

SUPPORTING STATEMENT INCORPORATING HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

For

CONVERSION OF BARNES TO SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DWELLING

At

**LOWGATE FARM
LOWGATE
TYDD ST. MARY
LINCOLNSHIRE
PE13 5PF**

For

MR NATHAN DACK



PLANNING APPLICATION ISSUE

Oglesby & Limb Ltd
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O&L

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Application Summary

- This application seeks full planning permission in respect of the redevelopment of brick-built agricultural barns for residential use.
- The existing site was originally a farmstead comprising a farmhouse and a cluster of outbuildings, mainly barns. The farmhouse was demolished years ago, but several of the original barn structures remain. Other buildings were added during the 20th Century, some are in agricultural use, some are derelict.
- The site is in the countryside; however, it stands immediately adjacent to the Settlement Development Boundary for Tydd St. Mary.
- The barns proposed for conversion are considered to be of historic value.

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Introduction

In August 2024 Oglesby & Limb Ltd was commissioned to undertake a feasibility study to assess the potential to redevelop a cluster of brick-built agricultural barns on a site on Lowgate in Tydd St. Mary. The family has owned and worked the farm for several generations, and the owner would now like to develop this barn to provide a home for his son and daughter-in-law together with their young family.

The works would require the conversion and refurbishment of two barns, one (barn A) is to be converted to a dwelling, the other (barn B) will be used for garaging and storage. The barn buildings are of substantial construction (traditional brick walls and solid roof) and are of sufficient size to accommodate all areas required. It is considered that the buildings are of historic merit and are worthy of retention, particularly because small barn buildings of this type are a finite resource within the district.

The document considers various aspects of the site to assess its characteristics and presents information to assist SHDC's Planning Department in determining an application for full planning permission.

Site Analysis

Location

The general location of the site is approximately 0.95km south-west of the village centre of Tydd St. Mary. Specifically, the site is located on the west side of Lowgate, opposite the last dwelling east of the road. The broader site comprises seven agricultural buildings which are generally located within the central or west sides of the site (fig. 01). The buildings proposed for conversion stand in the south-west corner of the site. The overall land area is circa 0.268 hectares (sts). The buildings for conversion were originally used in association with the open yard and comprise cattle areas, stables and storage. The site can be located via the following means:

- Nationally recognized references:
- Grid reference: TF 43482 17994
 - Easting / Northing: 543482, 317994
 - Latitude, Longitude (degs, mins, secs): 52°44'26"N, 000°07'26"W
 - What3Words: tomato.grinders.hill
- Refer to drawing A1728-01 for the location and extent.

Size and topography

The site is relatively flat and level and extends to approximately 2680m² in area (0.268 hectares - sts). The frontage dimension (north to south) is approximately 35m, the depth where the barns stand is estimated at 82m. The barns stand in the south-west corner of the site. (fig. 01). There are trees along the Lowgate frontage and across the north side of the site. There are some shrubs and trees between the buildings; these are mostly poor-quality self-set trees.



Fig. 01 – Aerial view of the site from the South-east.

Access to the site

Vehicular and pedestrian access to the site is along its east side, directly from Lowgate (Fig. 02). Across the front of the site is across a culverted drain, the culvert extends to the full site frontage. Lowgate has a 30mph speed limit to the stretch abutting this site, and there is good visibility in both directions from the entrance.



Fig. 02 – Access to the site is directly from Lowgate.

Site Boundaries

The site boundaries are all relatively clearly defined, those listed below relate to the wider Lowgate Farm site, of which part is proposed to be converted to residential use.

The east (frontage) boundary is defined by a timber fence, beyond which there is a grassed area above the culverted drain (fig. 03). There are large, established willow trees in this area. The grassed area runs up to the edge of Lowgate.

The south boundary is currently open to the abutting field, which is in agricultural use (fig. 04).

The west boundary is currently open to the abutting field, which is in agricultural use (fig. 05).

The north boundary is defined by a drain that runs east to west. At its west end it joins the drain that follows the line of Lowgate. Inside the line of the drain there is a dense strip of trees and inside this are the remnants of an orchard (fig. 06).



Fig. 03 – East boundary – fencing, trees and grass.



Fig. 04 – South boundary – open to fields.



Fig. 05 – West boundary – open to fields.



Fig. 06 – North boundary – trees and drain.

Views into, through and across the site

There are publicly accessible views into the site from the south-west, south and east. The distant views from the south-west (fig. 07) and south (fig. 08) are available from along Barton Lane and Lowgate when approaching from the south. From these viewpoints the barns are seen across an open field, with trees as a backdrop. Further north along Lowgate there is a closer view into the site from the east (fig. 09), though this is partially obscured by the large willow trees along the drain-side. The dense tree belt along the north side of the site obscures all views from that direction (fig. 10). Views from the west and north-west are only available from agricultural land.



Fig. 07 – View of the site from the South-west.



Fig. 08 – View of the site from the South.



Fig. 09 – Trees partially obscure views from the East.



Fig. 10 – Trees obscure views in from the North.

There are no views through the site as they are all obscured by buildings and trees.

There are views out to the south (fig. 11) and west (fig. 12) from the barns proposed for conversion. In all cases these are across open fields, with no nearby development.



Fig. 11 – View across open fields to the South.



Fig. 12 – View across open fields to the West.

Use and development of the site

The site is currently used for agricultural purposes, though some buildings are no longer in active use. The site comprises seven blocks of which two (A & B) are being converted, as follows (fig. 13):

Block A (fig. 14) This block is proposed for conversion to a dwelling. This block has been altered over time with the roof being enlarged to increase the span of the building, presumably to accommodate larger farming implements.

Block B (fig. 15) This is a brick-built barn and is located immediately east of block A. This is proposed to be used as garaging and storage.

Block C (fig. 16) sits at the south-west corner of the site and adjoins block A. This is a single storey brick-built barn with a pan tile roof. This has existed since before 1887 and is considered to be of historic value.

Block D (fig. 17) is a larger agricultural barn that sits adjacent and parallel to the west boundary and is clad in steel sheeting.

Block E (fig. 18) abuts block D and is perpendicular to it. This barn is of no historic interest.

Block F (fig. 19) sits in the centre of the site and is of concrete block construction with a corrugated steel sheet roof. This block is of no historic value.

Block G (fig. 20) is a single storey shed structure constructed of timber, that sits immediately east of block D. Again, this is of no historic value.

Between these blocks the site is mostly grassed, though there are gravel and hardstanding areas. The area to the north side of the site is overgrown but was originally an orchard. Some old apple trees remain, though the area is not managed.



Fig. 13 – Site view showing block locations.



Fig. 14 – Block A is a brick-built barn (C19).



Fig. 15 – Block B relocated brick-built barn (C19 & C20).



Fig. 16 – Block C is an enlarged brick-built barn (C19).



Fig. 17 – Block D is a larger, steel clad barn (C20).



Fig. 18 – Block E is a larger, steel clad barn (C20).



Fig. 19 – Block F is of concrete block construction



Fig. 20 – Block G is a timber shed (C20).

Use and development on land surrounding the site.

The land immediately to the north of the site is open fields in agricultural use, with no built development for at least 350m. The land immediately to the west of the site is open fields in agricultural use, with no built development for at least 1250m. The land immediately to the south of the site is open fields in agricultural use, with no built development for at least 120m. Beyond this distance there are detached dwellings, though development is sparse. To the east of the site, beyond Lowgate stands Lowgate House, but beyond this the land is again in agricultural use. There is built development on the east side of Lowgate, north of this site. This is frontage development, of private dwellings, which extends north to the centre of Tydd St. Mary.

Landscaping

The general wider context is one of open fields in agricultural use, divided by drains, droves and occasional hedgerows. The north section of the site has much tree growth, but beyond that hedges and trees are sparse.

Amenities

The village centre of Tydd St. Mary is approximately 1km north-east of the site. Located there are a shop, a school, a church and a public house.

The town of Long Sutton is 4.5km to the north and Wisbech is 9km to the south, both of which provide a wider range of amenities.

Architectural Context - general development

Lowgate House appears to be of similar age to the barns on the site and probably dates from the 19th Century. Most of the dwellings along Low Gate are however from the 20th Century and are relatively standard design from the latter part of that century.

Architectural Context – the barns

The barns proposed for conversion are typical of the construction found in utility buildings from the 19th Century.

Barn A is rectangular on plan measuring 22.4m long (internally) and 7.4m wide (internally). This barn was originally narrower; however, it had a steel frame inserted and was widened at some stage during the 20th Century. The walls are constructed of red brick, though bond varies due to there being many infill sections that post-date the original construction (fig. 21). Brick detailing is simple.

The original roof finishes and structure have been removed. The extant structure comprises timber trusses and the finish is corrugated iron sheet (fig. 22).

The north elevation of Barn A is completely open, to allow vehicle entry.



Fig. 21 – Brickwork varies due to later infills



Fig. 22 – Timber trusses and supporting steelwork.



Fig 23 – East elevation, part clad, part brickwork



Fig 24 – Open front, steel cladding to gable and roof

Barn B is again of traditional construction, albeit that it was reconstructed. The walls are constructed of red brick in English Garden Wall bond (3 courses of stretchers to one course headers) set in lime mortar (fig. 25). Detailing is simple with no projections or feature courses at either eaves or verge connections. There are two infilled openings to the west elevation in red brickwork.

The roof is finished in corrugated asbestos-cement sheets. Rainwater goods are absent. The roof structure is of simple timber construction. The structure is of traditional 'cut' form comprising loose rafters, a ridge board, purlins and ties (fig. 27). There are a pair of large, corrugated metal doors to the north elevation.



Fig 25 – Brickwork to west elevation with infilled openings



Fig 26 - Front elevation doors & gable cladding



Fig 27 – Timber trusses



Fig 28 – Brickwork to south elevation

Planning History

The SHDC Planning application search function indicates the following for this specific site:

H21-0961-16

Proposed New Dwellings (2 number).

Refused 23.11.16.

Reasons for refusal:

1. Situated within the open countryside in an unsustainable location and representing an unacceptable extension into open land.

The application sought approval for two new-build detached dwellings at the front of the site, immediately west of Lowgate. This was considered to be out of character (residential development is generally only to the east of the road). In addition, it was a proposal for two new buildings within the open countryside.

No further applications were found during this search.

Heritage Assessment

The barns proposed for conversion are not listed, but they are of considerable age and represent a reasonable example of small scale traditional agricultural buildings, typical of the area. The following investigations have therefore been undertaken.

Heritage Information

Historic Map Study

An historic map study for this site indicates that there has been development here in the form of a farmstead since at least as early as 1887. An early aerial photograph (circa 1940s) confirms development as it existed in the mid-20th Century. There are however anomalies concerning a block to the south of Block A which is visible on the 1905 map, but not on the maps before or after this. The aerial photo confirms its existence in the 1940s, however. Interestingly, the substantial barns to the east of Lowgate House on the opposite side of the road are visible on the photograph yet are not recorded on any of the maps.

Further details are provided below.

The Ordnance Survey Map of 1887

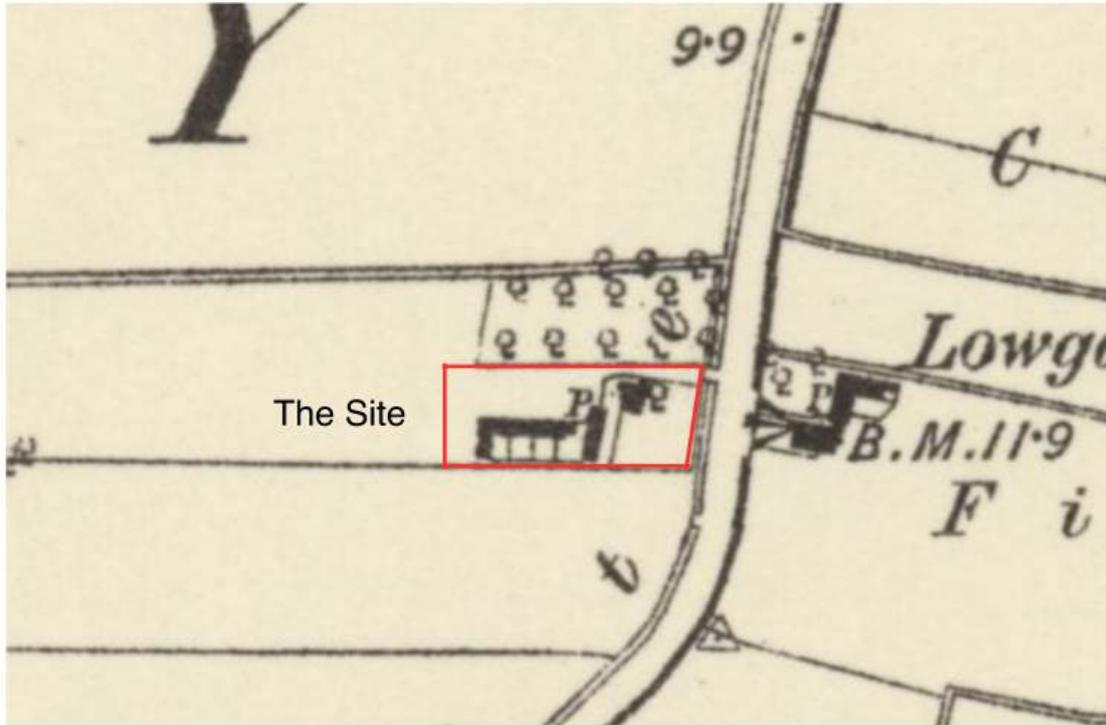


Fig. 27 – Detail of the Ordnance Survey Six-inch map published 1887.

This is the oldest map of the site found during the production of this report. This indicates blocks as follows:

The farmstead is already developed as part of Lowgate Farm.

The farmhouse is shown, this is the block furthest to the east within the red line.

The L-shaped block within the west side of the red line is the barn now proposed for conversion. At this date there is no enclosing block on the south side of the yard, but there are 3 yards clearly defined by walls.

There is a further block east of the L-shaped block which is known to have been another barn.

At this stage, the north area of the site is shown as being an orchard.

The Ordnance Survey Map of 1905

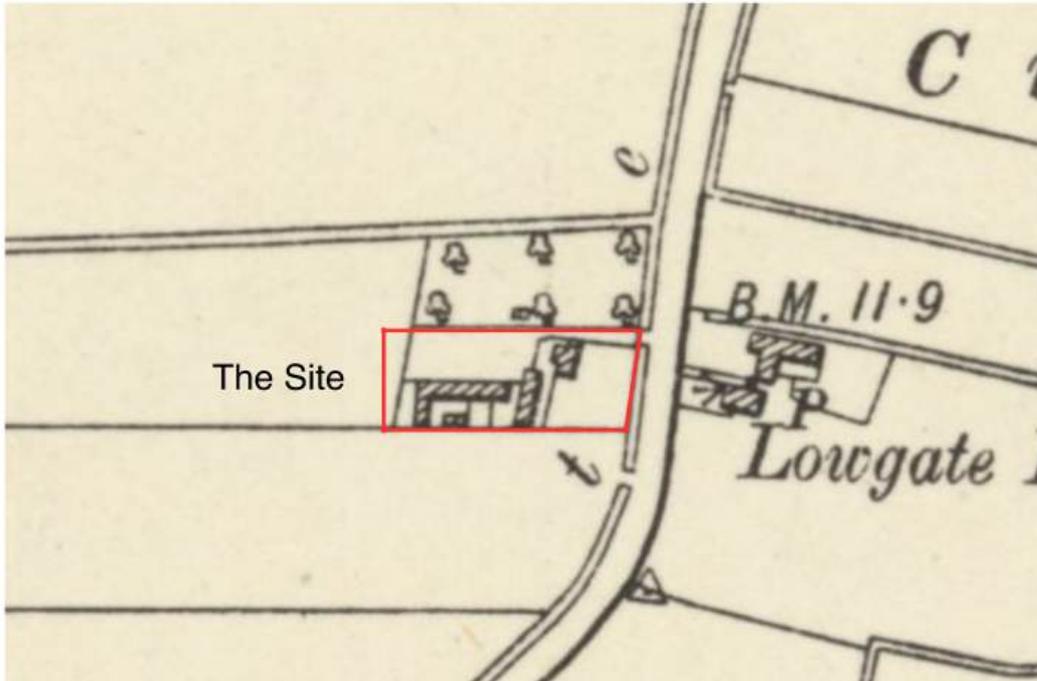


Fig. 28 – Detail of the Ordnance Survey Six-inch map published 1905.

This is the second oldest map of the site found during the production of this report. This indicates blocks as follows:

The details reflect those seen on the map produced in 1887 except that a further block is shown south of the L-shaped block. The centre and west enclosed yards have been combined to form a single, larger yard which is now defined on the south side by a further building.

At this stage, the north area of the site is still shown as being an orchard.

The Ordnance Survey Map of 1932



Fig. 29 – Detail of the Ordnance Survey Six-inch map published 1932.

This is the third oldest map of the site found during the production of this report. This indicates blocks as follows:

The details shown appear to conflict with those on earlier and later maps. Here the south building introduced on the 1905 map is omitted and the closed yards are not shown.

At this stage, the north area of the site is still shown as being an orchard.

The Ordnance Survey Map of 1953

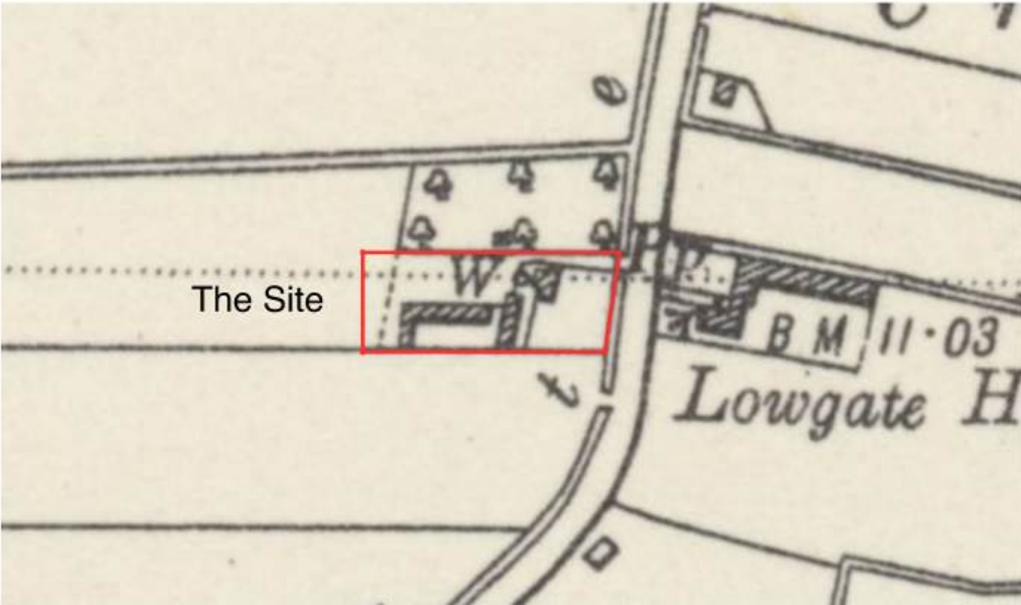


Fig. 30 – Detail of the Ordnance Survey Six-inch map published 1953.

This is the most recent historic map of the site found during the production of this report. This indicates blocks as follows:
The details shown appear to be exactly the same as shown on the 1932 edition.

Historic aerial photographs

Aerial image dated approximately 1940 to 1950



Fig. 31 – Aerial image circa 1940s – north to right of image.

This is the earliest aerial image found during the study and it is believed to date from the 1940s. This shows the barns proposed for conversion along the left side of the photograph. Also shown is a further barn to the left of block C, which no longer exists. At the time the photograph was taken, Block A has not been enlarged, and block B is in its original location. The photo also shows an enclosed yard enclosed by blocks A, C and the building to the south. The north side of the yard is enclosed by a fence and gate, one gate post of which appears to be extant in 2024. This photograph also shows the original dwelling.

Aerial image dated approximately 1999



Fig. 32 – Aerial image circa 1999 (Google Earth) – shows the site largely as it still exists in 2024.

This aerial image from Google Earth from 1999 shows development at that date. In terms of built development, this is the same as exists in 2024.

Aerial image dated approximately 2024



Fig. 33 – Aerial image circa 2024 (Google Earth).

This aerial image from Google Earth from 2024 shows development as it now exists. Since 1999 the central and south-east areas have been returned to grass and a few self-set trees have appeared between the buildings.

Current OS Mapping

The current OS map for the site is included as a separate drawing (A1728-01) and shows the site as it exists today.

Historic Local Knowledge

At present no further historic information has been gathered from local sources.

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 site has been developed since at least as early as 1887 and potentially several decades before that. The barns proposed for conversion were shown on the map of 1887 and are therefore assumed to be 19th Century construction. The barns feature traditional detailing and materials. It is therefore considered that they are of historic interest, albeit at local level.
2. Barn A again appears to have originated prior to 1887. The photograph from the 1940's indicates that the plan has been increased in dept since then. This would appear logical with the increased industrialization of farming and the associated need to store larger machinery since World War 2.
3. Barn B was reconstructed and relocated (slightly) in the 20th Century. Its appearance remains one of a traditional farm building.
4. Barn A has been a feature of the Tydd St. Mary landscape for over a century and are quite typical of 19th Century agricultural architecture. They are well matched to their setting which remains predominantly agricultural.
5. Barns A provides an overall footprint that is able to accommodate a large single-family dwelling. There is no pressure to extend the existing footprint, which would allow the overall visual mass to remain unchanged.
6. Barns A and B are of substantial construction. Barn B has solid brick walls to all sides and openings already exist that could be used for windows and doors. Barn A retains over 50% of its external brick walls. The north elevation was moved outward when the building footprint was increased and is now open sided. In summary these are substantial buildings that could be converted for the intended use.
7. The site is now under-utilized, and it is easy to imagine that these buildings will become derelict and overgrown if a sustainable use is not found for them. Should this happen, the site could become an eye sore.
8. The Opportunity exists to improve the site setting, ensure the longevity of traditional agricultural buildings and provide a family home.
9. A vehicular access point to the site from Lowgate already exists, and there is good visibility in both directions. The speed limit for the road is suitable for access to a dwelling.

Development Proposal:

The proposal would include the following:

1. The conversion of Barn A to form a single residential dwelling.
2. The conversion of Barn B to form garaging and storage.
3. Restoration works as required to implement the conversion.
4. The installation of boundary fencing.
5. Introduction of shrubs and planting to create a garden setting.

Planning Policy

Policy 23 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan appears very appropriate for this site. This policy covers the reuse of buildings in the countryside for residential use. The wording is as follows:

Policy 23: The Reuse of Buildings in the Countryside for Residential Use

Proposals for the conversion of existing buildings which are located outside defined settlement boundaries to residential use will be permitted provided that:

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.

It is considered that the proposal is capable of satisfying all criteria as follows:

1. The building has walls and roof intact and although it has not been maintained for many years there is no evidence of significant collapse. A structural report will be required at full application stage.
2. The building is typical of a small-scale Fenland farmstead from the 19th Century. This is a finite resource in the district and is worthy of retention.
3. The building is entirely in keeping with its agricultural setting.
4. The design can be prepared which is sympathetic and retains all features, using appropriate materials.
5. The development would enhance and maintain this setting, which would otherwise become derelict and overgrown.

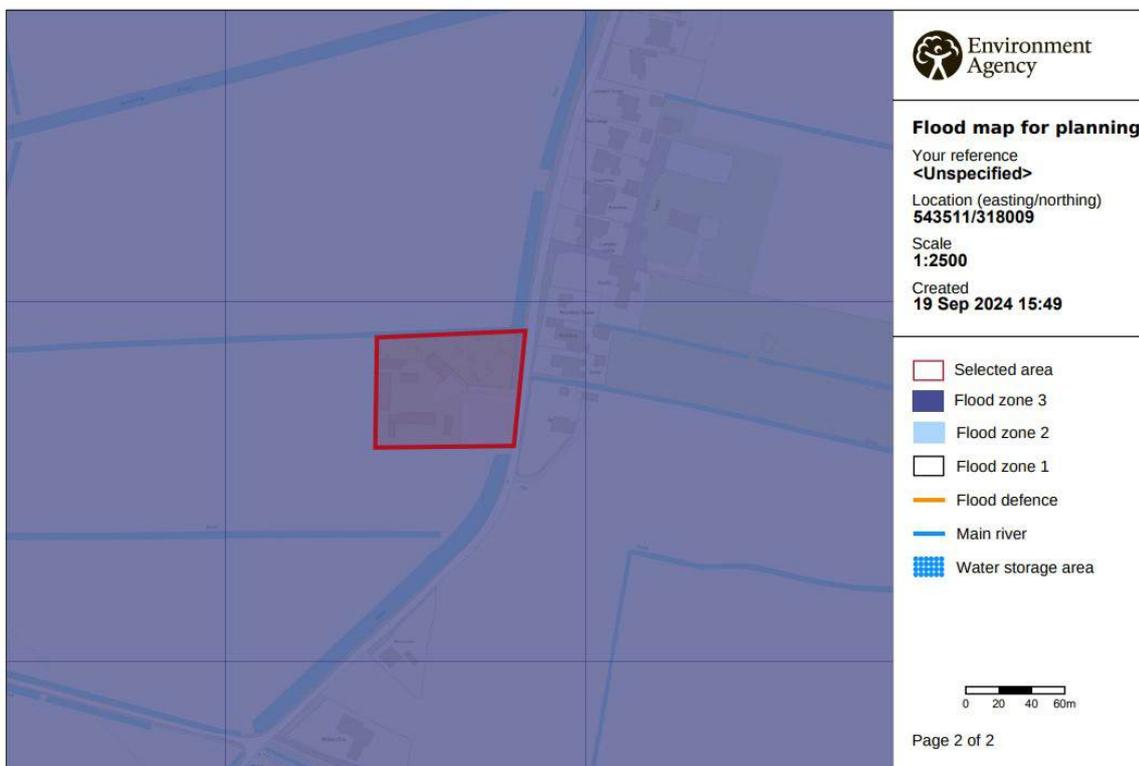
It is therefore considered that this site is well suited for conversion under Policy 23.

Demolition statement:

The development of this site would not require the demolition of any of the buildings that are considered to be of historic value.

Flood Risk Assessment:

The Environment Agency's Planning Flood Risk Map indicates that this site is entirely in flood zone 3. A site-specific flood risk assessment has been provided and is included with this enquiry.



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Fig. 34 – Map from Environment Agency website indicating site within Flood Zone 3.

Statement of Significance

Both barns appear to be shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1887 and are therefore considered to be of historical interest. The buildings are of simple construction and detailing typical of those found in utility buildings from this period.

Impact Assessment

The proposed works to the barns involve conversion of barn A to a dwelling and barn B to an associated garage and storage, all works take place within the existing footprint of both buildings without extending them.

The external brick walls are to be retained and rebuilt and repaired as required with traditional methods and materials. New window and door openings are to be formed re-using the former openings wherever possible.

The north elevation of barn A which is currently open will be infilled with vertical cladding coloured black behind the existing steel columns.

The roof will be re-covered with insulated corrugated metal sheeting to reflect that which is currently on the roof.

New metal rainwater goods will be installed on both buildings on drive-in gutter brackets similar to what exists on other buildings on the site.

Overall Summary

The foregoing report sets out the characteristics of the site and attempts to provide SHDC's Planning Department with information to assist it in considering the feasibility of potential development.

In summary, the barns proposed for conversion are of traditional form and construction and play their part within an agricultural fenland landscape. Whilst not spectacular, buildings of this nature are a finite resource in the district, but it is unrealistic to expect that new farming uses will be found for them, given the restrictive dimensions that they present. Conversion of Barn A to a dwelling would appear to be entirely in keeping with Policy 23 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan, because residential use suits the footprint and would ensure the survival of the buildings. There is much pressure to deliver new housing within the current political climate, and the conversion of the barns potentially provides a lower carbon solution to creating a dwelling on an already developed site.

END