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Statement to accompany an application for Listed Building Consent at The Moat House, Old Hall Green, Hertfordshire, SG11 1HE

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Introduction

This statement accompanies an application for Listed Building Consent (LBC) at The Moat House, Old Hall Green, Hertfordshire, SG11 1HE.

Listed Building Consent is required for any works for the demolition of a listed building or for its alteration or extension in any manner which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest¹.

It is considered that the following development proposals have the potential to affect the host listed building's character as a building of special architectural or historic interest. Listed Building Consent is accordingly sought.

Development proposals:

Retrospective - remove and replace internal staircase, remove a number of internal walls to create open-plan layout, insert new walls and doors to enlarge pantry and create W.C., install external lights and install external CCTV cameras;

Proposed - install external staircase with landing (fire escape), replace 1 no. window with 1 no. door, replace 1 no. door with 1 no. door of different style, seal and reglaze with fire resistant glass 5 no. windows, alter 3 no. existing windows to floating mullion type, treat internal wall with a white fire resistant paint, install new stud walls and internal fire door on second floor, replace first floor bedroom doors with fire doors, re-line a number of first floor bedroom walls with fire resistant plasterboard and re-line ceilings throughout with fire resistant plasterboard.

Background to the application

The site building is Grade II listed and was originally converted from a barn to a self-contained dwelling in the late 1980s, pursuant to 1986 consents 3/86/0844/FP and 3/86/0862/LB. The current owner/occupiers recently undertook a number of internal and external alterations to the converted property in the absence of Listed Building Consent (LBC). The revised internal layout has necessitated the installation of an external staircase for fire escape purposes (not yet installed). A number of other fire safety measures are also required in order to secure compliance with Building Regulations. This LBC application accordingly concerns both retrospective and proposed works. A

¹ Section 7 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

separate householder planning application concerning a number of the proposed works is submitted alongside this LBC application.

Purpose & scope of this document

This statement provides an assessment of heritage impact in accordance with paragraph 200 of the NPPF and should enable the LPA to discharge its duties under Section 16 (2) of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990.

Drawings & supporting documents

The application is accompanied by the following supporting documents, all attached separately:

Drawings

- Site and location plans 2156-01-2;
- Pre-existing floor plans 2156-02-1;
- Pre-existing elevations 2156-03-2;
- Existing floor plans 2156-04-1;
- Existing elevations 2156-05-2;
- Proposed floor plans 2156-06-2;
- Proposed elevations 2156-07-4.

Product specifications

- External stair (British Spirals and Castings);
- GYPROC FIRELINE 12.5MM data sheet;
- GYPROC FIRELINE 15MM data sheet;
- ENVIROGRAF P105 data sheet;
- SINIAT GTEC FIREBOARD data sheet.

Misc.

- TecFire report (JTF0270)
- Appendix 1 - 3/86/0844/FP & 3/86/0862/LB plans1;
- Appendix 2 - 3/86/0844/FP & 3/86/0862/LB plans2;
- Appendix 3 - 3/86/0844/FP & 3/86/0862/LB plans3;
- Appendix 4 - 3/86/0862/LB decision notice;
- Appendix 5 - 3/86/0862/LB officer report;
- Appendix 6 - 3/13/0541/FP & 3/13/0542/LB Design & Access Statement;

-
- Appendix 7 - 3/13/0541/FP & 3/13/0542/LB block plan;
 - Appendix 8 - 3/13/0541/FP & 3/13/0542/LB existing elevations;
 - Appendix 9 - 3/13/0541/FP & 3/13/0542/LB existing floor plans;
 - Appendix 10 - 3/13/0541/FP & 3/13/0542/LB location plan;
 - Appendix 11 - 3/13/0541/FP & 3/13/0542/LB proposed elevations;
 - Appendix 12 - 3/13/0541/FP & 3/13/0542/LB proposed floor plans;
 - Appendix 13 - 3/13/0541/FP & 3/13/0542/LB proposed loft plan;
 - Appendix 14 - 3/13/0541/FP & 3/13/0542/LB proposed sections;
 - Appendix 15 - 3/13/0542/LB Conservation Team's comments.

Location & Site Description

The site consists of a roughly rectangular parcel of land, containing one half of a Grade II listed building (entry no. 1347554). The site is in lawful use as a single, self-contained family dwelling (C3). The other half of the listed building comprises its own self-contained dwelling (Pond House), in separate ownership and occupation.



Front elevation of the listed building

An open-sided bay (winnowing area) is located at the point where the two residential units meet and this allows views through to the rear of the sites.

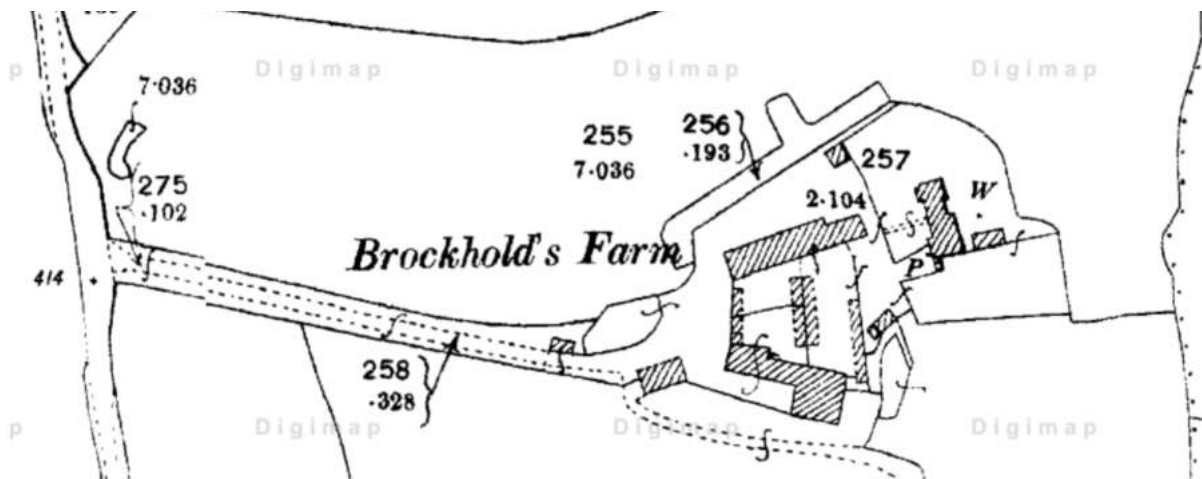


View through the winnowing area from the rear garden - timber post highlighted in yellow roughly marks split in ownership

To the front and rear of the listed building is its private curtilage, including gardens and a dedicated parking area. An historic moat runs along (but outside of) the site's rearmost boundary.

The listed building is an early C17 barn, with C19 alterations and extensions. It consists of a timber-framed structure, with dark weatherboard-clad elevations above a red brick plinth. It features an unusual double roof structure, the upper part thatched and the lower part slate tiled.

It was used, historically, in close functional association with Brockholds Farm (now defunct). The Grade II listed Brockholds Farmhouse (entry no. 1102255) - believed to have C15 origins - is located a few metres to its east.



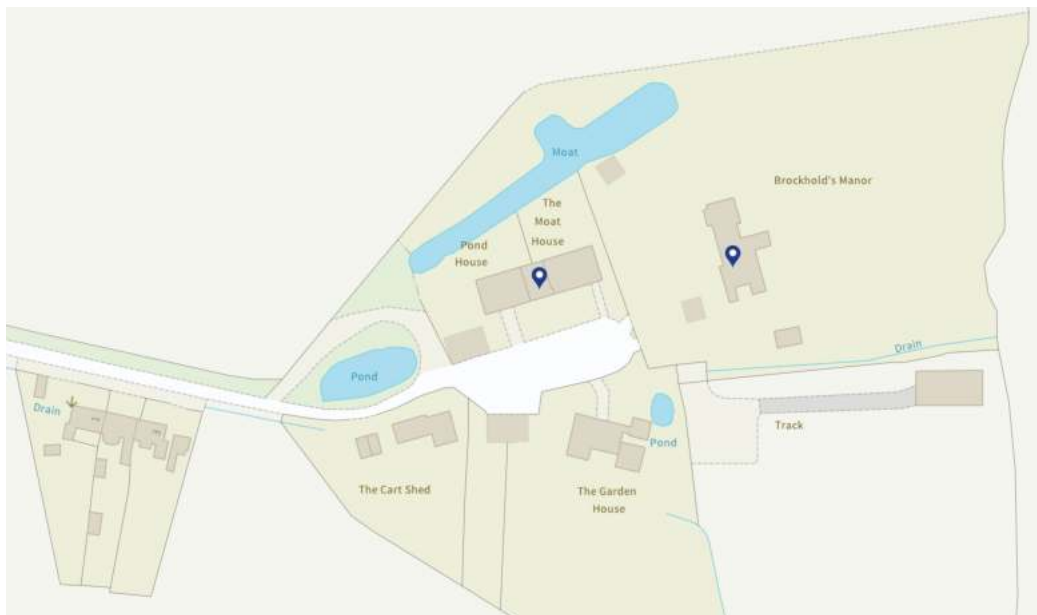
1890s OS Map - Brockholds Farm

The barn was originally converted to residential use in the late 1980s, pursuant to consents 3/86/0844/FP & 3/86/0862/LB. These consents also saw another of Brockholds Farm's agricultural buildings converted to residential use (The Garden House). Later, in c. 2008, the historic farm's cart shed was then extended and converted to another dwelling (3/08/1433/FP). Although the neighbouring converted farm buildings are not statutorily listed in their own right, they are likely to be considered curtilage listed.



Recent photograph of neighbouring barn conversion “The Garden House” - although not individually listed, the building possesses clear heritage value and is likely to be considered curtilage listed

As a result of modern conversions, the application site now forms part of a small cluster of residential development. Although residential in use, the former farmstead and its buildings do retain much of their agricultural character - including in terms of their courtyard arrangement and architecture.



Listed buildings map - The Cart Shed, The Garden House, Pond House, The Moat House (application site) and Brockhold's Manor (GII farmhouse) all now in private residential use

The site is within a rural setting and belongs to the “Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt”. The nearest defined settlement is Puckeridge, a Group 1 village, located c. 1.75 km to the site’s east.

The site is also within an Area of Archaeological Significance, where local policy HA3 applies.

Proposed Development

Retrospective works

Install external CCTV cameras (4 no. total)

4 no. CCTV cameras have been installed in total, 1 no. on each elevation of the building. The cameras are dome-shaped and black in colour and have been positioned just below the eaves. The cameras have been attached to the weatherboarding with small screws.



1 no. CCTV camera in situ

Install external PIR security flood lighting (5 no. total)

5 no. security floodlights have been installed in total, 1 no. on the south, north and west elevations and 2 no. on the east elevation. The lights on the south and north elevations have been positioned just below the eaves. The light on the west elevation is positioned between the second and first floor windows and the lights on the east elevation are positioned just below the half-hip thatched roof. The lights have been attached to the weatherboarding with brackets and small screws. Their wiring is black in colour and attached to the weatherboarding with small nails.



1 no. floodlight & 1 no. downlight on front elevation

Install external downlights (10 no. total)

10 no. ambient downlights have been installed in total, 4 no. on the south elevation, 3 no. on the north elevation and 3 no. on the east elevation. The lights have been attached to the weatherboarding with small screws. Their wiring is black in colour and attached to the weatherboarding with small nails.



Ambient downlight - illuminated



Close view

Remove internal staircase and replace with new spiral staircase

The closed-riser, domestic staircase has been removed entirely. In its place, a metal, open-riser, spiral staircase has been installed. The new stair is positioned slightly east of the previous staircase. It provides access all the way up into the loft space. It is accompanied by a glass balustrade on the first floor.



New spiral staircase



First floor glass balustrade



Remove various internal walls and doors on the ground floor to create open-plan kitchen/dining/lounge/reception area

Various internal walls and doors - all of modern, 1980s provenance - have been removed throughout the ground-floor to create an open-plan layout. No historic fabric has been removed or altered.



New open-plan layout

Install new internal wall in the position of the removed staircase to create W.C. and enlarge pantry (small section of wall also removed)

Some internal walls and a door - also of modern, 1980s provenance - have been removed and a modest section of wall - to match existing - installed in the position of the former staircase to enlarge the pantry and create a W.C..



The enlarged pantry

Install barn-style, sliding door along kitchen-facing wall of pantry for access

Barn—style sliding doors have been installed along the modern, kitchen-facing wall of the pantry to provide access.



New “barn-style” sliding doors

Proposed works

Install external staircase & replace 1 no. second floor window with 1 no. door

The conversion of the site’s second floor (loft) to storage and office space necessitates the provision of an external staircase for fire safety and Building Regs purposes.

The staircase has not yet been installed as the applicant understands it first requires householder planning consent and listed building consent.

The external staircase is proposed to be attached to the subject property’s west elevation, facing onto the winnowing area. The existing, uppermost window will be replaced with a white-painted FD30 fire door². The new door will provide access onto a small landing area with railings. The spiral staircase will lead from this landing area down to the ground. The stair features an open tread and slender metal railings to

² PREMIER EXTERNAL PLYWOOD GRADE 8G GLAZED - <https://www.premierfiredoors.com/products/external-plywood-8g-glazed-fd30-fire-door>

preserve views through. All parts of the new structure will be formed of white-painted aluminium. It will be attached to the building with gallows brackets.



Staircase profile [not to scale]



Image of proposed door (white colour)

Seal and reglaze 5 no. windows

To ensure fire safety, 5 no. existing windows will be sealed and refitted with fire-resistant glass. This will not materially alter their appearance.

Internal application of fire resistant paint

Part of the west wall will also be treated, internally, with a white, fire resistant paint (Envirograf P105 - specifically designed for use on lath and plaster). This will not materially alter its appearance. The product specification is attached separately.

Replace 1 no. external side door with 1 no. door of different style

The ground floor access door will be replaced with a white FD30 fire door identical to the new door above (image inserted previously).

Alter 3 no. existing windows to floating mullion type to provide a means of escape

This minor alteration will not affect the appearance of the windows. The existing mullion will be fixed to one of the window sashes (as opposed to the frame, as at present) and both sashes will be made openable. This will enable the windows to be used as a

means of emergency escape.

Replace all first floor bedroom doors with FD30 fire doors

All first floor bedroom doors - of modern, 1980s provenance - will be replaced with new FD30 fire doors³. The new doors have been selected to complement the new, external fire doors. They will be painted white to match the retained internal doors.



Image of proposed bedroom doors

Reline various first floor walls on both sides with GYPROC FIRELINE 12.5mm

A number of modern (c. 1980s) first floor walls will be re-lined with fire-resistant gypsum plasterboard. Their appearance will remain exactly as existing.

Install GYPROC FIRELINE 12.5mm stud walls and FD30 fire door in loft space

4 no. stud walls are proposed to enclose the stair access into the loft. The walls will be formed of fire-resistant gypsum plasterboard. The remainder of the loft space will remain open-plan, with access provided by an internal fire door. The fire door will be identical to the new bedroom doors (image inserted previously), also painted white.

Reline all ceilings with GYPROC FIRELINE 15MM or SINIAT GTEC FIRE BOARD 15MM

Ceilings - all of which have a modern, c. 1980s provenance - will be re-lined with fire-

³ EMERALD BRAND “Suffolk Fire Door Oak prefinished” product code: 10793 <https://www.emeralddoors.co.uk/products/oak-suffolk-fire-door-prefinished>

resistant gypsum plasterboard throughout. Their appearance will remain exactly as existing.

All of the above alterations are indicated on the separate elevation and floor plans. The application is also accompanied by detailed product specifications.

Future works

In the interests of transparency, the LPA is advised that the following, proposed works will be the subject of a future Listed Building Consent application:

- Install automatic fire detection and alarm system to Cat LD1, BS5839-6
- Install sprinkler system to Cat 1, BS9251:2021.

These final works are required in order to bring the dwelling fully in line with current Building Regulations. The works have not been included at this stage as the applicant has yet to instruct a specialist company to produce full specifications of the systems. If Listed Building Consent is forthcoming for the current works, the applicant will be able to source full details of the alarm and sprinkler systems for submission to the LPA. The applicant understands that the new fire safety systems must not be installed unless or until Listed Building Consent is granted.

Relevant Planning & Listed Building Consent History

Reference no.	Description	Decision	Date
3/86/0844/FP & 3/86/0862/LB	Partial demolition, conversion and partial conversion of two barns to three residential units and extension to Brockholds Cottage (Brockholds Farm, Great Munden)	Approved	21/10/1986
3/13/0541/FP & 3/13/0542/LB	Single storey rear extension, internal alterations, replacement doors and windows and insertion of windows to loft space, insertion of staircase and conversion of loft to habitable room	Approved	06/06/2013

Consents 3/86/0844/FP & 3/86/0862/LB concerned the original conversion of the subject barn to 2 no. dwellings. The “north barn” in this historic application includes the subject property, now known as The Moat House. A selection of the approved plans and related documents are submitted at appendices 1 - 5 for reference.

The applicant took ownership of the site in 2011, a number of years after the original 1980s conversion scheme was implemented and its residential occupation began.

In 2013, the current owner/occupier submitted applications for various internal and external alterations to the property (3/13/0541/FP & 3/13/0542/LB). The relevant consents were granted in the summer of 2013. However, its pre-commencement condition⁴ was never discharged and the development was never implemented. Notwithstanding this, the expired 2013 consents still attract weight and comprise a material planning consideration in this case⁵. A selection of the approved, 2013 plans and related documents are submitted at appendices 6 - 15 for reference.

⁴ requiring approval and implementation of a scheme of archaeological investigation in respect of ground works associated with the rear extension

⁵ this was confirmed by the Court of Appeal in 2019 - [2019] EWCA Civ 1272

Relevant Legislation, Policies & Guidance

National

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Chapter II Authorisation of works affecting listed buildings

7 Restriction on works affecting listed buildings.

- (1) Subject to the following provisions of this Act, no person shall execute or cause to be executed any works for the demolition of a listed building or for its alteration or extension in any manner which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest, unless the works are authorised under section 8.

8 Authorisation of works: listed building consent.

- (1) Works for the alteration or extension of a listed building are authorised if—
 - (a) written consent for their execution has been granted by the local planning authority or the Secretary of State; and
 - (b) they are executed in accordance with the terms of the consent and of any conditions attached to it.
- (3) Where -
 - (a) works for the demolition of a listed building or for its alteration or extension are executed without such consent; and
 - (b) written consent is granted by the local planning authority or the Secretary of State for the retention of the works,

the works are authorised from the grant of that consent.

10 Making of applications for listed building consent.

-
- (1) Except as provided in sections 12 to 15, an application for listed building consent shall be made to and dealt with by the local planning authority.
 - (2) Such an application. . . shall contain—
 - (a) sufficient particulars to identify the building to which it relates, including a plan;
 - (b) such other plans and drawings as are necessary to describe the works which are the subject of the application; and
 - (c) such other particulars as may be required by the authority.

16 Decision on application.

- (1) Subject to the previous provisions of this Part, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State may grant or refuse an application for listed building consent and, if they grant consent, may grant it subject to conditions.
- (2) In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or 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.
- (3) Any listed building consent shall (except in so far as it otherwise provides) enure for the benefit of the building and of all persons for the time being interested in it.

17 Power to impose conditions on grant of listed building consent.

- (1) Without prejudice to the generality of section 16(1), the conditions subject to which listed building consent may be granted may include conditions with respect to—
 - (a) the preservation of particular features of the building, either as part of it or after severance from it;
 - (b) the making good, after the works are completed, of any damage caused to the building by the works;
 - (c) the reconstruction of the building or any part of it following the execution of any works, with the use of original materials so far as practicable and with such

alterations of the interior of the building as may be specified in the conditions.

- (2) A condition may also be imposed requiring specified details of the works (whether or not set out in the application) to be approved subsequently by the local planning authority or, in the case of consent granted by the Secretary of State, specifying whether such details are to be approved by the local planning authority or by him.

NPPF (December 2023)

Paragraph 195 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment)

Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value. These assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

Paragraph 200 (Proposals affecting heritage assets)

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, 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. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary.

Paragraph 201 (Proposals affecting heritage assets)

Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

Paragraph 203 (Proposals affecting heritage assets)

In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

-
- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
 - b) The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
 - c) The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Paragraph 205 (Considering potential impacts)

When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Paragraph 206 (Considering potential impacts)

Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.

Paragraph 208 (Considering potential impacts)

Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

Paragraph 212 (Considering potential impacts)

Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

Paragraph 213 (Considering potential impacts)

Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site

should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 207 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 208, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.

Paragraph 214 (Considering potential impacts)

Local planning authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies.

Annex 2: Glossary

Setting of a heritage asset: 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.

Significance (for heritage policy): 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. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site's Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance.

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment; English Heritage (2015)

Change to heritage assets is inevitable but it is only harmful when significance is damaged. The nature and importance of the significance that is affected will dictate the proportionate response to assessing that change, its justification, mitigation and any recording which may be needed if it is to go ahead.

Sustainable development can involve seeking positive improvements in the quality of the historic environment. The setting of all heritage assets will frequently have elements that detract from the significance of the asset or hamper its appreciation.

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets; English Heritage (2017)

Setting is the surroundings in which an asset is experienced, and may therefore be more extensive than its curtilage. All heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not.

Setting is not itself a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation. Its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset or to the ability to appreciate that significance.

Settings of heritage assets change over time. Understanding this history of change will help to determine how further development within the asset's setting is likely to affect the contribution made by setting to the significance of the heritage asset.

Settings of heritage assets which closely resemble the setting at the time the asset was constructed or formed are likely to contribute particularly strongly to significance but settings which have changed may also themselves enhance significance, for instance where townscape character has been shaped by cycles of change over the long term.

Shared Interest: Celebrating Investment in the Historic Environment; English Heritage (2006)

Historic places are there to be used. Part of what makes them so interesting is a robustness that reflects sometimes centuries of use. Adapting them can provide a good return and the unique character of such places carries a premium.

The value of historic buildings can be enhanced through investment in the significant parts and adaptation of other parts. This approach not only strengthens financial viability, but provides the opportunity to add a further layer of heritage for the future, enhancing a historic building's public as well as private value.

Heritage Works: A toolkit of best practice in heritage regeneration; Historic England (2017)

Historic England has worked hard to remove the common misconception that listed buildings must be “preserved” effectively just as they are. This is not the case. The goal is positive “conservation” and managing change rather than “preservation”. This approach will allow a listed building to change and adapt to new uses and circumstances in a way that keeps its heritage value intact.

Building in Context: New development in historic areas; English Heritage (2001)

Thoughtless haste on the one hand and ill-considered imitation on the other have both over the years damaged the fabric of our historic towns and cities. But there is another way, in the form of buildings that are recognisably of our age while understanding and respecting history and context. While firmly of today, [such buildings] draw intelligent inspiration from what surrounds them and in that sense are rooted in the past. That is true confidence and assurance.

The regenerative capacity of good new design is apparent [...] we have in Britain today an abundance of architectural skill and every reason to believe in our ability to add inspirationally to the built fabric we have inherited.

“The Right Approach” to the design of new developments within the curtilage of heritage assets will result in a development which:

- Relates well to the geography and history of the place and lie of the land;
- Sits happily in the pattern of existing development and routes through and around it;
- Respects important views;
- Respects the scale of neighbouring buildings;
- Uses materials and building methods which are as high in quality as those used in existing buildings;
- Creates new views and juxtapositions which add to the variety and texture of the setting.

Adapting traditional farm buildings: Best practice guidelines for adaptive reuse (2017)

Without appropriate uses to fund their long-term maintenance and repair, they will disappear from the landscape. Whilst poor adaptation poses a threat, new commercial, residential or other uses that enhance their historic character and significance are to be encouraged.

Any adaptation will need to strike a balance between the practical requirements of a new use and protection of the historic character of the existing farm building and its setting. Thoughtful and innovative design can usually resolve these potential conflicts, but users may have to accept some degree of compromise – for example restricted headroom or slightly lower daylight levels than might be ideally desired.

Retention of as much significant historic fabric as possible is a fundamental part of any good adaptation, together with the use of compatible materials and methods of repair.

Another difficult aspect of farm building adaptation can be the incorporation of functions that require subdivision of the existing open spaces. This is especially the case with threshing barns, the upper floors of combination barns and loft areas that are significant for their impressive proportions and long sight-lines and whose significance would be harmed by subdivision.

Vehicular access and parking can have minimal impact when the farm building is converted to a single dwelling with careful landscaping. Parking requirements are generally determined by the local authority and for residential use this may be up to two spaces per dwelling. With a commercial use, car parking can become a much more serious threat to the setting.

Where new openings are added or new windows inserted within existing door openings, great care needs to be given to their placing and design. In many cases it is probably best to follow existing patterns on the building or other similar farm buildings. New openings can also be expressed in a modern semi-industrial way without resorting to making them appear 'historic'.

The large cart doors that lead into the threshing bays of barns pose a particular design challenge in adaptation schemes. New entrance screens which are slightly recessed

with a simple vertical emphasis can be effective. Full glazing can alter the scale of the building and can give too much prominence to the opening. However, if the cart doors still survive or replacements are designed this can successfully reduce the impact of glazing.

New doors and windows will inevitably be required for habitable accommodation but standard 'off the peg' joinery will never look substantial enough for buildings characterised by large robust frame sections. New hardwood joinery that matches the timber species used in the original building will help blend new and existing work.

The impact of new windows and doorways can also be reduced through the use of shutters or joinery screens.

The glazing of openings is a particularly subtle aspect of design in farm building adaptation work. In masonry structures setting glazing deep in the reveal of existing openings (which were rarely glazed) creates shadow lines and minimises reflections and impact. The glazing might be inserted as a frameless piece of glass bedded directly into the masonry reveals.

The roofs of farm buildings are often highly visible in the landscape. Their long unbroken roofs, undulating ridges, distinctive gables, hips and half hips, together with their regionally characteristic tile, stone or thatch coverings combine to give them their strong visual appeal.

Numerous new roof lights poorly positioned can have an intrusive impact, particularly where the roof is the dominant characteristic and is steeply pitched.

Where rooflights are to be added it is often better to locate them on the least prominent roof-slope when viewed from a public vantage point.



24

Image 24

The barn door opening has been replaced with glazing and solid sliding timber doors which maintain its simple semi-industrial character.



25

Image 25

A barn in the Yorkshire Dales National Park with glazing set in the deeply recessed existing entrance.



26

Image 26

A stock building in the Dartmoor National Park, converted to residential use, which has made good use of existing openings.



28

Image 28

White and bright colours for joinery are best avoided in preference to dark grey/red, pale green and grey greens. Alternatively colours that blend with the stonework can be used.



30



32

Image 30

The adaptation of this granary has carefully retained existing openings and incorporated sensitively designed new joinery with shutters.

Image 32

Glazing to the barn door opening has been set back to minimise impact with glass pantiles above. Ventilation slits in the masonry have been retained and glazed.



33



35



34



36

Images 33-37

33 Glazing has been introduced into the gable end of this barn with minimal impact on the character of the exterior.

34-37 The adaptation of this dairy to domestic accommodation has involved some skillful joinery design for windows and doors.

The use of joinery for shutters and horizontal subdivision has minimised the impact of new windows and glazing.



It is particularly important to retain the open aspect of barn interiors. The best solution is to keep the threshing bay and as many adjacent bays as possible open to the roof, which can allow the careful installation of a staircase, gallery and circulation/living area.



Image 45
The open interior of this barn has been retained and some agricultural fittings from its former use remain in place.

Where a degree of subdivision is possible it needs to respect the original structural bay divisions, whether these are defined by cross-walls, framed partitions or masonry nibs.

Inserted floors need to be kept to the minimum and care should be taken with how these are supported. Placing new floors across full-height threshing door openings is best avoided as it can compromise the character of the space.



47

Image 47

A galleried link has been incorporated in this domestic adaptation which has maintained the full-height open roof structure.



48

Image 48

Although this barn is for domestic use, the open interior has been maintained with views through.



49

Image 49

This large timber barn has been adapted for domestic use at one end with an office at the other end leaving the central threshing area open. New freestanding pods which house services and storage have been inserted on either side of the entrance.

Local

The East Herts District Plan 2018

Policy HA1 - Designated Heritage Assets

- I. Development proposals should preserve and where appropriate enhance the historic environment of East Herts.
- II. Development proposals that would lead to substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss. Less than substantial harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
- III. Where there is evidence of neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset will not be taken into account in any decision.
- IV. The Council will, as part of a positive strategy, pursue opportunities for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment recognising its role and contribution in achieving sustainable development.

Policy HA3 - Archaeology

- I. Where a site has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest (whether scheduled or unscheduled), applicants should consult with the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Unit to submit an appropriate desk based assessment and, where necessary, the results of a field evaluation, prior to the submission of an application.
- II. Where development is permitted on sites containing archaeological remains, planning permission will be subject to conditions and/or formal agreements requiring appropriate excavation and recording in advance of development and the subsequent storage and display of material.

Policy HA7 - Listed Buildings

- I. The Council will actively seek opportunities to sustain and enhance the significance of Listed Buildings and ensure that they are in viable uses consistent with their

conservation.

II. In considering applications the Council will ensure that proposals involving the alteration, extension, or change of use of a Listed Building will only be permitted where:

- (a) The proposal would not have any adverse effect on the architectural and historic character or appearance of the interior or exterior of the building or its setting;
and
- (b) The proposal respects the scale, design, materials and finishes of the existing building(s), and preserves its historic fabric.

III. Proposals that affect the setting of a Listed Building will only be permitted where the setting of the building is preserved.

Assessment of Significance

Introduction

Paragraph 200 of the NPPF (2023) requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposed development, including any contribution made by their setting. In all cases, 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. As a minimum, the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary.

In this case, the proposed development concerns the alteration/extension of a listed building. Listed buildings are subject to statutory protection⁶, with Local Planning Authorities required to *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* in their determination of an application for Listed Building Consent.

This statutory requirement is reinforced in the NPPF and local policies HA1 and HA7.

Assessment of significance - Aisled barn at Brockholds Farm⁷

The application site comprises one half of the GII listed building known as “Aisled barn at Brockholds Farm”. The site was first listed in 1984 and its list entry no. is 1347554. A full copy of its official list entry can be found at the end of this document. The official list entry provides the following summary of the building's significance:

“Barn. Early C17 altered in C19 and extended 2 bays to W. Timber frame dark weatherboarded on red brick sill. Flat pitched roof now of corrugated iron. A 6-bay double aisled barn with 2-bay W extension, facing S. Double doors in 4th bay from E and in 2nd bay from W. Heavy jowled posts on spur sill-walls, with curved braces to arcade plates. Face-halved bladed scarf joint over each post. Cambered tie-beams and sinuous braces in midstray. Straight tension braces in walls. Queen strut roof altered to flatter pitch and aisle walls heightened in C19. Three and a half bays of aisle at NW widened and rebuilt in brick in C20.”

⁶ Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

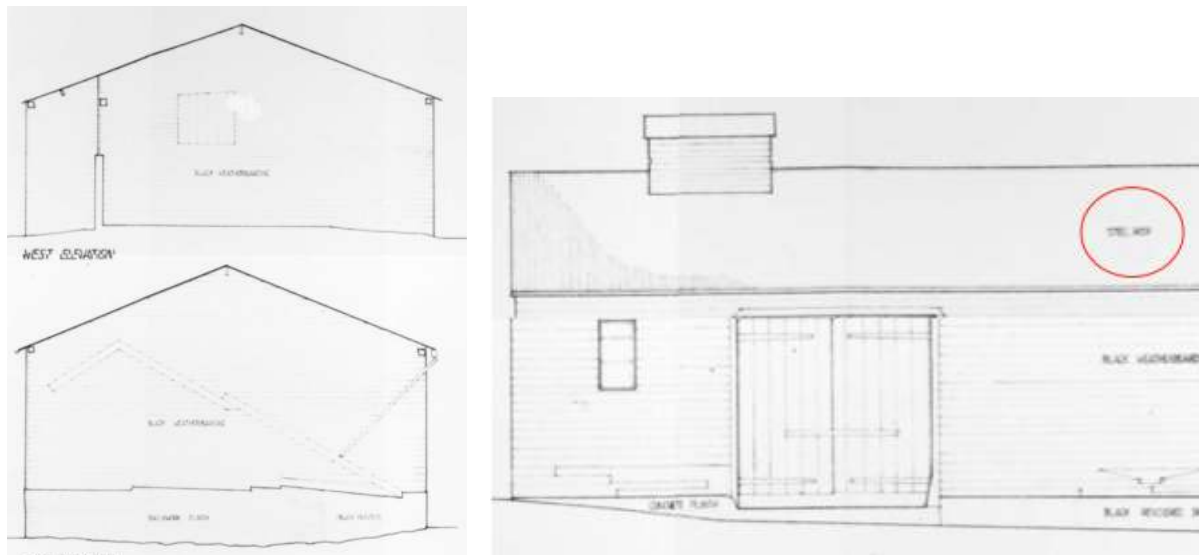
⁷ For the avoidance of doubt, the following assessment concerns the building as it existed prior to the recent internal and external alterations that are the subject of the current application

This indicates the building's primary special interest to be architectural. As an older farm building, it also possesses historic interest; providing clear insight into the local rural society, its economy and agricultural practices.

In terms of its architecture, the building's frame/structure⁸ and main external materials⁹ are heritage features of particular significance that remain in excellent condition today. Although the internal layout is much altered, the structure's overall form and scale is retained and this strongly evokes its original, agricultural function as a barn.

Whilst the roof is a uniquely attractive and curious feature, its provenance is modern; both its thatched and tiled sections dating from the 1980s conversion. The building's official list entry refers only to a "flat pitched roof now of corrugated iron" and to a "Queen strut roof altered to flatter pitch" and this does not describe the current, conjoined roofs of steeply pitched thatch and shallow pitched slate.

The existing building plans that accompanied the late 1980s applications to convert the barn (3/86/0844/FP & 3/86/0862/LB) indicate only a single, moderately pitched steel roof punctuated by a squat chimney (see extracts below).



Relevant extracts of the existing building plans submitted with the 1986 applications [no tot scale]

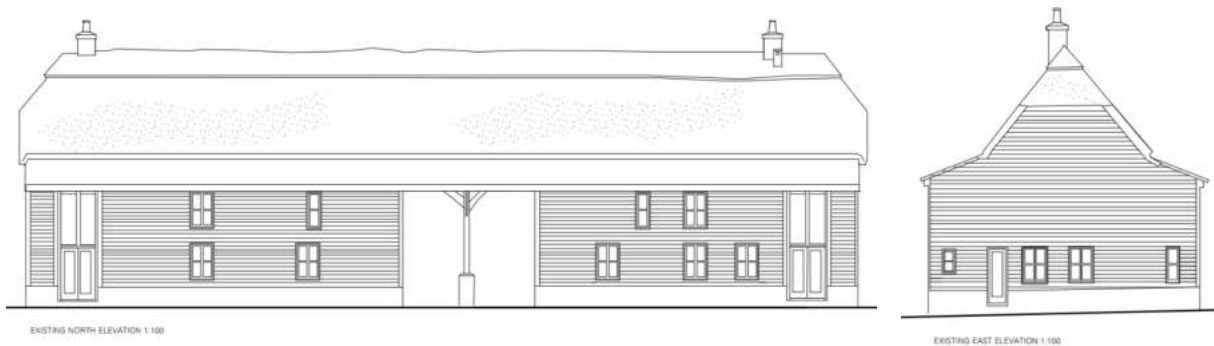
⁸ displaying various vernacular construction techniques

⁹ notably its black weatherboarding and red brick plinth

However, the Historic England Archive image that appears alongside the building's official list entry shows the current, double roof structure in place in 2008. The same roof structure also appears on the existing building plans submitted with the 2013 applications (3/13/0541/FP & 3/13/0542/LB).



Date: 2001-07-08; Reference: IOE01/04678/02; Rights: © Mr Les Brunton. Source: Historic England Archive



Relevant extracts of the existing building plans submitted with the 2013 applications [not to scale]

The 1980s roof is an undoubtedly successful and reasonably sensitive restoration that appears to make use of traditional thatching techniques and materials¹⁰. It also bears a strong familial resemblance to the character thatched roof of the adjacent, curtilage-listed barn conversion (The Garden House) which is also believed to date from the

¹⁰ albeit that patterned ridges - of the type present on this thatched roof and the neighbouring roof of The Garden House - are not traditional and do not pre-date the mid-C18. The thatch also appears to be reed rather than long straw - long straw being the traditional choice in this area but reed also being acceptable

1980s.



View of the neighbouring, curtilage-listed barn conversion (The Garden House) from the host property

Notwithstanding its modern origins, the distinctive roof structure has strong visual appeal and adds positively to the character and unique architectural interest of the building, whilst also reinforcing the shared physical characteristics (and clear group value) of the historic farmstead as a whole.



Internal view of the 1980s roof

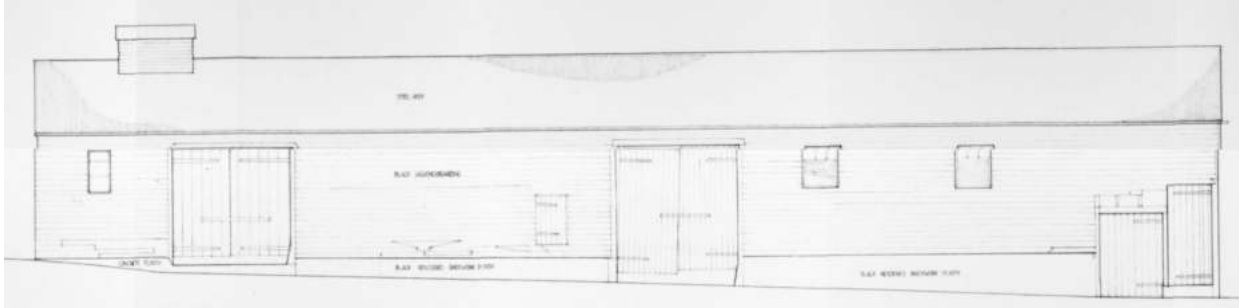
In terms of other external features, the barn's dark, feather-edged weatherboarding has a traditional and appropriately rustic character and is one of the main external indicators of the asset's original, agricultural use. Although clearly of some age, it remains in reasonably good condition, as does the historic brickwork below.



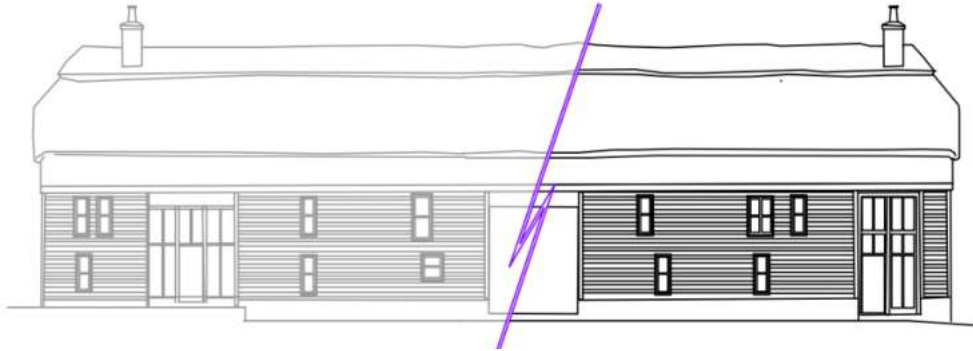
Dark-stained weatherboarding atop a brick plinth

This historic building typology is also characterised by its functional use of large-format openings, including threshing bays. The listed building retains such an opening at its very centre, although the large-format barn doors (present on the 1980s plans) have been removed.

Although now domestic in scale, the front doors are surrounded by larger areas of glazing that reflect - to some extent - the more generous, agricultural scale of the openings they replaced. Their simple character and use of dark, vertical planks also recalls the traditional appearance of the former barn doors.



The full, front elevation of the barn in c. 1986 - featuring large-format openings with barn-style doors



The full, front elevation of the barn today - both the scale and position of its historic, large-format openings are, to some extent, retained



Modern front doors respond reasonably well - in terms of their simple character and use of dark, vertical timber planks - to the barn doors they replaced in the late 1980s

Doors located on the private faces of the building are less appropriate, appearing as modern, domestic features that do not relate particularly well to the character and

appearance of the front doors or the building in general.



Modern side door

Concerning windows, the officer's report on the original 1980s barn conversion (full copy at Appendix 5) included the following appraisal:

“planning permission was given for the conversion to residential use to two units. This change requires the introduction of a number of new windows, which ideally the structure would be better without [...] the over provision of fenestration”.

Historic barns contained very few openings overall, none of which would traditionally have been glazed. As noted by the officer at the time of the 1980s conversion consents, the presence of multiple, glazed windows across all elevations of the subject building today is consequently a perceptibly modern characteristic that belies its contemporary residential use.



Arrangement of windows across the front elevation

That being said, the integral harm associated with modern fenestration is reduced/mitigated by the following factors:

- All windows are of the same style, colour and materials and, unlike the mix of external doors, this contributes towards a cohesive character and appearance throughout all external parts of the building;
- The use of dark timber frames is appropriate and achieves a discreet, natural appearance that relates well to the front doors and weatherboard-clad elevations;
- Windows are set-in from the weatherboarding, retaining - as far as possible - the profile of the building's elevations;
- The amount of windows is relatively restrained, with large sections of the historic weatherboarding left intact. Their irregular arrangement and variety of sizes is also responsive to the informal, agricultural character of the building, avoiding the sort of symmetrical and regular fenestration typically associated with purpose-built dwellings.

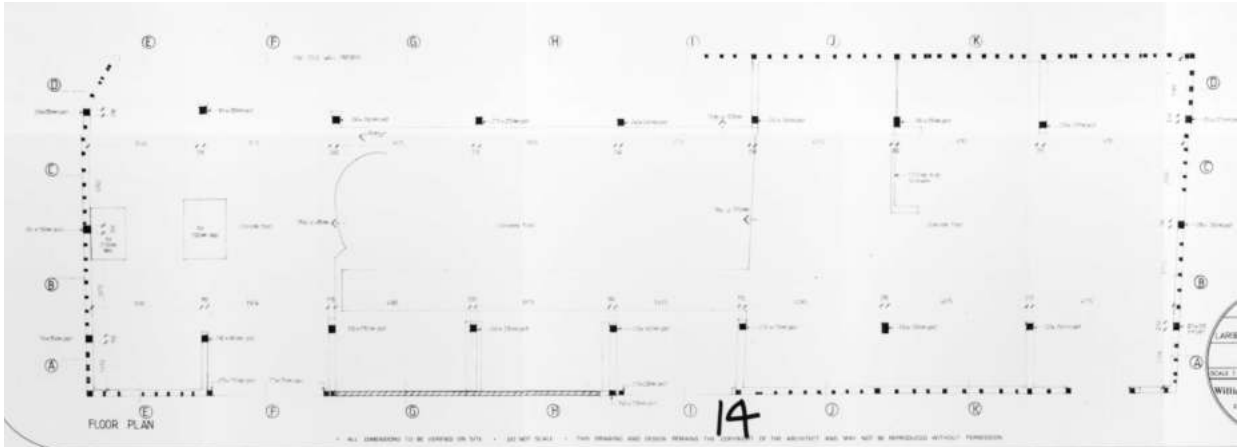


Close-up image of window style

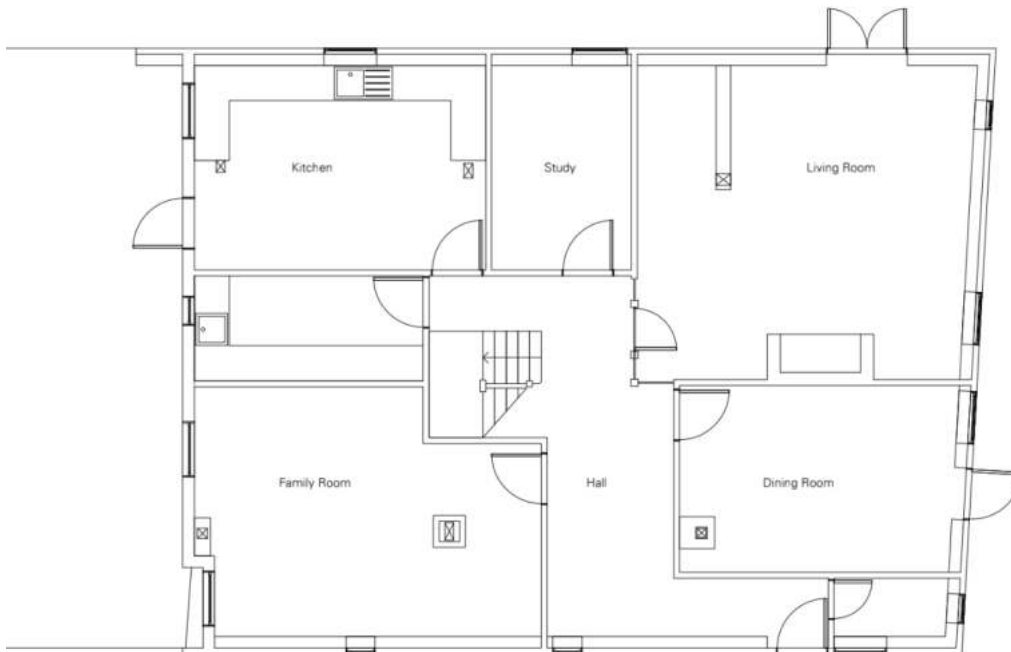
Other obvious external indicators of the barn's modern residential use include its guttering, signage and (unattached) domestic paraphernalia, such as plant pots, bins, tables and seating.

Internally, the harmful impacts of its residential conversion are more apparent. Most significantly, the barn's historic, open aspect - which is of considerable importance to the heritage significance of traditional farm buildings of this type - has been lost as a result of a high degree of subdivision. All internal walls and ceilings are modern and, in many areas, insensitively placed. The front door, for example, opens immediately onto a narrow corridor, tightly enclosed by modern walls. The result is the total concealment of

the barn's original, impressive proportions and long sight-lines.



Internal layout of the barn in c. 1986, prior to its residential conversion (N.B. this shows the listed building in full, also incorporating the adjacent dwelling) - full copy at appendix 3



Existing ground floor plan submitted with the 2013 applications (3/13/0541/FP & 3/13/0542/LB) indicates the internal layout of the building prior to the recent alterations

In addition, the placement of modern walls does not appear to respect the barn's original structural bay divisions.

The staircase is of the typical, closed-riser, domestic type - appearing as a substantial,

solid feature that provides considerable visual and physical separation between the ground floor and the upper storeys.

In terms of more positive internal features:

- The inside faces of the external walls have mostly been designed to leave exposed the original timber beams of the barn. Similarly, the original timber posts are mostly left exposed. These prominent, attractive heritage features provide an evocative visual reminder of the building's original, agricultural use; and
- Necessary structural support is provided in the form of steel beams. These have an appropriately simple, industrial/agricultural character that responds well to the simple agricultural style of the listed building.



Steel supports nod to the style of typical agricultural fittings (example below); exposed timber frame adds considerable character



Example of typical agricultural fittings, taken from Historic England's "Adapting traditional farm buildings: Best practice guidelines for adaptive reuse"



Exposure of the original timber posts and beams is a positive internal feature, providing a constant and evocative reminder of the building's agricultural origins and architectural significance

Above domestic features and internal subdivision notwithstanding, the conclusion reached by the LPA officer at the time of the 1980s conversion consents (full copy of their report at Appendix 5) was as follows:

“The main barn the subject of this application has been greatly altered over the course of its life and is now in such a condition that its contribution to the heritage has been greatly reduced. In spite of the fact that the barn is still fully used for the storage of building materials, in connection with the applicant’s private interests, planning permission was given for the conversion to residential use to two units. This change requires the introduction of a number of new windows, which ideally the structure would be better without. In view of the improvements to the exterior of the main building in terms of the removal of later unsympathetic extensions, however, it is considered that the visual improvement generally will outweigh the over provision of fenestration and therefore consent to the alterations should be granted.”

Although now of some age, the above officer appraisal is considered to be reasonably balanced and objective; duly recognising that the harms associated with the conversion - notably including the introduction of new windows - would be adequately counterbalanced by its benefits - notably including the removal of later, unsympathetic extensions.

It is also significant that the building would no longer be considered *“in such a condition that its contribution to the heritage has been greatly reduced”*, as was the case in the late 1980s. It can be assumed that the 1980s conversion scheme - both in terms of its physical improvements to the building and securing of an active and long-term beneficial use - is responsible for this positive turnaround. The building as it stands today is in good condition and retains a high degree of historic fabric; being clearly deserving of its statutorily listed status.

Impact of the Proposed Development

Overview

The development proposals consist of generally minor internal and external alterations to the listed building. A number of the works are retrospective but other works are only proposed at this stage. A full schedule and description of the works can be found on pages 9 - 16 of this document. The application is also accompanied by a range of pre-existing, existing and proposed drawings, as well as detailed product specifications.

Each retrospective/proposed building work is justified below, alongside an assessment of its likely impact on the building's heritage significance.

Retrospective works

Install external CCTV cameras (4 no. total)

The cameras are few in number, with only 1 no. on each elevation of the building. Their compact form, dark colour and positioning close to the eaves ensures a discreet appearance and very limited visual prominence. They are affixed to the weatherboarding with small screws, for minimal intervention into historic fabric and easy reversibility.

The cameras also serve an important function, protecting the property from acts of crime, vandalism and anti-social behaviour. The property lies in a quiet rural area where there is a lack of passive surveillance. In addition, the adjacent farmhouse recently began a new events/garden business (<https://www.brockholdsmanor.com/food>) which is open to members of the public. Since this business began, there has already been one incident of theft, during which three solar lanterns were stolen from the application site's garden (Hertfordshire Police crime reference no. 41/31670/22). The neighbour on the other side has also recently removed a dense roadside hedge and this has increased the visual prominence of the converted barn in public views from the road.

The cameras and other security measures are intended to plug these security gaps and mitigate for the site's inherent vulnerability.

These discreet new features are also viewed in the context of established and generally

more conspicuous domestic additions to the building, such as its guttering.

Overall, it is considered that the cameras cause very minimal harm to the heritage significance of the asset and this modest harm is appropriately mitigated by their security benefits.



CCTV camera positioned close to domestic guttering

Install external PIR security flood lighting (5 no. total)

The security floodlights are also used sparingly, with 1 no. on the south, north and west elevations and 2 no. on the east elevation. They are generally positioned just below the overhanging eaves to limit visual prominence. They are affixed to the weatherboarding with small screws, for minimal intervention into historic fabric and easy reversibility.

The lights are of the PIR variety which means they are only activated by certain movements¹¹, generally people. This ensures very minimal intrusion into the rural

¹¹they should not be activated by small wildlife like bats or insects

landscape. Because the area is not affected by street lighting or other sources of nighttime light pollution, the lights are essential to ensure safe movement around the site after dark. This is especially the case as there are various changes in ground level throughout the site.

The security lighting is considered to be an essential but appropriately restrained response to the unavoidable functional needs of the site's inhabitants.

Install external downlights (10 no. total)

The downlights provide discreet, ambient lighting after dark. This enables the building's occupants to make use of their external amenity areas in the evenings without the need for more intensive, obtrusive or unneighbourly light sources. The downlights produce only a modest amount of light (see photos inserted previously) that is well-contained within the rural landscape. Because of their dark colour and discreet form, the downlights appear inconspicuously against the weatherboard cladding. They are affixed to the weatherboarding with small screws, for minimal intervention into historic fabric and easy reversibility.

Remove internal staircase and replace with new spiral staircase

The removed staircase was a modern and perceptibly domestic feature of the building (c. 1980s). It had been poorly installed; contractors hired by the applicants advised that its lack of attachment to the wall was dangerous and it consequently required total reconstruction. Its removal and replacement is not considered to present any heritage harm.

Although modern, the replacement staircase is considered to materially improve upon the character and heritage impact of the previous staircase. For example:

- Its simple style and metal material recalls the functional/industrial character and appearance of typical agricultural fittings (see Historic England image inserted previously) which is clearly responsive to the building's original, agricultural character. It also complements the functional/industrial character of the exposed structural steel beams on the ground floor, for a cohesive appearance;
- Its compact, spiral form occupies less floorspace and thus preserves more of the barn's original and important open aspect. This also preserves a greater sense of connectivity between the different floors of the building;

-
- Its use of open risers means it has a less solid character, retaining views through to all parts of the open-plan ground floor area; and
 - The first floor balustrade has a discreet appearance and reinforces the sense of connectivity with the ground floor, preserving views between the two areas.

The revised form and location of the internal staircase has also provided the opportunity to enlarge the pantry and relocate the ground-floor W.C. somewhere more discreet and less harmful to the barn's open aspect. Previously, the W.C. was located immediately to the right (east) of the front door. This, coupled with the position of the former dining room, meant that on entering the barn, a person was immediately confronted with modern walls to ceiling height. This seriously curtailed the barn's historic long sightlines (a feature that would have been of considerable heritage significance). The revised staircase and relocation of the W.C. has provided the welcome opportunity to remove the unfortunate walls and restore this important element of the listed building's heritage significance.

Remove various internal walls and doors on the ground floor to create open-plan kitchen/dining/lounge/reception area

The 1980s scheme resulted in a very high degree of internal subdivision. This was an unfortunate outcome of the building's conversion that would not comply with modern heritage guidance. For example, Historic England's 2017 publication "*Adapting traditional farm buildings: Best practice guidelines for adaptive reuse*" includes the following relevant guidance:

"Another difficult aspect of farm building adaptation can be the incorporation of functions that require subdivision of the existing open spaces. This is especially the case with threshing barns, the upper floors of combination barns and loft areas that are significant for their impressive proportions and long sight-lines and whose significance would be harmed by subdivision;

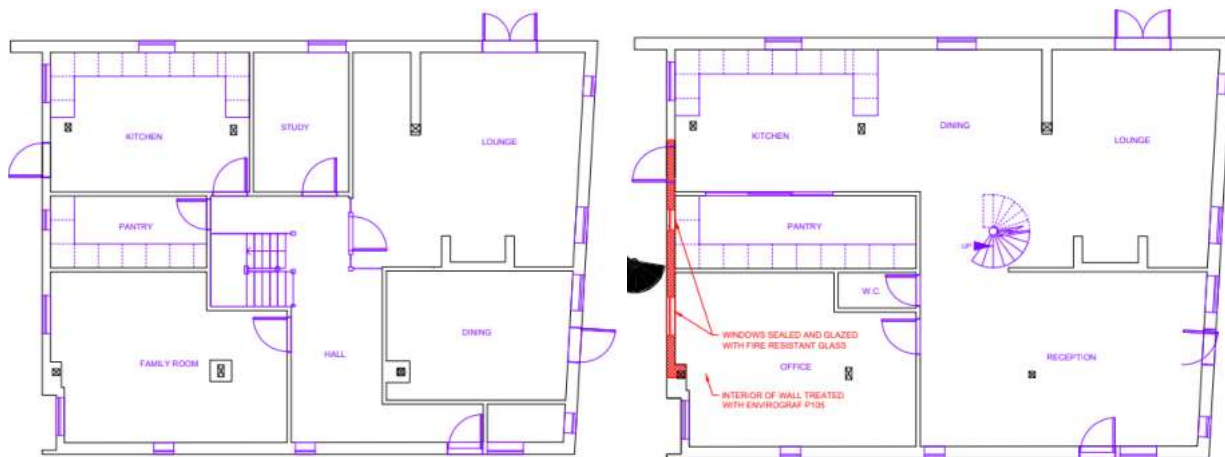
It is particularly important to retain the open aspect of barn interiors. The best solution is to keep the threshing bay and as many adjacent bays as possible open to the roof, which can allow the careful installation of a staircase, gallery and circulation/living area."

The existing building plans submitted alongside the 1980s applications provide clear evidence of the barn's predominantly open aspect. As a very large structure, its general lack of subdivision would have resulted in particularly impressive proportions and long

sightlines, of the type identified by Historic England to be of primary heritage significance.

As mentioned above, the removal of modern rooms/walls located in close proximity of the front door has had the beneficial effect of restoring - to a large extent - the long sightlines through the building. In addition, the removal of the former study and conversion of the majority of the ground floor to an open-plan kitchen/dining/lounge/reception area has secured the following welcome heritage benefits:

- Restoring the long, internal sightline between the barn's north and south elevations;
- Removing a fair amount of modern fabric (1980s doors and walls);
- Restoring - to a large extent - the barn's original open aspect.



Pre-existing ground floor layout

Current/proposed ground floor layout

No historic fabric has been removed or otherwise altered in order to create the new layout. In fact, as a result of the material reduction in modern enclosure/obstruction, the exposed timber frame is given new visual prominence and importance within the space.



Previously enclosed beam is now prominent within the space again

This internal alteration is considered to have rekindled important and modernly eroded elements of the listed building's particular heritage significance. This is a material heritage benefit to which due weight attaches.

Install new internal wall in the position of the removed staircase to create W.C. and enlarge pantry (small section of wall also removed) & install barn-style, sliding door along kitchen-facing wall of pantry for access

This alteration has only affected modern (c. 1980s) fabric within the building. The new, modern walls are "like-for-like", appearing as seamless additions to the retained modern walls. In spite of these new additions, the internal layout alterations as a whole have resulted in an overall material reduction in modern fabric (walls/doors) which is of benefit to the building's heritage significance and legibility. The enlarged pantry and new W.C. are also located in the position of the former, modern staircase, meaning the appearance of modern fabric in this location is not a new feature.

The new W.C. door is in keeping with other modern doors in the building (including the adjacent office door) in terms of both its style and materials.

The “barn-style” sliding doors are functional and appropriate to the typology of the listed building. They have a relatively discreet appearance, complementary to the character and appearance of the modern walls to which they adjoin. When open, they also provide an increased sense of spaciousness to the kitchen, better reflecting the barn’s original, impressive proportions and open aspect.

Relevance of the 2013 consent - a material planning consideration

It is also of material relevance that a number of the retrospective works - including the internal layout alterations - received Listed Building Consent in 2013 (3/13/0542/LB). Although this consent has expired, it remains a material planning consideration. Various documents associated with the 2013 consent - including the consultation response of the Conservation Team - are enclosed with the current application. At that time, the Conservation Officer found as follows:

“In considering the internal works these would result in the removal of later internal partitions which is acceptable [...] In summary the proposed works are considered to have little impact on the significance of the listed building”.

The Conservation Officer therefore recommended approval of the works - works of a very similar character to a number of the retrospective works here in question.

The significance of the listed building is the same today as it was in 2013 and the heritage impact of the relevant works is also materially the same. It is consequently considered that the relevant, retrospective works would continue to have little impact of the significance of the listed building and so Listed Building Consent should be granted in respect of them.

Proposed works

Install external staircase

The proposed external staircase is of a bespoke design that responds inherently well to the character of the listed building. The full structure will be well-contained within the host property’s own curtilage, not impinging upon any land in the neighbour’s ownership.

Its spiral form ensures it appears as a compact and discreet new feature, subservient not only to the building as a whole but also to the affected elevation.



View of winnowing area from a window in the west elevation - the compact, spiral form of the staircase has a modest footprint that will not overwhelm this space N.B. timber structure on right-hand side marks the split in ownership

Its style is simple and this, coupled with its use of high-quality aluminium, implies an industrial/agricultural character which relates it well to the architectural style and agricultural provenance of the host barn conversion¹². Aluminium is also a natural and enduring material whose functionality and appearance does not unduly diminish with time.

¹² see photographic example of typical agricultural fittings in previous section



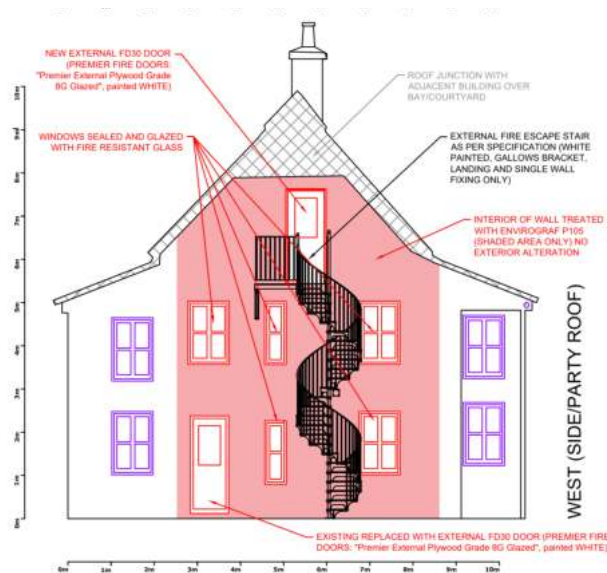
Example of a historic stair attached to a GII C15 barn in Somerset - Historic England archives (reference IOE01/03046/28). The stair itself is built-in but significantly makes use of simplistic, dark metal railings

Its spiral form and metal material also provides continuity and a strong sense of cohesion between the interior and exterior of the building; with internal access to the upper floors also being provided by a metal spiral staircase.



Interior stair has a simple, functional character that relates well to the agricultural style of the converted barn. Its compact form and open tread preserves much of the building's original open plan form and long sight lines

Its position on the west elevation is also discreet, ensuring it has only limited visibility in public views of the asset. Its white colour will assist its visual integration with the white wall behind. The winnowing area onto which it faces also has a more functional character, being used primarily for the storage of domestic bins (by both dwellings).

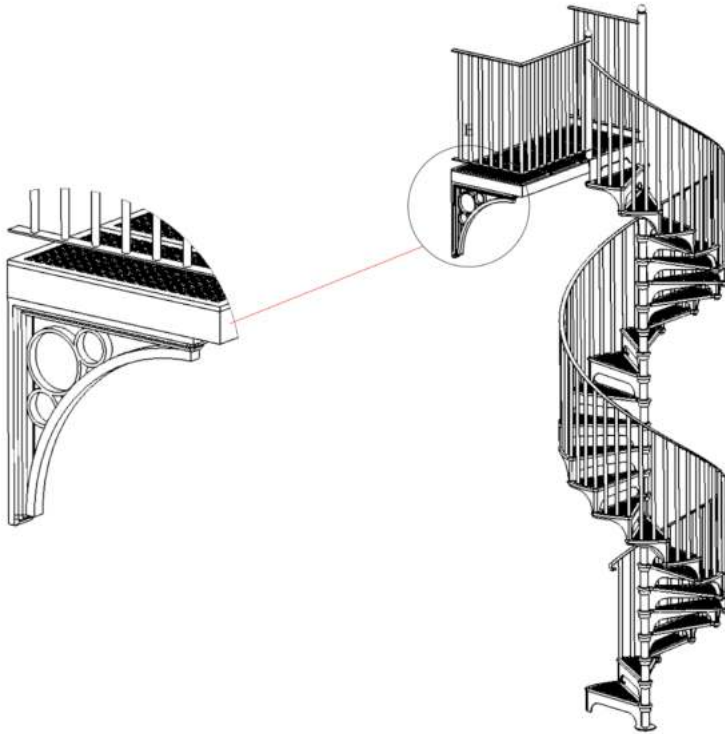


Proposed west elevation [not to scale]

The staircase is also positioned between windows, avoiding any obstruction of these existing features. Not only does this preserve the outlook from those windows, it also ensures the new structure does not appear unduly cramped or the resultant west elevation overly crowded.

As for the interior staircase, the use of an open tread and slender, well-spaced railings provides a sense of lightness to the structure and allows views through to the listed building. This ensures very minimal obscuration of the listed building and its historic fabric.

In terms of its attachment to the listed building, the staircase itself sits away from the wall, attached only to the new landing area. The landing area is attached to the building by way of a simple pair of gallows brackets which have a discreet form and character and will result in minimal obstruction of and intervention into its fabric.



Landing area attached to building by way of a simple pair of gallow brackets

Seal and reglaze 5 no. windows

As indicated on the separate elevation plan, the proposed fire safety measures include the sealing and re-glazing of 5 no. existing windows on the building's west elevation. This aspect of the proposals is a minor improvement that will not result in any material change to the windows' appearance.

The affected windows are modern in both their style and their provenance (late 1980s). The alterations will not affect any historic fabric and nor will they add to the established domesticity of the existing windows.

In addition, all of the affected rooms possess at least one other window (or extract in the case of the en-suite) that will remain openable to ensure adequate ventilation of the building. Suitable ventilation is also assisted by the revised internal layout which is now predominantly open plan.

Finally, the introduction of fire resistant glass will improve the building's resilience in the event of a fire, reducing the likelihood of substantial damage or total destruction.

This element of the proposals is not considered to give rise to any negative heritage impacts.

Replace 1 no. second floor window with 1 no. door & replace 1 no. external side door with 1 no. door of different style

The development includes the insertion of 2 no. new doors in the west elevation of the building. One of the doors will replace an existing, modern window and the other door will replace an existing, modern door.

It is notable, therefore, that the development does not result in any new, modern openings, nor does it require the removal of any historic or architecturally significant features. It requires only the replacement of existing, modern openings of a perceptibly domestic character. This ensures the proposals do not add to the overall domesticity of the building, nor result in any significant loss of its historic fabric.



Existing, modern window for replacement



Existing, modern door for replacement

In terms of their style and materials, the new doors are very similar to the existing, modern door and window and would consequently result in a negligible change to the character of the building.

It is also relevant to consider the proposed siting of the doors, one of which would be located in the building's upper gable. Whilst this siting would be unusual for many building typologies, it is not inappropriate in this context. This is because many traditional barns and similar, agricultural buildings incorporated haylofts with hay doors for access. Most commonly, hay doors would have been sited in the upper gable, similar to the door here proposed.



Example of a hay door located in the upper gable of a traditional rural barn

Internal application of fire resistant paint

The internal application of a white, fire resistant paint (Envirograf P105 - specifically designed for use on lath and plaster) will not result in any material change in appearance. The affected walls are already painted with a modern, white paint and so there will be no material change to any historic fabric.

This element of the works also presents a material heritage benefit, consisting of the

building's improved fire safety and resilience¹³.

Alter 3 no. existing windows to floating mullion type to provide a means of escape

This minor alteration will not affect the appearance of the modern windows. The existing mullion will be fixed to one of the window sashes (as opposed to the frame, as at present) and both sashes will be made openable. This will enable the windows to be used as a means of emergency escape.

This element of the works also presents a material heritage benefit - see footnote 13.

Replace all first floor bedroom doors with FD30 fire doors

All first floor bedroom doors - of modern, 1980s provenance - will be replaced with new

¹³ The application is accompanied by a separate, independent fire safety report that provides full details of the minimum works required to meet Building Regulations. The only measure required as a direct result of the retrospective use of the loft space as an office/storage area is the external staircase.

All other fire safety measures - including the paint, fire doors, window alterations and re-plastering - are required irrespective of the unlawful works. This means the building has been occupied in contravention of essential fire safety requirements. This was only discovered when the site was recently surveyed in relation to the retrospective works. This situation ought to be resolved as quickly as possible, not only for the residents' benefit but also for the building's benefit.

In the event of a fire, the proposed measures will significantly reduce the likelihood of the fire spreading rapidly throughout all parts of the building. This will greatly reduce the amount of damage that would occur to its historic fabric before the fire is extinguished.

In the event that Listed Building Consent is refused for the various fire safety measures, then there are two possible outcomes:

1. Material alterations will be required to the ground floor and first floor layouts. At this stage, the extent of alteration is unknown but it is likely to require greater compartmentalisation of the internal spaces. This would be likely to have the following negative impacts:

- Increase in modern fabric such as doors and windows;
- Greater obstruction of historic fabric as a result of increased modern fabric; and
- Further reduction of barn's historic open aspect and long sightlines.

2. If option 1 was not achievable, then the residential use of the building would be required to cease. The building would be left without any active or beneficial use which, in the long-term, would result in its rapid deterioration and, eventually, total loss.

FD30 fire doors¹⁴. The new doors have been selected to complement the design of the new, external fire doors. They have a simple, functional design that responds well to the industrial/agricultural character of the listed building. They feature a natural oak veneer to reflect the natural materials used in the building's original construction¹⁵. They will be painted white to match the retained internal doors.



Image of proposed bedroom doors

This element of the works also presents a material heritage benefit - see footnote 13.

Reline various first floor walls on both sides with GYPROC FIRELINE 12.5mm

A number of modern (c. 1980s) first floor walls will be re-lined with fire-resistant gypsum plasterboard. Their appearance will remain exactly as existing. There will be no loss of or change to any historic fabric.

This element of the works also presents a material heritage benefit - see footnote 13.

Install GYPROC FIRELINE 12.5mm stud walls and FD30 fire door in loft space

4 no. stud walls are proposed to enclose the stair access into the loft. The walls will be

¹⁴ EMERALD BRAND "Suffolk Fire Door Oak prefinished" product code: 10793 <https://www.emeralddoors.co.uk/products/oak-suffolk-fire-door-prefinished>

¹⁵ Fire doors are not available in solid wood and so the use of oak veneer is considered a reasonable compromise, especially in light of the material heritage benefit secured by the new fire safety measures

formed of fire-resistant gypsum plasterboard. The remainder of the loft space will remain open-plan, with access provided by an internal fire door. The fire door will be identical to the new bedroom doors (image inserted previously), also painted white.

This element of the works also presents a material heritage benefit - see footnote 13.

Reline all ceilings with GYPROC FIRELINE 15MM or SINIAT GTEC FIRE BOARD 15MM

All ceilings have a modern, c. 1980s provenance. Their proposed re-lining will not affect their character or appearance.

This element of the works also presents a material heritage benefit - see footnote 13.

Overall

Overall, the design of the proposed alterations is considered to be responsive to the established character and qualities of the host listed building. All new features are simple in their form and style, reflecting the overriding agricultural character of the converted barn. Natural, enduring materials have been used wherever possible. The new, external additions are clearly subordinate to the building and their siting has been carefully considered to achieve a harmonious and well-balanced appearance, with limited impact on historic fabric.

Whilst the minimal use of plywood and UPVC materials in the doors (essential for fire safety reasons) is somewhat unfortunate, this modest degree of heritage harm is considered to be adequately counterbalanced by the following heritage benefits:

- The material improvements to the fire safety and resilience of the listed building. Together, the proposed alterations significantly reduce the risk of serious damage to or total destruction of the barn in the event of a fire. This presents a clear and long-term heritage benefit, especially given the presence of a large, thatched roof¹⁶.

The proposed development is consequently assessed to present a thoughtful response to the heritage asset that duly preserves - and, in some respects, enhances - its

¹⁶ although thatched roofs are no more likely to catch fire, they do make fires more likely to spread and harder to extinguish once they have taken hold

significance, in accordance with local policies HA1 and HA7.

Other impacts

As the site lies within an Area of Archaeological Significance - where local policy HA3 applies - it is necessary to consider the potential archaeological impact of the proposals. Given the nature and siting of the proposals, there is no need for any kind of ground works nor any other disturbance of the ground. Therefore, there will be no potential for harm, loss or other disturbance of any below-ground deposits that might exist. Accordingly, there is no requirement for any archaeological investigations (desktop or otherwise) and no conflict with policy HA3.

Conclusion

Both the retrospective and proposed works have been progressed by way of a thoughtful and iterative design process. Their detailed design has been informed by a thorough appraisal and understanding of the host listed building and its particular significance.

Whilst there are some elements of the scheme that cause modest heritage harm, the total effect of these minor works on the overall significance of the listed building is limited. The modest degree of heritage harm is also considered to be duly outweighed by the positive heritage impacts of the scheme which include:

- fire safety improvements - moderate/significant benefit; and
- open-plan layout, restoring (to some extent) the barn's impressive proportions and long sightlines - moderate benefit.

When considered as a whole, the works are consequently assessed to preserve and sustain the overall significance of the listed building, in accordance with section 16 of the NPPF and local policies HA1 and HA7.

It is the professional opinion of Planning Direct that Listed Building Consent ought therefore to be granted without delay.

The applicant expects the LPA to bring any potential issues arising with the proposal to the attention of Planning Direct at the earliest opportunity, in order that clarifications can be provided and/or solutions agreed where appropriate.

Official List Entry (The Moat House)

Official list entry

Heritage Category:	Listed Building
Grade:	II
List Entry Number:	1347554
Date first listed:	24-Jan-1984
List Entry Name:	AISLED BARN AT BROCKHOLDS FARM (40 METRES WEST OF HOUSE)
Statutory Address 1:	AISLED BARN AT BROCKHOLDS FARM (40 METRES WEST OF HOUSE), STOCKALLS LANE

Location

Statutory Address: AISLED BARN AT BROCKHOLDS FARM (40 METRES WEST OF HOUSE), STOCKALLS LANE

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County:	Hertfordshire
District:	East Hertfordshire (District Authority)
Parish:	Great Munden
National Grid Reference:	TL 36459 22860

Details

Stockalls TL 32 SE GREAT MUNDEN STOCKALLS LANE (east side)

5/28 Aisled Barn at Brockholds Farm - (40m to W of house)

GV II

Barn. Early C17 altered in C19 and extended 2 bays to W. Timber frame dark weatherboarded on red brick sill. Flat pitched roof now of corrugated iron. A 6-bay double aisled barn with 2-bay W extension, facing S. Double doors in 4th bay from E and in 2nd bay from W. Heavy jowled posts on spur sill-walls, with curved braces to arcade plates. Face-halved bladed scarf joint over each post. Cambered tie-beams and sinuous braces in midstray. Straight tension braces in walls. Queen strut roof altered to flatter pitch and aisle walls heightened in C19. Three and a half bays of aisle at NW widened and rebuilt in brick in C20.

Listing NGR: TL3645922860

Legacy

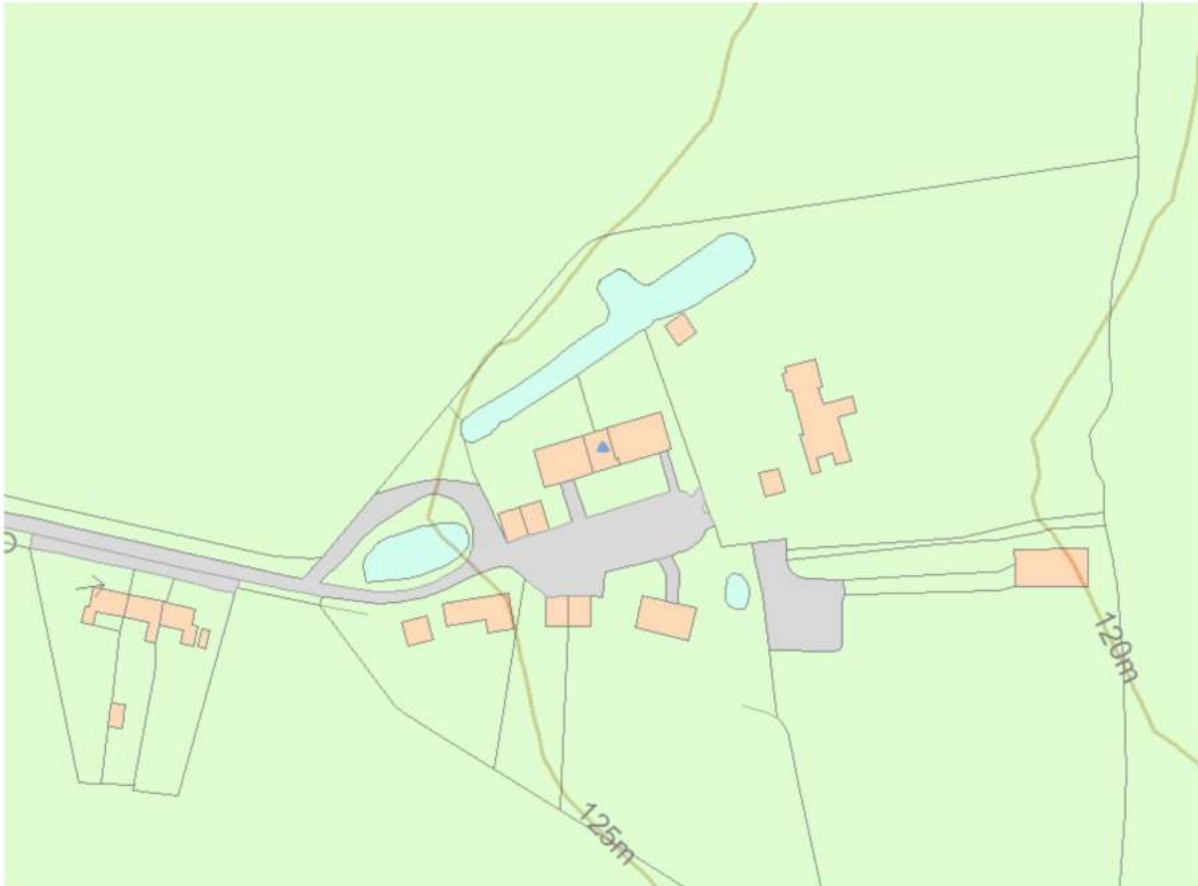
The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System number: **161298**

Legacy System: **LBS**

Legal

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.



End of official list entry