



DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

PROPOSED DWELLING INVOLVING THE DEMOLITION OF EXISTING AGRICULTURAL BUILDING

AT

**185 AVENUE FARM ROAD
SUTTON BRIDGE**

FOR

MR AND MRS GRUNDY

Job No. SE-2231

May 2026

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Design and Access Statement supports the application for the erection of a 2-storey, 4-bed dwellign involving demolition of the existing agricultural building. The application site is located at 185 Avenue Farm Road, Sutton Bridge.

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2.0 CONTEXT & PROPOSAL

2.1 SITE CONTEXT

The application site is positioned in a rural location, due north of the village of Sutton Bridge. It comprises an existing agricultural building which is located to the north of the cluster of buildings which comprise the existing farm holding.

The application site lies outside of any defined development boundary and is within Flood Zone 3 of the Environment Agency Flood Maps for Planning.

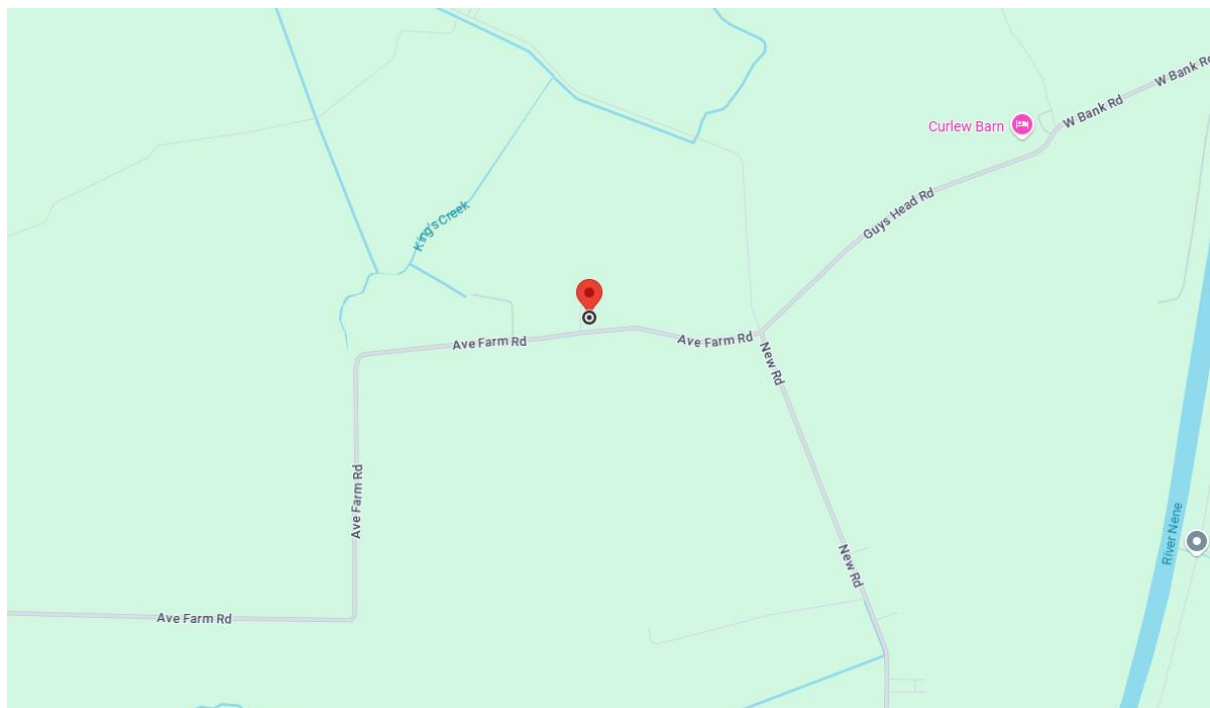


Figure 1: Digital Location Map (Courtesy of Google Earth)

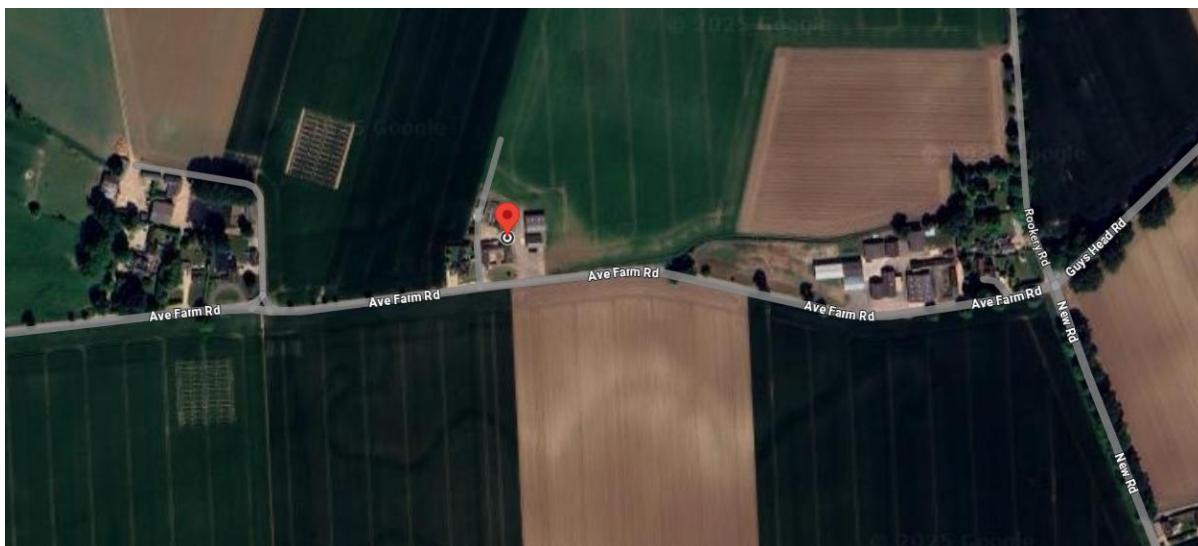


Figure 2: Digital Satellite Image (Courtesy of Google Earth)

2.2 HISTORY

HPE-0211-26 – Proposed replacement dwelling following Class Q approval for conversion of an existing agricultural building on site into a dwelling – See ‘Background’ 25.03.2026;

H18-0936-25: (Full Application) Demolition of existing agricultural building (with Class Q prior approval H18-0314-25) and erection of 2-storey 4-bed dwelling – Refused 26.11.2025;

H18-0314-25: (Prior Approval) Proposed Ban Conversion – prior approval granted 15.05.2025.

2.3 BACKGROUND

Preapplication advice for a similar proposal to demolish the existing agricultural building and to replace it with a 2-storey dwelling was submitted under reference HPE-0211-26. In its consideration of the proposal, the LPA noted the following (my summary):

The site lies outside the defined settlement boundary of Sutton Bridge and is therefore considered to be within the open countryside in planning policy terms under the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (SELLP). Policy 1 of the SELLP identifies the countryside as the least sustainable location for development, where proposals are only supported where they are necessary for a rural location or where they demonstrate wider economic, environmental or community benefits. As such, the principle of new residential development in this location would not normally be supported due to the site’s isolated position and reliance on private car travel.

Notwithstanding this policy position, the site benefits from a fallback position through the previously approved Class Q barn conversion under application H18-0314-25. The key consideration is therefore whether the proposed replacement dwelling represents a clear “betterment” over the approved fallback scheme in terms of design, visual impact and overall site enhancement.

The proposal seeks to replace the existing agricultural building with a contemporary two-storey dwelling. While the scheme has been revised and reduced in scale from a previously refused proposal, concerns remain regarding the overall bulk, length and massing of the replacement dwelling when compared to both the existing building and the approved Class Q conversion. Officers considered that the proposal does not yet sufficiently reflect the form and proportions of the existing barn, particularly due to the extent of the two-storey element, and therefore it is unclear whether the development would represent an overall visual improvement within the countryside setting.

The site is located within an open rural landscape, although there are neighbouring dwellings to the west. The removal of unattractive lean-to additions to the existing barn is acknowledged as a positive aspect of the scheme, and the revised proposal demonstrates some improvement over the previously refused application. However, officers advised that further amendments would be required, including reducing the scale of the two-storey element and better defining the residential curtilage to prevent unnecessary encroachment into the countryside.

In terms of residential amenity, the proposal was considered acceptable. The dwelling would not result in unacceptable overlooking, overshadowing or overbearing impacts on neighbouring properties and would provide an appropriate level of internal and external amenity for future occupants, in accordance with Policies 2 and 3 of the SELLP and Section 12 of the NPPF.

The proposal was also considered acceptable in highway safety terms. No changes are proposed to the existing access, adequate parking and turning areas are provided within the site, and Lincolnshire County Council Highways raised no objections. The scheme therefore accords with Policies 2, 3 and 36 of the SELLP and Section 9 of the NPPF.

The site lies within Flood Zone 3 and a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment would be required to demonstrate that the development can be made safe for its lifetime through appropriate mitigation measures, including raised finished floor levels. Subject to a satisfactory FRA, it was considered likely that the proposal could satisfy the sequential and exception tests set out within the NPPF and Policy 4 of the SELLP.

In relation to the previous application, ecological matters were also considered acceptable. The proposal is likely exempt from Biodiversity Net Gain requirements as a self-build/custom build dwelling, subject to a legal agreement securing this status. Previous ecological assessments identified low ecological value within the existing buildings and no significant impacts on protected species are anticipated, subject to mitigation measures including sensitive lighting design and the provision of bat and bird boxes.

In relation to land contamination on the previous application, the Council's Environmental Protection team requested a Phase 2 contamination assessment to be secured by condition, despite a previous Tier 1 assessment identifying limited contamination risks.

Overall, officers concluded that whilst the revised proposal represented an improvement over the previously refused scheme, it had not yet been clearly demonstrated that the replacement dwelling would provide a sufficient betterment over the approved Class Q fallback scheme. Further amendments to reduce the scale and bulk of the dwelling were therefore recommended before officer support could be provided.

2.4 PROPOSAL

The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a 2-storey 4-bed dwelling involving the demolition of the existing agricultural building on site. The proposal represents a similar scheme to that which was considered under pre-application HPE-211-26.

The proposal is positioned on a similar footprint to the existing building, which is that which was approved for residential conversion under H18-0314-25. The proposal retains the characteristic 'U' shaped footprint of the existing building and includes first floor accommodation as well as a single-storey rear projection. The form and character of the building will remain very much as a rural building conversion, rather than an urban or suburban domestic property.

Critically, this extends the accommodation available within the property to 4 bedrooms, rather than that single-bedroom which was approved under H18-0314-25.

Parking will remain to the front of the site and there are no proposed changes to the existing access which will be used to serve the development.

2.5 PRINCIPLE

The principle of residential development on the site has already been established through the prior approval granted under application reference H18-0314-25 for the change of use of the existing agricultural building to a dwellinghouse under Class Q of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order.

Whilst the site lies within the countryside under the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (SELLP), the fallback position created by the extant Class Q approval is a material consideration in assessing the acceptability of the current proposal. Through the pre-application process, the Local Planning Authority advised that any replacement dwelling should demonstrate a clear “betterment” over the approved Class Q conversion scheme in terms of design quality, functionality and overall sustainability.

The current proposal seeks to deliver a significantly improved form of residential accommodation when compared with the approved conversion. Under the Class Q approval, the building retained a substantial footprint but provided only a single bedroom at first-floor level, resulting in a poor relationship between the scale of the dwelling and the level of accommodation provided, which is akin to a family home. The approved layout therefore offered limited flexibility for modern family living and raised concerns regarding its long-term functionality and viability.

By contrast, the proposed dwelling provides a coherent and balanced internal arrangement, including four bedrooms at first-floor level, creating a form of accommodation that is better suited to the needs of modern occupants. This approach aligns with the objectives of the National Design Guide, which promotes homes that are adaptable, durable and capable of meeting the changing needs of occupants over time.

Importantly, the provision of substantial first-floor accommodation also delivers a significantly enhanced level of flood refuge. In accordance with Section 14 of the NPPF development in areas at risk of flooding must be safe for its lifetime. The accompanying Flood Risk Assessment identifies the importance of safe refuge accommodation at upper floor level, and the proposal responds positively to this requirement by providing meaningful and practical refuge space for future occupants in the event of flooding.

The proposal also represents an improvement in sustainability terms. A replacement dwelling can achieve significantly higher standards of insulation, energy efficiency and sustainable construction than would reasonably be achievable through the conversion and retrofitting of the existing agricultural structure. The scheme therefore provides environmental benefits through improved

building performance and reduced energy demand, consistent with the broader sustainability objectives of the NPPF and Policies 2 and 3 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan.

The proposal represents a clear improvement over the approved Class Q fallback position through improved design quality, better living accommodation, enhanced flood resilience and superior sustainability credentials. It is therefore submitted that the principle of the proposed development is acceptable.

2.6 FLOOD RISK

Section 14 of the NPPF requires a sequential approach, directing new development to land at lowest risk of flooding in the first instance unless it can be demonstrated that no land is available to accommodate the proposal.

The application site is located within land identified as Flood Zone 3 and is therefore in an area at highest risk of flooding. However as this proposal is for the redevelopment of an existing site which will be an improvement on the current situation, there are no alternative sites available which could accommodate the development proposed.

The application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment which demonstrates that the proposal is technically acceptable in terms of flood risk.



Figure 3 : Extract from Environment Agency Flood Maps for Planning

3.0 DESIGN

3.1 USE & AMOUNT

In terms of use, the development would provide a single C3 residential dwelling, replacing the existing agricultural building. The proposal therefore continues the established residential conversion trajectory previously accepted under prior approval H18-0314-25, albeit through a replacement new-build approach rather than conversion.

In terms of amount, the dwelling is positioned on a similar footprint to the existing building, which itself was approved for residential use under the Class Q prior approval. The proposal retains the characteristic U-shaped footprint of the existing structure and introduces a combination of two-storey accommodation and a single-storey rear projection.



Figure 4: Location Plan

3.2 LAYOUT, SCALE AND APPEARANCE

The proposed dwelling is arranged on a footprint broadly consistent with the existing agricultural building on site, which benefits from prior approval for residential conversion under H18-0314-25. The scheme retains the characteristic U-shaped layout of the existing structure, reflecting its established rural form and responding to the pattern of development already present on the site.

The internal arrangement introduces a more efficient residential layout, providing four bedrooms at first-floor level together with associated living accommodation. A single-storey rear projection is also incorporated, but the overall arrangement remains closely aligned with the existing building footprint, ensuring that the development continues to occupy a contained and logical position within the site.

The proposed dwelling is two-storey in height, reflecting a modest increase in scale compared to the existing agricultural building. However, the overall massing has been carefully designed to remain proportionate to the established footprint and rural context.

The building does not seek to introduce excessive height or suburban-scale expansion but instead retains a form that is comparable to a converted agricultural building. This approach ensures that the proposal responds appropriately to its countryside setting in accordance with Policy 2 and Policy 3 of the SELLP which require development to be appropriate in scale, siting and design, and to respect local character.

The proposal also aligns with the NPPF, particularly Section 12, which requires developments to achieve high-quality design that is sympathetic to local context and reinforces local distinctiveness.

The appearance of the proposed dwelling is deliberately influenced by rural building typologies, reflecting the form and character of traditional agricultural structures rather than introducing suburban residential design. The retained U-shaped form and simple massing ensure that the building continues to read as a converted rural structure within the landscape.

The design avoids overly domestic detailing and instead adopts a restrained architectural approach appropriate to its countryside location. This approach is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework, which seeks to ensure that developments are visually attractive, function well, and respond positively to their surroundings, as well as the design principles set out in the National Design Guide.



Figure 5: Proposed site plan

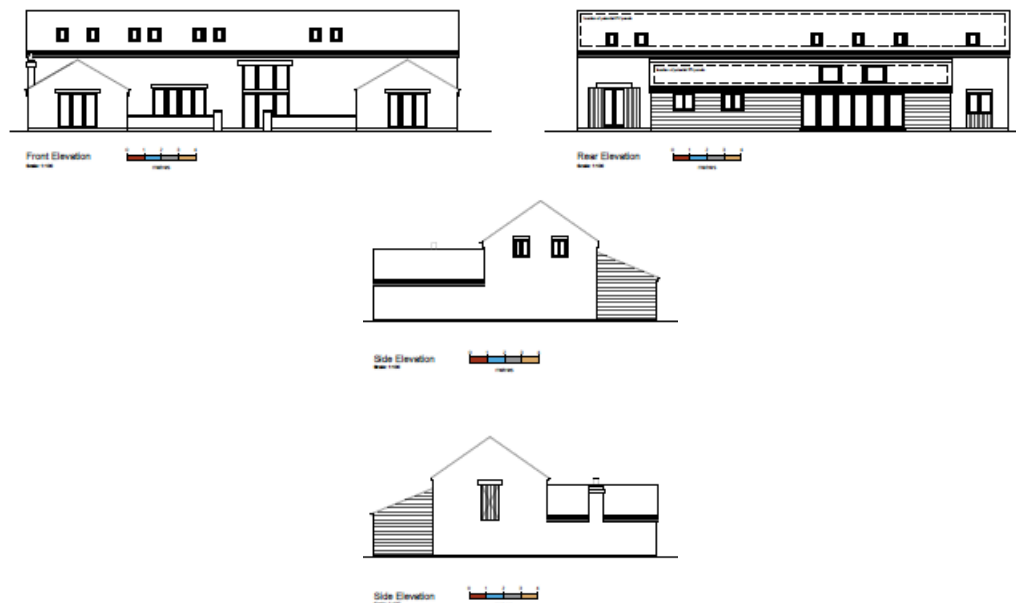


Figure 6: Proposed elevations

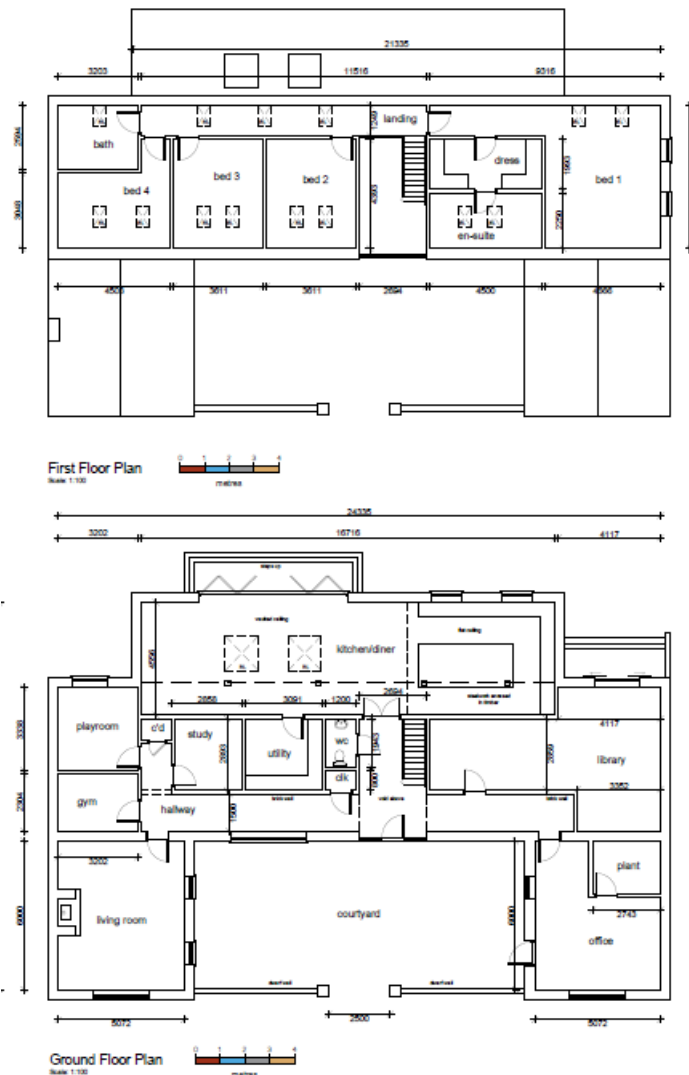


Figure 7: Proposed plans

3.3 LANDSCAPING

The proposed development is exempt from Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements on the basis that it constitutes a self-build dwelling. In accordance with the relevant provisions of the Environment Act 2021 and associated secondary legislation, self-build and custom-build housing proposals are excluded from mandatory BNG requirements, subject to appropriate evidence of self-build status being provided and secured. The application therefore does not include a BNG assessment or metric calculation. Notwithstanding this exemption, the proposal will still deliver environmental considerations through the replacement of an existing agricultural building with a new dwelling designed to modern standards, offering improved energy efficiency and opportunities for appropriate ecological enhancements where required through planning condition.

4.0 ACCESS

4.1 SITE ACCESS

The proposed development will utilise the existing site access, which previously formed part of the approved Class Q prior approval application (H18-0314-25) and has therefore already been accepted in principle as an appropriate means of access to serve a residential use. Furthermore, the suitability of the existing access has been acknowledged in both the determination of previous applications and within the Local Planning Authority's pre-application advice, which raised no objection in highways terms. The proposal does not seek to intensify the use of the access beyond that already established and is not anticipated to result in any material increase in vehicle movements. As such, there would be no adverse impact on highway safety or the local road network. The scheme therefore accords with Policy 3 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan, which seeks to ensure safe and appropriate access to development, as well as Paragraph 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which states that development should only be refused on highway grounds where there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the residual cumulative impacts would be severe.