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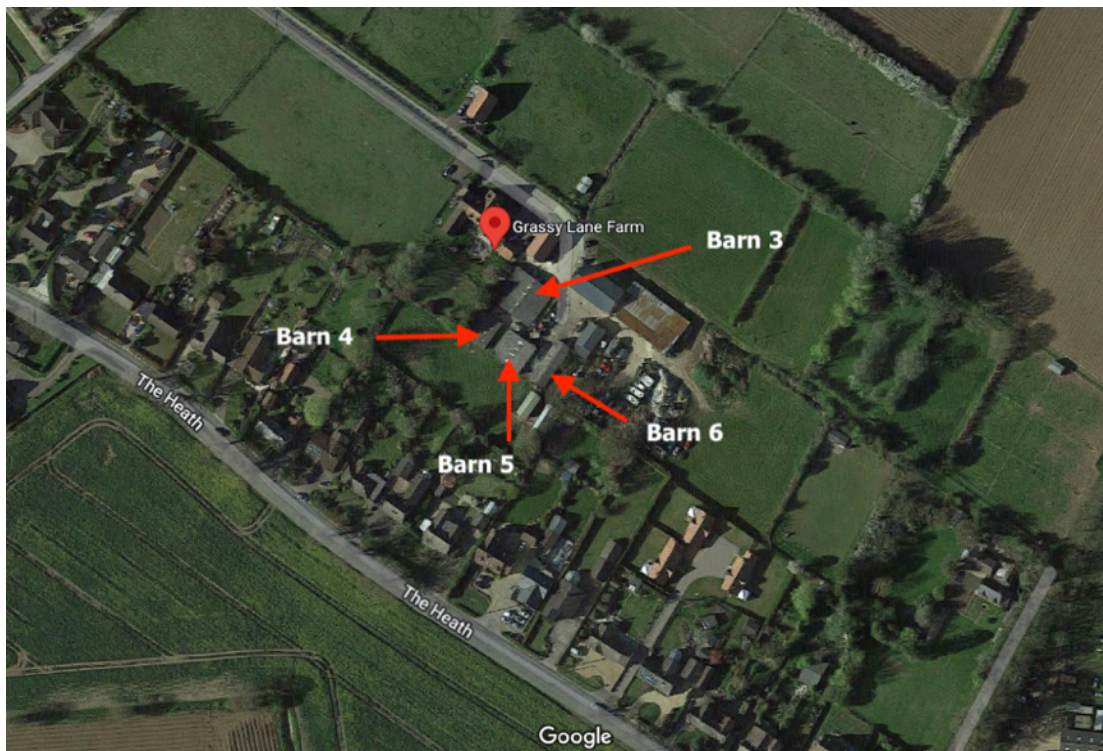
PW788 – March 2024

Design and Access Statement to support a full application for Replacement of existing barns with 4no. new build dwellings at Grassy Lane Farm, Woolpit

1.0 Introduction

This statement is to support a full planning application for 4no. new residential dwellings with parking at Grassy Lane Farm in Woolpit, to replace 4no. existing barns that have Class Q approval for change of use to residential dwellings. The proposed new dwellings have a floor area that is similar to that approved under the previous Class Q application.

The existing barns, referred to as barns '3', '4', '5' & '6' are sited on land that currently comprises Grassy Lane Farm – see picture 1 below. The barns are all single-storey of modern construction and were granted approval in November 2022 for change of use to 4no. residential dwellings (ref: DC/22/04130). The proposed new-build dwellings are considered to provide a “material betterment” to the site, than the approved barn conversions.



Picture 1 – Aerial view of the site and existing barns

Ferry Quay House, Ferry Quay
Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 1BW

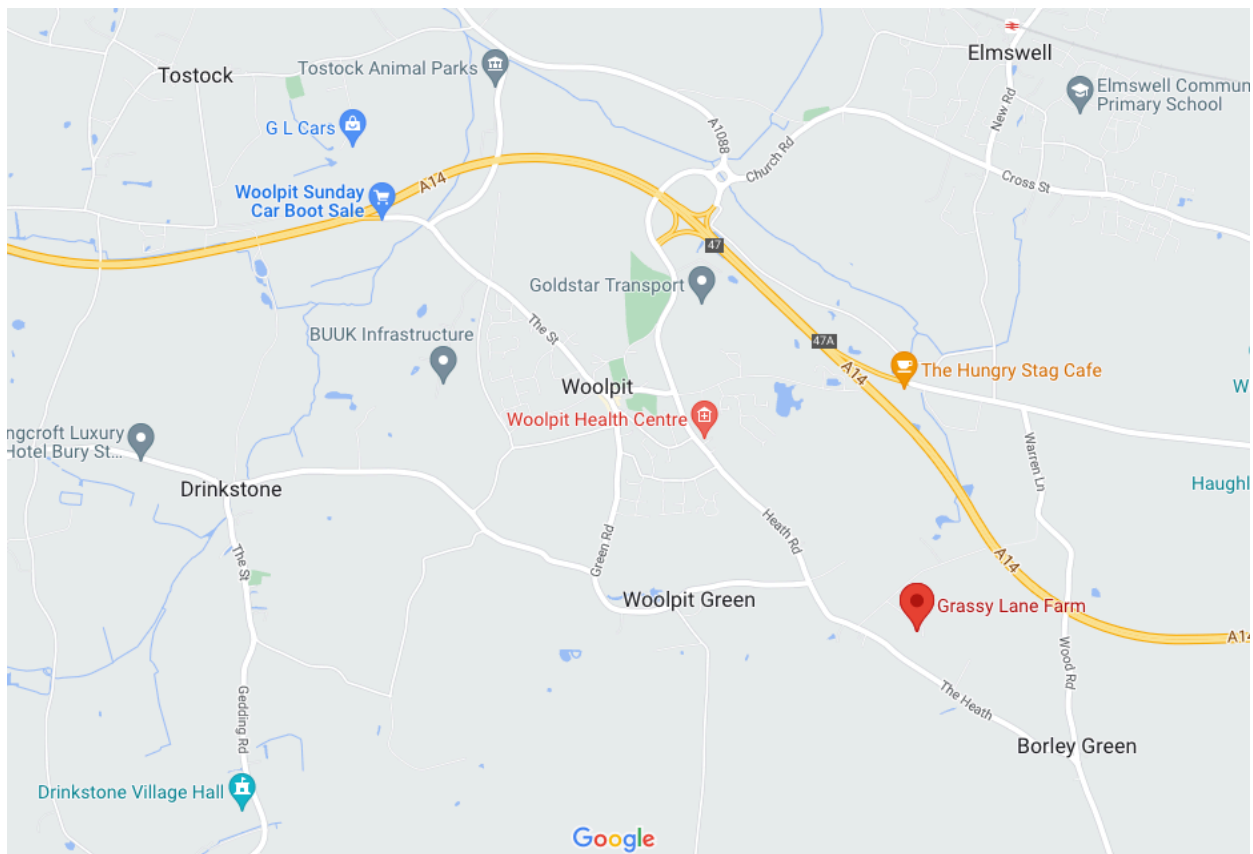
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2.0 Site in Context

The site is located to the south-east of Woolpit as shown in picture 2 below, and is outside of a defined settlement boundary. To the south of the site is a row of detached dwellings fronting onto The Heath, but are separated by rear gardens of these properties. On the north side of the site there are two further properties and the existing agricultural barns. All other surrounding land is agricultural.

The site is not within a Conservation Area or within an AONB, and there are no listed building nearby.



Picture 2 – The location of the barn (red marker) to the south-east of Woolpit

3.0 Previously Approved Dwellings

The 4no. existing barns have Prior Approval for change of use to 4no. dwellings, including 3no. “larger dwellinghouses’ of 171m² (barn 3), 117m² (barn 4) and 143m² (barn 5), and 1no. “smaller dwellinghouse” of 93m² (barn 6). The total combined approved residential floor area is 524m².

The approved works include a new profiled PPC sheet roof covering to the existing structures to replace the existing metal sheeting, upgrading the existing structures (walls/floors) to meet current Building Regulations, plus installing new PPC aluminium window and doors.

This extant consent is considered to represent a material planning consideration as a “fallback” permitted development position.

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4.0 Pre-application Advice

A request for pre-application advice was submitted in February 2023, and advice was subsequently received in March 2023 under reference: DC/23/01009. The pre-app included proposals for 6no. detached dwellings.

The advice concluded that the design and layout put forward for the pre-app was not supported, as the proposed dwellings were uniform and not in keeping with existing locality. The pre-app also stated that *“in principle, the Class Q fallback exists and could be utilised to create new dwellings on this site however, in its current form, it is unlikely the proposal would receive support from Planning Officers with the Class Q consent being the preferable development route in this instance as the dwellings retain their agricultural form and presence within the site and their layout creates a farmyard layout”*.

Following this advice, the proposals have been amended, the number of dwellings has been reduced and the design has changed so that the dwellings now have an agricultural form and presence, with a layout around a central courtyard.

5.0. Existing buildings

All existing barns within the site area will be demolished. This includes Barn 3 (281m²), Barn 4 (127m²), Barn 5 (153m²) and Barn 6 (125m²) that are shown below – see pictures 3-6. The existing floor plans and elevations are shown on enclosed drawing PW788_PL503, and the total existing floor area is 686m².

The barns are all single-storey and are of modern construction with metal sheet roofing and a combination of metal sheeting/blockwork to the walls.



Picture 3 – Barn 3

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Picture 4 – Barn 4



Picture 5 – Barn 5



Picture 6 – Barn 6

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6.0 The Proposal

The proposed site plan is shown on drawing PW788_PL501 and the proposed floor plan and elevations are shown on enclosed drawing PW788_PL502.

The proposal includes the construction of 4no. semi-detached, single-storey new-build dwellings, 2no. on each side of a courtyard with parking bays located within the central courtyard. Plots 1 and 3 are 112m² and have 2no. parking bays, and Plots 2 and 4 are 225m² and have 4no. parking bays. The total internal floor area is 674m².

6.1. Design/materials

The proposed dwellings have an agricultural barn style form and presence and will be of high-quality design that respects the local distinctiveness and the built heritage of Mid Suffolk, in accordance with Policies CS5, GP1 and FC1.1. Each dwelling has an east barn and a west barn that are joined by a central flat-roofed link element. Each dwelling has a large open-plan kitchen/living/dining room situated to the rear, with glazed doors leading to the rear garden. Adjacent to the link element is a small private courtyard/seating area. To the front/middle of each property is the bedroom accommodation.

The main barn style elements of the dwellings will be finished in agricultural style materials including PPC corrugated metal sheeting (colour black) to the walls and roofs. The link elements will be finished in vertical timber boarding (natural finish) to the walls and single-ply membrane flat roofs. All windows and doors will be in PPC aluminium, colour black. The dwellings also feature rolling shutters over the front entrance doors, that will be in hardwood, stained black.

6.2 Vehicular Access/Highways

The farm is served by a single track land (Grassy Lane) which is accessed via Warren Lane. Warren Lane serves a number of nearby properties, but is a no-through road and therefore has little traffic. The existing access has good visibility in both directions.

As approved in the Class Q application, the new dwellings will share the existing access, and there will be parking available within the central courtyard, adjacent to the properties. As a result, there will be minimal impact on local highways in accordance with policies T09 and T10 and Paragraph 111 of the NPPF.

6.3 Landscaping

The proposed site plan shows indicative hard and soft landscaping including a bonded shingle courtyard, Tegula setts to parking bays, herringbone block permeable paved areas, grassed areas surrounding the dwellings and sandstone slab patios. The rear gardens will be divided by a 0.9m high brick wall and existing walls/fencing to the boundaries will be retained.

7.0 Planning Considerations

7.1 Contamination

An Enviroscreen Land Contamination Report and Land Contamination Questionnaire are enclosed with this application.

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7.2 Ecology

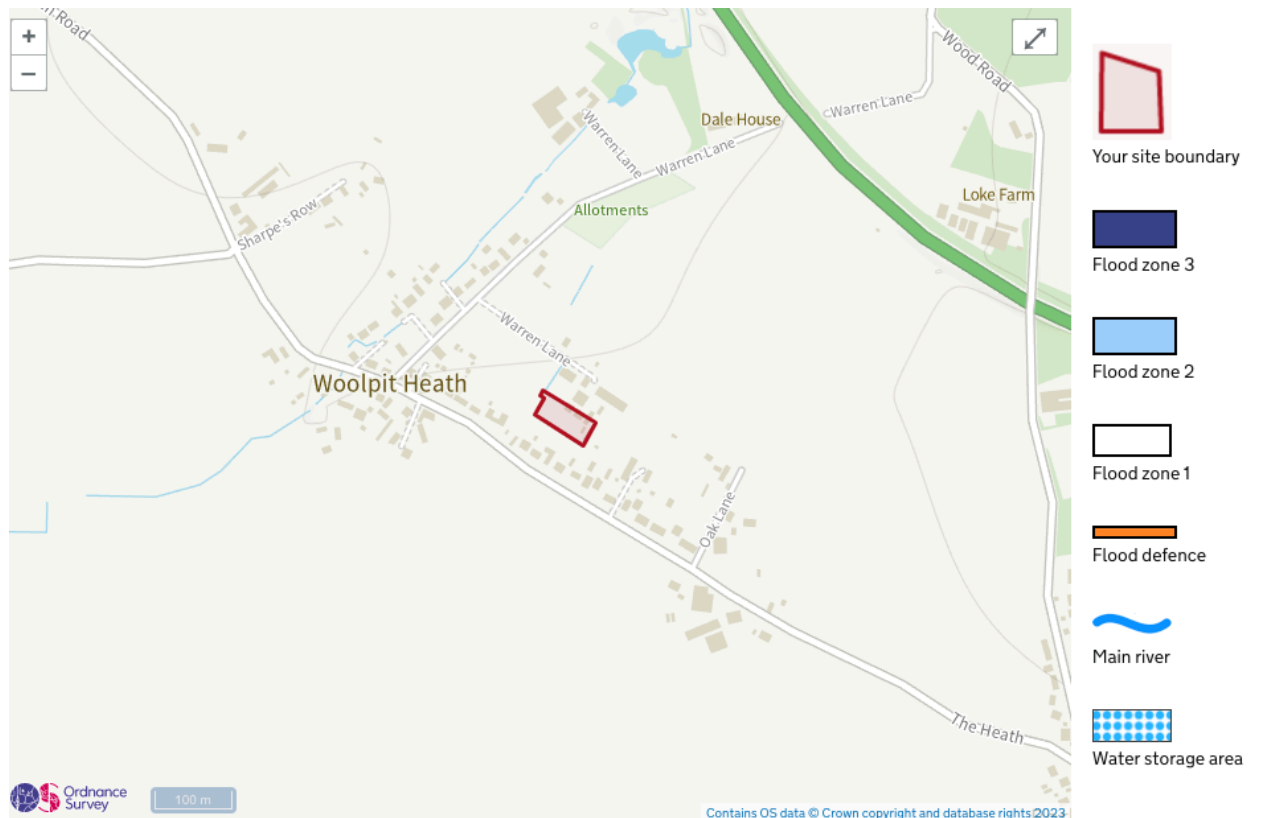
A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal is enclosed with this application.

7.3 Residential Amenity

The proposed development is unlikely to have a detrimental impact on residential amenity owing to the distance afforded to any neighbouring properties. The proposed dwellings are also single-storey with most openings facing to the rear, so there would be limited overlooking concern or loss of light for neighbouring dwellings.

7.4 Flood Risk

The whole site is located in Flood Zone 1 (see picture 7 below), and therefore a Flood Risk Assessment has not been carried out.



Picture 7 – Extract from the EA Flood Risk map showing the site in Zone 1.

8.0 “Material Betterment”

We believe that this proposal will result in the betterment in terms of its visual impact and sustainability to that of the previous Class Q approval. We can confirm the following:

- The design of the replacement dwellings has been carefully considered and uses similar materials and form to the existing agricultural buildings that have Class Q consent for residential use.

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- The overall size and height of the proposed dwellings is similar to the existing barns that will be demolished as part of this proposal.
- The form and layout of the development is similar to an agricultural farm yard arrangement
- The proposed dwellings will be built to a more sustainable and lower energy use standard than the approved conversions. Under the current Building Regulations the U Values required for new-build and the requirement to meet specific SAP/EPC are significantly higher than the requirements for conversions.

9.0 Conclusion

Permission to convert the 4no. existing agricultural barns at Grassy Lane Farm in Woolpit to residential use (4no. dwellings), has already been established under a Permitted Development Class Q application in 2022, which provides a “fallback position” for development at the site. We are now applying to demolish the existing barns and replace them with 4no. new-build dwellings, that have a combined floor area that is similar to that approved under Class Q.

The proposals are considered to provide a “Material Betterment” over Class Q conversion as they are better designed, more sustainable, have better and more workable layout and will allow the removal of eyesores (existing barns).