SWANN EDWARDS ARCHITECTURE

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

PROPOSED BARN CONVERSION TO FORM 3x RESIDENTIAL UNITS

AT

BIRDS DROVE,
SUTTON ST JAMES
SPALDING,
PE12 0JY

FOR

MR. ALMEY

Job No. SE-2475 **March 2026**

Swann Edwards Architecture Limited - Registered in England & Wales No. 07943586.
Place of Business: Black Barn, Fen Road, Guyhirn, Wisbech, Cambs. PE13 4AA
t 01945 450694 **e** info@swannedwards.co.uk **w** www.swannedwards.co.uk
Registered Office: 22-26 King Street King's Lynn PE30 1HJ.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Design and Access Statement supports the change of use of the agricultural barn at Birds Drove, Sutton St James, from agricultural to residential under Class Q of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).

It is proposed to convert the existing barn on site to provide three residential units.

2.0 CONTEXT

2.1 Site location

The application site is located at Birds Drove, Sutton St James. It is located on the western side of the highway. The site is within a rural location, characterised by active agricultural fields.



Figure 1: Aerial photograph of the site courtesy of google. Map data: Imagery ©2026 Airbus, Maxar Technologies, Map data ©2026.

2.2 Site description

The site comprises of a detached barn which lays facing east. The barn is made up of a steel frame and has low level masonry walls, finished in a metal sheet cladding and has a pitched roof finished in metal sheet roof cladding.

The proposal is to convert the existing agricultural barn under a prior approval application.

Currently the building has minimal equipment and produce but the building in question is still solely used for agricultural purposes.

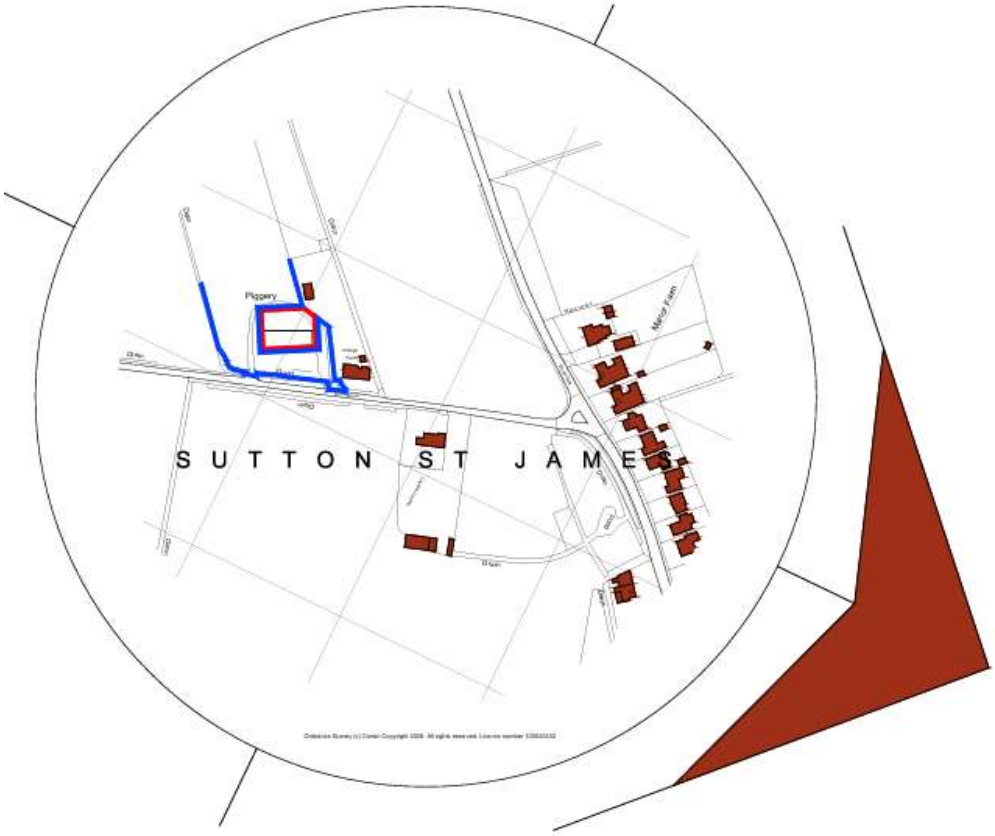


Figure 2: Location Plan

3.0 LEGISLATION & CONTEXT

3.1 The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, Class Q – *agricultural buildings to dwelling houses*

The proposal is submitted under Class Q of the GPDO. The requirements of Class Q as set out in the GDPO along with an appraisal of how the proposal complies with the legislation are set out in the table below:

Class Q – agricultural building to dwellinghouses

Permitted development

Q. Development consisting of –

(a) a change of use of a building and any land within its curtilage from a use as an agricultural building to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order; or

(b) development referred to in paragraph (a) together with building operations reasonably necessary to convert the building referred to in paragraph (a) to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of that Schedule.

Development not permitted

Q1. *Development is not permitted by Class Q if —*

Q	Legislation	Proposal
a)	a change of use of— (i)a building that is part of an established agricultural unit and any land within that building's curtilage, or (ii)a former agricultural building that was (but is no longer) part of an established agricultural unit and any land within that building's curtilage,	The existing building has always remained in agricultural use and the proposal is for the change of use of the building to residential.
	to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of Schedule 1 to the Use Classes Order,	
b)	development referred to in sub-paragraph (a) together with the extension of the building referred to in sub-paragraph (a), or	Yes
c)	development referred to in sub-paragraph (a) together with building operations reasonably necessary to convert the building referred to in sub-paragraph (a) to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of that Schedule or to extend that building	

Development not permitted Q.1
Development is not permitted by Class Q if —

Q1	Legislation	Proposal
a)	in the case of a site that is part of an established agricultural unit, the site was not part of the established agricultural unit— (i)on 24th July 2023, or (ii)where the site became part of the established agricultural unit after 24th July 2023, for a period of at least 10 years before the date development under Class Q begins,	The site is still in use as an agricultural building and this section of the site has always remained in agricultural use.
b)	in the case of a site that was (but is no longer) part of an established agricultural unit— (i)the site was part of an established agricultural unit on 24th July 2023, (ii)where the site ceased to be part of an established agricultural unit after 24th July 2023, the site has not been part of the established agricultural unit for a period of at least 10 years before the date development under Class Q begins, or (iii)since ceasing to be part of an established agricultural unit, the site has been used for any non-agricultural purpose	n/a
c)	the floor space of any dwellinghouse developed under Class Q having a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of Schedule 1 to the Use Classes Order exceeds 150 square metres	The proposed dwellings will have a floor area of less than 150sqm each.
d)	the development under Class Q, together with any previous development under Class Q, within the original limits of an established agricultural unit (see paragraph Q.3(2) of this Part) would result in— (i)the cumulative number of separate dwellinghouses having a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of Schedule 1 to the Use Classes Order exceeding 10, or (ii)the cumulative floor space of dwellinghouses having a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of Schedule 1 to the Use Classes Order exceeding 1,000 square metres,	The proposed dwellings will have a floor area of less than 150sqm each.
e)	the site is occupied under an agricultural tenancy, unless the express consent of both the landlord and the tenant has been obtained;	No
f)	less than 1 year before the date development begins— i) an agricultural tenancy over the site has been terminated, and ii) the termination was for the purpose of carrying out development under Class Q, unless both the landlord and the tenant have agreed in writing that the site is no longer required for agricultural use;	There has been no need to end an agricultural tenancy to facilitate the development.
g)	development under Class A(a) or Class B(a) of Part 6 of this Schedule (agricultural buildings and operations)	There has been no other development carried out under

		has been carried out on the established agricultural unit during the period which is 10 years before the date development under Class Q begins,	Class A(a) of Class B(a) of Part 6 on this agricultural unit since March 2011.
h)		the development would result in the external dimensions of the building extending beyond the external dimensions of the existing building at any given point, other than— (i)extension of the building allowed by paragraph Q.1(i); (ii)protrusions of up to 0.2 metres to accommodate building operations allowed by paragraph Q.1(j)(i),	There are no proposed extensions to the buildings or protrusions which exceed the existing external dimensions.
i)		the development under Class Q(b) would result in an extension that— (i)has more than one storey, (ii)is sited anywhere other than to the rear of the existing building, (iii)extends beyond the rear wall of the existing building by more than 4 metres, (iv)has eaves the height of which exceed the height of the eaves of the existing building, (v)is higher than whichever is the lower of— (aa)the highest part of the roof of the existing building, or (bb)a height of 4 metres above the ground, (vi)extends beyond a wall that forms a side or principal elevation of the existing building, or (vii)would be sited on land that, before the development under Class Q(b), is not covered by a hard surface that was provided on the land by virtue of any development, and— (aa)the hard surface was not provided on the land on or before 24th July 2023, or (bb)where the hard surface was provided on the land after 24th July 2023, the hard surface has not been situated on the land for a period of at least 10 years before the date development under Class Q(b) begins	n/a
j)		the development under Class Q(c) would consist of building operations other than— (i)the installation or replacement of— (aa)windows, doors, roofs, or exterior walls, or (bb)water, drainage, electricity, gas or other services, to the extent reasonably necessary for the building to function as a dwellinghouse, and (ii)partial demolition to the extent reasonably necessary to carry out building operations allowed by paragraph Q.1(j)(i),	The proposal will include the provision on the upgrade of the walls and roof, installation of doors, windows and services to the extent that is reasonably necessary for the building to function as a dwelling.
k)		the site is on article 2(3) land,	The site is not within a conservation area or marked as a national park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
l)		the site is, or forms part of— (i)a site of special scientific interest; (ii)a safety hazard area; (iii)a military explosives storage area,	The site is not within a SSSI, within a safety hazard area or a military explosives area.
m)		the site is, or contains, a scheduled monument	There is no scheduled monument on the site.
n)		the building is a listed building,	The building is not listed.

o)	the existing building, excluding any proposed extension under Class Q(b) but including any proposed building operations under Class Q(c), would not be capable of complying with the nationally described space standard issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government on 27th March 2015(1) as read with the notes dated 19th May 2016 which apply to it, or	The building meets the nationally prescribed space standards.
p)	the building does not have suitable existing access to a public highway.	Suitable access can be achieved.

The above demonstrates that the proposal complies with Class Q of the GPDO and therefore planning permission is not required for the change of use as set out in the application.

4.0 CONDITIONS

4.1 Q.2

Under Q.2 of Class Q, the submission requires a determination from the Local Planning Authority as to whether prior approval of the authority will be required with regards to a set of criteria as set out and appraised in the table below:

Q.2	Legislation	Proposal
a)	Transport and highways impacts of the development;	The development will not increase the amount of traffic to the site over and above what could be generated by the existing agricultural use and to the extent which would cause harm or safety issues to the public highway.
b)	Noise impacts of the development;	The proposal is for residential development and therefore would not typically result in noise disturbance.
c)	Contamination risks on the site;	There are no known contamination risks on site.
d)	Flooding risks on the site;	The site is located within Flood Zone 3 of the Environment Agency Maps and thus will be supported by a flood risk report.
e)	Whether the location or siting of the building makes it otherwise impractical or undesirable for the building to change from agricultural use to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of the Schedule to the Ise Classes Order;	The dwellings will be accommodated in the existing barn structure. The use of this part of the site for residential purposes will not compromise the use of the remainder of the land beyond the buildings in terms of sensitivity issues which may prejudice the use of the neighbouring land.
f)	The design or appearance of the building; and	The appearance of the buildings will remain largely the same. Existing openings will be used where possible and new openings will be inserted only where necessary.
g)	The provision of natural light in all habitable rooms of the dwellinghouses.	All habitable rooms within the development will benefit from natural light.

The above demonstrates that prior approval of the Local Planning Authority is not required for the change of use.

5.0 APPENDICES



Appendix 1: Extract from Environment Agency Flood Maps for Planning



Appendix 2: Proposed site plan