

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Conversion of existing redundant barn to annexe
ancillary to main dwelling (Renewal of Planning
Permission and Listed Building Consent
19/505191 and 19/505192)

At

Little Foxes
Upper Street
Leeds
Maidstone
Kent

October 2023

Consilium Town Planning Services Limited
Northdown House
Lower Street
Leeds
Maidstone
Kent. ME17 1RJ

1 Introduction and Scope of Report

1.1 This Heritage statement has been written by Consilium Town Planning Services Limited on behalf of the applicant (Mr and Mrs B Razzell). My qualifications include a specialism in conservation and urban design. I am a Director of Consilium Town Planning Services Limited. I have been a qualified Town Planner for 20 years in both private and public sectors. I have had experience relating to the alteration, conversion and renovation of listed buildings and also agricultural barns.

1.2 This proposal relates to the conversion of a former barn to form a residential annexe. This Heritage Statement is prepared as the barn is within the curtilage of Little Foxes which is a Grade II listed building. The building was listed (Grade II) on 14 December 1984.



1.3 The barn is also within the Leeds Conservation Area. In term of planning designations, the site is also within the open countryside (reference adopted Maidstone Local Plan (2017)).

1.4 Planning permission and listed building consent has previously been granted in 2015 and was later renewed in 2019 for conversion to a residential annex. However, the planning permissions and consents were not implemented due to a change in ownership.

1.5 There has been a recent full planning application lodged on (23/502439/FULL) on 6 June 2023 for the renewal of the annexe scheme. However, this was refused on 1 August 2023 for the reasons set out below (see Section 3: Planning History). In summary the issues raised were twofold:

1 Due to the number of window and door openings, their scale and design, and the addition of solar panels, the proposal would harm the simple, agricultural character and appearance of the curtilage listed barn and its significance, the setting of grade II listed Little Foxes the character and appearance of Leeds conservation area; and

2 The application contains no ecological information to enable the assessment of the proposals upon biodiversity and to permit the proposal could therefore result in unquantifiable harm to ecological interests.

1.6 The applicant has now employed a new professional team to address the issues raised in the refusal of planning permission 23/502439/FULL. In summary, we will address the points raised in the refusal as set out below:

- The removal of solar panels from the roofspace (as recommended by conservation officer);
- The reduction of the number of new windows proposed under 23/502439/FULL. The proposal will be in line with the previous approved scheme 19/505191 and 505192/FULL which proposed three new window openings on the existing building. The proposal will therefore be 'akin' to 19/505191/FULL and 505192/LBC with the exception that the metal sheeted outbuilding will be retained for garaging with timber cladding on the elevation of the building; and
- Submission of an Ecological Report attached and bat survey (to address the second ground for refusal).

1.7 The barn is a two-storey building constructed of facing brick (Flemish bonded) with weather boarding at first floor level with a

peg tile roof. To the western side is a single storey corrugated outbuilding attached to the main building. The proposal, which previously under 19/505191 & 19/505192 included the demolition of the corrugated roofed lean to outbuilding. This outbuilding will now be retained and will be reclad with timber (see drawings). There will be some internal works as shown on the internal layout plan. The main alterations relate to the façade of the building with alterations to windows and doors. Internally a new staircase is required

- 1.8 The English Heritage list entry for the Little Foxes is as follows:

9/122 Little Foxes GV II House. Early C17 with late C18 front range.

Front range:

Ground floor painted brick, first floor tile-hung. Plain tile roof. 2 storeys with moulded wood eaves cornice. Hipped roof, hip returning alongside elevations. Regular fenestration of 2 glazingbar sashes. C19 canted bay to ground floor. Boarded door to left. Probably replaces end bay of rear range.

Rear range to left: early C17. Timber framed. Ground floor red brick in Flemish bond with occasional grey headers, first floor tile-hung. Plain tile roof. At right-angles to road. 2 storeys and attic on brick plinth. Roof higher than front range, half-hipped to rear, gabled to front. Multiple brick ridge stack in right slope of roof at front end. One hipped dormer. Irregular fenestration of 3 casements, with fourth in side elevation of front range. Short C19 2-storey rear extension. Interior: large inglenook with stone jambs. Exposed timbers

Listing NGR: TQ8201852937

- 1.9 The purpose of the Heritage Statement is twofold: firstly, to provide an assessment of the architectural and historic significance of the heritage asset affected, and second, to describe the proposed alterations and to assess the impact they have on the building's heritage significance. It is intended to assist the owner, the architect and the local planning authority in making informed decisions about proposed alterations and the future conservation of the listed building.
- 1.10 The Heritage Statement is written to comply with paragraph 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) (the NPPF) and accompanying National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG), which jointly set out the requirements for understanding the significance of an impact of proposed alterations on heritage assets.

- 1.11 Such an approach is identified as best practice in *Historic England's Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2- Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the historic Environment* (2015) and in *Advice Note 12 – Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing in Heritage Assets* (2019).
- 1.12 The NPPF states that the level of detail in the assessment of significance should be proportionate to the assets importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on its significance. As such, this heritage statement focuses primarily, but not exclusively, on these parts of the building which are directly affected by the proposed alterations.

2 Description of the Barn and Assessment of its Heritage Significance

- 2.1 This section describes the barn at the rear of Little Foxes and its key features in sufficient detail to understand its heritage significance, as the basis for assessing the impact of the proposed alterations which are described in section 4 below. Understanding heritage significance is the first step in establishing the extent to which a heritage asset can absorb change whilst sustaining its character, special interest or cultural value.
- 2.2 Significance lies at the heart of heritage conservation planning policy and is defined in the NPPF 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 the heritage asset's physical presence but also from its setting. In the case of barn derives from its architectural interest, and its history as part of a working farm. It also contributed to the setting of other listed buildings in the area.
- 2.3 The photographs in Appendix I cover the external elevations of the building and some internal details. They are selected to illustrate the buildings heritage significance but also any features of interest of those which provide context and/ or dating evidence.

Site and Surrounding Area

- 2.4 The building is situated within the village of Leeds village (south east of Maidstone). The building is a combination of red facing brick with timber weatherboarding at first floor level. At ground floor level it has two bays divided by a wooden partition. There are no internal divisions on the first floor. The listing describes the building as an early 18th century agricultural building.

*Aerial Photograph from the early 1940's Courtesy Google Earth:
Barn Below*



*Aerial Photograph from the early 1960's Courtesy Google Earth
Barn Below*



Aerial Photograph from the early 1990 Courtesy Google Earth Barn Below:



Aerial Photograph from the early 2006 Courtesy Google Earth Barn



- 2.5 The above images clearly illustrates the building once enjoyed a spacious and semi-rural setting as part of a group of farmyard buildings, surrounded by open fields to the west of the property. This contrasts markedly with the more recent aerial photographs over the page taken in 1990 and also in 2006 with residential development to the north of the site. These show that the open

setting of the building and the character of the area has changed significantly since the 1990's due to development to the north of the site.

- 2.6 The existing structure is a combination of brick to two-storey's (Flemish bond) and brick to the ground floor and stained weather boarding to the upper floor. There are some existing window openings, and part of the structure has large double doors. The quality of the brick work in the building would indicate that it could be a higher status outbuilding than a general sheeted metal barn.
- 2.7 The historic OS map (below) shows the building within a semi-rural setting which also included Little Foxes and other buildings in this former group. *Yew Dene, now called The Tower House, is a large detached, GII dwelling dated 1886 and 1887, in a Gothic style. The Tower House is separately listed also includes attached walls and service wing.
- 2.8 There is no evidence that the barn formed part of the ownership of Yew Dene from the OS plan.

Summary of Heritage Significance

- 2.9 The barn is an important and relatively well preserved example of a former agricultural building.
- 2.10 The barn makes an important contribution to the setting of the various neighbouring listed buildings including the host property Little Foxes and the surrounding properties in the vicinity plus Tower House.
- 2.11 There is no intervisibility between the barn and Tower House which is situated to the west of the barn and surrounding by trees and vegetation restricting views of the property. It is also within separate ownership and not within the curtilage of Tower house. Therefore, there is no impact on the setting of Tower House as a result of the proposal.
- 2.12 Overall, the sympathetic conversion of the barn as a residential annexe will be beneficial to surrounding properties as conversion will revitalise the existing existing building.

3 Relevant Planning History

3.1 Application Summary

- 15/509327 & 15/509328 Conversion of existing redundant barn to residential annexe and changes to fenestration and conservation rooflights, demolition of existing attached single storey building to provide car parking - Approved
- 19/502382 & 19/502383 Conversion of existing redundant barn to holiday let and changes to fenestration and conservation rooflights, demolition of existing attached single storey building to provide car parking - Approved
- 19/505191 & 19/505192 Conversion of existing redundant barn to annexe ancillary to main dwelling. Demolition of existing out building to provide car parking area - Approved

A pre-application 22/504956/PAMEET was undertaken on 17 October 2022 with a written response on provided on 16 November 2022;

23/502439/FULL Conversion of existing redundant barn to annexe ancillary to main dwelling (revised scheme to application 19/505191/FULL and 19/505192/LBC) - Refused

3.2 The issues raised in the 2023 refusal were as follows:

3.3 On a procedural matter, the submitted application (23/502439/FUL) did not provide sufficient information to either assess the significance (fabric or its connection/ relationship with Little Foxes) of the curtilage listed building.

3.4 The application did not contain sufficient information on the proposed works to allow for a full assessment of the proposed scheme. The conservation officer's comments, contained in the delegated report, stated that the proposed materials, including insulation and fire protection, which could have an impact on the significance and fabric of the building be detailed.

3.5 Details of any proposed changes to the ground floor (such as limecrete or concrete slab) should be included within an LBC. Joinery details and the proposed installation of services

(including Soil Vent Pipe) should also be included with an LBC application.

Design

- 3.6 Whilst the previously approved scheme (19/505191/FULL and 19/505192/LBC) were approved with a few additional openings, these were limited and looked to retain a more subservient outbuilding appearance. **Note: Earlier applications allowed three new windows and doors on the elevation drawings with three velux windows.**
- 3.7 Therefore, it was considered, the previous submitted scheme (23/502439) proposed substantial new openings, in a regular form, including feature windows, which changed the appearance of the building to look like a modern domestic house.
- 3.8 The drawings had little or no detail on them, so it is not possible to ascertain the proposed materials for the new windows. This has now been addressed on the new drawings.
- 3.9 The delegated report continued that the installation of solar panels on a listed building was not usually permitted due to the concerns of the loading onto the existing structure, the possible impact on maintenance and the visual impact. The recommendation was that solar panels can be placed on the ground within the curtilage of listed buildings (with due care and consideration). **Note: solar panels have now been removed from this latest scheme.**
- 3.10 In summary, the previous scheme provided insufficient information to allow for an understanding of the building, or how the proposed works would impact on the significance of the listed building. From the information provided, the proposed openings were considered to result in a loss of fabric to the building. The proposed design changes the appearance of the simple, subservient outbuilding into a modern domestic dwelling. This was considered to cause harm to the significance of the curtilage listed building and to the setting of the designated heritage assets.

4 The Proposed Alterations and Assessment of Their Heritage Impact

- 4.1 Local planning authorities are required to consider the impact of proposed alterations on the significance of heritage assets in order to minimise conflict between the proposals and the conservation of the heritage assets (NPPF 195). Heritage impact is the impact that a proposed development has on the significance of any heritage assets or their setting; it can be positive, negative or neutral.

Description of Proposed Extension and Alterations

- 4.2 The proposals have reverted to the scheme as previously approved under 19/505191 & 19/505192 with the following additional points:
- The existing Lean to side building to be retained and will be timber clad (replacing the existing metal 'crinkle' sheeting). New timber doors added to the garage;
 - East Elevation. Addition of new doorway into the barn. The existing doorway on the south elevation provides insufficient head height and there is a drop in levels between the front of the site and the internal slab level;
 - North Elevation: Addition of three velux roof windows in the roofspace. (Internal ceiling on second floor to be vaulted);
 - West Elevation: No changes;
 - South Elevation: No additional windows and doors to that previously agreed under 19/502382 & 19/502383 other than new windows at ground and first floor on the eastern side of the barn for natural daylight;

Internal Changes

- 4.3 The proposed front door shown 19/505191 & 19/505192 had insufficient headroom. There is also a 400mm step down into the existing building. It is therefore proposed to have a new door on the east elevation with a raised timber hallway (400mm above existing slab internally). There will be steps down from the hallway to the proposed kitchen and ground floor rooms; and
- 4.4 A proposed new staircase will lead off the hallway to the first floor bedrooms as shown on the drawings.

- 4.5 Other proposed openings were previously allowed under 19/505191 and 19/505192/LBC along with existing retained windows and doorways.
- 4.6 The proposed alterations are minimal and are required to provide natural daylight and sunlight into the barn. Viewed from Little Foxes two proposed doorways (to the kitchen and sitting room) are shown on the east elevation at ground floor level. Three existing windows at ground and first floor are retained.
- 4.7 On the main south elevation two new windows are shown on the eastern side of the elevation. They replace the existing proposed windows that were shown where the timber clad garage will remain. The ground floor depicts a window with a barn style stable door below. At first floor there is a new bedroom window.
- 4.8 All proposed windows and doors will be timber framed. Joinery details can be made a condition of planning.
- 4.9 Overall, the proposed alterations to facilitate the conversion to a residential annexe are minimal and will have no impact on the setting of nearby listed buildings.
- 4.10 A vent pipe is shown on the roofslope of the north elevation. A boiler flu pipe is also shown along with vents to kitchen, toilet and first floor bathroom. A new waterpipe is also shown on the drawings entering the property below the proposed kitchen window.
- 4.11 The internal partition wall between the two existing bays will remain at both ground and first floor level. At first floor the ceiling roof will be vaulted. The existing A frame timber supports will remain exposed with boarding to the underside of the ceiling.
- 4.12 At ground floor a stud partition wall will be added to create a toilet and a new staircase will be added to the first floor in place of the existing stepped ladder. Likewise, at first floor level there will be minimal works with partition walls creating two bedrooms and the bathroom. There are no structural alterations. The existing concrete floor at ground floor will be re-laid,

5 Summary and Conclusion

- 5.1 In determining applications that affect designated heritage assets the NPPF require great weight to be given to their conservation, in proportion to their significance (NPPF 2021).
- 5.2 The significance of the barn is analysed and summarised in section 2 above. The building is protected as it is curtilage listed and also with the conservation area. It has heightened significance as the centre of the village.
- 5.3 It is accepted by the Local Planning Authority that the barn can be converted to a residential annexe. The principle is therefore agreed. The amended proposals are modest in terms of their physical and visual impact on the building and its setting. The proposals result in an enhancement and is consistent with the conservation of the listed building and its special architectural and historic significance.
- 5.4 The proposals comply with policies aimed at conserving and enhancing the historic environment in the NPPF, the NPPG and the adopted plan. Most importantly, they comply with the statutory duty set out in Sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
- 5.5 The proposed development would preserve the historic and architectural integrity of the Grade II listed building, its significance and its features of special interest and the character and appearance of the conservation area and the countryside. There are not considered to be any significant residential amenity issues or other issues which would justify a refusal.
- 5.6 The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Development Plan Policy and Central Government guidance and therefore we respectfully request that consent be granted.