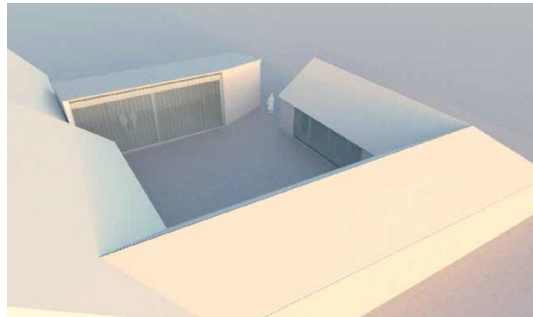



SUPPORTING STATEMENT

✓	Design and Access Statement.
✓	Planning Statement.



Proposal:-	Alterations and conversion of a separate barn (Barn 2) to provide additional accommodation in conjunction with the residential use of The Old Byre (Barn 1).
Site:-	Somerton Farm, Newport Road, Cowes, Isle of Wight, PO31 8PE.
For:-	Joseph Kohlmaier.
By:-	 Chartered Town Planner The Studio Newbarn Farm Sun Hill Calbourne Isle of Wight PO30 4JA aw@andrewwhiteplanning.co.uk
Date:-	June 2022.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Andrew White Planning Consultancy Ltd is instructed by its client, Joseph Kohlmaier, to prepare and submit an application for full planning permission to complete the conversion and adaptation of a lean-to barn providing additional accommodation in conjunction with the residential use of The Old Byre as permitted under Class Q.
- 1.2 The applicant was genuinely of the belief that the lean-to barn (hereafter referred to as 'Barn 2'), being the principal focus of this application, was within the curtilage of the permitted scheme (hereafter referred to as 'Barn 1') and therefore did not require permission on the basis of providing ancillary accommodation and not a separate residence in its own right.
- 1.3 The acquisition of Barn 2 has presented an opportunity of creating a completely innovate and holistic residential environment by harmoniously bringing together the heritage and historic fabric of two old farm buildings. Through using high-tech sustainable materials and by arranging the accommodation as physically independent yet functionally connected spaces around a central courtyard, we are able to achieve the applicants vision of an inside-out barn conversion that responds to the emerging trends in the way that we live and work.
- 1.4 The purpose of this statement is to explain, justify and essentially regularise the integration of Barn 2 into the residential domain of The Old Byre. Recognising the presumption in favour of sustainable development and that good design is a key aspect of sustainability, we will highlight the architectural credentials of the submitted scheme and explain why this approach should be embraced on the basis of its compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Island Plan Core Strategy.

2.0 SITE AND LOCATION

Site Identification

- 2.1 The application site is part of the Somerton Farm complex being located on the south-east side of Newport Road, Cowes:-

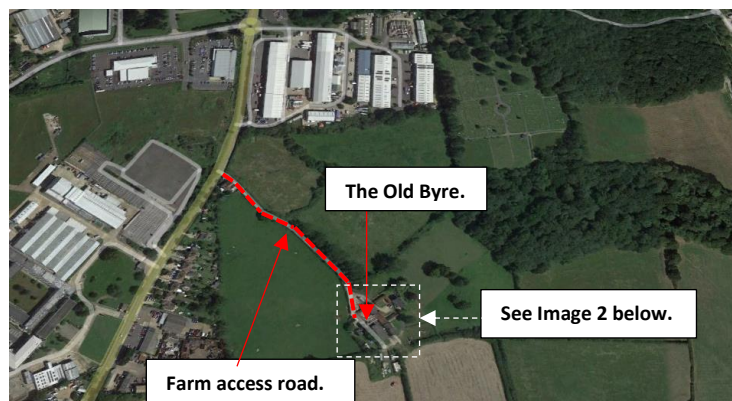


Image 1 – Aerial View.

Site Characteristics

- 2.2 Surrounded by open fields, The Old Byre forms part of a rural complex previously owned by several generations of a prominent local farming family. Having secured residential conversions through two separate Class Q applications, the previous landowners sold-off certain buildings and associated land including the site in question. The site consists of two farm buildings – a 19th century 'L' shaped structure (outlined red below) and a late c20 (outlined blue) – arranged around a central courtyard. The atmosphere of the ensemble is unique due to its context with the surrounding landscape and the specific fabric and material quality of the existing building's.



Image 2 – Zoomed in aerial view.

- 2.3 The building outlined blue was not part of the approved residential curtilage pertaining to the Class Q for the red outline. Having got underway with the approved scheme and acquired the second building it became apparent that there was an opportunity to create a cohesive and unique architectural approach to bring both buildings together functionally as a single planning unit. Moreover, recognising that the permission was in place to use both buildings outlined red and yellow for separate residential purposes it became obvious that the blue structure would also lend itself to residential use, albeit in conjunction with the red outline.

Character and Context

- 2.4 Immediately beyond the application buildings the setting is one of open undulating farmland, save for Somerton Farmhouse and Somerton Farm Cottage to the east and west respectively. To the west is the ribbon development of housing that aligns the eastern edge of Newport Road and nearby there are various commercial sites including BAE, Ascensos, Aldi, Esplanade Garage, Somerton Industrial Estate and Clifton Grade scrapyards. Significantly, land at Somerton Farm surrounding the current application site is allocated through the Draft Island Planning Strategy for 1.9 hectares

of employment land and 130 dwellings. Works have recently completed on a property refurbishment adjacent to the junction of Newport Road with the lane leading down to Somerton Farm. The red brick house has been greatly modernised, with dark framed windows and a timber cladded contemporary extension with balcony and roof lantern.



Image 3 – Looking west along the farm lane showing the recently refurbished and extended house fronting Newport Road to demonstrate the variation in the surrounding built environment and the evolving architectural dynamic.

Designations and Constraints

- 2.5 The site is just outside of the defined settlement boundary for Cowes (red solid line on the plan below) but is within the Medina Valley Key Regeneration Area and therefore, by definition, is sustainably located. The site is not designated for any ecological, landscape or heritage designation.

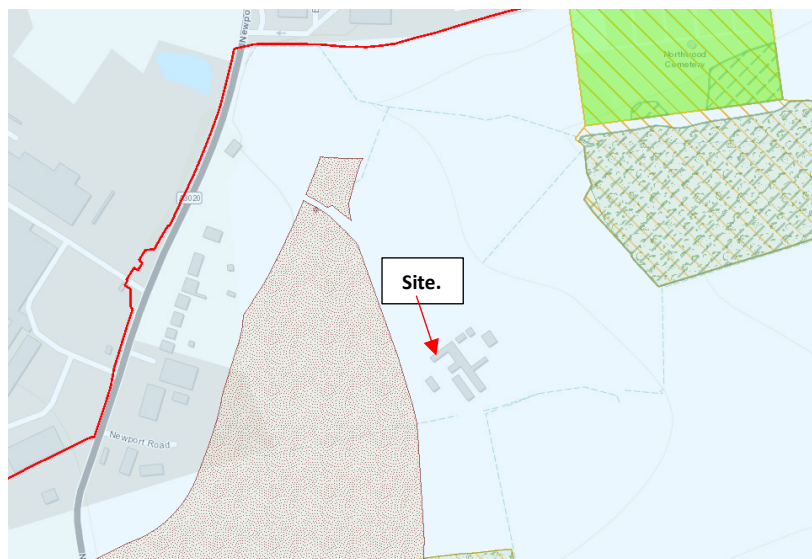


Image 4 – Councils constraints map.

3.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 Full planning permission is sought for the change of use, conversion and physical alterations of Barn 2 to provide additional residential floor space in conjunction with the dwelling in Barn 1. At the same time Barn 1 is being altered just in terms of its external materials and fenestration to help ensure architectural cohesion in relation to the materials and fenestration so that the contextual and innovative vision of the applicant can be fully realised.
- 3.2 Below are two photographs looking at the front of Barn 2 before work commenced and in progress. It can be seen that the scale, general building form and juxtaposition with the red tiled barn are almost identical.



Image 5 – Previous Barn 2.



Image 6 – Barn 2 under conversion.

- 3.3 The proposed conversion and changes to Barn 2, in conjunction with the fenestration and material alterations to the current building known as Barn 1, seek to transform this former agricultural ensemble into a contemporary family home. The European-style

home comprises two separate wings where bedrooms and work-spaces are provided in Barn 1 and living, kitchen and dining would take place in Barn 2 configured around a courtyard garden.

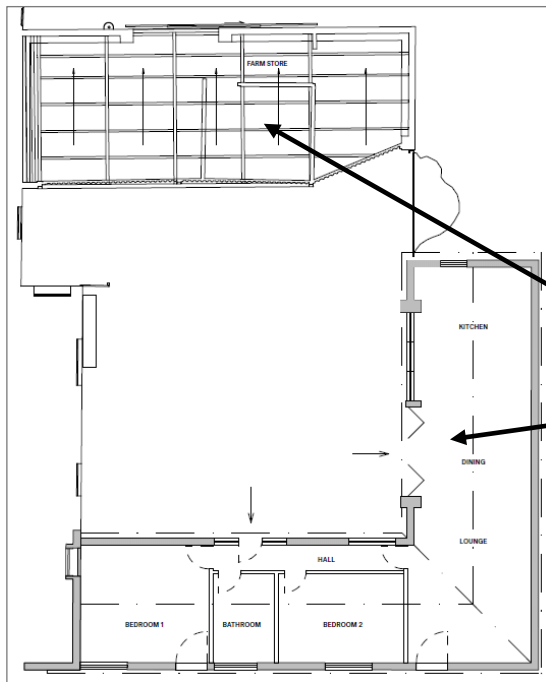


Image 7 – Current floor plan.

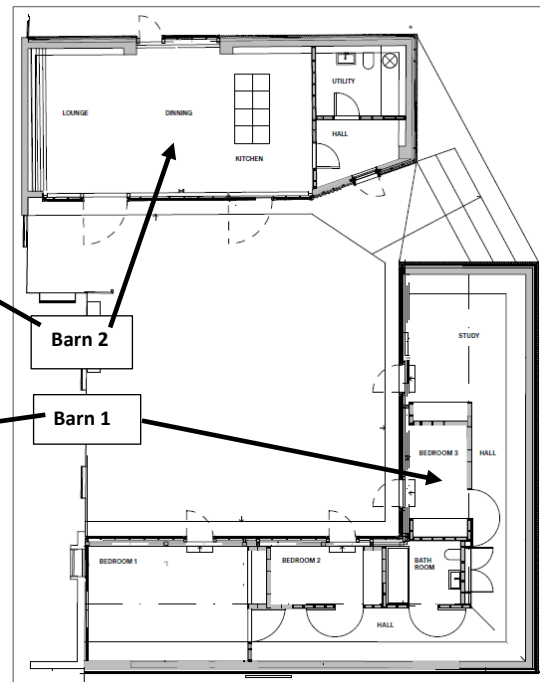


Image 8 – Proposed floor plan.

3.4 The two extant structures of the Old Byre remain disconnected, separating the world of sleep and quiet work from the space of cooking and social encounter. In this way, the courtyard that unites the ensemble becomes charged with the ritual of everyday crossings, adding outdoor living space in the summer. But beyond this pragmatism, it is an integral part of life in the barns, setting The Old Byre apart from similar properties on the Island.

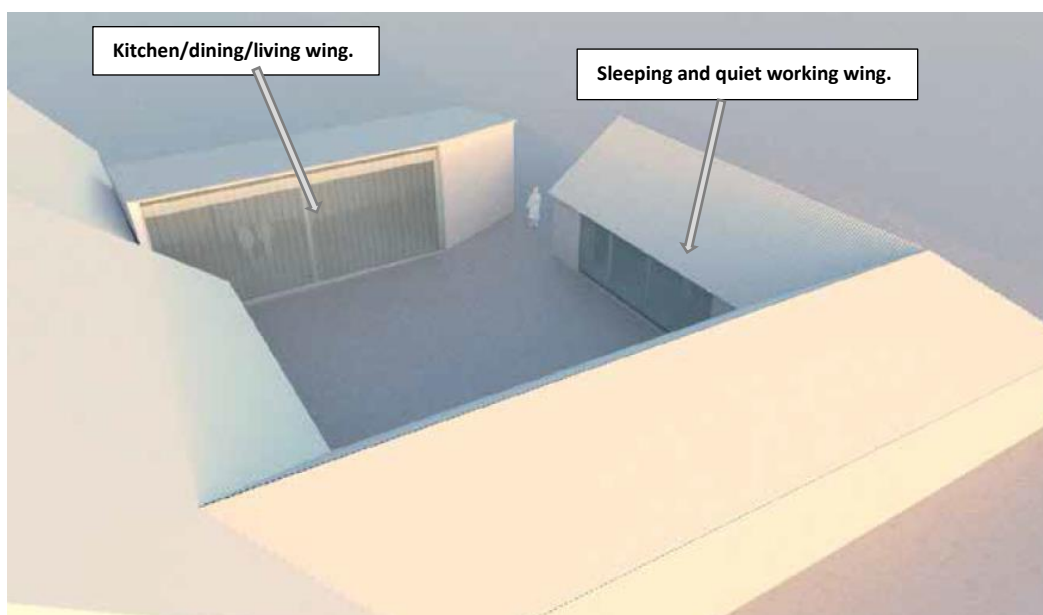


Image 9 – Illustrative view looking down into the courtyard.

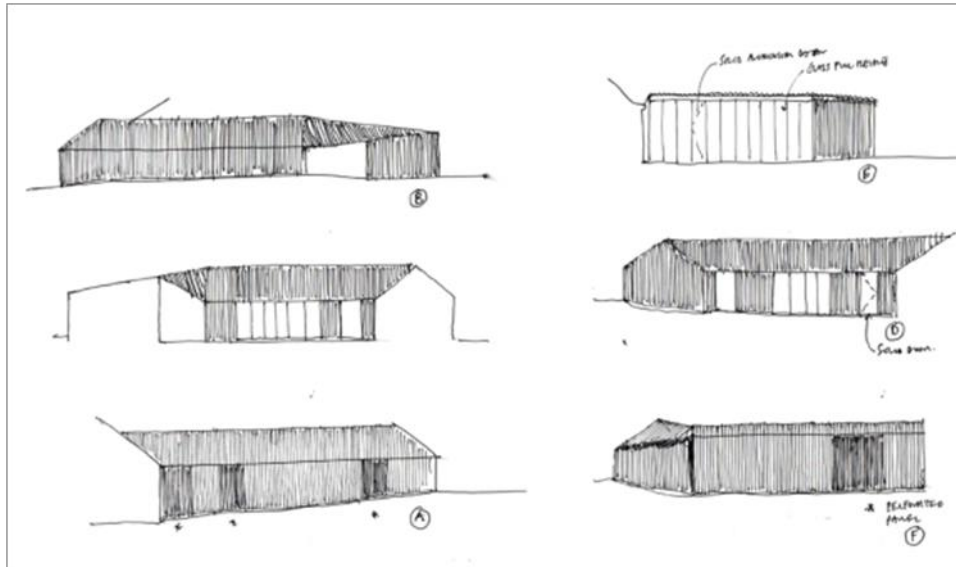


Image 10 – Design Concept.

3.5 Traditionally used in non-residential applications and particularly in agricultural environments, the proposed materials rely heavily on corrugated cement fibre sheets for the outer skin in respect of the outward facing elevations and the roof. Fibre cement offers several advantages over metal and timber cladding such as its weatherproof characteristics, its rust and rot free properties and aesthetics. In this regard, this principal material helps to deliver a design that would pay homage to the architectural history of the site. The images below show two illustrations of the corrugated material proposed along with one photo of the material in-situ.



Images 11 & 12 – Illustrations of the cement fibre cladding.



Image 13 – Cladding in-situ on Barn 1.

- 3.6 The visually discrete inward elevations that face the courtyard will be finished with translucent polycarbonate panels punctuated by glazed aluminium doors creating a bright and open atmosphere, contrasting with the old brick of neighbouring buildings and complementing the corrugated cement fibre cladding. By day, flooding the interior with light. By night, illuminating the courtyard with a very subtle glow.



Image 14 – Courtyard elevations including polycarbonate panels.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

4.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 s38(6) states that the determination of this application must be made in accordance with the relevant Approved Development Plan, which in relation to this proposal is the Island Plan Core Strategy (IPCS). Where development does not comply with policy, say for example Policy SP1 of the IPCS, s38(6) does state that permission can still be granted depending on the specific circumstances of the proposal. Before identifying the relevant 'local plan' policies it is firstly necessary to consider the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as policies developed at a local level must be in conformity with the national picture. **Also, because certain local policies within the IPCS are out of date it means that the NPPF carries even greater weight.**

4.2 NPPF

4.2.1 The NPPF was updated in July 2021. It continues to stress the presumption in favour of sustainable development and increases the emphasis on high-quality design and place-making.

4.2.2 **Paragraph 11** confirms the presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; **or where the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date (as is the case here), granting permission unless:**

“any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.”

4.2.3 **Paragraph 62** offers support for people wishing to commission or build their own homes.

4.2.4 **Paragraph 120** states that planning decisions should promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings.

4.2.5 **Paragraph 126** states that *'the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve.'*

4.2.6 **Paragraph 130** states that decisions should ensure that new developments:-

- function well and add to the overall quality of the area;
- are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate landscaping;

- are sympathetic to local character and the surrounding environment, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate change (such as increased densities);
- establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live;
- optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount of development (including green space) and support local facilities and transport networks.

4.2.7 **Paragraph 132** stresses the importance of design quality through the evolution and assessment of individual proposals.

4.3 Island Plan Core Strategy (IPCS)

4.3.1 **Policy SP1 (Spatial Strategy)** of the Island Plan Core Strategy states that:-

'The Council will, in principle and in line with its overarching approach to economic led regeneration and national policy, support development on appropriate land within or immediately adjacent the defined settlement boundaries of the Key Regeneration Areas, Smaller Regeneration Areas and Rural Service Centres and will prioritise the redevelopment of previously developed land where such land is available, suitable and viable for the development proposed. Unless a specific local need is identified, development proposals outside of, or not immediately adjacent to the.....defined settlements will not be supported.'

4.3.2 **Policy SP5 (Environment)** - states that the Council will support proposals that protect, conserve and or enhance the Island's natural and historic environments.

4.3.3 **Policy DM2 (Design Quality for New Development)** – states that the Council will support proposals for high quality and inclusive design to protect, conserve and enhance our existing environment whilst allowing change to take place. Development should optimise the potential of the site and complement the character of the surrounding area.

4.3.4 **DM12 (Landscape, Seascape, Biodiversity and Geodiversity)** – the Council will support proposals that conserve, enhance and promote the landscape interests of the Island.

5.0 ASSESSMENT OF MAIN ISSUES.

5.1 The determination of this application will turn on the following main issues:-

- The principle of undertaking the works in question;

- Whether the proposed development, taken as a whole, would cause significant and demonstrable harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Principle

- 5.2 The principles underpinning the location of new housing development are generally based upon the concept of the 'defined settlement boundary' (DSB), whereby land that is within or immediately adjacent to the DSB will be supported as a matter of broad principle. Whilst the group of buildings in question is just outside and beyond the settlement boundary, the DSB actually runs along Newport Road and hence the access to our site is technically within it. However, the concept of the DSB is outdated by virtue of the fact that the Council does not have an up-to-date development plan, cannot evidence a five year supply of housing land coming forward and has a persistent record of under delivery. Consequently, the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies on the Island.
- 5.3 Significantly this application is not seeking permission for additional housing development, it is seeking to repurpose a redundant agricultural building for residential purposes in conjunction with an existing property. There would be no net increase in dwellings. Planning policies under the NPPF are generally supportive of development that seeks to utilise redundant buildings as this approach helps to create the homes that people need without physically intruding into undeveloped greenfield land. It also provides such buildings with a sense of purpose and longevity; whilst enhancing the visual contribution that they make to their setting and surrounding environment.
- 5.4 Also, as shown above at Image 2 and as re-inserted below to help emphasise the point, the small barn in question (outlined blue) is located between two barns that have already been permitted as residential dwellings. It would be cumbersome to retain the blue structure as an independent agricultural building and there wouldn't be a need for that in any event given that this is no longer a working farm, that some land has been sold-off and because the wider farm is being earmarked for housing and employment purposes. The obvious outcome, therefore, is that the barn in question is incorporated into the residential domain of the previously permitted dwellings. As proposed, this is for the property outlined red and the landowner has been fastidious in his approach to ensure that his new family home provides for a holistic and cohesive architectural solution based on a contemporary interpretation of barn conversions, whilst recognising evolving trends in terms of how people live and work, and the role architecture can play in this context to accommodate lifestyle choices.
- 5.5 Immediately below is the aerial view showing the juxtaposition of the subject building with adjoining residential conversions, confirming that re-purposing it for ancillary purposes is an entirely logical proposition:-



Image 15 – Aerial view showing the spatial relationship of Barn 1 (red), Barn 2 (blue) and the neighbouring residential barn conversion (yellow).

5.6 Given the planning history relating to barn conversions at Somerton Farm, the proximity to the settlement boundary and because the proposed scheme would form part of a self-build home for the applicant by repurposing an under-utilised building, it stands that the application can be supported as a matter of principle as per Paragraphs 62 and 120 of the NPPF.

Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Surrounding Area

5.7 Policy DM2 supports high quality and inclusive design to protect, conserve and enhance our existing environment whilst allowing change to take place. Similarly, DM12 seeks to conserve, enhance and promote our natural environment. The NPPF also advocates high design standards recognising that contextual, beautiful and sustainable buildings are fundamental planning outcomes.

5.8 This application is accompanied by a thorough Design Statement, which provides a really helpful written commentary and visual narrative for justifying the architectural approach that has been taken when striving to achieve a contextual and innovative approach for this site as a whole.

5.9 As explained within the Design Statement, this is an innovative barn conversion proposal that has been created by award-winning architect Gianni Botsford and developed by designer and architectural historian Joseph Kohlmaier (the applicant). The project is completely unique in its approach and draws together an understanding of local history and agricultural heritage, and through design excellence including a blend of traditional and technologically advanced materials, we are able to create a domestic setting with a sense of place recognising the agricultural origins of the site.

5.10 The proposed design approach would provide for an innovative and thoughtful living environment, both internally and externally, whilst the outward facing elevations in

particular pay homage to the agricultural history of the site. The living environment would be flooded with light, would optimise privacy for the occupiers and the adapted buildings following the architectural principles outlined would appear to have a clear sense of purpose and belonging in this environment.

- 5.11 The architectural response is completely individual so as to respond to the challenges and opportunities presented by this unique site. As such, we have been able to demonstrate that it would comply with the high design standards expected by Paragraph 131 of the NPPF which states that great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings. When looking at the accompanying Design Statement we strongly assert that the resultant dwelling is entirely reflective of Paragraph 126 under the NPPF, which states that *'the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve.'*
- 5.12 With all factors taken into consideration as outlined above, it is asserted the proposal would not cause harm to the character and appearance of the area, would complement the immediate built form and would conserve the landscape interests of the surrounding area. It follows that there would be no conflict with policies DM2 and DM12 of the Island Plan which generally supports proposals for high quality and inclusive design that would protect, conserve and enhance the existing environment whilst allowing change to take place.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 This proposal seeks to build-upon the recent history of residential barn conversions at Somerton Farm. An opportunity has arisen for the landowner in this instance to deploy architectural excellence by bringing together two barns to create an innovative and distinctive single dwelling cleverly arranged around a traditional courtyard environment.
- 6.2 Whilst incorporating modern approaches in relation to internal layout and certain material choices, the design is based upon a thorough understanding of context and the principal material (being cement fibre cladding) pays obvious homage to agricultural building practices but with high levels of sustainability.
- 6.3 When viewed from the adjoining farm lane the resultant dwelling will appear like a traditional farm building in the typical industrial/agrarian setting of Northwood and the structures nearby. Over time, ivy, lichen, trees and shrubs will make the buildings blend with the ground and landscape.
- 6.4 Overall, the proposal will clearly reflect the national planning policy requirement to create high quality, contextual and sustainable buildings whilst also complying with Policy DM2 from the Island Plan Core Strategy which states that development must complement the surrounding area. As such, and recognising the presumption in favour

The Old Byre, Somerton Farm, Northwood.

of sustainable development, we politely request that the application is approved without delay.