



TOWN AND
COUNTRY
PLANNING
DEVELOPMENT
CONSULTANTS



**THE PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION
AREAS) ACT 1990**

**PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE CONVERSION OF A
BARN AT CASTLE FARM, WRAGG CASTLE LANE,
PITCHCOMBE, STROUD, GL6 6LU, INTO ONE DWELLING**

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Prepared by

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 LPC (Trull) Ltd have been instructed to present the planning application for the conversion of an existing stone built barn, to create 1No new dwelling, at Castle Farm.

1.1 The application submission includes an overarching supporting planning statement wherein it is noted that a previous application in 2022 (S.22/2245/FUL) was withdrawn in light of the comments made by the case officer; Ms Sarah Carruthers by email dated 21st November 2022. Those points raised are listed below.

- It is not clear on the site location plan or within the planning statement as to the extent of the agricultural land associated with the site and within the applicant's ownership.
- There are no details of the existing agricultural enterprise, it was clear on my site visit that livestock was kept on the site and the existing buildings were in use. The site and building are not considered to be redundant or disused and therefore the proposal to convert the site into residential use conflicts with the NPPF para. 80.
- There is no information on how the proposal would impact on the existing agricultural enterprise. Without demonstrating or accounting for the loss of the agricultural site and buildings, the proposal may put unnecessary pressure on the need for additional agricultural buildings within the open countryside and within the AONB, which affords the highest level of protection.
- In terms of heritage impact, the Conservation Specialist has raised concerns in that the over domestic fenestration could be deemed to erode some of the special interest of the heritage asset. Whilst this harm may be considered as 'less than

substantial' and should be weighed against the public benefits of the scheme, the public benefits are considered to be limited given the loss of agricultural use and impact on the rural economy, and unfortunate design for this non-designated heritage asset.

- Whilst the proposal may accord with principle 4 of CP15, by enabling development to maintain a heritage asset, the design concerns would conflict with the further criteria in that, (i) it does not have an adverse impact on the heritage assets and their setting', and would therefore undermine its heritage interest, in which it's seeking to preserve.

- It is noted within the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Recommendations that further dawn/dusk surveys are required and these would need to be undertaken prior to submitting the application, to fully ensure that appropriate mitigation is incorporated into the scheme. In view of this, there is currently insufficient information to demonstrate that the proposal would not adversely affect protected species, contrary to policy ES6.

1.3 It is the purpose of this standalone Heritage Statement to therefore provide a proportionate assessment of the significance of the heritage environment and also address the specific concerns in these regards, as bulleted pointed above.

1.4 In support of the withdrawn application it was felt the building does not exhibit sufficient special or unique qualities to justify its consideration as a non-designed heritage asset, However, as indicated above the Council's conservation officer disagreed and therefore in addition to considering the impact of the conversion on the setting of the nearby listed building, more focused attention has been given to the positive investment made to retain the existing building in an active use, and the sensitivity of the works themselves.

2.0 THE HERITAGE ENVIRONMENT

2.1 The adjacent property is a Grade II Listed Building and its siting relative to the application barn is shown by the Historic England plan extract below, with the blue triangle.



2.2 The relevant Listed Building schedule is inserted below.

SO 8408-8508 PITCHCOMBE WRAGG CASTLE LANE (north east side)

9/207 Halesmead

II

Shown on map as Haylesmead. Detached house. Early-mid C17; extensive early C19 alterations. Early C20 addition by Edwin Lutyens for Miss Mayer. Random and coursed rubble limestone; ashlar chimneys; stone slate roof. Two-storey with attic; 2-storey rear wing. Front: 3-window fenestration to main part of house, all 16-pane sashes in chamfered surrounds. Central doorway with Regency architraves and moulded 5-panel door; gabled decorative timber porch. Two eaves-mounted gabled dormers with small-paned timber casements. Gable end chimneys, now reduced in height with plain caps. Part to right is single-storey Lutyens addition with continuous set of small-paned timber casements. Chimney with moulded cap to south east gable end; off-centre

small paned glazed doors. Rear: 2-storey wing has C20 casements. Lower parallel-roofed range added to rear of front range. Interior: large fireplace in one room with monolithic jamb slabs. Spiral staircase now removed but alcove survives. High ceiling with plaster mouldings to Lutyens room, stone fireplace having decorative edge to mantel shelf.

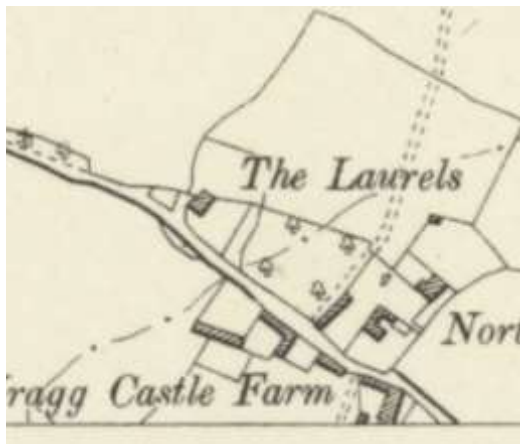
- 2.3 The aerial photograph extract inserted below helps to further show the relationship between the application barn and the listed building. In addition to the high stone wall that defines the garden area and the fact that the house does not appear to have had an agricultural link in the past or been designed as a farmhouse it can also be seen that there will be a substantial area of utilitarian corrugated clad buildings that will be removed to reveal the stone barn, which will thus substantially open up the sense of space along the shared boundary. The barn does not contribute positively to the setting of Haylesmead.



2.5 The mapped chronology around the listed building can be seen from the dated extracts inserted below.



1886



1903



1924

The barn is clearly mapped in 1886 but there is no obvious access from Wragg Castle Farm to the south west but it still appears to be separate from Haylesmead, which is more contained. The mapping shows that

that distinction had increased by the beginning of the 20th century as there is a potentially enclosed yard to either side of the barn. Later, and as transition towards the greater enclosure around Haylesmead is progressed the south eastern yard enclosure has been breached between the two.

- 2.6 Considering the wider heritage environment it is logical that the barn has its agricultural origins in association with the older Wragg Castle Farm on the southern side of the road, albeit access is unclear, unless Norton Cottage was also part of the larger farm grouping, potentially along with Haylesmead. The main farm's listing schedule is inserted below, but is silent regarding such wider built relationships.

9/208 Wragg Castle Farmhouse and stables

II

Farmhouse with attached stable. Early C17; extended to north mid-late C17; early C19 stable. Random rubble and ashlar limestone, coursed rubble to stable; ashlar chimneys; stone slate roof. Two-storey with attic. East front: earliest part to left has full gable with, single-window fenestration, 3-light to ground and upper floors, 2-light to attic, all recessed cavetto with hoodmoulds. Small stair-light at upper floor level, stair turret projecting forward with catslide roof. Range continues to right, moulded doorway with plank door being grouped with two 2-light casements to right under combined hoodmould; two grouped 3-light casements above. Full parapet gable to later C17 addition to right, 2-light to ground floor, 3-light above and 2-light to attic, all recessed chamfered with hoodmoulds and leaded iron casements, attic casement with lead latticing. Upper floor single light to left. Ridge-mounted chimney indicates original north gable end, ridge height changing slightly at this point. Parapet north gable end, chimney having moulded cap. West side: projecting chimney stack with moulded cap to gable of south cross-wing. Outbuilding with lean-to roof below. Addition

to north has gabled stair turret with 2-light recessed chamfered lead latticed casements. Two further 2-light casements to right. Stable range projects forward to left with segmental arched openings, loft doorway in west gable end. Interior not inspected.

- 2.7 The name Wragg Castle Lane, accordingly to local history reviews does not provide any evidence of a castle. There is a legend only that Wragg Castle Farm incorporates a staircase that was part of the old castle. It was possibly one of many strongholds raised during the reign of King Stephen (1135-1154) of which 140 were ordered to be destroyed by a Council of Westminster under King Henry II in 1155. As the castle crumbled, local folklore has it that it became known as the 'Wragged Castle'.

3.0 SETTING

- 3.1 Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Listed Buildings Act) states: "In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a Listed Building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses". This principle is expanded in the NPPF to cover a range of heritage assets: "Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification".
- 3.2 Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires that Local Planning Authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining or enhancing the significance of heritage assets. Paragraph 199 states that when considering the impact of the proposed works on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be

given to the asset's conservation. Paragraph 200 states that any harm to, or loss of, the significance (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.

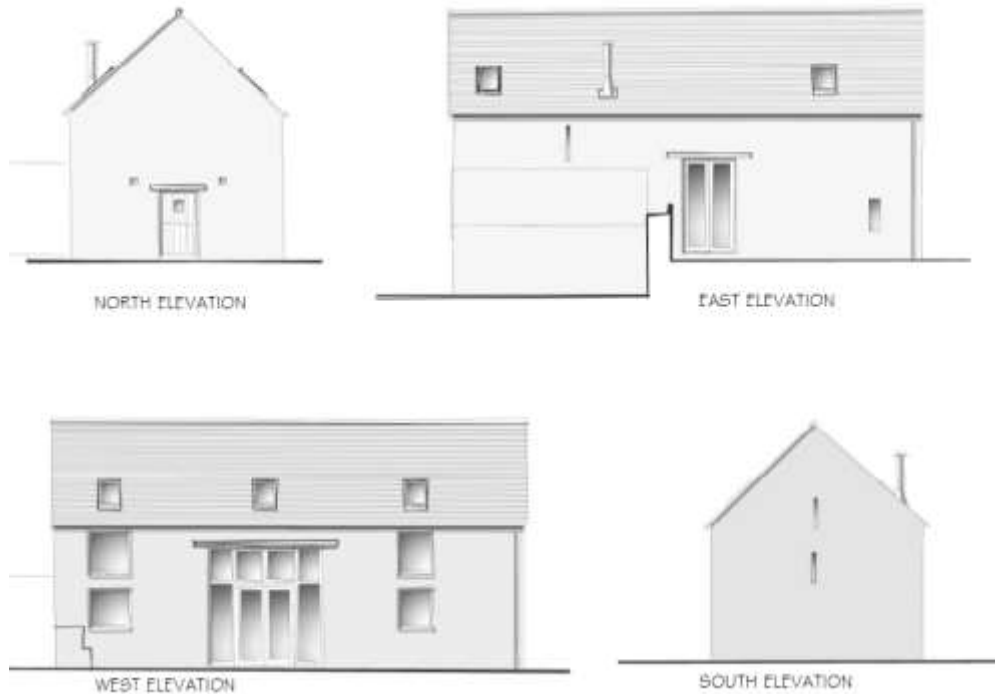
- 3.3 Paragraph 202 states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
- 3.4 Historic England's – Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance refers to those heritage values which help determine significance. These are the; 'Evidential' value derived from the potential of a place or building to yield evidence about past human activity; 'Historical', concerning the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present, being illustrative or associative; 'Aesthetic', relating to the way in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place; and 'Communal' derived from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.
- 3.5 Any illustrative or associative value of Haylesmead in terms of its setting is very low and not publicly clear given its very strong secluded and enclosed layout. Furthermore, as this will be unchanged it should be stressed that its aesthetics are not prescriptive, drawing from beyond the details outlined in the listed description schedule.
- 3.6 The Listed property has a tightly defined setting, however in the broad sense the farm building group includes Haylesmead as part of their historic setting, and clearly the application building, distinct from the rest of the grouping provides wider historical, evidential and aesthetic qualities that can be recreated in terms of the former bucolic setting as a result of the overall site clearance related to the new chapter of use for the barn. Arguably therefore there will be an enhancement to the

heritage setting although in any event, as said its setting is extremely tight relating to the well defined residential property and gardens.

- 3.7 The heritage environment is not materially changed and most definitely not harmed by works to the application building, increasing the historic sense of space around the barn. The removal of those ad hoc structures that surround the bar will substantially enhance its setting and reveal its own heritage significance.

4.0 NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSET

- 4.1 Further to Ms Currathers' email referenced above, clarification was sought regarding what fenestration was considered more appropriate for the barn, as although the barn was not considered initially to be a heritage asset the Council's conservation officer had described it as a Non-designated Heritage Asset and that aspect of the conversion was considered detrimental to its simple historical and aesthetic qualities. The advice received indicated it must not be 'overly domestic'. With that in mind the plan extracts inserted below show the revised simple timber framed treatment for all existing and proposed openings. The joinery to be employed will be hard wood left unstained so as to weather a natural and subtle shade of silver. The framing shown is simple and uses minimal framing within the openings. The main opening to the west of course needs to include some subdivision for strength and to incorporate a functional domestic scale opening. The proportions shown reflect the scale of the opening and the window hierarchy. The precise joinery detailing can of course be conditionally controlled by the submission and approval of large scaled details once the revised treatment is agreed in principle, as not overly domestic.



- 4.2 The barn to be converted is currently engulfed by an array of utilitarian corrugated sheeted structures, for which it is assumed planning permission was never sought. Despite these buildings now being lawful their removal, as a consequence of the proposed reuse of the barn represents a very clear planning gain to reveal the simple historic barn and increase the sense of space around the building and contextually, in the wider scene, particularly mindful too of the AONB setting.
- 4.3 The application development changes the agricultural character of the Non-designated heritage Asset, but those changes are modest and typical of the needs of a new chapter of use, associated with the investment to preserve the building. The barn's significance is low and even if the changes are not considered neutral in these regards then over and above the long term survival of the building secured by the new chapter of use the public benefits are magnified by the substantial site clearance associated with the application development, reinstating the more historic openness, and scenic beauty. This attracts greater weight

than the less than substantial harm possible from the essential works to facilitate the new chapter of use.