in which the Planning Officer had recommended that permission be granted advising that a realistic 'fallback position' was that a less desirable development would go ahead if planning permission was refused.
- 5.18 The judgement given by Lord Justice Lindblom in which he stated:

'The status of a fallback development as a material consideration in a planning application is not a novel concept. It is very familiar.'

This went on to establish that where there is a real prospect of a fallback development being implemented it must be taken into account centred in a material considered for the planning application under consideration.

- 5.19 In this case the prior approvals for conversion of the two existing buildings establishes the right for three separate residential units to be provided on the site.
- 5.20 The consideration in this case is that 'on balance, conversion of the existing unsightly C20th farm buildings to residential use would not provide an ideal solution in aesthetic terms, whereas the proposed development with 3 No. detached sympathetic dwellings could be seen as providing an environmental and landscape improvement providing greater public benefit.

6. **CONCLUSIONS**

- 6.1 Although the site is outside an defined settlement boundary, Permitted Development Rights allow for conversion of the buildings to residential use which has already been confirmed by the prior approvals already obtained.
- 6.2 These prior approvals are a material consideration with this application as it provides a fallback position as there is a very realistic opportunity to complete the development granted under the prior approvals which remain current.
- 6.3 The three new dwellings proposed are considered to be more sympathetic than the existing buildings in terms of style, appearance and scale. This will improve the appearance of the area generally and relationship to the adjoining listed building ensuring that there will be no harm caused.
- 6.4 It is also no more unsustainable in terms of its location than the prior approvals already granted.
- 6.5 This proposal therefore represents a positive improvement over the prior approvals granted for conversion of the existing buildings bringing greater public and landscape benefits.