



Heritage Statement

**Proposed Access
Green Oak Farm Barn
Stonham Road
Mickfield
Stowmarket
Suffolk
IP14 5LS**

4th September 2023

Contents

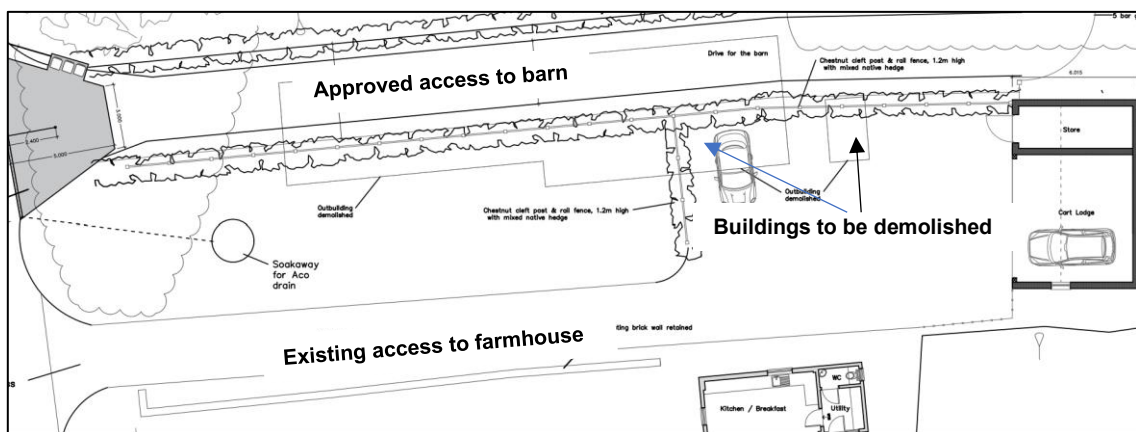
Introduction	3
The Heritage Asset: Description & Significance	4
Proposed Works & Heritage Impact Assessment	7
Conclusion	10
Bibliography	11

Introduction

1.1 This Heritage Statement has been written to support an application for planning permission for a vehicular access to the Barn at Green Oak Farm, Mickfield. The National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF) requires an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by the proposal, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance (paragraph 194).

1.2 This Statement provides an appraisal of the heritage assets affected and assesses significance in accordance with the policies contained in the NPPF and the guidance contained in Historic England's Advice Note 12 *Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets*. The impact of the proposed works on the significance of the heritage asset is then described and considered.

1.3 On the 20th December 2022, planning permission and listed building consent were granted for the conversion and extension of a barn at Green Oak Farm to form a single dwelling (DC/22/05201 / DC/22/05202). The approved drawings showed a separate access to the barn close to the north of the existing farmhouse access, which necessitated the demolition of two outbuildings. This application seeks to vary the approved scheme by providing the barn access further south of the farm group, whilst retaining the existing farmhouse access unaltered.



The Heritage Asset: Description & Significance

2.1

The planning application for the conversion and extension of the barn was accompanied by a Heritage Impact Assessment produced by Michael Collins. This section of the statement draws on this assessment of the heritage asset and the conclusions reached¹.

2.2

Green Oak Farmhouse is a grade II listed building (list entry no. 1033202). The list description reads as follows:

Former farmhouse, early or mid C16 with alterations of c.1600. Timber-framed and roughcast. Pantiled roof, once thatched; an axial chimney of red brick. Three-cell cross-passage entrance plan. Two storeys and attics. Various windows, mainly of early C19: a casement in the hall with transoms and boarded shutters; small-pane sashes in the parlour cell. A C19 four-panelled entrance door at cross-entry; at lobby entrance position is a hipped slated porch with panelled door and shallow pediment above. At the service end is good C16 exposed framing. A pair of twin four-centred arched doorways into the service rooms, which are now united. Arch-braced studwork and heavy unchamfered floor joists. Open fireplace in the hall and other alterations, probably c.1600.



Grade II listed Green Oak Farmhouse



Curtilage listed Barn

2.3

Collins records that the only surviving farm building of the early farmstead is the five-bay barn which stands to the east of the farmhouse and is separated from it by the remnants of a moat. The barn has received permission to be converted into a single dwelling. The earliest part of the building is a section to the west which formed a small barn of three bays that dates from the early seventeenth century. The barn was subsequently enlarged in the early nineteenth century.²

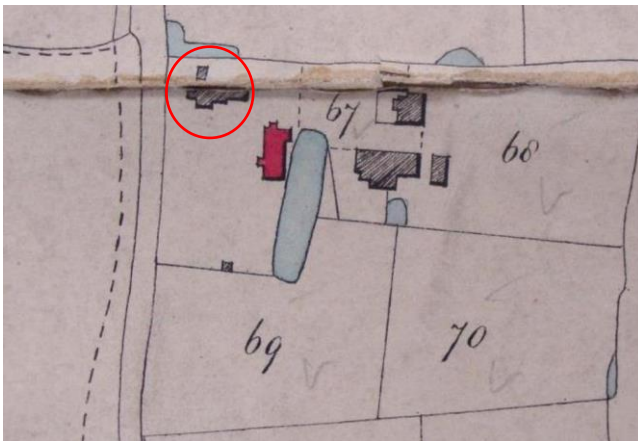
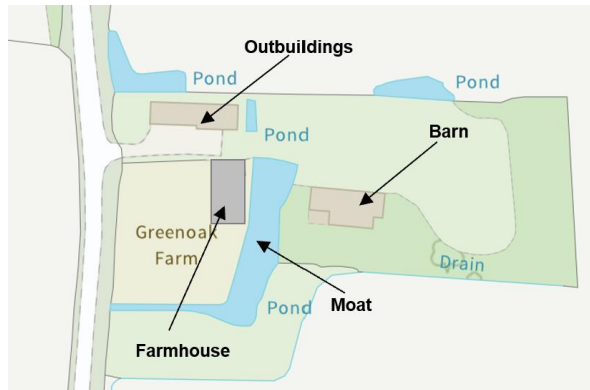
2.4

The farmstead appears to have been reduced to its present form by the end of the third quarter of the twentieth century. The farm ceased to operate in the mid-1980s and the surrounding land was sold to a neighbouring farm. The site of the farmstead became a single residence with a domestic curtilage that included the barn and outbuildings to the north-west of the farmhouse.

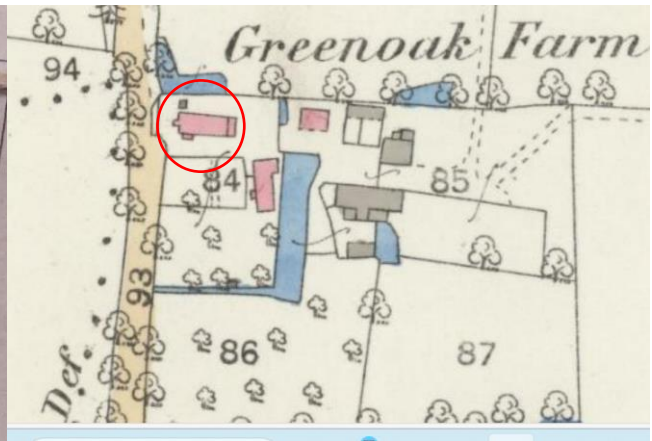
¹ Collins *Green Oak Farm: Heritage Impact Assessment* October 2022

² *Ibid.* p.16

2.5
Collins calls the outbuildings modern, suggesting they were built around the 1950s³, which may be so, but buildings in the same position are shown on 19th century maps, including the tithe map of 1837.



1837 tithe map



1885

(Outbuildings ringed red)

2.6
Auction details of 1903 records the outbuildings as *A detached backhouse, brick, clay and thatch, and dairy.*⁴ The clay lump has long gone as has the thatch and much of the original fabric. Yet they are sited in the historic position of the bakehouse and dairy and as such make a contribution to the setting of the listed farmhouse.



³ Collins op. cit. p.23

⁴ Ibid. p.11

Significance

2.7
The National Planning Policy Framework defines 'significance' as, "The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting".⁵

2.8
Green Oak Farmhouse is a grade II listed building which derives its significance from its age, history and architectural interest. It is of high significance and its rural setting, within a moated site, and with the remains of its former farmstead makes an important contribution to its significance.

2.9
Historic England's Good Practice Guidance Note observes that

Some buildings and structures are deemed designated as listed buildings by being fixed to the principal building or by being ancillary within its curtilage and pre-dating 1 July 1948. Whether alteration, extension or demolition of such buildings amounts to harm or substantial harm to the designated heritage asset (i.e., the listed building together with its curtilage and attached buildings) needs careful consideration. Some curtilage structures are of high significance, which should be taken fully into account in decisions, but some are of little or none. Thus, like other forms of heritage asset, curtilage structures should be considered in proportion to their significance⁶.

2.10
Green Oak Barn, dates from the early 17th century and was enlarged in the early 19th century. It forms part of the historic curtilage and makes a significant contribution to the farm setting.

2.11
The outbuildings to the north-west of the farmhouse occupy the historic site of the former bakehouse and dairy, sited within the moat and close to the farmhouse. Whilst they may have little intrinsic worth, they form a part of the historic setting and have some, albeit low, significance.



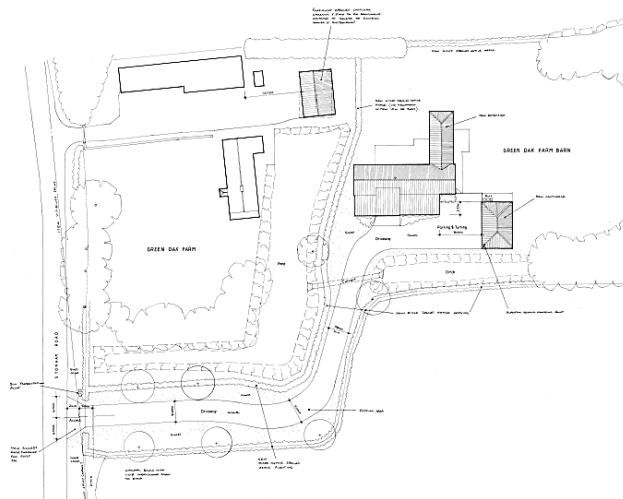
⁵ NPPF 2021 Glossary

⁶ Historic England *Good Practice Advice in Planning: 2* (2015) para.15

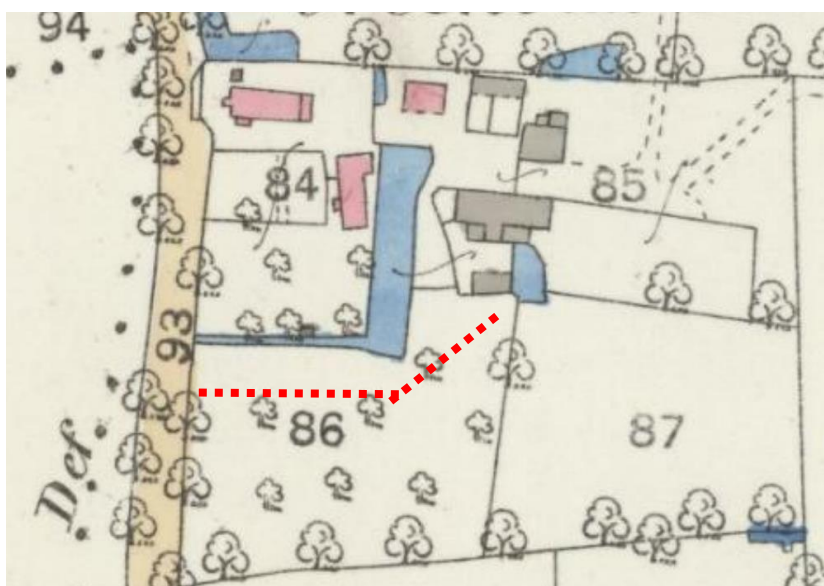
Proposed Works & Heritage Impact Assessment

3.1
The 2022 approved conversion of the barn to a dwelling included the provision of a new access, immediately to the north and parallel to the existing farm access. It cuts across the northern section of the former moat and requires the demolition of outbuildings which occupy the footprint (and possibly some fabric) of the bakehouse and dairy.

3.2
The planning application now submitted seeks to alter the access to the barn, proposing a vehicular access to the south of the farm, avoiding the need to demolish the outbuildings and cut across the site of the moat.



3.3
The line of the revised access will leave the Stonham Road south of the farmhouse garden, cutting eastwards across land north of the former stackyard meadows, shown on the 1837 tithe map, and as orchard on OS maps from 1885.



1885 map with line of proposed access dotted red

3.4
The land is currently grassland between the southern arm of the former moat, marked by a belt of trees, and a newly planted hedge on the south side. The proposed access would be gravel surfaced.



Line of access with moat tree belt on the left



Line of access leading to the barn



The moat



Line of proposed access looking south from the barn



Proposed access where it leaves Stonham Road

Heritage Impact Assessment

3.5
The 2022 approved access drive to the converted barn required the demolition of the outbuildings and also cut across the line of the northern section of the moat. The revised access does not. Its impact on the setting of the listed building is less than the approved scheme.

3.6
Its proposed position, to the south of the moat, runs across the northern edge of a former orchard, now grassland which is enclosed on its south side by a recently planted hedgerow. Its position, between an established tree belt and the new hedge ensure its impact on the countryside is mitigated and its 'soft, informal' surfacing ensure its impact is minimised. It causes no harm to the setting of the heritage asset.



View from the south to the barn with line of proposed access dotted

Conclusion

4.1
The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that in considering applications for development which affects a heritage asset or its setting, local planning authorities shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting (section 66.1). The National Planning Policy Framework (2021) expands on the 1990 Act and states that the significance of listed buildings can be harmed or lost by development in their setting. Paragraph 206 states that proposals which preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to, or better reveal the significance of the heritage assets should be treated favourably.

4.2
The revised siting of the proposed access to the barn preserves the surviving elements of the historic farmstead and the setting of Green Oak Farmhouse, thereby better revealing its significance.

4.3
Paragraph 194 of the NPPF requires an applicant to “describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting”. Paragraph 197 requires local planning authorities, in determining applications to take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets.

4.4
The proposed relocation of the access to Green Oak Barn causes no harm to the setting of the designated heritage asset and no harm to its wider countryside setting. The proposal satisfies both national planning guidance and local planning policies which seek to protect the historic environment and the setting of listed buildings.

Bibliography

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