



**Planning/Design Statement
For Repair and Refurbishment of Existing Barn at
The Dower House
Great Ness
SY4 2LE**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The sandstone barn at the Dower House is located on the west side of the main house. The barn has sandstone elevations under a natural slate roof. At the northern end of the barn there is a flat roofed 1960s built double garage. The north gable end of the sandstone barn is built into the wall of the garage.
- 1.2 At the southern end of the barn there is a hipped roof. There is some limited timber joinery within the barn. On the west side of the barn there are two stable doors. The ground around the barn falls from the north in a southerly direction. On the west side of the barn there is a large parking/turning area. The parking area is in front of the 1960s built double garage.
- 1.3 There is pedestrian access across a gravel pathway from the Dower House to the garage, and in turn there is internal access from the garage into the barn. As mentioned above, there is direct external access from the barn to the west garden via the two timber stable doors.
- 1.4 The Dower House is a substantial redbrick house built in the 19th century. It is not listed but can be classed as an undesignated heritage asset due to its prominence in the centre of the hamlet of Great Ness. The house has been subject to a recent scheme of refurbishment following a fire in March 2020.
- 1.5 The house and barn are both shown on the late 19th century ordinance survey map. At this time the house is labelled as 'The Cottage'.

2.0 EXISTING PROPERTY AND PHOTOGRAPHS

- 2.1 As stated above the Dower House is a substantial 19th century brick built house under slate roof with traditional patterned timber joinery. The house has direct access to the adopted council road that runs west to east past the front elevation past the Dower House from the general direction of Nesscliffe towards Little Ness and on to Baschurch.
- 2.2 The barn is located to the west of the Dower House and orientated in a north south direction. At the northern end of the barn is the 1960s built garage. The barn and garage are behind the neighbouring sandstone cottage which is now known as Pear Tree Cottage.
- 2.3 There is vehicle access into the parking court at the northern end of the barn from the adopted council highway via a driveway that runs along the west gable end of Pear Tree Cottage.
- 2.4 The barn is not visible from the public highway, and it does not obscure or impact on the views from Pear Tree Cottage.
- 2.5 The barn has a natural slate roof and sandstone block elevations.

2.6



View from the front west end of the Dower House looking south along the east elevation.

2.7



Existing east elevation.

2.8



Existing south elevation.

2.9



Existing west elevation.

2.10



West elevation looking south from the carparking forecourt in front of the 1960s double garage.

2.11

The barn is in reasonable condition, but at risk of deterioration. It is currently used for storage and wood-work / craft. The staircase from the ground to first floor area has partially collapsed. There is a broken beam in one of the roof trusses on the east side of the barn. This is resting on an internal brick wall onto the first floor floorboards, which are now supported from underneath with temporary props. This requires repair. Repair to the floors will be needed as part of the scheme as there is extensive woodworm, and there are partial areas of concrete on the ground floor. A new steel beam to support the reduced first floor area is shown on the proposed floor plans.

3.0 PROPOSED ALTERATIONS

3.1

The proposed alterations are simple in nature and maintain the form and shape of the barn.

3.1.1

The converted barn will capable of many uses. The applicants are proposing to use the barn as a children's craft area, gym and garden store.

3.2

External alterations are limited to the following:

3.2.1

Insertion of two conservation roof lights in the west roof slope to provide natural light at first floor level over what could be a workbench or desk.

3.2.2

The existing internal staircase and first floor are removed. A new steel beam is inserted and new partial first floor area created. The southern end of the barn will retain a double height space. As much roof structure as reasonably possible will be left on display.

3.2.3

New glazed doors will be provided in the existing stable door position. The stable doors will be retained and pinned back in an open position.

3.2.4

The south gable end will have a double French door with side screens inserted. The French door is large to suit/align with the large blocks of sandstone that will need to be removed to provide the opening. The intention is to remove as many complete sandstone blocks as possible with only minimal cutting. Any removed sandstone will be stored on site. This will enable the French door opening to be reinstated with sandstone if ever required. The advantage of providing a large opening is to allow storage of large garden furniture and

machinery within the barn. This large opening will also allow sufficient natural light within the barn such that only one opening is required.

- 3.2.5 A matt black twin wall wood burner flue is to be provided in the southern roof slope of the hipped end.
- 3.2.6 A new WC will be provided at ground floor level. The purpose of the WC is to provide facilities should the barn be used as a gym &/or for a gardener to use. A replacement staircase is being provided to the first floor along with the insertion of a new steel beam to support the replaced first floor structure.

4.0 SUSTAINABILITY AND ECOLOGY

- 4.1 Repairing and improving the existing structure is more sustainable than demolition and reconstruction.
- 4.2 There will be no need to bring any new masonry onto the site. The existing roof structure will be treated and repaired as necessary. The existing slates will be reused where possible.
- 4.3 The proposed WC can be connected to the existing private drainage system. The total load on the drainage system will not increase as the occupancy of the house will not be increased by undertaking this development.
- 4.4 A preliminary ecology assessment has been undertaken and is included with the planning application. No evidence of bat or bird habitat was noted by the ecologist during the inspection. As stated above the roof of the barn, walls and joinery are all in a serviceable condition which discourages birds and bats from entering the building.

Signed electronically *AJ Downton*

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Building Surveyor
9 February 2024

