DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Conversion of Maple Tree Farm Buildings,
Lutton Garnsgate, Long Sutton. PE12 9JP

For: Mr & Mrs L Russell



Photo showing the application site, view towards north from Lutton Garnsgate

Location & Surroundings

The site is located in a southward direction from Long Sutton, just approximately 1.5miles from the town centre, south of the A17 bypass, 500yards along Lutton Garnsgate.

The buildings front onto Lutton Garnsgate and are set back just a few metres from the road verge.

The buildings are known as 'Maple Tree Farm' although are the remaining farmyard of the former 'Garnsgate House, which now lies in ruin covered in brambles adjacent the 2 storey building, which in turn is Grade II listed, and therefore the application is accompanied by an Heritage Impact Assessment.

The farm buildings are made up of 4 elements, and for ease throughout the application we will refer them as;

Element 1 - the '2 storey barn' (the listed building),

Element 2 - 'the cart shed',

Element 3 - the '1.5 storey cowshed/potting shed'

Element 4 - the 'former piggery'.

Southward of the site along Lutton Garnsgate, less than 50 yards from the gable of the barn is 'Maple Tree House', a characteristic 3 bay Georgian vernacular farm house with its own outbuildings. This house is a mirror image to the former Garnsgate House which lies in ruin.

Northward from the site is open farmland and sporadically placed older style dwellings upto and including the well known Garnsgate Hall.

Proposal

The application proposal is to convert the farm buildings into a single dwelling, although element 3, the brick 1.5 storey shed, will remain untouched at this stage, other than clearing off the ivy growth etc, with the storage shed use wholly maintained.

(Note: The ivy removal has already commenced and will be removed prior to the application decision, to avoid delays that could be caused as a consequence of the bird breeding season)

The Process & Evaluation

In accordance with current planning policy, there are current permitted development rights including the conversion of agricultural buildings to dwelling houses subject to certain criteria. The buildings are very worthwhile for retention and conversion as they carry much more merit than some proposals recently put forward to planning authorities. However, amongst other things, part of the site contains a listed building, the site falls within a floodzone and the extent of the site is greater than the allowable criteria, therefore a full application is required.

A pre-application enquiry was made reference PE-00559-15 in which it was noted that the buildings look capable of conversion and a conversion scheme would be acceptable.

The relevant part of the NPPF is section 12, with the most relevant paragraphs for the LPA to consider when determining the application being 131 & 132 which state the following;

when determining planning applications local planning authorities should take account of:
* the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the asset putting them to viable uses consistent with the conservation'
* the positive contribution that conservation to heritage assets can make
* the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

South Holland Local Plan policy HS16 sets out criteria which are met by the proposal, the building is most certainly of architectural and historic merit where the conversion will not adversely affect but will actually prolong the lifespan and retain these characteristic buildings, and the design proposals are very sympathetic to the building with due regard being given to retaining the existing appearance.

Policies EN4 & EN5 are also met by the proposals.

We have investigated some of the recent application approvals around the area for conversion of agricultural buildings to dwelling houses, and have been shocked and somewhat amazed as to some of the approved schemes. We believe the planning policies and criteria are set out to allow conversion of buildings that show character and worthiness of retention, as this application site undoubtably does, the following photographs are some buildings within the local area gaining permission which in our view do not have what we have at this application site...



This building was approved under a reference 14/00006/REF on a site within 15miles by a neighbouring authority.



Another brick farm shed which has no comparison against the buildings covered by this application....




A Concrete block & steel framed shed approved a few miles away... offering no merit or characteristics whatsoever, and arguably not following the ethos of the town and country planning order.

The Current Use

The buildings are currently sparingly used due to the size of modern day farming equipment and the working of modern day farms, such that they are becoming larger in size, intensely farmed, and the need has gone for small potting sheds and original brick barns. Modern farm buildings are larger in size, steel framed buildings and large cold stores. The buildings have been used to store occasional use implements with smaller spare parts and obsolete equipment in the sheds. One end of the 'potting-shed' has been used as a small cold store more recently, for seed and fertiliser, but the farm no longer have use for these buildings and they are now fully redundant.

The site that the buildings occupy is well defined by grass before the field edges.

Involvement & Design

Discussions have been had with local persons, passing-by walkers and neighbours and those that we have spoken to have said that the buildings have been redundant for years, getting more and more covered in ivy etc and would be excited to see the buildings put to a use to retain their character.

Flood Risk

The site is in a very positive position regarding flood risk and the EA mapping. The site is on a high piece of ground and as such falls outside the flood risk mitigation heights. A FRA has been produced which shows the site location in a favourable location.

It should be noted that the proposed floor heights would not want to be raised above the existing door thresholds or character may be hindered, the existing walls are generally solid masonry, and sleeping accommodation is all at first floor level. With the character and historic merit of this range of buildings retained by conversion, including a listed element, any further EA requirements should not jeopardise the building or a planning permission. Rainwater will be disposed by soakaways and foul water will be into a septic tank.

The Design
Use

The use of this development is solely for residential purpose. The existing use is obviously agricultural, however current farming methods and techniques render the buildings impractical, what with a larger farming business purchasing this smallholding farm a number of years ago and having other more useable farm yards in the area, these buildings are now redundant. They have been used up until now for light storage of small parts, unused implements and equipment, but all of this will either become disposed of or moved to another yard.

Amount

The Ground floor internal area of the listed building element equates to 58sqm (inclusive of the passageway), the cart shed reduced to 64sqm, the potting shed 61sqm and the piggery will become reduced to approx 27sqm to create the access.

Layout

The layout of the site wholly remains, the cart shed becomes reduced in depth to align through with elements 1 and 3 to an original depth before it was extended eastward.

The site access will flow tastefully around the northern edge of the site to the rear of the potting shed area, with some thorn hedging lining the gravelled driveway along with tree and shrub planting further into the site.

The listed element will contain the bedroom accommodation, where the existing openings lend themselves to the layout, this will open through a former doorway opening into the kitchen sitting area within the existing cart shed space. The potting shed will remain untouched at this time, and when additional funds become available its conversion will be considered, understanding that permission would need to be in place prior to any works commencing.

Scale

The scale of the buildings generally remains as current, with the cart shed element being reduced.

Landscaping

The current site is edged by some sparse thorn hedging. The proposal will be to introduce a post an rail fence to the north and east boundary and plant a thorn hedge within the fenceline, inclusive of some individual trees to attract the wildlife. The gravelled driveway will be edged in shrubs. a footpath would be added to the rear of the barns.

The remainder of the gardens will be laid to lawn.

Appearance

The appearance of the buildings will be unchanged, although the conversion will bring enhancements which will in turn prolong the lifespan of the buildings. Repointing will be carried out with a lime mortar, any odd bricks with blown faces will become replaced or turned. Doors and windows will be solid timber as will the varge boards, rainwater goods will become added and will be black metal of a cast iron appearance.

Cladding to the front of the cart shed is proposed to replicate the existing appearance however compliment the brick barns, and is proposed to be decorated a slate grey.

Proposed roof coverings will be a terracotta clay pantile 'Arcadia Reclaimed' or similar, which are a new tile replicating a reclaimed appearance.

Access & Visibility

Access into the site is hardly changed, the road is a very quiet lane with no edgings etc, with the current access just flowing from the road edge. The new access will be very similar immediately adjacent the retained farm access, which is only being retained should there ever be a need to use it as a secondary access from the field behind. Generally the retained field access gates will remain locked shut.

Final Evaluation

A great opportunity to conserve some historic farm buildings retaining their full character and prolonging their lifespan, if this opportunity is not permitted it is more than likely the buildings will end up as a ruin much like the former farmhouse adjacent.

The conversion is sympathetic, and the applicant is willing to convert the buildings and bring this site back to life. The buildings have significant merit and are a fine example of the type that the council should be permitting conversion.

The proposals meet all of the T&C Planning Order 2015 Part Q criteria although due to the listed element, warrant this application so that the proposals can be reviewed and agreed whilst it is noticed due respect is given to the historic value. NPPF Section 12 paragraphs 131 & 132 also support this application.