HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

For

PROPOSED CONVERSION OF BARN TO DWELLING

At

LA CASTAGNA
CHEAL ROAD
SURFLEET
SPALDING
LINCOLNSHIRE
PE11 4BA

For

MR AND MRS WARD



PLANNING APPLICATION ISSUE

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Application Summary

- This Full Planning Application seeks approval in respect of the conversion of a brick-built barn to a single residential dwelling.

- The key aims of the proposal are as follows:

    1. To convert the barn for residential use.

    2. To undertake necessary repairs to the barn to allow for its conversion.

    3. To define a 'plot' around the barn to provide a residential curtilage.

- The site is in Flood Zone 1 and 2.

- La Castagna was converted from agricultural to residential use under H17-1152-19 (27th April 2020) and the complex was acknowledged as having historic merit.

Index

	Page
Introduction	4
Site Observation	5
Heritage Considerations	8
Demolition Statement	10
Flood Risk Assessment	12
Development Proposal	13
Site Appraisal	14
Overall Summary	14

Introduction

In August 2025 Oglesby and Limb Ltd submitted and enquiry for pre-application advice concerning the conversion of the barn for residential use. The enquiry reference is PE-00205-25 and the case officer was Jacob Bryan. The feedback during the pre-app response was as follows:

1. The proposal may accord with Policy 23; this is the main policy that it would be judged against.

2. Most of the criteria of policy 23 appear to be satisfied, although a structural report will be required, and the heritage merits of the barn will need to be checked.

3. A list of supporting documents was provided.

The matters raised in the pre-app response have been addressed as follows:

a. A structural report has been commissioned which indicates that the barn is structurally sound and capable of conversion without the need for significant extension, alteration or rebuilding.

b. A discussion has been had with Greg Watkinson of SHDC who has confirmed that from a conservation perspective the barn complies with the relevant criterion of Policy 23.

c. A dimensional survey of the barn has been completed, and it is confirmed by design that the building is capable of accommodating a 2 bedroom, 3 person dwelling with areas according with the DCLG Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard, even accounting for thermal upgrading internally.

d. A protected species and bat report has been completed and is included with this submission.

e. A flood risk assessment has been completed and is included with this submission.

Site Observation

Location

The site is located on Cheal Road in Surfleet, approximately 2km north-east of the Mermaid public house in Surfleet village. It can be located via the following means:

Nationally recognized references:	
Grid reference:	TF 23312 28823
Easting / Northing:	523312, 328823
Latitude, Longitude (degs, mins, secs):	52°50’34’’N, 000°10’14’’W
What3Words:	bunkers.overtime.broadcast

Refer to drawing A1793-01 for the location and extent.

Size and topography

The wider La Castagna site contains a converted barn (now a dwelling) and a cluster of farm out-buildings, of which the proposal barn is one. The complex is surrounded by fields. The proposal building is a single storey brick-built barn located adjacent Cheal Road. This has grass areas to the east and south and the entrance drive to the west. The land is relatively flat, though rises away from Cheal Road.

Access to the site

The vehicular and pedestrian access to La Castagne already exists and is immediately west of the proposal barn. For the barn conversion, a new access to Cheal Road would be proposed, immediately east of the barn as indicated on drawing A1793-01. This would go through the existing wire fence (fig. 01)



Fig 01. Proposed site entrance would be through the wire fence east of the barn.

Site Boundaries

The site boundaries are mostly defined.

The north boundary is open to the road, however there is a timber post and wire fence between the field and the road (fig. 01).

The east boundary is currently formed by a timber post and wire fence (fig. 02).

The south boundary is currently open but will be formed by a timber post and rail fence across an existing small field.

The west boundary is formed by an existing timber post and rail fence (fig. 03).



Fig 02. View from north boundary looking south.



Fig 03. West boundary fence.

Views into and across the site

The barn stands in a rural landscape so there are views into and across the site in multiple directions, though only those from the east, north and west are from public land (Cheal Road). The barn is seen with a backdrop of open fields and the buildings of La Castanga.

There are no notable views across the site.

Views out from the site

Views out from the site, are available in all directions, generally across open fields.

Use and development of the site

The wider La Castagna site has been developed since at least as early as 1887 and this is evidenced by the Ordnance Survey plan of that date (fig. 04). After 1903 there is no further map available prior to the revision of 1950. This map (fig. 05) shows the proposal barn and a further building immediately south of it. The Chestnuts stands to the west of La Castagne and is the original farmhouse that dates from at least 1887. La Castagna is part of what was the farmstead of The Chestnuts and was originally used for farming until it was converted to form a dwelling. The proposal barn, which was constructed in 1911, was a further part of the same farmstead. All buildings on the site were originally used for agriculture and ancillary residential use

Use and development on land surrounding the site

The site sits in an area which is predominantly in agricultural use with residential dwellings scattered along Cheal Road.

The majority of buildings in the area are single or two storeys in height with most dating from the 19th Century or later. There is a mix of styles, with no particular style being dominant, but most would be classed as 'traditional'.

Landscaping

In general, the landscape is agricultural with open fields interspersed with hedges, drains and droves. There is an area of woodland to the west of the site approximately 125m away.

The proposal site is grassed and has no trees or hedges.

Amenities

There is a small range of amenities in Surfleet 2-3km east of the site. Spalding is located approximately 6km to the south-east.

Heritage Considerations

History

La Castagna was acknowledged as being of historic value during the application process in which approval was granted in 2020.

An historic map study indicates that the proposal barn was constructed between 1887 and 1950 (figs, 04 & 05). There is a date stone on the north elevation of the barn which indicates that it was constructed in 1911, making it now 115 years old. The construction of the outer walls of the proposal barn comprises solid wall construction, with the brick bond being three rows of stretchers to every one row of headers (fig, 06). The window head details (shallow brick arches) are also consistent with a construction date of around 1911.

The proposal barn is modest in size and clearly played a part in defining the farmstead throughout the 20th Century. It appears relatively intact and many of the original wall features, though simple in form, are nonetheless extant. There are numerous openings still evident, some having been bricked in during the building's history. The roof coverings have been replaced with light-weight metal sheeting, but this is also a common feature of the area.

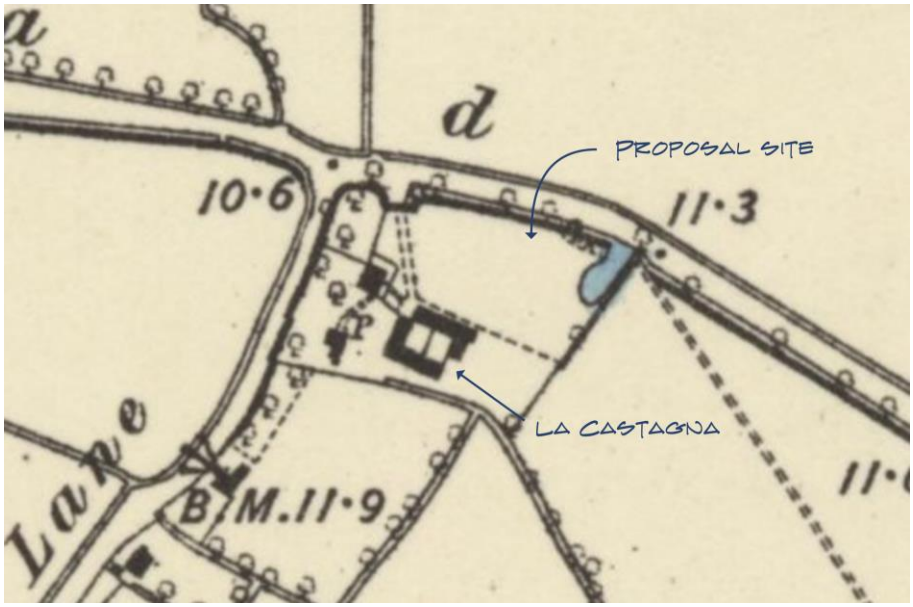


Fig 04. Extract from Ordnance Survey map or 1887 (barn not shown).

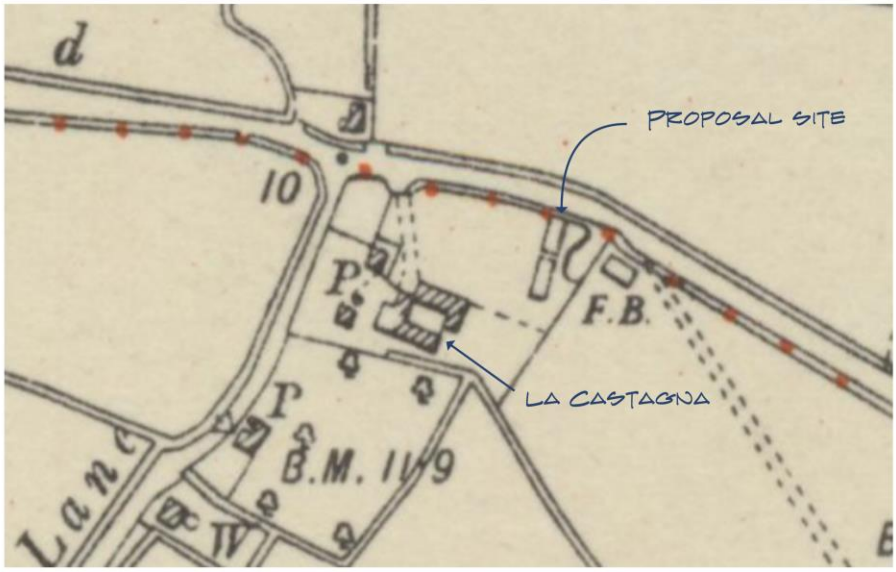


Fig 05. Extract from Ordnance Survey map or 1950 (barn now shown with a further block to the south).


Fig 06. Traditional brick construction.

An analysis of the barn indicates that it is of modest dimensions. The overall length of the building is circa 12.20m and its span across eaves is circa 6.20m. This is typical for a small ancillary barn of this period. The building has gable walls at the north and south ends and supports a simple duo-pitch roof running between the gables, again very typical. The detailing at the eaves is simple, though it is acknowledged that some brickwork may have been lost when the original roof coverings were removed and the

corrugate iron sheets were installed. Brickwork detailing around the window and door openings is uncomplicated and reflects the utilitarian nature of the buildings use. The north elevation has a large opening for corrugated steel sliding doors, which it is suspected was introduced sometime after the original construction.

Internally the walls are exposed brickwork, and the roof is of traditional 'cut' timber design, albeit that the soffit is lined with boarding.

Overall, the barn represents a typical small farm building from the Fens from the early part of the 20th Century, before farming became industrialized. It is unremarkable yet has local charm and contributes to the farmstead setting of La Castagna and the wider agricultural context of Surfleet Cheal.

Statement of Significance

The form, massing and overall shape of the barn is very typical of an ancillary agricultural building dating from the early years of the 20th Century, prior to the era when farming became industrialized. Its positioning, size and general appearance hold architectural and historic value, representing a modest building from that era. There is also value in the positioning of the building in defining the route of access to La Castagna generally.

Architecturally, the building is simply detailed, but again this reflects the utilitarian use and nature of such structures; this was a working building, not built with significant aesthetic considerations. There remains historic value, particularly in the fabric of the walls which are of traditional brickwork.

In conclusion, the overall mass, shape and positioning of the building are an important element that define the original farmstead. The external construction and features of the barn provide a good example of an ancillary barn from the pre-war era.

Heritage Impact

The design has been carefully considered. It is proposed that the conversion be entirely contained within the existing building envelope. Whilst there is documentary evidence (in map form) that there was additional footprint on the south end of the property, no detailed information is currently known to us. In any event, the existing envelope is adequate to provide for a 2 bedroom, 3 person dwelling, which is what is proposed. The impact in terms of positioning, massing and overall size if therefore minimal and the key characteristics will all be retained.

Regarding external brickwork, all will be retained; the proposals for this are limited to undertaking necessary repairs and limited repointing (using traditional lime-mortar) where needed. To the east and west elevations, it is proposed that the existing window and door openings will be reused. In all cases the openings are extant but have been infilled. The proposal is to reinstate these openings, with the exception of one on the east elevation which will be enlarged to accommodate a door. The south elevation has a single bricked-up opening set centrally and this will be reinstated to allow a window to be installed. In all cases it is believed that these interventions are minimal in that they will reinstate openings where they were previously. With these reinstated the barn will take-on an appearance closer to what was originally designed. The north elevation (facing Cheal Road) has been more significantly altered over time than is the case for the other elevations. Here the proposal removes the corrugated steel doors and their support structure and seeks to infill the existing opening with a glazed screen. No details are known to us regarding the original appearance of this gable wall. It could have had a smaller window opening, but it could also have had a larger opening for a horse or possibly a cart. Rather than speculate, it is considered appropriate to accept that an intervention has occurred and retain this with glazed infill.

The rainwater goods have been mostly lost, however there are some small sections of half-round metal guttering on brackets fixed directly into the brickwork. The proposal seeks to reflect this simple approach by proposing black metal rainwater goods, with rise and fall brackets fixed into the brickwork. This detail is common within the district.

All windows and doors are proposed to be in timber, which reflects the material that would have originally been used. The windows will be of the flush casement type, which again reflects the simple detailing that would have existed.

The original roof covering has been lost and replaced by corrugated iron sheets. Details of the original covering are not known to us. The building is however modest in both size and detailing and this being the case it is proposed that clay pantiles be used for the conversion. These have been available locally for decades and better reflect the utilitarian nature of this barn. This would also relate well to La Castagna where the north wing (highest status) has a slate covering, but the south and west wings have pantile coverings (the south wing is believed to have had a pantile covering prior to the conversion works).

In summary, the design proposes to retain the existing walls, including their fenestration pattern. The proposed new materials seek to reinstate and harmonize with the original fabric. The proposed roof covering will be contextually appropriate for both the La Castagna farmstead and the wider agricultural environment. We therefore conclude that the impact upon the building and site should be acceptable when balanced against the positive benefit of providing a dwelling and ensuring the longevity of the barn.

Demolition statement:

The proposed works would not require the demolition of any part of the barn, other than reopening former openings.

Flood Risk Assessment:

The Environment Agency Flood Risk Map identifies the site being within flood zones 1 and 2, with the barn itself appearing to be within flood zone 1. A site-specific Flood Risk Assessment is included as part of this application.

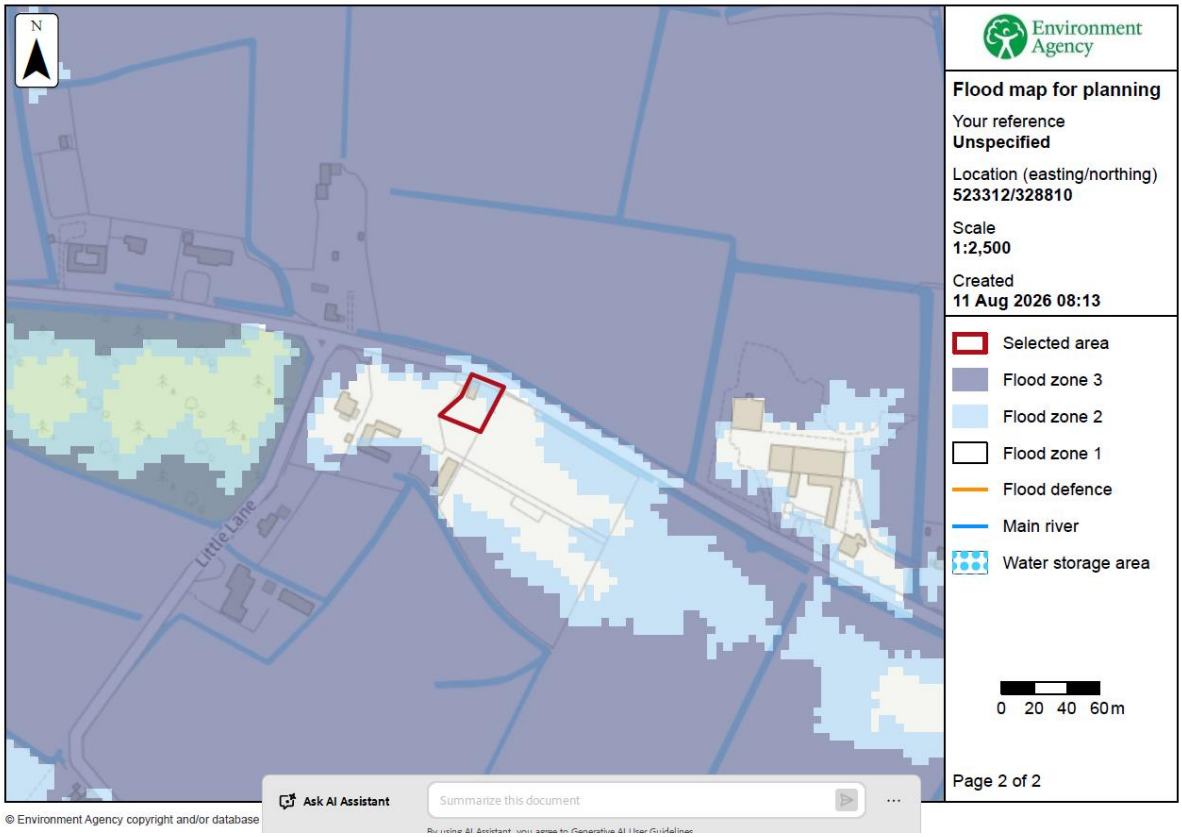


Fig 07. Flood Risk Map for the site.

Development Proposal:

The proposal would include the following:

1. The conversion of the barn to form as single residential dwelling.

2. Thermal and services upgrades to the barn to facilitate the conversion. Intervention to the external envelope is however minimized by reusing existing openings for windows etc.

3. The formation of a new vehicular and pedestrian access from Cheal Road. The provision of a drive and parking.

4. The formation of a residential curtilage by installing some new boundary treatments. These are of timber post and rail construction to match the existing.

5. The lowering of the ground level adjacent the south end of the building to reduce moisture ingress and protect the building fabric. This would be done using either traditional brickwork, or timber sleepers set into the ground.

6. External works to create suitable access and provision for the storage of waste, recycling, and drainage.

Site Appraisal

Details of the site and general context have been described above. From those findings the following statements relative to the site are believed true.

1. The building is of some architectural and historic importance in that it is an example of an early C20 agricultural building in a rural setting. Reuse of the building would ensure its conservation.

2. The building appears to be sound and the walls true and plumb. The construction is substantial and is suited for conversion.

3. The barn is sufficiently distant from neighbouring barns to not present any conflicts with neighbouring uses.

4. The barn is of adequate dimensions to accommodate a 3 person, 2 bedroom dwelling according with the DGLG Technical housing standards – nationally described space standards, even allowing for thermal upgrade linings internally. The barn does not need to be extended to achieve the minimum sizes required.

5. There is sufficient land available to provide an appropriately sized garden adjacent the barn.

Overall Summary

The proposals would provide a new use for the barn which would ensure its longevity and would continue to form part of the farmstead in the way that it has likely done for at least 100 years. The proposal would appear to meet all of the requirements of Policy 23 of the SELLP and if permitted to be converted under this policy would provide another home at a time when there is clearly great demand.

END