

Design & Access Statement

Reference: 4411
June 2023.

Proposed Conversion & renovation of redundant agricultural buildings to form two dwellings and all ancillary works.

Barn at: Rise Hall, Akenham, Suffolk. IP9 6TQ.

Planning Implemented under Ref: 0164/02.

Introduction

This design & access statement (DAS) has been prepared by Patrick Allen & Associates on behalf of the applicants in support of the planning application to Babergh Mid-Suffolk District Council for the amendments to the proposals implemented under approval 0164/02. The various conditions of the original consent have been discharged.

The project has been subject to the pre-application process (ref; DC/23/01438/PREAPP) with the Planning Officer Nikita Mossman (May 23). The proposals at the time were the same as those submitted with this application. The general principle of the proposed amendments were accepted in principle. The pre app response concluded.

'Should a full application be made, the proposal for conversion of the agricultural buildings to 2no. dwellings is likely to be considered acceptable in principle, having regard to local plan policy H9.'

Following on from the pre-app advice there has been some dialogue with the Planning Officer Nikita Mossman who has confirmed that a section 73 application could be submitted to cover the amendments as the existing approved scheme has already commenced. (Email dated 18.05.23.)

Rise Hall Barns are situated on ground amidst open, undulating countryside to the North of Thurleston Lane. The barns are located to the Northwest of Rise Hall. The barns are surrounded by additional redundant agricultural buildings which are in various states of repair. The main barns benefit from full planning permission as referenced above which was implemented by laying out of part of the access as required by condition 8 of that permission. This 'material start' was confirmed in the letter from MSDC dated 17.11.2009 from the Planning Officer Lisa Evans to the Agent at that time. Therefore, the principle of conversion has already been established by that permission, which is a material consideration.

The barns were listed during the course of the planning application. The barn complex makes an important contribution to the group value of Rise Hall Farmstead.

Use

The proposed scheme still provides for the conversion and renovation of redundant agricultural buildings to form two dwellings, all as per the existing approval. The proposed barn conversions will be provided with their own parking area, all served from the existing vehicular access that serves the site, all as approved.

This application merely relates to the proposed design changes for the main barn structures, all as shown on the accompanying drawings.

The principal design changes to that of the approved scheme are as follows;

Demolition of the existing modern 20th century structures to the eastern gable and the single storey structure to the North. Both these structures are in a poor state of repair and detract from the setting of the barn. Their removal should enhance the setting of the group value of Rise Hall Farmstead.

Amended internal layout to both units. It should be noted that it is proposed to retain more of the existing volume of the barns as open space, with a 'bay' in each unit as full height voids.

The original approved scheme proposed lowering the floor quite considerably which will have significant impacts on the structure of the barns. The revised proposals keep the floor level as existing and accommodates the main trusses by stepping down below them at first floor level.

Th majority of fenestration still seeks to fully re-use existing openings to minimise the creation of new openings. New openings in these proposals have been significantly reduced to that of the original approval. Glazing is to be 'inset' to the main thrashing doors to Unit 2. This allows more light into the structure and reduces the need for new openings to adjacent rooms. Example as below;



It is proposed to fully glaze the existing lean to shelter to the North elevation of Unit 2 to retain its existing 'open character'. The glazing is to be set back behind an oak frame which creates a shadow line and minimises reflections and impact, whilst also appearing that the original openings have been infilled which retains much more of an agricultural character.

It is proposed to glaze the Eastern gable end at high level with black stained timber louvres externally so that visually it would read as timber boarding; Example as below.



Example of glazed gable treatment behind timber louvres.

The screening by timber louvres has been an accepted design solution to reducing visual impact of fenestration in other barn conversions in the area.

It is proposed to construct 2no cart-lodge structures to serve both units as annotated on the accompanying plans. This will ensure that parked vehicles don't distract from the farmstead setting.

Amount, Scale & Layout

The principles of the development which has been implemented was considered acceptable under previous local planning policy. This application is merely for the changes mentioned above.

The layout of the proposed development is clearly illustrated on the submitted drawings both in terms of how the development is arranged on the site, also in terms of how the accommodation is set out internally. These amendments would have no material detrimental heritage impact.

The demolition of the existing modern 20th century structure referred to above which detract from the setting of the barns should be considered a heritage benefit as this will enhance/preserve the heritage asset.

This application still proposes the formation of two residential units. However, the sub-division of the barn is now proposed at a different point. The approved scheme inserted the party wall immediately adjacent to the threshing bay. The current proposal includes the first bay to the west of the threshing bay within the eastern unit (Unit 2) so that the function of the threshing as the focus of the barn is retained and further emphasised by this bay being left as a full height space.

Appearance

The design and scale of the proposals is much as approved with the added benefit of the demolition of the modern structures. The proposals retain the character of the local rural vernacular & all external materials are retained as approved.

In general fenestration to the existing walls of the structures has been significantly reduced to that of the approved scheme. All existing barn and hatch doors are retained pinned back. All rooflights are to be of a traditional design, with minimal frames with a central glazing bar. Rooflights are all to be recessed in the surrounding roof covering in accordance with the pre-app recommendation.

The existing roof coverings are proposed to match existing with slate to the main barn and peg tiles to the stables. Pantiles are also retained to the single storey element.

Access

There are no changes in respect of the access arrangements. The application site is accessed via the existing vehicular access that serves the barn, all as per the approval. The driveway within the applicant's curtilage is to be appropriately surfaced with a bound shingle finish, entirely appropriate for the rural setting & as approved.

The vehicular access to the units provides ample off-road parking and manoeuvring space enabling the dwellings to be accessed safely, from the highway.

Conclusion

The planning principles of the development are already established by the existing permission. Consent was granted in 2003 on the basis that the external works for the conversion of the barn would make a neutral contribution to the setting of Rise Hall farmstead. The proposed further works of alteration are considered not to have a material impact on the works originally consented. In fact, the amended reduced fenestration is regarded to be a significant improvement on the scheme as originally approved.

The current proposals are for amendments to those implemented under Babergh Mid-Suffolk DC approval Ref 0164/02 which provided for the conversion, renovation and change of use of the redundant agricultural barn to form two dwellings.

The amendments proposed will result in a high-quality development which makes a positive contribution to the built environment of the area, without any significant impact on the local landscape or any other matters of acknowledged.