
DESIGN ACCESS AND PLANNING STATEMENT

Proposed change of use of 1no agricultural barns to 1no domestic dwelling, including the conversion of ancillary buildings and a small extension. The change of use of the granary to a meetings room for commercial use.

at

Middle Ripley Farm,

North Ripley Road,

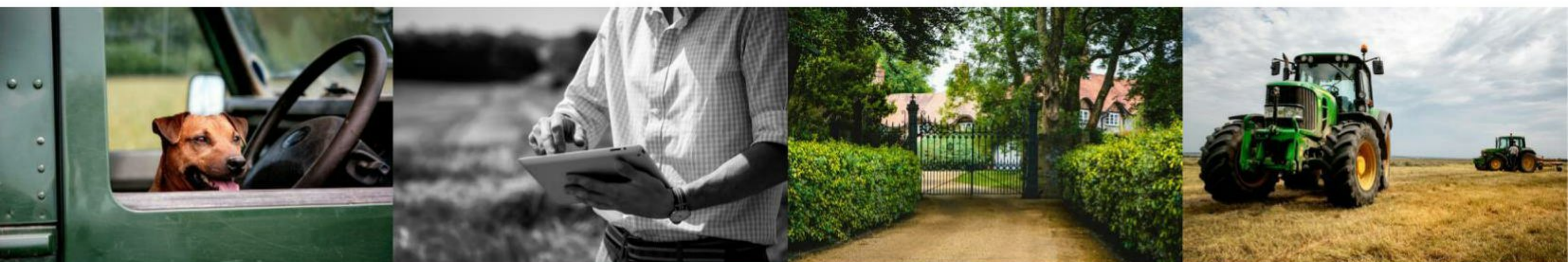
Ripley,

Bransgore,

BH23 8ES

Ref: 8842

March 2022



Contents

1. Introduction and Proposal
2. Executive Summary
3. Planning Policy
4. Design and Layout
5. Access
6. Context, Setting and Landscape Interactions
7. Conclusion

1. Introduction and Proposal

1.1 The application seeks full planning consent for the “Change of Use” of a series of agricultural buildings at Middle Ripley Farm to the following: -

- The conversion of Barn A to a domestic C3 dwelling. (Barn A red arrow)
- The minor extension to Barn A replicating the original built form referenced in the Heritage Assessment.
- The “Change of Use” of Barn B, The Granary, to a meeting space for use by the estate (Barn B black arrow). The Granary is Grade II Listed.
- The conversion of Barn C to an ancillary domestic use associated to Barn A. (Barn C blue arrow)
- The minor repairs required to all barns and landscaping works.



Aerial photograph of the site showing the position of the barns.

- 1.2 The proposal will include the required parking numbers and cycle spaces as set out in the guidance provided by Hampshire County Council.
- 1.3 The proposal will make use of the existing vehicular access onto the adjacent highway network.
- 1.4 The application has been submitted against National and Local Planning Policies, whilst having strong regard to the rural setting and the heritage assets set out within the Heritage Assessment.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The statement sets out how the proposed scheme meets the requirements of the relevant local and national planning policies.
- 2.2 The New Forest District Council Local Plan Policies and National Planning Policy Framework have been considered in detail when developing the scheme.

- 2.3 The statement sets out how the proposal meets the requirements of the key planning policies whilst considering the rural setting and heritage assets.
- 2.4 Where the policy and design require expert consultants' reports, these have been prepared and submitted as part of this application. The reports have been referred to in detail as part of this statement.
- 2.5 When reviewing the landscape interactions, the proposal will offer planning gain through its choice of materials and careful design using the surrounding buildings and dense landscaping as screening.
- 2.6 There are no obvious constraints to affect the deliverability of the project as the land use/proposal will be able to be assimilated within the environment.

3. Planning Policy

National Policy

3.1 Relevant Policies of the National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph 80 states that “planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:

- c) the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting.”

Paragraph 180 states that policies and decisions for new developments should ensure they:

- a) Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development.
- b) Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout, and appropriate and effective landscaping.
- c) Are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities).
- d) Establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming, and distinctive places to live, work and visit.
- e) Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks.
- f) Create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users, quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

Local Policy

- 3.2 The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, state that planning applications and appeals must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations which indicate otherwise. The policies of this development plan must, in turn, conform with those of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Where they do not, for example if a Plan is out of date, the NPPF takes precedence.

The Relevant Development Plan

3.3 The development plan which relates to the site comprises the following documents

- Local Plan 2016-2036 Part 1: Planning Strategy
- The Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2009
- Local Plan Part 2: Sites and Development Management 2014

3.4 The policies of the development plan document which are relevant to this application are summarised below. These define the planning issues that have been considered in this statement.

Designations

3.5 The application site is designated as Open Countryside within the Green Belt as set out by the Local Plan.

Relevant Policies in the Local Plan 2016-2036 Part 1: Planning Strategy

3.6 Policy ENV3: Design quality and local distinctiveness

“All development should achieve high quality design that contributes positively to local distinctiveness, quality of life and enhances the character and identity of the locality by creating buildings, streets, places, and spaces that are:

- Functional: well connected to surrounding uses, and logically laid out so that different elements work well together in a manner that is safe to access, easy to navigate, convenient to use and that makes effective use of both developed land and open spaces;
- Appropriate: sympathetic to its environment and context, respecting and enhancing local distinctiveness, character, and identity; and
- Attractive: visually appealing and enjoyable to be in.”

This policy has been addressed in further detail in section 4, Design and Layout of this statement. The scheme however will offer planning gain from the visual improvement on the rural setting through the tidying up of the site and the buildings.

Relevant policies of the Local Plan Part 2: Sites and Development Management 2014

3.7 Policy DM20: Residential development in the countryside

“Residential development in the countryside will only be permitted where it is:

- a) a limited extension to an existing dwelling; or
- b) the replacement of an existing dwelling, except where it: (i) is the result of a temporary permission(s); and/or (ii) is an unauthorised use; and/or (iii) it has been abandoned; or
- c) affordable housing to meet a local need, in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CS22; or
- d) an agricultural worker’s or forestry worker’s dwelling in accordance with Policy DM21.

In all cases, development should be of an appropriate design, scale and appearance in keeping with the rural character of the area and should not be harmful to the rural character of the area by reason of traffic and other activity generated or other impacts.”

3.8 Policy DM22: Employment development in the countryside

“Rural employment/business development will be permitted where it is:

- b) the re-use of existing permanent buildings which are structurally sound so that they can be re-occupied without major rebuilding or extension.”
- 3.9 There are no other policies in the development plan that allow for such conversions and therefore for the sake of this application, we must conclude that whilst the proposed development is consistent with the aims of the development plan (in terms of delivering houses) the conversion of redundant rural buildings to residential is not specifically provided for by the plan.
- 3.10 In the absence of specific policy support for the principle of the conversion to an open market residential use, we need to look at material considerations. The NPPF provides the route to a planning consent. NPPF states that “The policies in this Framework are material considerations which should be taken into account in dealing with applications from the day of its publication. Plans may also need to be revised to reflect policy changes which this replacement Framework has made.” Therefore, it is clear, the “policies” of the NPPF should be a material consideration.
- 3.11 The Core Strategy was prepared in the context of the old Planning Policy Guidance and Statements. PPS7 referred to development in the countryside and contained the advice (paragraph 17) that “The Government’s policy is to support the re-use of appropriately located and suitably constructed existing buildings in the countryside where this would meet sustainable development objectives. Re-use for economic development purposes will usually be preferable, but residential conversions may be more appropriate in some locations, and for some types of building. Planning authorities should therefore set out in LDDs their policy criteria for permitting the conversion and re-use of buildings in the countryside for economic, residential and any other purposes, including mixed uses.”
- 3.12 The highlighted priority for economic development was clearly the focus of policy CS1 rather than residential development – this was a sign of the time and the planning focus at that point. The NPPF now states that (para. 79) “Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply: c) the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting”. Given that this is in the housing section of the NPPF it is clearly referring to new open market housing and a specific focus of the current planning guidance that was not the case with PPS7.
- 3.13 Therefore, the cross reference back to policy CS1 of the Local Plan renders this specific part of policy STR3 out of date and inconsistent with the NPPF. The LPA should therefore apply the policy test of the NPPF which clearly allows for the re-use of redundant or disused buildings which enhance the immediate setting.
- 3.14 The inconsistency between the development plan and the NPPF which we previously concluded could be explained by the age of the Core Strategy which pre-dates the NPPF and was written in the context of PPS7 which was less supportive of the re-use of rural buildings for residential purposes. Why that provision is not updated in the recently adopted Local Plan is not apparent but, nonetheless, the NPPF is a material consideration of weight and provides the justification for the proposed development. This is a material consideration of weight

which allows for the principle of the development because the proposal is consistent with the NPPF policy in paragraph 80.

- 3.15 When reviewing alternative options for the buildings, such as other forms of agriculture, commercial and tourism. It was determined, that due to the level of expenditure to repair the barns and their limited capacity, agriculture was not a viable option. A commercial use would not be viable due to the limitations of the local broadband and the impact on the rural road network. The estate has discounted a tourism use as they would want to retain control over the occupants, due to the close proximity of other domestic dwellings, the granary and the farming practices.

Material Considerations

- 3.16 Landscape Policy:

The proposed scheme is within the “Lower Avon Valley - River Terrace Farmlands”.

- 3.17 Below are other key policies that have been referenced when developing the scheme: -

Local Plan Part 2 Sites and Development Management Development Plan Document

- Policy DM2 - Nature conservation, biodiversity, and geodiversity (Saved Policy)

The Local Plan 2016 - 2036

- Policy ENV2 The South West Hampshire Green Belt
- Policy ENV4: Landscape character and quality
- Policy ECON1: Employment land and development
- Policy CCC2: Safe and sustainable travel
- Policy IMPL2: Development standards

These policies have been covered in greater detail throughout the DAPS and accompanying documentation.

Broadband

- 3.18 At present, the broadband speeds to the adjacent properties are between 8-12 mbs. There is no clear line of sight to the local satellites and therefore there is no way to improve this speed. The nearest broadband cabinet is either Sopley or Ringwood and these are too far away to run a new line to a single property. When faster broadband is available a new connection will be provided by the applicant. The broadband provided to the property is felt to be adequate for the needs of a three-bedroom domestic dwelling of this nature.

4 Design and Layout

- 4.1 The scheme being proposed has followed an extensive development process, working with the Local Planning Authority and consultants. The key points when reviewing the requirements of the scheme, are as follows: -

- To protect the Heritage Asset on site and the heritage assets within the surrounding area.

- Enhance the landscaping of the Greenbelt.

It is felt that the scheme achieves this through the removal of a series of modern derelict structures and finding a viable use for the three barns that will not have an immediate or local detrimental impact.

4.2 The proposal is as follows: -

1. The change of use of Barn A to a three-bedroom dwelling, following the reinstatement of the built form in the North-Western corner. It was investigated as to whether the Western end of Barn C could be reinstated and changed to a habitable space. This was discounted as the ground level and roof level were too low within the flood zone.
2. The change of use of Barn B (Granary) to an estate meetings room. This use only requires a minimal amount of repair works, the installation of a glazed screen, the installation of a wood-burning stove with flue and the siting of a free-standing external metal staircase.
3. The change of Barn C to a garage and domestic office space that will service Barn A. this will include the removal of a bay of Barn C to expose the eastern wall of Barn A.

4.3 Barn A

The change of use of Barn A includes the following work.

- The formation of five new window openings and one new door opening. In conjunction with the pre-application comments, these have been kept to a minimum to not create a building with too many domestic features. The amount of opening has been reduced compared to that shown on the pre-application submission.
- The change of material on the roof from a profiled fibre cement or asbestos sheeting to a grey natural slate, offering planning gain through the improved appearance.
- The lifting of the finished floor level to address the flood risk, with a carefully designed series of steps on the eastern, western and southern elevation for access.

4.4 Barn A – Extension

The Barn A extension has been designed as follows.

- It has been established in the Heritage Assessment that the barn has changed over time with various elements being removed or altered.
- It was determined that due to the linear pattern of the barn, it would be difficult to create a three-bedroom dwelling to suit a modern family without an extension.
- The Heritage Assessment clearly sets out that there was a structure in the position shown for the extension historically.
- The position of the extension ensures that are limited views of the proposed structure and therefore this does not change the character of the setting or impact the heritage asset.
- The contemporary design using traditional materials ensures integration within the Green Belt, without detracting from the existing structure.

- The roof has been designed to sit just above the boundary wall, but below the main Barn A roof structure, therefore from the long view, remaining subservient to the principal building.

4.5 Barn B

As previously mentioned, Barn B is a simple change of use with a minimal number of alterations to the Grade II Listed Building. The changes are as follows.

- Minor repairs to the timber cladding and plain clay tile roofing of the building.
- The installation of a glazed screen between the timber posts/beam to the existing entrance.
- The installation of a wood-burning stove and metal flue.
- The installation a series of metal steps to the access, set off the existing structure. The steps are to be free-standing.

The works are deemed to provide a viable use for the building without having a detrimental impact on the heritage asset.

Formal joinery drawings are requested to be conditioned as part of a formal planning consent.



Barn B – Internal Structure to be retained.



Barn B – Internal structure to be retained, showing areas of cladding that require repair.



Barn B – Internal structure to be retained, showing areas of cladding and feather boards that require repair.



Barn B – Internal structure to be retained, showing existing posts where the glazed screen will be set between.



Barn B – Internal structure to be retained, showing existing posts where the glazed screen will be set between.

4.6 Barn C

The change of use to Barn C includes the following work.

- The removal of a the dilapidate western bay of the cart shed.
- The formation of an internal wall to separate the car port from the refuge bin storage/ bike shed from the car port.
- The conversion of the eastern brick-built structure to a home office.

Historical Appraisal – Proposed Scheme

- 4.7 Heritage Statement (see accompanying Heritage Assessment for a full analysis of the existing buildings)
- 4.8 Middle Ripley Farm consists of a farmhouse, two threshing barns, a lean-to, a shelter shed, stables and two stores. The farmhouse has been divided into three dwellings and now has no working association with the farm buildings, all of which are themselves redundant and gradually deteriorating. This proposal will lead to the conversion/re-use of the two threshing barns, shelter shed and small store, and the demolition of the semi-ruinous lean-to.
- 4.9 The older of the two threshing barns (Barn B), dating to the 18th century, will be converted into a meeting space, with only necessary like-for-like replacement of missing or damaged timbers. The existing modern eastern access will be covered over, and the northern doorway will be utilised once more, approached by new metal free standing steps. In order to allow for the heating of the internal space, a wood burning stove will be used, with a flue exiting the roof in the south-west corner just above eaves height.
- 4.10 The larger of the two threshing barns (Barn A), dating to the early 19th century, will be converted into a dwelling. Due to the risk of flooding, which this site is prone to, the floor level within the barn will be raised by 0.86m, necessitating the raising of the existing blocked western door to match that of the eastern, and the formation of steps leading up to both

doors, composed of brick and stone. The barn is currently without windows, having instead a series of four high level vents in its eastern and western walls. Three new windows will be inserted into the eastern wall and one in the western, while at the north-western end of the barn a new extension, with communicating door, will be added in the position of the one that existed here in the 19th and 20th centuries. These new openings have been positioned to enable the retention of all eight vents, although each will be infilled for insulation purposes, with the blocking stepped back to highlight their presence.

- 4.11 At the north-western end of the barn a small new extension, with communicating door, will be added. It has been placed in this location partly because it recreates an earlier, similarly sized, extension visible on mapping of the later 19th and 20th centuries, but also due to this being the least visible of the barn's elevations. It has been designed to be subservient to the adjoining barn both in size and materials, with timber cladding used in imitation of the other smaller structures on the site.
- 4.12 At the southern end of the barn the existing lean-to will be demolished, and two new openings made of matching size and style, with one functioning as a door, the other as a window. While parts of the lean-to date to the 19th century, it is mainly of late 20th century construction, with the early fabric in poor and unstable condition. Its demolition is not considered to represent a significant loss and will serve to expose more of the neighbouring brick barn.
- 4.13 The shelter shed was added to the north-east corner of the brick threshing barn in the mid-19th century. Later in the 19th century part of its original eastern bay was replaced with the existing small brick store. The proposed works would see the renewal of the door and windows in the small store, the insertion of a new timber door into the adjoining remaining part of the eastern bay of the shelter shed, the retention of the central bay, and the removal of the western bay. The latter is considered to be the most significant change to the shelter shed, however a high percentage of the timbers of this western bay date to the 20th or 21st century, as a result of previous repairs to a possibly ongoing problem, its removal would have the benefit of exposing once again the full eastern elevation of the early 19th century brick threshing barn.
- 4.14 Overall the proposed scheme will bring these buildings back into use, enabling their ongoing survival and maintenance. The main aim has been to preserve the only surviving element of the 18th century farm, the timber threshing barn, and highlight the most significant feature of the early 19th century farm, the large brick threshing barn; for the removal of the semi-ruined lean-to at the latter's southern end, and the pulling back of the western end of the shelter shed, will expose significantly more of its fabric than currently visible.
- 4.15 The threat of further flooding episodes and the requirements of modern design regulations have necessitated a number of alterations and losses, notably the raising of the internal floor levels and the insertion of new openings, however these are not considered excessive and have been positioned so as to leave existing features prominent, such as the vents and opposing door openings. The most significant loss will be the western end of the shelter shed, however this is mitigated by the benefit in exposing the full eastern elevation of the earlier brick barn, and the fact that the timbers to be removed are largely the result of modern poor-quality repairs.

Structural Appraisal & Schedule of Repairs

4.16 Barn A & C

Due to the nature of these barns, a structural appraisal report has been prepared for this building by AWA Civil and Structural Engineers and is included with the planning application.



Barn A – Eastern elevation showing the connection to Barn C



Barn A – Eastern elevation showing the connection to Barn C



Barn C – Southern elevation showing the connection to Barn A



Barn C – Southern Elevation

4.17 Barn B



Barn B – Northern elevation

Due to the nature of this barn, a structural appraisal report has been prepared for this building by AWA Civil and Structural Engineers and is included with the planning application

In terms of the aesthetical repairs to the barns, the following works will be carried out.

1. The moss will be removed from the plain clay tiles.
2. Where the plain clay tiles have frost damage or cracking, on inspection, they will be removed by hand and replaced with a suitable handmade clay tile.
3. Where the timber cladding, is damaged, has slipped or is coming away, a visual inspection will be carried out to see if the timber can be re-attached. If the timber cannot be re-used, a similar piece of matching timber will be installed using the same construction methods.
4. The floorboards, where they have become damaged will be carefully removed and either repaired or replaced with a piece of matching timber installed using the same construction methods.



Barn B – South-eastern elevation



Barn B – South-eastern elevation



Barn B – Western elevation

Pre-application Response

4.18 Within the pre-application response from NFDC, the following comments were made.

- The southern elevation incorporates too many new openings.
- The two main barn door appears to be “oddly elevated” above existing ground level.
- The “Red Line” rear curtilage appears to be quite significant.

The following revisions have been made to the design to address the above points.

1. The number of openings has been reduced from three new openings to one.
2. The main barn openings now incorporate carefully designed access steps to prevent views of elevated openings. This will allow the floor to be raised in conjunction with the flood risk assessment.
3. The “Red Line” rear curtilage has been reduced to only include the domestic garden space.

5 Access

5.1 The site is accessed as existing from North Ripley Road that runs from Sopley to the south, and North Ripley to the north. The access is shared with two other domestic dwellings and access to the adjacent farm land and buildings within the applicant’s ownership.

5.2 Due to the alignment of the road and existing boundary there is a clear line of sight, making the visibility splays optimum.

5.3 The buildings would have historically been prone to agricultural operations and therefore without going into detail, one would not anticipate an intensification of use of the junction following the conversion. The access is safe and appropriate. It is felt that there are no highway implications envisaged.

6 Context, Setting and Landscape Interactions

- 6.1 The context, setting and landscape interactions are important. They have a direct correlation to the Local and National Planning policies which have been taken into consideration as part of the proposed scheme. It is felt that that the existing barn, although not clearly visible from outside of the site, is requiring aesthetical repairs, with the scheme retaining the rural character.
- 6.2 The proposed scheme is for the conversion of a series of existing agricultural buildings and therefore the impact from this change is felt to have no detrimental impact on the rural setting. There is felt to be planning gain from the development through the removal of the derelict structures from Barn A, the repairs to Barn B and the suitable use protecting Barn C.
- 6.3 The key consideration for the development on the edge of the hamlet surrounded by other domestic and agricultural structures is to retain the historical pattern of the village and reference to the original use of the barns. The landscape scheme has therefore been designed to keep a simplistic layout using materials that are associated with the countryside location.
- 6.4 The domestic garden space is to be kept to the west of the site enclosed with a wooden post and rail fence and native species hedging. This will ensure that there are limited views into the site from the public highway.

Ecology

- 6.5 Due to the rural nature of the building an ecological survey has been carried out. The ecology statement confirms the following and is included with the formal planning application.

“The site is small with limited floral ecological value, there are no suitable habitats for reptiles on site, there is no evidence of badger activity on site. Bat activity surveys showed that all three buildings have bats roosting in them. The barns are also used by a number of nest/roosting birds including barn and little owls and house sparrows.”

Please refer to the Vesper Conservation & Ecology Limited survey for further details.

Flooding

- 6.6 Due to the location within an area at risk of flooding, a report has been prepared by Aqua Callidus and accompanies the submission. The measures proposed in the report have been included within the drawings.

Green Belt Assessment

- 6.7 Due to the nature of the proposed scheme, conversion of a series of existing agricultural barns, it is felt the impact on the Green Belt will be minimal. To ensure that the development, within a cluster of domestic dwellings and rural structures, does not spread the ancillary garden space into the open countryside, the external domestic features of the proposal have been kept to the west of the site where the public vistas are minimal. It is therefore felt the change of use will have a minimal impact.
- 6.8 As previously stated, the proposal is for the conversion of a series of barns, therefore the existing structure is permanent, with minor increase of barn A’s massing and a reduction to

the massing of barn C. Barns A and C are to be domestic in nature and therefore the traffic and noise will be far less than if the building were to be used for agriculture. Barn B will be limited to estate use only and therefore will accommodate traffic that would already be within the area.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 The proposed scheme offers a pragmatic solution to protect a series of existing heritage assets, where it has been demonstrated there is planning gain.
- 7.2 Within the context of National and Local Planning Policy it is felt to be compliant, particularly as the Government has a strong regard to employment uses within rural areas.
- 7.3 The proposal integrates well with its landscape and has no obvious constraints that would affect the deliverability. The proposal harmonises with the visual amenity and can be improved via planning gain.
- 7.4 When balancing all of the material considerations it is felt that the proposal is compliant and should be granted approval.

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