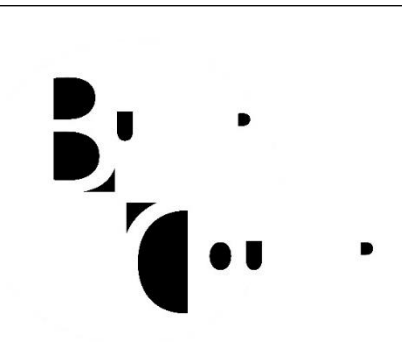


# HERITAGE STATEMENT

---



Bulmer + Counter Architects

## SITE ADDRESS

Nicoll Farm

Allum Lane

Elstree

Hertfordshire

WD6 3NP

**ALTERATIONS AND CONVERSION OF BARN AND BYRE TO PROVIDE A SINGLE DWELLING**

**&**

**ALTERATIONS TO DISUSED FARMHOUSE TO PROVIDE A SINGLE DWELLING**

**&**

**CONSTRUCTION OF 4 DETACHED DWELLINGS**



## CONTENTS:

1. INTRODUCTION & INFORMATION SOURCES CHECKLIST
2. SITE ADDRESS
3. ABOUT THE DEVELOPMENT
4. THE NATURE OF THE HERITAGE ASSETS
5. THE FORM AND MATERIALS OF THE HERITAGE ASSETS
6. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ASSETS
7. THE PROPOSED WORKS
8. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY, POLICY & GUIDANCE
9. THE IMPACT ON THE ASSETS
10. PRESERVING OR ENHANCING THE HERITAGE ASSETS
11. ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTEREST
12. CONCLUSION



## **1. INTRODUCTION & INFORMATION SOURCES CHECKLIST**

This Heritage Assessment has been prepared as a result of a proposal to alter and convert a listed barn and byre to provide a single dwelling, and alterations to a disused farmhouse to provide a single dwelling.

In preparation of this Statement we have referred to:

- Historic England list of protected historic sites
- National Planning Policy Framework
- Planning Practice Guidance: conserving and enhancing the historic environment
- Adopted Local Plan
- Historic England 'Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets'
- Historic England 'Adapting Traditional Farm Buildings'

## **2. SITE ADDRESS:**

Nicoll Farm, Allum Lane, Elstree, Hertfordshire WD6 3NP

## **3. ABOUT THE DEVELOPMENT:**

<b>Does the development site include:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
A <a href="#">listed building</a> ?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A <a href="#">scheduled ancient monument</a> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
A <a href="#">site of archaeological interest</a> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Within a <a href="#">designated conservation area</a> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
A <a href="#">non-designated heritage asset (including locally listed buildings)</a> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Within a registered <a href="#">historic park and garden</a> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
In the <a href="#">setting of / adjacent</a> to one of the above?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3.1. The site contains two existing buildings, both listed (Grade II).

Barn and Byre – An agricultural barn and byre with evidence of some domestic usage in its long history.

Farm House – A residential house.

3.2. The site is not within a conservation area, although it perhaps has some associative connection to the Elstree Village Conservation Area by virtue of proximity (0.3 mile/0.5km).

## **4. THE NATURE OF THE HERITAGE ASSETS**

### 4.1. OFFICIAL LIST ENTRIES:

#### **4.1.1. BARN & BYRE**

BARN & BYRE – OFFICIAL LIST ENTRY:

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II List

Entry Number: 1103585

Date first listed: 20-Jul-1982

Date of most recent amendment: 12-Aug-1985

List Entry Name: BARN AND BYRE AT NICOLL FARM ABOUT 20 METRES SOUTH WEST OF HOUSE

Statutory Address 1: BARN AND BYRE AT NICOLL FARM ABOUT 20 METRES SOUTH WEST OF HOUSE,  
ALLUM LANE

#### **Location:**

Statutory Address: BARN AND BYRE AT NICOLL FARM ABOUT 20 METRES SOUTH WEST OF HOUSE,  
ALLUM LANE

County: Hertfordshire

District: Hertsmere (District Authority)

Parish: Elstree and Borehamwood

National Grid Reference: TQ 18395 96000

#### **Details:**

TQ 19 NE ELSTREE ALLUM LANE (North side) Elstree

7/155 Barn and Byre at 20.7.82 Nicoll Farm about 20m SW of House (Formerly listed with Nicoll GV II Farmhouse as barn)

Barn with attached byre. C17, extended C19 and altered C20. Timber frame, weatherboarded. Tiled roofs. Barn: 4 bays with C19 extensions, 3 similar bays to W and brick to SE. Entrance to N and hipped threshing bay to S in 2nd bay from house. Oculus in E gable. Windows to W gable of lower timber extension which has a lean-to addition to front. C18 door hood set onto entrance on brick extension. Interior: clasped purlins, straight queen struts, intermediate collars. Curved and arched braces from wall posts to tie beams and to wall plates. Re-used timbers in 3 bay extension: clasped purlin collar beam roof. Slightly lower byre to N; 4 bays with additional hipped bay to N. Windows with round heads, Gothic glazing and leaded lights and C18 flat hood set over door with pointed head all inserted facing house. Interior: clasped purlin collar beam roof, queen struts, arched braces.

Listing NGR: TQ1839596000



*Barn & Byre - Listing Map*

#### **4.1.2. FARM HOUSE**

FARM HOUSE – OFFICIAL LIST ENTRY:

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1174074

Date first listed: 20-Jul-1982

List Entry Name: NICOLL FARM HOUSE

Statutory Address 1: NICOLL FARM HOUSE, 34, ALLUM LANE

**Location:**

Statutory Address: NICOLL FARM HOUSE, 34, ALLUM LANE

County: Hertfordshire

District: Hertsmere (District Authority)

Parish: Elstree and Borehamwood

National Grid Reference: TQ 18468 96062

**Details:**



TQ 19 NE ELSTREE ALLUM LANE (North side) Elstree

7/154 No. 34 20.7.82 (Nicoll Farm House)

GV II

House. c.1500, c.1600 crosswing, altered mid C17. Early and mid C18 extension, alteration and refronting. C19 and C20 additions. Timber frame originally. Brick walls, whitewashed to front, some weatherboarding. Tiled roof. Originally 3 bays with 2-bay open hall, parlour crosswing added to right. Now 2 storeys. Entrance to far left of original house with later hipped roofed porch. Early C18 1 bay kitchen extension to left and 2 bays of house brick fronted in early C18 with plat band over first floor and parapet. Timber casements with segmental heads. C17 cross axial ridge stack to left of original house, 3 diagonal shafts. Later C18 brick front to right bay of hall and parlour wing. Plat band and parapet. Ground floor casements and C19 French windows. 2 first floor sashes. Right return of parlour wing has original English bond external stack partly hidden by C19 addition with lower roof. Left return: weatherboarded first floor, half hip to roof. C20 rear extension to left. Rear gable to parlour wing. External C18 stack to rear of hall. Ground floor casements. First floor horizontal sliding sashes. Interior: only soot blackened hall roof with clasped purlins and wind braces remains from c.1500. Clasped purlin roof to wing. Mid C17 floor inserted on stopped ovolo moulded beams. Mid C19 wall extends forward from front dividing garden from farmyard. Attached brick piers with ball finials and gates. (RCHM Typescript)

Listing NGR: TQ1846896062



Farm House - Listing Map



4.2. HISTORIC MAPS:

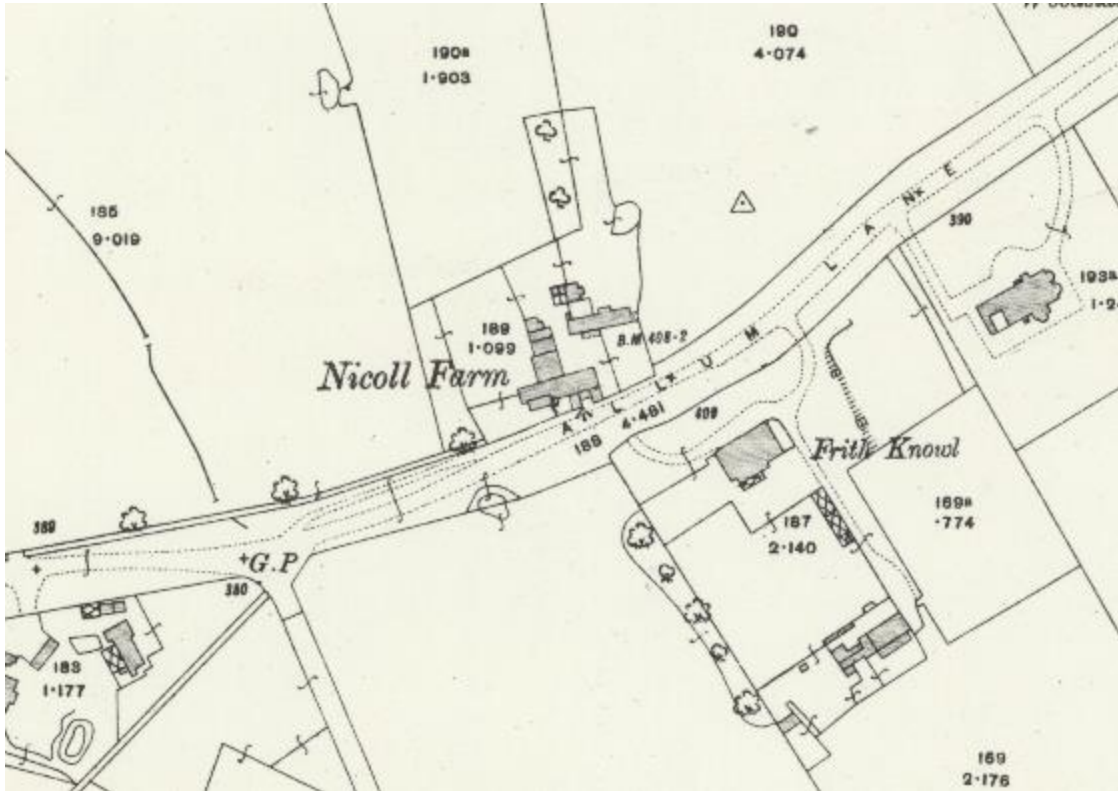


Hertfordshire XLV.5, Published 1868



Hertfordshire XLV.5, Published 1898





Hertfordshire XLV.5, Published 1914



Hertfordshire XLV.5, Published 1936





### 4.3. SITE HISTORY:

- 4.3.1. The farm has not been active since the 1960's and its land holding has gradually reduced until reaching its current size.
- 4.3.2. Agricultural storage buildings to the west were removed in 2018 in order to accommodate 'The Stables' residential development.
- 4.3.3. Prior to their removal, the modern storage buildings took the place of the Barn and Byre, these buildings becoming disused for practical purposes, apart from serving as some domestic storage and garaging.
- 4.3.4. Land held to the north is now occupied by The Hertsmere 18-hole golf course.
- 4.3.5. The rear gardens of properties in Blattner Close now occupy part of the earlier holding to the north-east.
- 4.3.6. For centuries prior to land sale and development, the farm's main purpose was in hay-making, providing material for horses and cattle, sold through London markets. This purpose continued under Douglas Dalton who took possession of the farm in 1933.
- 4.3.7. Douglas Dalton leased the farm, together with 125 acres of grassland, from Lord Aldenham.
- 4.3.8. He employed two labourers who lived on the premises.
- 4.3.9. He also kept a herd of cows and some poultry.
- 4.3.10. Mr Dalton acquired the application site from RH W D Baron Aldenham in 1958. His use of the farm as a functioning entity ceased in the 1960's but ownership of the site and buildings (Farm house, Barn and byre) continued until sale in 1982.
- 4.3.11. The current owner acquired the site in 2018.
- 4.3.12. Although currently vacant, there has been some recent history of unlawful squatting, combined with extensive marijuana cultivation (extensive in the sense that it has occupied the greater part of both buildings). The relatively sophisticated heating, ventilation and irrigation systems associated with this activity have been carefully and largely removed, but there remains some evidence as illustrated in photographs contained within this document. Sadly, evidence of activity without consideration for the buildings themselves appears to have resulted in some areas of damage and vandalism.



## 5. THE FORM AND MATERIALS OF THE HERITAGE ASSETS

The heritage assets comprise a Barn and byre(s) and a farm house.

Although existing plan and elevation drawings are submitted in full as planning application drawings, they are reproduced below for the purposes of this record and assessment.

### 5.1. BARN & BYRE(S):

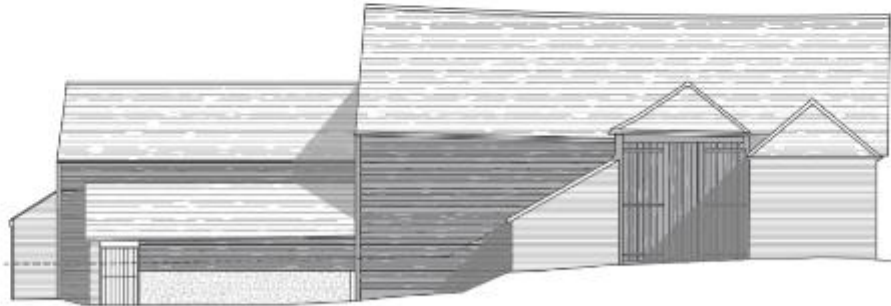


GROUND & FIRST FLOOR PLANS



EXISTING: BARN - NORTH ELEVATION

SECTION 2.000

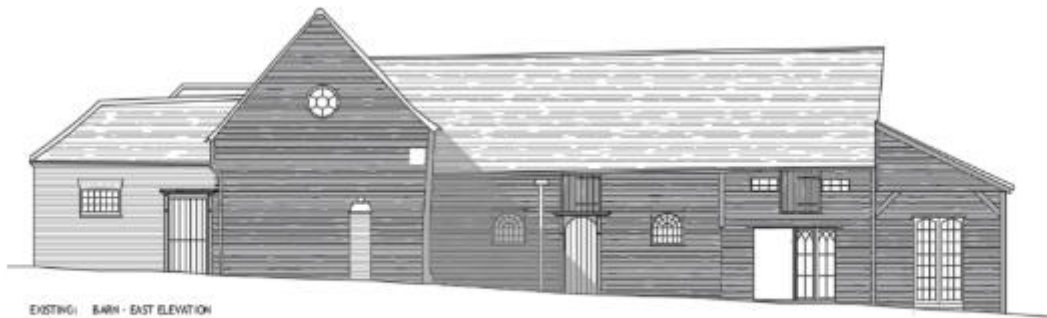


EXISTING: BARN - SOUTH ELEVATION

SECTION 2.000

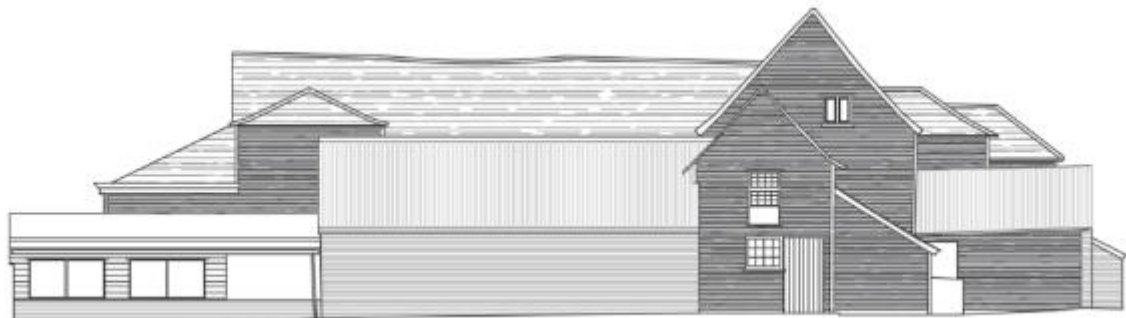


## NORTH & SOUTH ELEVATIONS



EXISTING: BARN - EAST ELEVATION

SECTION 2.000



EXISTING: BARN - WEST ELEVATION

SECTION 2.000

## EAST & WEST ELEVATIONS



5.2. FARM HOUSE:



GROUND & FIRST FLOOR PLANS





EXISTING: FARMHOUSE - SOUTH ELEVATION

DATE: 7.2016



EXISTING: FARMHOUSE - WEST ELEVATION

DATE: 7.2016



### SOUTH & WEST ELEVATIONS



EXISTING: FARMHOUSE - NORTH ELEVATION

DATE: 7.2016



EXISTING: FARMHOUSE - EAST ELEVATION

DATE: 7.2016



### NORTH & EAST ELEVATIONS



5.3 PHOTOGRAPHS AS EXISTING

5.3.1. BARN & BYRE EXTERIOR



1. Barn from south-east



2. Barn from south





3. Barn from south



4. Barn from south-west





5. Barn from south



6. Barn south-west corner







7. Barn south east corner



8. Barn from East





9. Barn from east; door and canopy



10. Door and canopy





11. Barn south-east corner



12. Barn from north-east



13. Barn from east



14. Barn east elevation door and canopy



15. Barn north-east corner



16. Barn garage to north





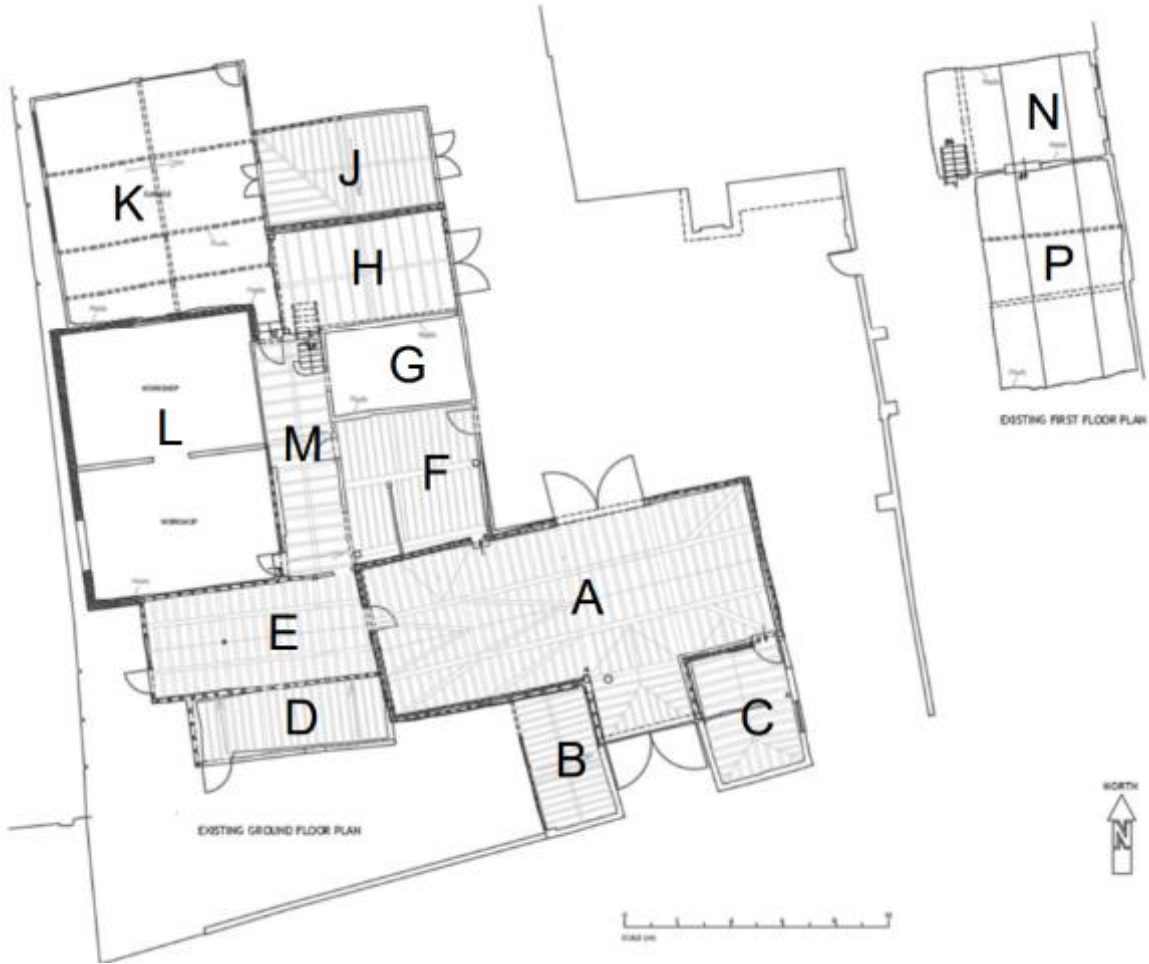
17. Barn west boundary looking south



18. Barn west boundary looking north



5.3.2. BARN & BYRE INTERIOR



KEY PLAN – KEY LETTERS FOLLOW EACH PHOTO BELOW, TO INDICATE APPROXIMATE LOCATION





19. Barn underpinning and repairs south elevation (A)



20. Main barn looking west (A)







21. Main barn looking west; ad hoc propping (A)



22. Main barn north elevation (A)





23. Main barn south elevation;  
underpinning and ad hoc repairs (A)



24. Main barn south doors;  
ad hoc propping (A)





25. Main barn looking east (A)



26. Main barn south elevation;  
underpinning and ad hoc repairs (A)



27. Main barn south elevation; door to eastern byre (A)



28. Barn north elevation (east end) (A)



29. Barn east elevation (A)



30. Barn north elevation (A)





31. Barn south-east corner (A)



32. Barn central byre looking south (B)





33. Barn eastern byre (C)

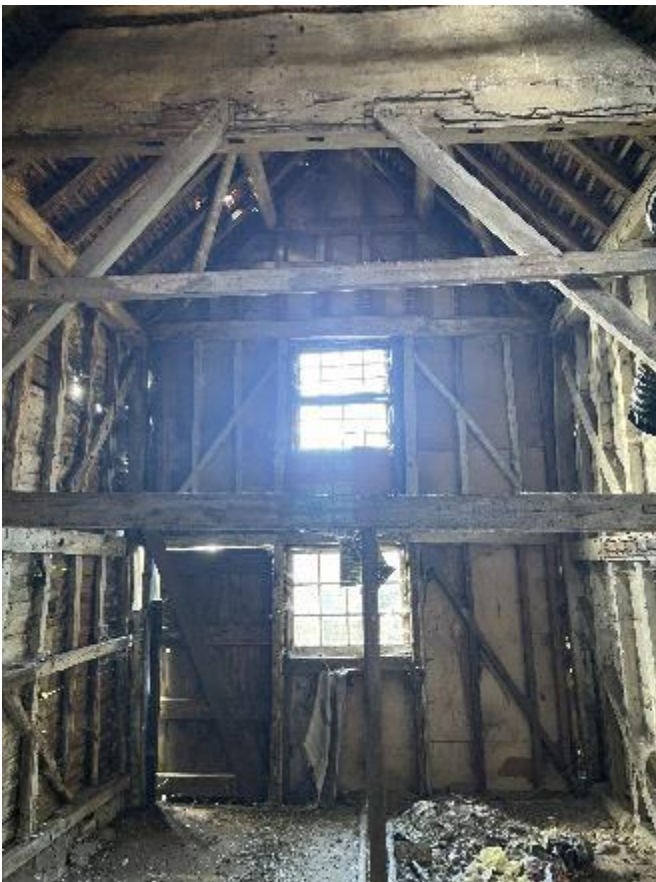


34. Barn eastern byre looking west (C)





35. Western byre looking east (D)



36. Smaller barn looking west (E)





37. Smaller barn looking east (E) (Ducting remnants of marijuana plantation)



38. Room 'F' looking south



39. Room 'F' looking north



40. Room 'F' looking west





41. Room 'G' looking east



42. Room 'H' looking north



43. Room 'H' looking west



44. Room 'H' looking south



45. Room 'J' looking east



46. Room 'J' looking south-west





47. Garage 'K' looking north



48. Room 'L' looking west



49. Room 'L' looking west



50. Link 'M' looking south



51. Room 'N' looking south (foam adhesive remnants of marijuana plantation)



52. Room 'N' looking east (foam adhesive remnants of marijuana plantation)







53. Room 'P' looking south



54. Room 'P' looking east

5.3.3. FARMHOUSE EXTERIOR



55. Farmhouse west elevation



56. Farmhouse north-west corner





57. Farmhouse north-east corner



58. Farmhouse east elevation



59. Farmhouse north elevation



60. Farmhouse north-east internal corner



61. Farmhouse north elevation, east end



62. Farmhouse north elevation chimney





63. Farmhouse north-east corner



64. Farmhouse east elevation





65. Farmhouse south-east corner; barn east elevation in distance



66. Farmhouse south elevation, east end



67. Farmhouse south elevation window detail



68 Barn east elevation,  
Farmhouse south  
elevation west end





69. Farmhouse south elevation, garden wall



70. Farmhouse south elevation, west end



71. Farmhouse south-west corner



5.3.4. FARMHOUSE INTERIOR



KEY PLAN – KEY LETTERS FOLLOW EACH PHOTO BELOW, TO INDICATE APPROXIMATE LOCATION





72. East kitchen (A)



73. East Kitchen (A)





74. East hall (B)



75. East hall (B)



76. East hall (B)



77. West hall (C)



78. West hall (C)



79. West hall (C)



80. West hall (C)



81. Living room (D)







82. Living room (D)



83. Living room (D)





84. Living room (E)



85. Living room (E)





86. Living room (E)



87. Living room (E)



88. Study (F)



89. West kitchen (G)





90. West kitchen (G)



91. West kitchen (G)





92. West kitchen (G)



93. West kitchen (G)





94. East Bedroom (H)



95. East Bedroom (H)



96. East Bedroom  
Dormer (H)



97. East bedroom (H)





98. Extension staircase (J)



99. Bathroom (K)





100. Bedroom (L)



101. Bedroom (L)



102. Bedroom (L) (plastic, cables and loose material remnants of marijuana plantation)



103. Landing looking south (M)





104. Bedroom (N)



105. Staircase (P)



106. Bathroom (Q) (Ducting remnants of marijuana plantation)



107. Landing (P) (plastic and foil remnants of marijuana plantation)



108. Bedroom (R) (ducting remnants of marijuana plantation)



109. Bedroom (S)



110. Bedroom (S)



111. Bedroom (S)





112. Bedroom (S)



113. Bathroom (T)







114. Bathroom (T)



115. Bathroom (T)



## **6. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ASSETS**

- 6.1. The proximity of new buildings to the west, north and east of the site mean that the Barn and Farmhouse no longer sit within the agrarian setting they once would have done. There are no other heritage assets within the vicinity.
- 6.2. However, the proximity of the buildings to one another preserves some sense of a historic grouping.
- 6.3. The loss of land associated with the functioning farm has removed the broader setting of the Barns and Farmhouse; the hierarchy of the farm no longer exists and the space surrounding the buildings is now not untypical of a residential curtilage.
- 6.4. The deterioration of the buildings' condition has been gradual and progressive over many decades.
- 6.5. This deterioration can be arrested, however the cost of repair and conversion will be considerable.
- 6.6. In addition to the physical deterioration of the buildings, certain deliberate modifications or acts of damage have occurred, which further erode the quality of the buildings individually and as seen in conjunction with one another. These include:
  - Barn: Inappropriate historic additions to the north (garage and workshops)
  - Barn: Inappropriate repairs and propping of historic timber frames
  - Barn: Breakage of external joinery (windows and doors); forced entry and vandalism
  - Barn: Windows blocked or glazing removed in order to modify ventilation and/or create an artificial environment to support extensive marijuana cultivation
  - Barn: Internal coverings, insulations and ducting fitted by squatters in order to support extensive marijuana cultivation (recently largely removed)
  - Farmhouse: A 1980's extension of rather average design and detailing
  - Farmhouse: Incongruous internal metal spiral staircase
  - Farmhouse: Windows blocked or glazing removed in order to modify ventilation and/or create artificial environment to support extensive marijuana cultivation
  - Farmhouse: Internal coverings, insulations and ducting fitted by squatters in order to support extensive marijuana cultivation (recently largely removed)
- 6.7. As mentioned above, although not within the Elstree Village Conservation Area, the site perhaps has some associative connection through proximity (0.3 mile, 0.5km).

People familiar with the vicinity may see the site (the Barn in particular) as a particular feature of the shrinking agricultural space between Elstree and Borehamwood.
- 6.8. Both heritage assets – Barn and Farmhouse – are special locally by virtue of their age (predating all immediate neighbours), layout (the Barn – being agricultural in origin), interesting features (both buildings, in terms of external design features) and materials used.

## **7. THE PROPOSED WORKS**

7.1. In outline, proposed works to the buildings and surrounding area consist of:

1. Repair and conversion of the barn and byre(s) to create a single dwelling
2. Repair and minor alteration of the farmhouse to restore the building to use as a single dwelling
3. Curtilage landscaping to provide appropriate parking and amenity space
4. Erection of four new-build dwellings within the curtilage of the overall site. This work is referred to below, but in greater detail in the accompanying planning Design and Access Statement.

7.2. In more detail, proposed works to the Barn(s) and byre(s) consists of:

1. Demolition of mid/late 20<sup>th</sup> century extension to the north (rear)
2. Historic windows and doors retained and restored where possible
3. Replacement windows and doors where necessary of appropriate material, cross-section and detail
4. Glazed doors and screens to large cart door openings fitted behind restored shutter doors, to be of appropriate material, cross-section and detail
5. Insertion of two windows into south elevation of the barn at ground floor level
6. Timber repairs where necessary using traditional carpentry techniques and replacement material
7. New insulated structural floors, using limecrete substrates and existing finishes where possible (flints)
8. Insulated external walls, using natural breathable materials, lime plaster internal finishes and cladding reused externally; new cladding required being of similar material and cross-section
9. Insulated roofs, using insulations and breathable materials above existing timber frame elements, lime plaster internal finishes and existing tiling reused externally; new tiling required being of similar handmade traditional material
10. All viable surviving historic features to be reused in situ – e.g. timber wall panelling, stables and stalls
11. Three conservation rooflights installed into first floor bedrooms (northern end of barns)
12. Brickwork repointed using lime mortars; replacement bricks required to be reclaimed or handmade, of matching size, colour and texture
13. Replacement cast iron rainwater gutters and downpipes, of simple design and using rise/fall brackets

Note: It would only be possible to fully detail some external surfaces and junctions following full exposure of historic material (west and north elevation of northern barn)

7.3. In more detail, proposed works to the Farmhouse consists of:

1. Subdivision of west kitchen to provide Utility room and cloakroom
2. Removal of cloakroom and partition walls from 1980's extension kitchen
3. Removal of external door and boiler housing with chimney to east-facing elevation of 1980's extension; brickwork made good in matching material
4. Insertion of external door opening into 1980's kitchen south-facing wall

5. Substitution of timber staircase for existing metal spiral staircase
6. Removal of cloakroom from Study
7. Refitting of existing bathrooms
8. Historic windows and doors retained and restored where possible
9. Replacement windows and doors where necessary of appropriate material, cross-section and detail
10. Modern secondary glazing removed and associated doors replaced or reglazed with thin double-glazed units
11. Fenestration of 1980's extension replaced with casements of a simpler design and cross-section
12. Brickwork repointed using lime mortars; any replacement bricks required to be reclaimed or handmade, of matching size, colour and texture
13. Replacement cast iron rainwater gutters and downpipes, of simple design

7.4. In more detail, proposed external works consist of:

1. Removal of self-seeding trees which are harmful due to proximity to buildings
2. Limited planting, of architectural plants, appropriate to the scale and character of the buildings
3. Hard surfacing to comprise gravel and stone reflecting former agricultural usage
4. Historic garden walls and piers repointed with lime mortars; any replacement bricks required to be reclaimed or handmade, of matching size, colour and texture
5. Vehicle access to the two buildings to be from the rear (via the drive to the east of the site), in order to preserve the Allum Lane frontage and in order to limit domesticity as seen from a public perspective
6. Estate fencing and planting used as the means of division and boundary marking between Barn and Farmhouse

7.5. In more detail, proposed new-build works consist of:

1. Construction of four new dwellings located to the north and due east of the farmhouse
2. New buildings of the scale and form of traditional farm buildings – low height, low eaves, pitched roofs, narrow spans, accommodation within the roof
3. Contemporary fenestration and detailing – a stripped-back appearance, compatible with and sympathetic to the utilitarian character of the historic farm environment.
4. Simple design, in order that the historic buildings should retain prominence in stature and character.
5. Clay tile and timber as a fundamental material palette
6. Hard and soft landscaping designed to integrate the new buildings into the historic setting
7. Shared vehicle access for all buildings, in order to consolidate vehicle movements, to accentuate the farmyard circulation core and to minimise visual intrusion of vehicles at the Allum Lane frontage.

**PROPOSED BARN RESTORATION WORKS:**

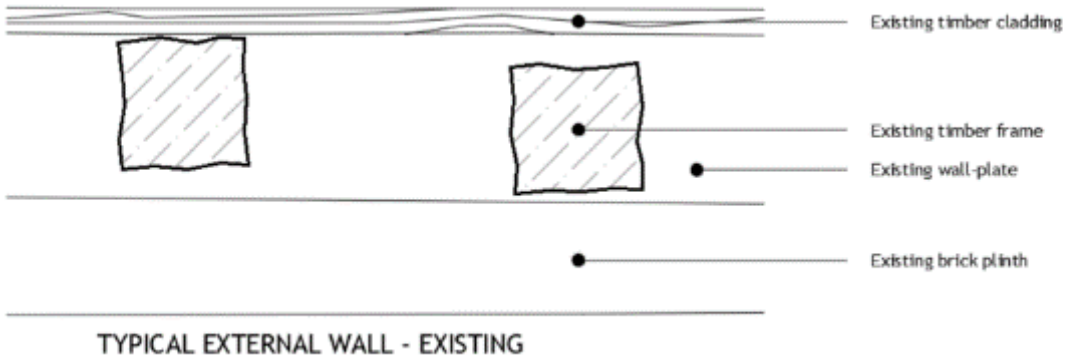
- 7.6. Proposed works have been compiled with reference to a structural review of the Barn, prepared by Gyoury Self Consulting Engineers. ('Summary Report on Structural Review and Inspection' is an application document).
- 7.7. The structural review proposed two alternative strategies with regard to the Barn timber frame, which is in very poor condition:- (i) installation of a new primary structural frame inside the existing timber frame, with the existing frame retained cosmetically, (ii) retention and repair of the timber frame; repair involving replacement of timbers as required on a like for like, piece by piece basis.
- 7.8. The applicant proposes to adopt the second option – retention and repair of the timber frame - in the belief that the greater interest lies in the frame as seen from the interior. This would be visually obstructed by a substantial new primary frame.

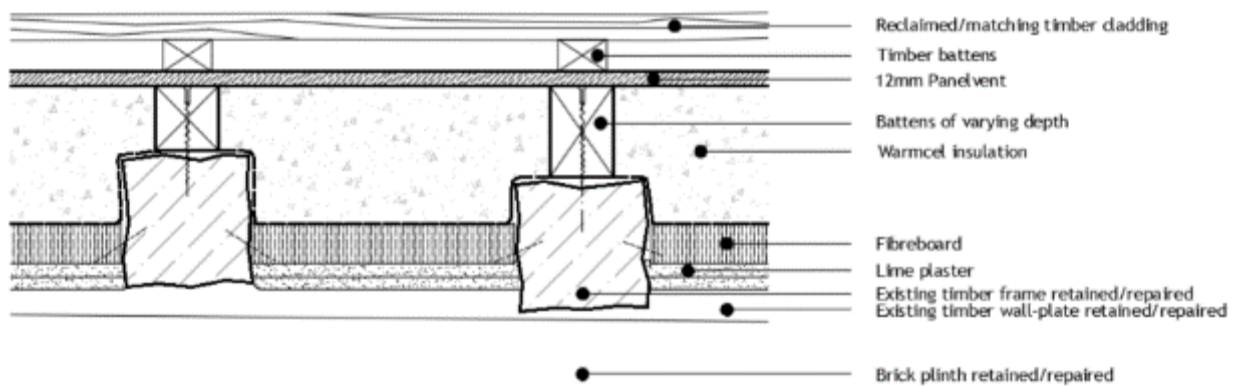
Furthermore, much of the external cladding is in need of repair or replacement; external strengthening and replacement of cladding (as illustrated below) would provide an opportunity for the existing frame to remain visible from the interior.

**7.9. WALLS:**

Subject to further structural consideration, repair and integration of thermal layers would be carried out in natural and breathable materials, comprising lime plaster (interior), Fibreboard linings (plaster backing) between original frame members, 'Warmcel' cellulose insulation, 'Panelvent' (exterior – structural diaphragmatic contribution), battens and timber claddings.

Existing and proposed external wall build-ups are illustrated below:





TYPICAL EXTERNAL WALL - PROPOSED

#### 7.10. FOUNDATIONS, GROUND FLOORS & PLINTHS:

Plinths are in a sufficiently poor condition that they require significant repair or replacement. Where they would originally have been brickwork (with a raised timber wall-plate), significant areas have been replaced historically with in-situ concrete.

The proposal is to replace in situ concrete with brickwork to match original, laid in lime mortar.

Where original brickwork remains, widespread damaged or spalled bricks would be replaced to match original, again laid in lime mortar.

This process of plinth restoration would be carried out in small lengths, in tandem with underpinning works.

Existing floors are in very poor condition and are not generally of much historical interest. The process of underpinning would enable straightforward replacement of structural floors with a suitable material – for example Limecrete.

There is one floor believed to be of greater interest – Key Plan Room ‘F’, Photographs 38-40 above – which comprises whole flints laid on soil. The proposal would be to reuse these flints (in the same space – proposed Snug-Hall), re-laid as an exposed floor finish.

#### 7.11 ROOFS:

Roof timbers are not dissimilar to the walls in terms of condition and loss of structural integrity and function.

Subject to full inspection, the proposal is to retain timbers and to replace where necessary on a like for like, piece by piece basis.

Insulation placed between and above the rafters would enable the frame to be seen from the interior. Timber sheathing fixed above insulation would add a diaphragmatic function, strengthening the structure against wind loads.

The insulation and sheathing added to the roof thickness would alter existing rooflines slightly, but it is not considered that this would be significantly discernible. A slightly raised eave-line could be neutralised by the slightly thickened external wall. Simple cast iron gutters on drive-in rise and fall brackets would create a finished detail of traditional appearance, quite similar to original constructions.

- 7.12. It is expected that restoration works would be subject to Condition upon grant of permission, to allow for amplification of methodology (e.g. Method Statements) and quantification of replacement/repair (e.g. full Timber Survey).



## **8. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY, POLICY & GUIDANCE**

### **8.1. PLANNING HISTORY:**

- 8.1.1. The site has limited known relevant planning history.
- 8.1.2. Permission was granted in 1962 (reference TP/62/0027) for a Dutch Barn for grain storage. It is assumed that this was a building subsequently demolished to make way for 'The Stables' development, situated to the west of the application site.
- 8.1.3. Permission was granted in 1982 (reference TP/82/0368 (planning) & TP/82/0584 (Listed Building Consent)) for a two-storey extension. It is assumed that this is the comparatively modern extension to the north of the farm house.
- 8.1.4. This extension is located in what would have been a space between the farm house and a detached building (demolished) which is illustrated in the 1868-1914 maps above.
- 8.1.5. A planning pre-application was conducted in 2019 (reference 18/0197/PA) which included proposals for new-build dwellings, the findings of which have been considered in the preparation of these application proposals.
- 8.1.6. There is no evidence of planning history for the additions to the Barn and Byre shaded in pink below. It is evident that these elements have been constructed at different times across several decades. The 1936 Hertfordshire map (page 7) shows a variety of extensions in this general area, but none which reflect the footprint of the buildings which exist today.





## 8.2. PLANNING POLICY & GUIDANCE:

8.2.1. The decision maker is required by section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a heritage asset.

8.2.2. National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF places emphasis on heritage “significance”, which it defines as:

*“The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.”*

8.2.3. The NPPF encourages local planning authorities to recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance. Conversely, it recognises the fact that new development can make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

8.2.4. The NPPF requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposal, to a proportionate level of detail.

8.2.5. The NPPF requires an LPA to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset. This significance should be taken as the benchmark against which the impacts of a proposal are to be assessed.

8.2.6. The significance of a heritage asset is defined in the NPPF as being made up of four constituents, architectural interest, historical interest, archaeological interest and artistic interest. The setting of the heritage asset can also contribute to its significance. Setting is defined in the NPPF as:

*“The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.”*

8.2.7. The NPPF requires the impact on the significance of a designated heritage asset to be considered in terms of either “substantial harm” or “less than substantial harm”.

Harm is defined by Historic England as change which erodes the significance of a heritage asset.

8.2.8. HERTSMERE LOCAL PLAN – CORE STRATEGY

### **Policy CS14 Protection or enhancement of heritage assets**

*“All development proposals must conserve or enhance the historic environment of the Borough in order to maintain and where possible improve local environmental quality. Development proposals should be sensitively designed to a high quality and not cause harm to identified, protected sites, buildings or locations of heritage or archaeological value including Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, Historic Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Ancient Monuments or their setting, and identified and as yet unidentified Archaeological Remains. The Council will take account of available historic environment characterisation work, including Conservation Area appraisals and archaeological assessments, when making decisions affecting heritage assets and their settings.”*

## **9. THE IMPACT ON THE ASSETS**

### **IMPACT OF PROPOSED WORKS TO THE BARN AND FARMHOUSE:**

- 9.1. Both heritage asset buildings – Barn and Farmhouse – have declined in condition in tandem with decline in use and maintenance.
- 9.2. The proposed alterations, conversion and conservation would result in an immediate and durable net gain in terms of value of the heritage assets.
- 9.3. The demolition of the mid/late 20<sup>th</sup> century additions to the barn (north) would be an enhancement of the historic building and its immediate setting.
- 9.4. In other respects, the proposed alterations to the barn are minor and original volumes are left undisturbed and unsubdivided.
- 9.5. The small number of new window openings would be proportionate to and in keeping with the agricultural character of the original buildings.
- 9.6. Key features – for example flat hoods (external) and cattle stalls and feed racks (internal) would be maintained in situ, preserving the character and apparent function of the original building.
- 9.7. The proposed approach to the barn is very much one of repairing, restoring or converting the building as it originally was, working with existing spaces to create a residential (as opposed to ‘domestic’) environment.
- 9.8. Alterations to the Farmhouse are equally minor in number and scope, again being a question more of repair and restoration.
- 9.9. Each basis of interest – archaeological, architectural, artistic and historical – would be preserved or enhanced by the proposed work.
- 9.10. The proposed work would enhance the setting of the two listed buildings and would reintroduce historic landmark buildings of value and historical significance into the street scape.
- 9.11. The principal justification for the works lies in the proposed change of usage of the barn (from historic agrarian/more recent domestic storage) to permanent residential accommodation, together with the repair of the Farmhouse to the extent required to bring it back to full residential usage. Work in both areas would secure each building for indefinite practical use without loss of historic interest and character.
- 9.12. Each individual item of work exists only to facilitate or support that change.
- 9.13. Spatial change would be minimal, apart of course from demolished parts.
- 9.14. External appearance would be largely unaltered, apart from some replacement joinery of appropriate design and detail, repair of surface materials (tiling, cladding and brickwork) and renewal of ancillary details such as rainwater goods
- 9.15. External areas – paths, pavings and grass areas have become overgrown in a similar way to which the buildings have declined. Proposed external work would restore the traditional curtilage setting of the buildings, being simple in character with a high proportion of semi-hard surfacing and localised domestication through planting.

## **IMPACT OF PROPOSED NEW-BUILD DWELLINGS:**

- 9.16. The proposed new buildings would be compatible with and complementary to the existing buildings in form, character and material.
- 9.17. The proposed buildings would be subservient to the existing buildings in terms of scale.
- 9.18. Proposed new buildings are arranged around the existing buildings (to north and east) leaving a space in between which evokes the character of a farmyard.
- 9.19. A contemporary approach to the design of the new buildings – simple detailing and proportion, a limited palette of natural materials and colour – ensures that they will not compete with the listed buildings in terms of style; they will not mimic or imitate.
- 9.20. The existence of the new buildings will facilitate the conversion of the two listed buildings. Absence of the new buildings would lead to a substantial financial deficit; repair and conversion of the heritage assets would be uneconomic.

## **10. PRESERVING OR ENHANCING THE HERITAGE ASSETS**

- 10.1 The proposed work would enhance the heritage assets, individually and in terms of group value, by creating a viable ongoing use for disused buildings.
- 10.2. The proposed work would enhance the heritage assets by removing inappropriate modern additions and returning the buildings – in particular the barn – closer to their originally built form.
- 10.3. There would be a discernible public benefit by virtue of the visibility of both buildings, which are located close to, or immediately upon the Allum Lane frontage.
- 10.4. There would be the concurrent benefit publicly of bringing buildings back to use where the site and buildings are currently vacant. (The recent unlawful occupation and use of the buildings as a marijuana ‘farm’ underlines the wider social benefit of the proposed redevelopment).
- 10.5. The barn building can offer no practical or viable ongoing use without work and redevelopment; a residential usage would be the most enduring and the most likely to secure necessary ongoing maintenance and repair when needed. No commercial use is feasible economically.
- 10.6. The creation of the new buildings will facilitate the repair and conversion of the two listed buildings, in particular the barn (being in a weaker condition). Any development within the curtilage of the heritage assets may be said to cause a level of harm to the assets’ setting; however, the ability to take a holistic approach to the site will result in a level of preservation and enhancement which would not otherwise be possible.

## **11. ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTEREST**

- 11.1. The site is not situated within an area of archaeological interest (Policy SADM29 – Heritage Assets: Archaeological Sites).
- 11.2. The proposed work to the heritage assets themselves (Barn and Farmhouse) is comparatively superficial (physically) and involves no excavation other than at structural floor level.
- 11.3. The proposed new buildings on the site will generally require foundations of conventional depth.

There are some localised areas of augered pile construction, where new foundations would occur within tree root protection areas. The construction in these areas would be non-percussive and would allow for inspection of soils removed.

- 11.4. The approximate date at which the site was first inhabited is unknown, but the farmhouse listing indicates a date for construction of that building of c.1500.

Below-ground remains from that date could be of some social or historic interest, and construction could be carried out with appropriate techniques for excavation and recording of any finds of interest.

## **12. CONCLUSION**

- 12.1. The two heritage assets – Barn and Farmhouse - are in need of repair, having been allowed to deteriorate over many decades. The applicant has inherited a substantial undertaking.
- 12.2. The barn has deteriorated more substantially than the farmhouse, probably reflecting the fact that the farmhouse has been occupied for much of its life as a dwelling, where the barn fulfilled a practical agricultural storage purpose. Historic patch repairs have been carried out either pre-listing or without much regard for the purpose of listing and in an entirely utilitarian manner.

A more considered, systematic and widespread process of repair is required.

- 12.3. The proposed work to the two buildings is modest in terms of alteration. Their character and appearance would generally be unaffected; in fact it would be enhanced, for example through the removal or replacement of modern additions.
- 12.4. The proposed work in terms of repair would likewise conserve, preserve and enhance, through use of traditional techniques and materials.
- 12.5. The two buildings are publicly visible and of interest architecturally and historically. The proposed work – to the buildings themselves and to the surrounding open spaces - would enhance and conserve a historic streetscape.

The proposal to access the two buildings from the rear (via the existing drive) would preserve the appearance of the street frontage without being dominated by vehicles and without introducing unnecessary domesticity.

- 12.6. The proposed new buildings are a necessary part of the overall process of restoration, in order to address an otherwise impossible cost deficit which would result in an ongoing course of essential repairs only.
- 12.7. The proposed new buildings would preserve the setting of the heritage assets, through appropriate positioning, scale and material; they would not erode the significance of the historic buildings.
- 12.8. Although the barn and farmhouse were once part of a substantial agricultural holding – positioned in close proximity to Allum Lane for practical purposes – the gradual erosion of the farm in size and condition has removed arguably all discernible ‘farmstead’ setting from the physical context of the two buildings.

Some brick garden walls and piers remain and would be preserved.

The proposals allow for landscaping and spacing between buildings which would reinforce the agricultural character and appearance of the site and the buildings’ immediate setting.

- 12.9. The harm caused to the heritage assets by the proposed new buildings is considered to be ‘less than substantial’ in the context of NPPF para 196.
- 12.10. The proposals, including the proposed method of conversion and repair of the two heritage assets has been carefully considered, with interdependent old and new environments coexisting to provide a sustainable long-term use of the site.

Prepared by: BULMER + COUNTER ARCHITECTS LTD

Date: November 2023

