Proposed Conversion of Existing Agricultural Buildings to create single dwelling with garaging
(Revised Scheme)

Crowtree Farm Barns
White Cross Lane Surfleet Spalding PE11 4AJ

for Dr. & Mrs. C. Scarisbrick



PLANNING STATEMENT

February 2020

mlp Moulton Land and Planning

alan j finch

PROPOSAL

This is a Full Planning Application for the conversion of existing agricultural buildings known as Crowtree Farm Barns. This submission follows a detailed review of a previous scheme which was refused by the LPA in June 2019 (ref H14-0451-19). It is now considered that this Full Application addresses the concerns that led to the refusal of that scheme.

THE SITE

The application site is situated in Open Countryside between the settlements of Surfleet and Pinchbeck however the site is within 100metres of the B1356 Surfleet Road. The character of the location is predominantly open agricultural farmland with individual dwellings dispersed. The nearest dwelling is located directly opposite to the subject site. The relatively recent redevelopment of that site has created a replacement dwelling of individual and high quality appearance.

The site and immediate surroundings are typically flat and devoid of any mature landscaping.
The Applicants intend to introduce appropriate native species planting to the site to enhance its rural character.

The subject application site has direct and existing vehicular access onto White Cross Lane which is a typical single width public highway.

The subject agricultural buildings are of varied character, age and condition but nonetheless are considered to be of significant importance to be noted on the HER register as a non-designated Heritage Asset and therefore worthy of protection and sympathetic re-use.



PLANNING HISTORY

H14-0229-17 – Prior Notification Application -granted 7th April 2017
for Change of Use of agricultural building to dwelling (Use Class C3)
This Consent is Extant_ *(subject to time limits imposed). With no pre-commencement Conditions.*

H14-0451-19 – Full Planning Application - refused 18th June 2019
For 'Proposed Barn conversion'
This Application was considered to represent an unsympathetic conversion of traditional farm buildings

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
FULL

Reference:	H14-0451-19	**Date of Decision:**	18th June 2019
Applicant:	Dr & Mrs C Scarisbrick Willow Cottage 8 The Water Gardens Wisbech Cambs PE13 1LD		
Location:	Crowtree Farm Barns White Cross Lane Surfleet Spalding Lincs		
Description:	Proposed barn conversion		

South Holland District Council hereby give notice that this application has been REFUSED for the above proposal for the following reason(s):

1 The proposed design, size and scale of the extensions is not sympathetic and would not retain and enhance the buildings intrinsic agricultural character and would unacceptably harm the architectural integrity of the form and composition of the existing buildings.

The building is noted as a non-designated heritage asset on the Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Record and the proposals would unacceptably harm the integrity of the heritage asset.

The Local Planning Authority is of the view therefore that the proposals would be contrary to criteria 1 and 4 of Policy 23 and Policy 29 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan.

(extract from Decision Notice H14-0451-19 – reason for refusal)

THE SCHEME

The owner Applicants, although disappointed to have the previous application rejected, remain committed to create an individual, sympathetic scheme of refurbishment that will provide them with a new home.

A detailed review of the existing buildings has in fact generated a scheme which we believe will provide a re-development of the site that fully addresses the concerns previously raised by the LPA and also makes better use of the buildings and avoid the need for extensions or alterations to roof heights etc.
Clearly this approach will preserve and protect the historic character and relative arrangement of the complex of buildings.

The two main buildings that occupy the site are of contrasting appearance, age and function.
The traditional brick and pantile barn is clearly the most important asset on the site.
It is L-shaped of varying roof heights and offers potential yet challenging accommodation for conversion to residential accommodation.
There are elements of that building that have unfortunately seen unsympathetic adaptation such as removal of brick camber arch lintels and insertion of oversized cast concrete lintels as evident on the north gable of the building.

THE SCHEME cont/….

By stark contrast there is a large rectangular common brick clad shed located adjacent to the original barn and previous schemes identified this building as either suitable for garaging or indeed the most recent application proposed its demolition. Despite its large footprint this modern packing shed remains subservient to the original barn with lower ridge height and being set back from the site entrance partially concealed by the main barn.



Modern Brick Farm Building - South Elevation onto Fields



Modern Brick Farm Building elevation into site (north elevation)

THE SCHEME cont/…

The floor space offered by this open plan building lends itself perfectly to adaptation to create the daytime accommodation for a dwelling such as kitchen, dining, utility and sitting room. The existing openings to this building lend themselves also to providing necessary daylight and ventilation to those areas.
Relatively minor work is required to bring this building up to an energy efficient standard and the transformation of the external appearance is proposed by means of cladding the modern brickwork with traditional horizontal featheredge timber boarding.
The roof which is currently corrugated sheeting material is to be replaced with clay pantile.

We therefore have two buildings to be retained and converted to provide individual and practical accommodation that satisfies the applicants requirements, both short term and long term.
In order to link the living and bedroom accommodation it is considered that a single storey glazed link will be the most appropriate addition. This structure will be pantile roof onto a bespoke timber post arrangement with a predominance of glass.

The principal entrance to the dwelling is via this link and the abutment of the link with the traditional barn is below eaves height. The access into the barn makes use of an existing opening, currently occupied by a metal crittal window with concrete lintel over. This leaves the two main openings to this elevation to be retained and suitably proportioned bespoke timber feature screens introduced.

Where the link adjoins the modern building the pantile roof of the link will intersect with the existing roof. This breaks up the low pitch roof area and creates visual interest to this elevation.

Garaging and storage facility is an essential requirement for any family dwelling and it is also important on conversion schemes of this type to provide appropriate building form and sufficient storage to minimise the need for ‘domestic’ sheds etc scattered around the curtilage.
It is indeed acknowledged that the LPA will normally attach a Condition to schemes such as this whereby under the General Permitted Development Order 2015, Permitted Development rights are removed to ensure control and safeguard the visual amenity of such sensitive developments.

Therefore a detached single storey building is proposed to house motor vehicles and provide secure storage for the dwelling. This building is to be of external materials to reflect the appearance of the adjacent single storey building with timber boarding and pantile roofing.
The garage building is to be sited on that part of the land currently occupied by derelict glasshouses and old brick built boiler house. This maintains the relationship of buildings within the site and also provides a satisfactory arrangement for vehicular access, turning and parking for the new dwelling.

PLANNING POLICY

Policy 23 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) indicates that proposals for the conversion of existing buildings which are located outside defined Settlement boundaries to residential use will be permitted subject to satisfying specific criteria as below :-

1. the building is structurally sound and capable of conversion without the need for significant extension, alteration or rebuilding;
2. the building is of architectural or historic merit or makes a positive contribution to the character of the landscape, to justify conversion to ensure retention;
3. the proposal is in keeping with its surroundings;
4. the design is sympathetic to the character and appearance of the building in terms of architectural detailing and materials of construction; and
5. development leads to an enhancement of the immediate setting of the building.

Where permission is granted, permitted development rights may be removed in order to control future alterations or extensions that may impact on the appearance and character of the surrounding area.

Paragraph 79 of the National Planning Policy Framework, 2019, indicates that planning decisions should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside, unless there are exceptional circumstances. They include the re-use of redundant or disused buildings where such development would enhance the immediate setting. The extant permission for conversion demonstrates that this site complies with this National Policy and the Case Officer Report for the recently Refused Full Application H14-0451-19 acknowledged that the principle of development was not in question – it was the specific design that was considered inappropriate.

TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Heritage

The Historic Environment Officer's comments relating to the previous scheme are noted and welcomed by the Applicants who have invested significantly in this project and certainly want to preserve and enhance the character of this historic farmstead. Its recording on the HER register as a non-designated asset is acknowledged and it is hoped that the scheme now proposed will be received positively and encouraged.

Environmental Protection

The extant Prior Notification Consent for the change of use of the buildings on this site does not include any pre-commencement conditions including any Potential Contamination Investigation. It is therefore envisaged that, consistently, this application will not attract such a Condition.
A Screening Assessment Form accompanies this submission to demonstrate the site condition and relevant historic use.

Flood Risk

The Flood Risk Report prepared for the previous scheme has now been updated with the Supplementary Report accompanying this application. As a result, the required floor levels to the accommodation can now be provided at 300mm above existing ground level which will enable a satisfactory scheme with minimal impact on the existing buildings, external appearance or general character of the area.

Structural Condition

Structural Engineer Assessment has previously established that the buildings are suitable for conversion – copy accompanies this application for reference

Highways
The site has an existing vehicular access from the public highway and no objections were raised previously. Refuse collection from the single property will be available from the site curtilage in accordance with SHDC Refuse Policy.

Foul drainage –
A private Package Treatment Plant is appropriate in this rural location with ample area available for the Infiltration of treated outfall into the ground.
Installation will be in accordance with all relevant Statutory Approvals and specifications.

Surface Water –
The driveway to the dwelling is to be of permeable construction with roof water from the dwelling being directed to proprietary soakaways.

Protected Species
A Protected Species Report undertaken by Fauna Forest Ecology Limited dated August 2019 accompanies this Application.

CONCLUSION

As this Planning Statement and accompanying drawings will demonstrate, the Applicant owners of this site are committed to creating a sympathetic and exemplary scheme of conversion of a range of farm buildings to provide a unique and appropriate residential dwelling for their own occupation.

The potential and constraints of the existing site and its varied buildings have been fully reviewed and the resultant design avoids alteration to the historic character of the main traditional brick barn.
It also makes use of an adjacent modern farm shed by its retention and transformation into a more attractive and relevant building. That building remains subservient to the main barn whilst providing satisfactory and sustainable living accommodation.

This site, although technically positioned in 'open countryside' between the two villages of Surfleet and Pinchbeck is visible from the main road that links these settlements and its positive contribution to the character of this area is therefore of particular significance.

The recent development to the opposite side of White Cross Lane by way of a replacement dwelling has made a significant improvement to the character of this rural area and the opportunity to create a sympathetic conversion of redundant farm buildings will complete the transformation of this small part of the District. It will importantly serve as a worked example of appropriate development.

As mentioned earlier in this Statement, the Refusal of the previous scheme, was initially met with disappointment by the applicants. However, the opportunity to take a fresh look to this project has, we believe, resulted in a design that satisfies all interested parties as well as relevant Planning Policies.

We hope that the Local Planning Authority will now share our enthusiasm for this fresh approach and process the application towards a favourable determination at the earliest opportunity so that my Clients can undertake this project to create their new individual home.