

Job no. 097

DESIGN, ACCESS & PLANNING STATEMENT (Rev B)

Application: PROPOSED REPAIR, ALTERATION AND EXTENSION OF THE BARN & CART SHED, CLIFFE HOUSE FARM, CUBLEY, PENISTONE, SOUTH YORKSHIRE S36 9FR.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by *Inc. Architecture Ltd for and on behalf of Gemma Garnham and Kevin Cooper, in support of the planning application for the proposed repairs, alterations and extension of The Barn, Cliffe House Farm, Mortimer Road, Cubley, Penistone, South Yorkshire S36 9FR.
- 1.2 Cliffe House Farm lies on the southern edge of Cubley (**Fig. 01**), a former small hamlet lying a mile south of Penistone which, as a result of housing development from the mid-20th century, now lies within the town boundary. Penistone lies 14 miles north of Sheffield, 13 miles south-east of Huddersfield, 24 miles south of Leeds, 15 miles south-west of Wakefield and 7 miles west of Barnsley, just outside the north-eastern corner of the Peak District National Park.



Fig 01. 1850 OS map of south Penistone showing Cubley and Cliffe House Farm

- 1.3 Penistone is the westernmost of five principal towns (including Wombwell, Hoyland, Goldthorpe and Cudworth) in the Metropolitan Borough of Barnsley in South Yorkshire. Barnsley lies at the mid-point between the region's two main cities of Leeds to the north and Sheffield to the south. It covers an area of 320 square kilometres and is home to around 222,000 people. Historically Barnsley was centred on coal mining resulting in the borough's dispersed pattern of small towns and villages. Because people lived where they worked and coal was moved by rail, road links between towns and villages were poor and communities were self-contained. The borough has a varied geography. The west of the borough is predominantly rural in character with open moorland, arable farmland and natural woodland. It is characterised by attractive hilly countryside part of which lies in the Peak District National Park, and is centred on the rural market town of Penistone... (extract from the Barnsley Core Strategy)
- 1.4 The farm lies in open farmland and comprises a Victorian farmhouse, a tractor shed and pig-sty which have been recently converted into a dwelling, the barn and an attached cart shed (**Fig. 02**) and to the north of the group a converted shelter shed which overlooks the fields to the north. Due to changes in farming practice, the barn and cart shed have been redundant for some considerable time and are in danger of falling into a vulnerable state.



Fig 02. 1893 OS map showing the layout of buildings at Cliff House Farm at that time. The farmhouse is in the south-eastern corner backing onto the yard and facing Mortimer Road which lies across a field beyond a sand stone quarry due east. The combination barn and cart range enclose the western and northern sides of the farm yard and the stable encloses its eastern side

- 1.5 The early 19th century barn is of combination bank barn form comprising a central threshing floor (4 bays) with opposing cart and winnowing doors, a cowhouse at the lower end (furthest from the prevailing winds) (2 bays) and a single cart store and oxen stable at the upper end with hay loft above (3 bays) accessed by an external staircase (*refer to Condition Report for photographs*). The barn has coursed sandstone walling with segmental arches to both cart openings and substantial stone lintels and tied jambs to the doorways. The roof is natural blue Welsh slate laid on a mechanically fixed king post roof structure. Extending from the southern end of the barn is a three bay milking parlour of mid-20th century date constructed in concrete block and profiled asbestos sheet roofing supported by three steel trusses. This milking parlour opens up into the former oxen stable. There are mid-20th century windows with concrete lintels which have been introduced to the left of both cowhouse doors. The rear of the barn opens out onto an enclosed paddock and has three first floor pitching eyes to the hay lofts and a late 19th century ground floor window which lights the passage formed at the rear of the cart store.
- 1.6 The cart shed range encloses the northern side of the farm yard and lies perpendicular to the barn range which encloses the western side of the yard. It is single storey, of five bays with cart openings in the two easternmost bays and stable doors in the first and third bays from the west where the cart shed abuts the barn. The cart shed has coursed sandstone walling (the front, rear and side elevations all of differing character so clearly not all of the same build) with substantial stone piers either side of the cart openings and stone lintels and tied stone jambs to the doorways. The roof is stone slated. The cart shed range is later than the barn, probably mid-19th century (it is present on the 1856 OS map). The cart openings have been infilled and mid-20th century windows (also with concrete lintels) have been introduced to the right of both stable doors.
- 1.7 At the intersection between the barn range and the cart shed range is a mono-pitched link building which is divided into two birthing stables. The eaves of this building and therefore the headroom is low. It has narrow roughly coursed sandstone walling under a stone slate roof and two small window openings in the western elevation which overlook the paddock.
- 1.8 None of the buildings at the farm are listed but the barn and cart shed are characteristic of the local vernacular (building tradition and materials) and the rural settlement pattern in the western half of the Borough.
- 1.9 The site is located on the 20 bus route between Cubley and Barnsley, 21A bus route between Penistone to Barnsley and from Penistone regular bus services run through the local villages as far as Sheffield and Holmfirth. Penistone railway station lies on the Sheffield to Huddersfield (Penistone) line which link to the Trans-Pennine Express services, Cross Country services and the East Coast main

line services between London and Edinburgh. Cubley is just over 7 miles from J37 of the M1 motorway.

- 1.10 Local shopping facilities are located nearby in Penistone which has weekly Saturday markets (one each month is a farmer's market), a weekly Thursday produce market in a cruck barn and three supermarkets. Penistone has a wide range of local services and businesses, café's, restaurants, its own radio station and a cinema. It is served by three churches (St. John the Baptist C of E, St. Andrews Methodist/United Reformed and Penistone Community Church) and has a Primary and Grammar School. The town hosts an annual Agricultural Show, a Music Festival, a Literary Festival, a Folk Festival and a Major's Parade. The Peak District National Park lies less than 3 miles south of Cubley along Mortimer Road.
- 1.11 The Farm has been in the ownership of the same farming family for at least 75 years. The parents of the previous owners, Mr and Mrs Fretwell, ran Cliffe House Farm as a dairy farm until Mr Fretwell's death in 1991, his widow continued with dairy farming until 1998 and since then various family members have kept animals on a casual basis. The main agricultural business ceased in 1998. Members of the same family still own and occupy the bungalow, the converted shelter shed and the farmhouse.
- 1.12 The barn and cart shed range were bought by the current owners in March 2017. An application for conversion of the barn into two dwellings was approved on 28th November 2011. This permission is still valid as development commenced within the required 3 year period. The new owners would like to convert the buildings into a single dwelling and, due to the different floor levels within the cowhouse, threshing floor and cart store, would also like to provide a ground floor bedroom and living space at the lower level for a wheelchair bound relative with level access from the external door serving the utility.
- 1.13 An *Arboricultural Report* was produced for the previous application. The trees on the site (in the main mature Beech and Sycamore) are not protected by a Tree Preservation Order or by virtue of them being in a Conservation Area, however, they contribute substantially to the visual amenity of the area and would enhance the development and the new owners are anxious to ensure they are protected during the construction process and carefully pruned and managed to ensure their health and longevity.
- 1.14 A *Bat Survey* was produced for the previous application and is included for reference and continuity with this application. There are barn owls roosting within the barn and mitigation measures are to be employed to ensure they are provided for in the future.

- 1.15 A *Condition Report* has been prepared to support this application to provide an accurate assessment of the condition of the building(s), their construction and a chronological assessment of historic repair and alteration.
- 1.16 This Design, Access and Planning Statement is to be read in conjunction with the following supporting documentation:
- Condition Report
 - Bat Survey (from the previous application)
 - An Arboricultural Report (from the previous application)
 - Access Plan (from the previous application)

2.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 Application Ref: 2011/1254: Planning Consent for *change of use of Agricultural buildings to form two dwellings*. Decision date: 28th November 2011. Subject to the following conditions:
- 1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission. *Reason: In order to comply with the provision of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990*
 - 2. The development hereby approved shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the plans and specifications as approved unless prior written consent has been given by the Local Planning Authority to any variation. *Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the locality and in accordance with LDF Core Strategy Policy CSP 29, Design.*
 - 3. No development shall take place until full details of the proposed external materials have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. *Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the locality and in accordance with LDF Core Strategy Policy CSP 29, Design.*
 - 4. Construction or remediation work comprising the use of plant, machinery or equipment, or deliveries of materials shall only take place between the hours of 0800 to 1800 Monday to Friday and 0900 to 1400 on Saturdays and at no time on Sundays or Bank Holidays. *Reason: In the interests of the amenities of local residents and in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CSP 40, Pollution Control and Protection.*
 - 5. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (No. 2) (England) Order 2008 (or any Order revoking or re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no enlargement, improvement or other alteration of the dwellings which would otherwise be permitted by Part 1 of Schedule 2 to that Order shall be carried out without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority, and no garages or other outbuildings shall be erected. *Reason: To safeguard the*

openness and visual amenities of the Green Belt in accordance with LDF Core Strategy Policy CSP 34, Protection of Green Belt

- 6. No development or other operations being undertaken on site shall take place until the following document has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:
 - o Tree protection plan (TPP)
 - o Arboricultural method statement (AMS)No development or other operations shall take place except in complete accordance with the approved methodologies. *Reason: To ensure the continued well-being of the trees in the interests of the amenity of the locality.*
- 7. No hedges or trees on the site (except those shown to be removed on the approved plan), or their branches or roots, shall be lopped, topped, felled, or severed without the written permission of the Local Planning Authority. If any retained tree is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, another tree shall be planted at the same place and that tree shall be of such a size and species, and shall be planted at such time, as may be specified in writing by the Local Planning Authority. *Reason: To safeguard existing trees/hedges, in the interests of the visual amenities of the locality.*
- 8. No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, full details of both hard and soft landscaping works, including details of the species, positions and planted heights of proposed trees and shrubs; together with details of the position and condition of any existing trees and hedgerows to be retained. The approved hard landscaping details shall be implemented prior to the occupation of the building. *Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the locality*
- 9. The parking/manoeuvring facilities indicated on the approved plan shall be provided prior to the development being brought into use, and shall be retained for that sole purpose at all times. *Reason: In the interests of road safety*
- 10. Pedestrian intervisibility splays, having the dimensions 2m x 2m, shall be safeguarded at the drive entrance/exit such that there is no obstruction to visibility at a height exceeding 1m above the nearside channel level of the adjacent highway. *Reason: in the interest of road safety.*
- 11. Visibility splays, having the dimensions 2.4m x 90m, shall be safeguarded at the drive entrance/exit, such that there is no obstruction to visibility at a height exceeding 1m above the nearside channel level of the adjacent highway. *Reason: In the interest of road safety.*
- 12. No development works shall begin until a report, endorsed by a competent engineer experienced in ground contamination and remediation, has been submitted and agreed with the Local Planning Authority. The report shall, amongst other matters, include the following:
 - o A survey of the extent, scale and nature of contamination

- An assessment of the potential risks to human health, property, adjoining land, ground waters and surface waters, ecological systems and archaeological sites and ancient monuments
- An appraisal of remedial options, and proposal of the preferred option(s)
- A remediation statement summarising the works to be undertaken (if required)

The above must be conducted in accordance with DEFRA and the Environment Agency's 'Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination, CLR 11'. The development shall thereafter be undertaken in full accordance with the submitted report. *Reason: In order to comply with Barnsley LDF Core Strategy Policy CSP40, Pollution Control and Protection.*

Other applications relating to the site:

Application Ref: 2011/1256: Planning Consent for *conversion of an Agricultural building and extension to form 1 no. dwelling*. Decision date: 28th November 2011.

Application Ref: 2011/1255: Planning Consent for *conversion of an Agricultural building and extension to form 1 no. dwelling*. Decision date: 28th November 2011.

There are also three earlier applications submitted in June 2011 which were withdrawn. These include:

Application Ref: 2011/0722: Planning Consent for *change of use of an Agricultural building to form 1 no. dwelling including single storey and two storey extensions*

Application Ref: 2011/0718: Planning Consent for *change of use of an Agricultural building to form 2 no. dwellings*

Application Ref: 2011/0707: Planning Consent for *change of use of an Agricultural building to form 1 no. dwelling including single storey extension*

- 2.2 The approval awarded in 2011 is still valid as development commenced within the required 3 year period. This application seeks to reduce the number of dwellings from two to one (which Laura Bennett, the Planning Officer who dealt with the previous approval, confirmed was permitted development) and includes an extension at the northern end of the barn (to provide wheelchair accessible accommodation and two additional bedrooms) and alterations to the southern milking parlour which was to be demolished as part of the previous approval.
- 2.3 Three design options were submitted for pre-application consultation to Robert Tollyfield (Planning Officer) and Tony Wiles (Conservation Officer) and the submitted version represents the third of these options which was suggested in

principal by the LA Officers in their response and has been further amended in line with their comments.

3.0 PLANNING POLICY

3.1 This statement has been written in accordance with *Government circular 01/2006 section 3: Design and Access Statement*, enforced on the 10th August 2006 and has been prepared to demonstrate how the physical characteristics of the scheme have been influenced through a process of assessment, involvement, evaluation and design.

3.2 During preparation of this Design and Access Statement careful reference has been made to the following Planning Policy and guidance:

- **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012).** The sections of the NPPF of particular relevance to this application are:
 - *Section 6: Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes*
 - *Section 7: Requiring good design*
 - *Section 9: Protecting Green Belt land*
 - *Section 10: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change*
 - *Section 11: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment and*
 - *Section 12: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment*
- **Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council Statutory Development Plan (SDP) (to be superseded by the Local Plan in summer 2017)** which comprises:
 - Core Strategy (adopted September 2011) which promotes local distinctiveness through its policies to protect and enhance the natural and built environment, with particular reference to:
 - Core Strategy policy CSP8 which identifies Penistone as one of five Principal Towns which have been prioritized for development
 - Core Strategy policy CSP 9 and CSP10 which makes provision for 1100 new homes in Penistone over the plan period within greenfield and previously developed sites that are within the built up area with possibly limited peripheral greenfield sites.
 - Core Strategy policy CSP29 which make provision for high quality development which contributes to local distinctiveness and enhances historic character.
 - Core Strategy policy CSP34 protects the Green Belt around Penistone safeguarding the countryside and

- Core Strategy policy CSP37 which make provision for retention and enhancement of the character and distinctiveness of local Landscape Character Areas. This specific aim of this policy is to ensure all new development should be in keeping with the surrounding landscape and reflect the character, materials and details of the local area, particularly in prominent positions such as on the edge of towns and villages where it is important to maintain a clear distinction between urban areas and the countryside and to ensure that development is not obtrusive in the skyline
- Core Strategy OBJECTIVE 6 which stresses the importance of sustainability and high quality design in new developments which enhances local distinctiveness and is built in appropriate materials
- Core Strategy OBJECTIVE 7 which highlights the aim of delivering a mixed range of housing types and tenure to meet the needs of a diverse community.
- Core Strategy OBJECTIVE 8 which stresses the importance of protecting and improving the appearance, character and distinctiveness of the countryside, the natural environment and local heritage.
- Core Strategy policy CSP 2 which sets out the aim of minimising energy consumption in new dwellings by raising current Building Regulations standards to ensure all new dwellings achieve at least a level 3 rating under the Code for Sustainable Homes or equivalent, which is to rise to at least level 4 by 2013 and to level 6 by 2016.
- And in particular Core Strategy policy CSP30 which seeks to protect and improve historic buildings and their settings and recognises the irreplaceable value of the historic environment in defining local character and distinctiveness, the social and cultural identity of the borough and helping to provide a sense of continuity and identity. To achieve this aim the policy suggests that heritage assets should be sensitively conserved, protected and re-used as a stimulus for re-generation and to retain the borough's local distinctiveness.

- **National Guidance**

- Planning Policy Guidance Note 2: Green Belts (2006)
- *Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (2010)*
- *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (2010)*

- *The Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings*, English Heritage
- *Living buildings in a living landscape: finding a future for traditional farm buildings*, English Heritage

3.3 This Design & Access Statement and the documentation supporting the application seeks to establish the special nature of the site, the sensitivity of the proposed development, the contributions the development would make to the locality and an illustration of the ways in which the development addresses relevant local and national planning policy.

This statement will also address the following design factors:

- Context
- Use & Density
- Layout
- Scale
- Landscaping
- Appearance

4.0 DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

4.1 The Special Nature of the Site

Cliffe House Farm lies in open farmland south of Cubley but just within the Penistone town boundary and in designated Green Belt (*refer to Penistone UDP Plan*). The buildings at the farm are arranged around a yard with the farmhouse in the south-eastern corner, a converted tractor shed and pig-sty block enclosing its eastern side, the barn range opposite enclosing its western side and a cart shed range attached to the northern end of the barn and enclosing the northern side of the yard.

The earliest buildings in the group are the farmhouse and combination barn which are of early 19th century date, followed fairly soon after (mid-19th century) by the cart shed range and subsequently towards the end of the 19th century by the tractor shed and pig-sty. The front elevation of the barn faces onto the yard with its rear overlooking a paddock and open fields to the west. It is formed of a range orientated on a north-south axis and is constructed in coursed sandstone under a blue Welsh slate roof. It is of combination bank barn form, characteristic of the Pennine uplands, which served a number of agricultural functions and is built into the slope of the site to provide an element of protection from the prevailing winds (*for a full description of the buildings refer to the Condition Report*).

The farm occupies an exposed position on the top of the moor and is protected against the prevailing winds by a bank of mature trees (mainly Sycamore and

Beech) within the western paddock. Historic maps indicate these trees have formed this shelter belt for some substantial time and that there was also a bank of trees along the southern side of the farm yard.

The farmhouse, barn and cart shed have been little altered save the addition of some windows in both the barn and the cart shed range during the 20th century. These two buildings are in reasonable condition, given they have been redundant for at least 18 years, and whilst not listed or affording the protection of a Conservation Area, are fine and characteristic survivals of the local vernacular (building tradition and materials) and the rural settlement pattern in the western half of the Borough. The tractor shed and pig-sty block, and a shelter shed on the northern side of the group, have been recently converted into two dwellings and this has retained the individual farm buildings and the special nature of the surviving farmyard setting.

4.2 The Sensitivity of the Proposed Development and the contributions it makes to the locality

Maintaining and enhancing the agricultural, rural and historic setting has been an important consideration in planning the development. The scale, massing and positioning of the new interventions (the reconstruction of the single storey milking parlour at the southern end of the barn and the two storey extension at the northern end of the barn) have been carefully considered to respect the scale and massing of the historic buildings to which they abut or replace and as far as possible to minimise the visual impact of the development when viewed from the wider landscape.

Whilst it is recognised the barn and cart shed range are not listed, the development seeks to approach the repair and conversion in the same manner as that afforded a listed heritage asset, by ensuring:

- As much historic fabric as possible is retained through a programme of minimal and sensitive repair.
- Historic fabric is repaired in-situ with like for like using techniques and materials contemporary with its original construction.
- The historic volumes and the internal sub-division of spaces are retained unaltered wherever possible to allow their function to remain legible.
- The existing openings have been retained in their existing form and proportion to allow the historic use, significance and relationship between these openings to remain legible.
- New openings are kept to a minimum and have been proportioned and sized with reference to the buildings agricultural origins (to avoid domestication) but do not attempt to replicate historic architectural detailing (no stone jambs or lintels) so new work is clear and distinct from historic fabric.

- A preference for the historic buildings to remain dominant and the new interventions to be visually distinct using a modern agricultural yet sympathetic language.
- A preference for the new interventions to reflect the scale, massing and proportions of the historic buildings they abut but with a more abstract and contemporary aesthetic using a simple palette of materials which are sympathetic to the agricultural and landscape setting.
- A desire for larger areas of glazing within the historic barn to reference the vertical tri-partite division and proportions of some of the existing windows.
- A preference for dark slender metal frame windows and doors set deep within the reveals to allow the historic solid/void ratio of the walling and openings to remain clearly legible

The design of the new interventions has referenced the detailing, fenestration and proportions of other modern agricultural buildings in the area. The principal openings in both the single and two storey elements are conceived as large cart or tractor shed openings, and extend full height down to the ground, connecting the building interior with the surrounding landscape. Timber shutters have been added to the large scale openings to minimise the visual impact of the development at night time from the green belt (**Fig. 01**).



Fig. 01. Sliding timber shutters, timber cladding and a profiled metal roof reference other modern agricultural buildings in the area.

The proportions of the two new openings to the rear of the existing barn reference the cart and winnowing door openings and have been minimised in quantity to maintain the legibility of the original openings whilst providing a visual connection with the garden from the main living space.

The roof pitch and profile of the new interventions reference directly the historic barn, but the intention is that the new-build will have hidden gutters, clean lines with simple contemporary detailing (**Fig's 02 & 03**) which allows it to sit respectfully and quietly alongside its more ancient neighbour. Materials are to be simple, natural and sustainable in keeping with the natural landscape and the former agricultural use.



Fig's 02 & 03. Agricultural forms with a simple contemporary aesthetic, one where the vertical timber cladding continues up the roof surface and one with a terne coated steel standing seam roof.



The cart shed range currently lies in close proximity to the converted tractor shed and in order to improve turning for fire and waste vehicles and access into the yard, the cart shed gable is to be set back (westwards) by 700mm. Whilst this will have an obvious impact on the historic building, as some reconstruction will be required, it is hoped the benefit to all residents on the site will outweigh the inevitable harm.

The reconstruction of the southern milking parlour, currently concrete block and sheet asbestos, on the southern end of the barn range, using the same proportions, roof pitch and massing as the existing (though reducing the length by a metre to allow access along the southern gable into the garden and paddock), is seen as an enhancement of the setting of a historic building, the rural landscape and the Green Belt. On order to maintain a visual distinction between the historic barn and the single storey element a glazed recess has been incorporated (**Fig. 04**).



Fig. 04. An example of a glazed recess to link the buildings either side whilst maintaining a visual separation.

The two storey extension at the northern end of the barn has been introduced for two important reasons. The owner's father has a physical condition which already makes mobility challenging and it is likely in the near future will require use of a wheelchair. Provision of a bedroom, wheelchair accessible WC/shower and separate living space on one level with level access through the utility from the yard and into the garden will allow the owner's father to visit them for moderate periods and retain an element of modesty and independence. It goes without saying, of course, that this arrangement will also serve the current owners well into their future should they face similar challenges. As such, accessibility and life-long occupation have been key principles of the design and have been accommodated in a sensitive manner to minimise the impact of the accessible accommodation on the significance of the historic structure.

The two storey extension is also necessary because of the constraints imposed by the building itself in accommodating its new use. As stated previously the barn is built into the slope of the site with the ground floor level of each part of the barn (cowhouse, threshing barn, cart store and oxen stable) rising as it progresses southwards. The corresponding floor level within the hay loft above the oxen stable at the southern end of the barn (accessed via the external stone staircase) is such that the tie beams of the trusses within the hay loft are waist high and in order to serve as bedrooms, the trusses would have to be removed altogether as the bay width cannot accommodate a double bed. The decision was taken, therefore, to concentrate the bedrooms at the northern end of the building where the tie beams are significantly higher.

One of the principal aims of the conservation philosophy adopted for the development at the outset was to retain as far as possible the historic volumes without subdivision and in particular the central threshing floor (**Fig. 05**). This left just two bays at the northern end of the barn which could serve as a bedroom for the owners and dictated the requirement for the two storey extension to accommodate two further bedrooms in the same vicinity for the owner's children.

In a historic context, sustainability can be considered in two ways. Firstly it can be defined as a buildings' ability to continue in long term use, despite in some cases the original historic use having become redundant, to ensure the future maintenance, structural stability and longevity of the building and to allow it to be used and enjoyed by future generations.

Sustainability can also be defined as the impact the building or development has on the environment throughout its life and in construction terms this has been approached in the following ways:

- The repair of the historic structures is to be approached using materials and methods contemporary with their original construction to allow the building to



Fig. 05. The intention is to retain the central threshing floor of the barn open and without sub-division.

breathe and self-regulate moisture to create a healthy living environment and to ensure the building fabric performs thermally to the best of its ability (*refer to research undertaken over the last 5 years by Historic England and The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings into the thermal performance of historic buildings and the importance of breathability*).

- New floor slabs are also to be moisture permeable to prevent moisture being drawn from the ground into the base of the walls and the rubble filled core of the existing buildings. The construction will comprise limecrete laid on 100% recycled foamed glass aggregate insulation (zero carbon) which, depending on the depth of the insulation (dictated by the level of the existing footings), can readily exceed Building Regulation standards.
- Walls are to be pointed using lime mortar, plastered with hemp lime plaster (to improve the insulative value) and finished with lime or mineral paint to maintain the breathability of the structure and aid drying of the fabric.
- New structures are to be super insulated timber frames finished with oak or pressure treated timber to ensure its long life and to be visually sensitive and in keeping with the agricultural setting and the Green Belt. Insulation here will be hemp or cellulose (zero carbon) and fully fill the 300mm timber frame. To protect

- the sole plates, the timber frame will be set on a masonry plinth with 150mm cavity insulation and cavity closers around window and door openings.
- The roof of the existing buildings will be insulated with hemp insulation and under-drawn with clay board and a lime plaster skim.
 - All new windows will be fitted with triple glazed units or double glazed units with a vacuum filled cavity to ensure the best possible u-values are achieved in what is an exposed location.
 - Existing field boundaries (dry stone walls, chestnut post and rail fences) are to be repaired to retain the distinctiveness of the surrounding landscape and the character of the Green Belt.

The high quality of the design and construction of the new interventions and the careful and sensitive repair of the historic structures have been carefully balanced to make a positive contribution to new development in the Borough outlined in the Core Strategy, enhance the rural setting of a heritage asset and the Green Belt and provide a benchmark of best practice for new housing development of which the Local Authority and the local community can be proud.

4.3 How the development responds to National and Local Planning Policy and Guidance

- The development responds to Core Strategy policies CSP8, CSP 9 and CSP10 by providing housing development in a town and within a peripheral greenfield site identified in the Strategy.
- It responds to Core Strategy policies CSP29, CSP37 and Core Strategy OBJECTIVE 8 by providing a high quality development which makes a positive contribution by protecting and improving the appearance, character and distinctiveness of the countryside, the natural environment and local heritage which are also objectives also set out in *Section 9: Protecting Green Belt land*, *Section 11: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment* and *Section 12: Conserving and enhancing the Historic Environment* of the NPPF.
- The scale and massing of the development and the materials and construction of the new interventions have been carefully considered to minimise their impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the agricultural setting of the historic buildings and to retain and enhance local character and distinctiveness as set out in Core Strategy policies CSP30 and CSP34. The heritage assets have been sensitively conserved and repaired to ensure they continue to be used and enjoyed by future generations and contribute to the borough's local distinctiveness. The design is not intended to be a pastiche of the local vernacular but has been carefully considered to be visually distinct using a modern yet sympathetic language. Again these objectives are also set out in *Section 7: Requiring good design*, *Section 9: Protecting Green Belt land*, *Section 11: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment* and *Section 12: Conserving and enhancing the Historic Environment* of the NPPF.

- The development responds to Core Strategy OBJECTIVE 6 and Core Strategy policy CSP 2 in its aim to minimise energy consumption, surpass current energy efficiency standards, minimise its carbon footprint and provide a healthy internal environment for the buildings occupants which are objectives also set out in *Section 10: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change* of the NPPF.
- The site is currently occupied by the 3 bed farmhouse, a 2 bed converted shelter shed, a 3 bed converted tractor shed and a 2 bed bungalow so the 4/5 bed barn conversion contributes positively to the aims of Core Strategy OBJECTIVE 7 by providing a mixed range of housing types on the site which helps to create a diverse and thriving community. This is also an objective set out in *Section 6: Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes* of the NPPF which also stresses the importance of housing provision for people with disabilities and families with children, currently unrepresented on the site. Section 6 of the NPPF also stresses the importance of bringing empty buildings back into use for housing provision and sets out a “*presumption in favour of sustainable development*” when considering housing applications.
- PPG2 Green Belts (2006) stresses the importance of re-using vacant buildings in Green Belt provided the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction, are capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction, the conversion proposals respect local building styles and materials and does not have a materially greater impact than the present use on the openness of the Green Belt.
- By retaining and repairing existing dry stone field boundaries and hedgerows, the development responds to *Section 9: Protecting Green Belt land* and *Section 11: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment* of the NPPF and enhances the setting of the historic farm buildings set out in *Section 12: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment* of the NPPF and also Core Strategy policies CSP29, CSP37 and Core Strategy OBJECTIVE 8.

Design guidance relating to the conversion of historic farm buildings is published by English Heritage. This guidance is contained in *The Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings* and *Living buildings in a living landscape: finding a future for traditional farm buildings*.

This guidance states, “*Tight planning controls over new development in the countryside combined with a growth of demand for both rural workspaces and residences in the countryside have resulted in increased opportunities for the adaptive re-use of traditional farm buildings in many areas.*” This is borne out by a general shift in national policy in recent years, “*towards a more permissive stance on rural development, combined with the specific emphasis on the re-use of historic farm buildings, (which) is likely to increase demand for the conversion and re-use of the traditional farm building stock.*” It continues, “*The listed farm building resource has already undergone significant change. Over half have been*

subject to planning applications for development with an approval rate of 81%. By 2004, 31% of principal listed working buildings had been converted to other uses, mostly to residential use (Gaskell and Clark 2005)."

Methods of farming over the last 50 years has rendered traditional farm buildings redundant as larger more easily accessible steel clad structures have replace the traditional barn for hay storage and as hygiene and welfare standards for livestock have resulted in similar redundancy for traditional stables, cowhouses and pig sty's. Farmers face the dilemma of having to maintain and repair historic farm buildings without the potential reward in terms of value to the efficient and economic running of the farm which has led to a significant proportion of traditional farm buildings falling into a state of disrepair.

The farm buildings at Cliffe House Farm are no exception and have all previously been awarded planning permission for conversion into dwellings to meet the borough's identified housing requirements. Retention and re-use of these historic farm buildings will help retain the area's local distinctiveness and contribute to the character, beauty and architectural diversity of the countryside.

The EH guidance continues, *"The aim of a local authority in determining conversion applications should be to seek a scheme that: retains as much historic fabric and as many features of interest as possible; respects the agricultural character of the buildings, including their general robustness and simplicity of design; protects the building's farmstead and landscape setting and its relationship to the farmhouse; and safeguards protected species. The use of materials from sustainable sources should be promoted, alongside measures to ensure energy efficiency, where these can be incorporated without affecting the building's character..... It should not normally be necessary to consider whether the building is no longer needed for its present agricultural or other purposes.....English Heritage and the Countryside Agency believe the starting point for future policy must be an understanding of the character, condition and sensitivity to change"*

As a precursor to the feasibility design proposals we produced a *Condition Report* of the existing buildings which incorporates an introductory section describing the chronological development of the site and identifies how the context of the farm has changed over time. This has provided us with important information on which to base our proposals in the hope that this enables the development to maintain, respect and enhance the historic structures and the surrounding landscape.

5.0 CONCLUSION

In summary, therefore, the proposal has been prepared with reference to all the relevant National and Local Planning Policy and guidance and consultation responses from Conservation & Design and Development Control (Robert

Tollyfield & Tony Wiles). The development saves and provides a sustainable future for an impressive group of historic agricultural buildings.

New interventions are of a sensitive scale and character to ensure the impact on the historic buildings is negligible while providing the current owners with a home which can accommodate all family members of varying ages and levels of mobility. The repairs, alterations and extensions have all been considered to take account of the significance of the historic buildings and the materials and methods of their original construction. However, carefully considered measures have been taken to improve the thermal performance of the historic structures without compromising their breathable properties and performance, and which are reversible, recyclable, zero carbon and therefore have minimal impact on the buildings' significance.

The proposal has been designed to take account of Green Belt and Heritage Policy as well as accessibility, sustainability and design guidance and it is hoped in so doing the proposal is sensitive, sympathetic and appropriate.