

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT & 'VERY SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES STATEMENT'

ANNEX BUILDINGS

ROYD HILL FARM, ROYD LANE, HIGHAM, BARNSELEY

GENERAL

The Site



Royd Hill Farm is located in Higham, Barnsley. The Application site is approximately 5550m² (1.37 Acres) and consists of a two storey farmhouse and various 1 & 2 storey farm buildings.

The surrounding area is set within the green belt. To the East of the site there are three existing two storey dwellings. To the West of the site there are three relatively recently constructed detached dwellings, one of which is currently being extended.



Fig 1 – Extension to Surrounding Buildings

Main access to the site is from the South East and the Village of Higham. The main access road then divides into two directions which lead to the main courtyard, and the two dwellings to the West, and also around the perimeter of the site. The road carries on around the perimeter of the site, under the M1 motorway until, shortly after, it becomes a dirt track suitable for agricultural vehicles.

The buildings form a flow of process traditional to farmsteads of its nature and era. One of the out buildings is Grade II Listed. The building of timber frame construction and it is the timber frame that is of particular interest.

The site is self contained and does not overshadow any neighbouring properties. The small annex buildings opposite the Farmhouse and Grade II listed barn offer a degree of natural acoustic protection from the nearby M1 motorway.

The development will look to comply with a range of policies including GS7 Green Belt, GS8 & 13 Development within the Green Belt, BE2 and 2A Development affecting Listed Buildings and T2A vehicular access.

Alongside the relevant policies the site will be developed using guidance from 'The Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings : A Guide to Good Practice ' as published by English Heritage.

Neighbour Consultation(See Appendix A)

The following neighbours were consulted:

Name: Mr C Peake & Mrs P Trueman
Address: 22 Royd Lane, Higham, Barnsley
Comments: (See Appendix A)

Name: Miss K Wyke & Mr P Allen
Address: 24 Royd Lane, Higham, Barnsley
Comments: (See Appendix A)

Name: Mr D Lane & Mrs M Lane
Address: 26-28 Royd Lane, Higham, Barnsley
Comments: (See Appendix A)

The comments made by the neighbours demonstrate a clear understanding of the proposed works has been communicated. The residents are clearly in favour of the proposed scheme and believe that it will add value to the current site by creating a mini hamlet

Reference has also been made to the importance of bringing back into use a site which is now largely in disrepair.

Local Authority Consultation

Prior to the submission of this application 2 Pre Submission Assessment meetings have taken place between Matthew Burgin and Michael Barnett (BBAD Ltd) and Tony Wiles and Kieran Dunn (Barnsley MBC). The second meeting also included representatives from the Client. Both meetings resulted in significant changes to the proposed schemes in line with recommendations from both the Conservation and Planning Officer.

SITE PROPOSAL

Whilst the existing farmhouse is still in use the outbuildings have deteriorated into a poor state of repairs. Several of the buildings, or elements thereof, give the first impression that they are currently in danger of collapse. Should the buildings be left without remedial action it appears that this is probable outcome for the buildings in the short term.

As with many existing farmsteads dereliction is becoming an increasing problem, particularly as the site clearly no longer has a viable mainstream or low key agricultural use. It would appear that an inherently sustainable redevelopment would be of long term benefit to site. From the neighbour consultation, this sentiment is shared by the current occupiers of the immediate surrounding properties.

From English Heritage – ‘ If adaptive reuse is the most sustainable option it will help to determine which elements of the building are most worthy of retention, and which may be lost with little or no detriment – sometimes indeed with beneficial effect. Such understanding will also help to inform pre-application discussions for the various consents that may be required.’

Key Site Factors

Due to the existing nature of the site there are two key features which must be retained to achieve sympathetic and sustainable re-use.

- Existing Grade II listed timber framed barn.
- The flow of process of the existing farmstead and courtyard.

Existing Grade II listed timber framed barn.

The existing Grade II listed timber frame is in an advanced state of disrepair. A structural report on the Grade II listed Barn was carried out by EPOC (16.03.08) (See Appendix B) and concluded that there was major structural integrity problems with areas of the barn. It also identified areas of infestation within the timber frame. The many recommendations included underpinning foundations, reproofing and removing areas of walls and replacing with salvaged stone.

Due to the importance of this building to the site as a whole the barn needs to be appreciated and understood as a whole. As it is timber framed construction this frame will be load bearing and, as such, any work to either the timber frame or external envelope will have major implications. As the building is believed to date back to the 15th century any future re-use will have to consider loadings on the timber frame. See attached method statement supplied by the Structural Engineer. (See Appendix C)

The flow of process of the existing farmstead and courtyard.

Whilst the main barn is believed to date back to the 15th century the remaining buildings are more recent. It is possible that this barn is the only remaining original building and the other outbuildings have been added during the lifespan of the farmstead. As the roof is of a slate construction, it would appear that they would be dated around 1750-1880, during the boom period for agricultural activity. The use of blockwork and render, particularly on the annexe buildings would suggest that the outbuildings have been modified piecemeal throughout this period.

Whilst individual buildings appear to have been removed, adapted and fallen into disrepair, the farmstead character has remained.

It is easy to see how this farmstead functioned in providing shelter for the farm families and livestock and would suggest it took its current form around the 1840s to the 1870s.

Preserving the nature of this regular courtyard layout is essential and designed correctly would enhance the overall farmstead. Many of the alterations over the years have been carried out to poor design and construction standards and can be redesigned sympathetically.

EXISTING GRADE II LISTED BARN (PLOT 2)



Existing Overview

The barn adjacent to the farmyard is the oldest building on the site and is of timber frame construction. As with many barns the form and plan is simplistic with few openings. There are two substantial openings large enough to drive a loaded wagon with a smaller door situated in the corner. Careful inspections have indicated the appearance of many alterations over the years to the openings, some more obvious than others. It is possible that the openings removed were used at one point to pitch in the crop, suggesting it was once served as a threshing barn. The removal of openings would also suggest that, as was common in the 1880's, the barn was also used as a cow house.

The barn currently has a Planning Approval (Ref : B/05/0602/DT/LB) granted on 31st March 2005.

Proposed Scheme

Current Volume = 665.86 m3

Proposed Volume = 665.86 m3

Proposed Increased = 0 %

Current Footprint = 124.00 m2

Proposed Footprint = 124.00m2

Proposed Footprint Increase = 0 %

The proposed scheme utilises the existing form of the barn. As the barn is Grade II listed the design is sympathetic to the historical importance of the building and its current material state of disrepair. As the building dates back to the 15th century and is timber frame it is likely that the external cladding is not original. Whilst the cladding may have been added it is now of intrinsic importance and must be considered in the design and method statements.

Over the years, as the stone cladding has become part of the evolution and history of the barn, openings within the stone have been added and omitted. As with many barns of its type it does not currently have many openings. For the building to have a sustainable and adaptive re-use it will be necessary to have more openings within the envelope of the cladding than is currently there.

Careful inspections have been carried out to identify where openings have been blocked up over the years. Re using these openings will allow windows to be situated necessary for the daylighting required within the dwelling without compromising the historical integrity of the building. The Code for Sustainable Home (for New Build) and EcoHomes (for Conversions) developed by the Building Research Establishment (BRE) both identify the importance of daylighting within dwellings. Daylighting is encouraged and rewarded to exceed 2 % in kitchen areas and 1% in study areas, bedrooms and living areas. Whilst it is unlikely, due to the constraints placed upon the design by the buildings current form and listing, it is necessary to consider the importance of daylighting. Drawing 08-011-120 identifies areas within the cladding where clear evidence of previous opening exists.

On the front elevation there are currently 2 openings which are used as doors. The largest of the two openings (the cart door opening) shows clear evidence of having been reduced. There is also evidence of two other openings within the front elevation. The proposed elevations feature 8 openings, which exceeds the current number of both existing and removed by 4. There is also a rooflight in the roof, which will be the conservation type to reduce impact. On the approved application there are 4 windows and 2 rooflights. The glazing will be set back deep within the reveal to create shadow lines and minimise reflections and overall impact. The formation of these windows has been kept to a minimum along with the overall dimensions of the openings. Four of the openings (which are the ones additional to the approved design) are small apertures with chamfered internal reveals to maximise the amount of light received inside and give the appearance of glazed owl holes. In general the colour and construction of the windows will be to suit the surrounding and is to be approved by the Planning and Conservation Officer, prior to installation.

The rear elevation currently has 4 openings, with the largest showing evidence of having been reduced in size. The new elevation has just one more opening and one conservation rooflight than existing and just one more rooflight than the approved elevation.

The side elevation current has one opening, which is to remain, as it appears on the approved design.

The existing roof covering of stone slate is to be re-used if possible.

Internally the timber frame is to receive localised treatments, in accordance with specialist recommendations, where necessary. The roof trusses are to remain as

existing and alongside being a feature of the barn, will also form part of the structural roof.

EXISTING FARMHOUSE (PLOT 1) - UNLISTED



Existing Overview

The existing Farmhouse is a two storey stone constructed traditional farm property with a front porch and basement. The building is currently occupied by one of the Applicants. The existing roof is of stone slate but has been repaired with a bitumen waterproof membrane and appears to be in need of replacement. Attached to the side is a grade II listed single storey timber framed barn.

Proposed Building

Current Volume = 577.25 m³

Proposed Volume = 887.00 m³

Proposed Volume Increase = 53.7 %

Current Footprint = 103.90 m²

Proposed Footprint = 143.50 m²

Proposed Footprint Increase = 38.1 %

The proposed works involve extending the building to the rear, increasing the overall footprint by around 38.1 %. The increase in size has enabled the building to have 4

double bedrooms. The master bedroom has a dressing area, en-suite and a balcony which takes advantage of views over the cricket field.

The Farm House is not a listed building and the proposed works, whilst adding 38.1% to the existing footprint, are in keeping with the existing building. As is common with the Farmstead character the Farm House is the flagship of the Farmstead and is the first building to be seen when approaching the entrance.

All new external materials will match existing and be approved by the Local Authority prior to commencement.

BARN 2 – PLOT 3 (UNLISTED)



Existing Overview

Barn 2 is a large detached outbuilding with no listing. Internally there are timber roof trusses which are the only features of interest. The external structure is weathered sandstone, as the listed barn. It is likely that this barn was converted to cow houses in the 1880's.

Proposed Building

Current Volume = 641.29 m³

Proposed Volume = 848.23 m³

Proposed Volume Increase = 32.3 %

Current Footprint = 129.29 m²

Proposed Footprint = 180.00 m²

Proposed Footprint Increase = 28.2 %

The proposed building has an increased footprint whilst retaining the existing height at eaves. The building is slightly longer with two additional one storey habitable areas at the rear. The roofs to the one storey additions have been stepped from the main roof, and a different pitch used, in accordance with comments made by the

Planning Officer to give the buildings a 'articulated' look in keeping with the Farmstead. The front elevation has been design to compliment the listed barn with a floor to eaves height window, similar to the listed barn. Such size openings would be common as a typical cart door entrance in Farm Outbuildings of this age. To minimise the impact of the glazing on the front elevation timber double doors and panelling have been added, as suggested by the Planning Officer, to the extent of approximately 50% of the overall panel.

All new external materials will match existing and be approved by the Local Authority prior to commencement.

ANNEX BUILDINGS (UNLISTED)

Recent Photographic Evidence of Annex Buildings Usage (March 2008)



Current Photographic Evidence of Annex Buildings Usage.



Existing Overview

Originally the Annex buildings were one storey outbuildings that appear to have been used to house livestock. Currently all that remains of those buildings is the outer wall to the road and the buttress walls (See current photos). Internally and externally what remains of the structure appears to have no features of architectural or historical importance. Although all that remains of the Annex Buildings is a perimeter wall, photographic evidence exists of its most recent use. Although a

proportion of this structure has been removed as it was considered structurally unsound, the photographs help identify the history of the outbuilding.

Proposed Building

Current Volume	= n/a
Proposed Volume	= n/a
Proposed Increased	= n/a
Current Footprint	= n/a m ²
Proposed Footprint	= 189.29 m ²
Proposed Footprint Increase	= n/a %

Design Evolution (See Appendix D)

The proposed Annex buildings have evolved during the design stage firstly through comments made by the Planning and Conservation Officers during pre application consultations and then by following English heritage guidelines for the Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings.

Initially the Annex buildings were to be 1 ½ storey accommodation with the height of the existing rear wall to remain as existing. This design was discussed with the Planning and Conservation Officers but was seen as contrary to the traditional form of farm buildings. The 1 ½ storey with dormers was the main reason for this and is not seen as a suitable form of construction in keeping with the existing form of the farmstead.

The Planning and Conservation Officer commented that it would be preferable to have a traditional 2 storey construction which would compliment the existing farm buildings, even though this would require the exiting rear wall to be raised slightly. A second scheme was then designed with the annex buildings to have a similar design as the two barns. The main feature of the two barns is a wall to eaves glazed panel on the front and rear elevations. These panels would represent a typical cart door entrance, which were a common feature of barns used for threshing.

Although this design met the guidelines set by the Local Authority of massing and complimenting the new barn developments, after considering English Heritage literature, it was decided to add a third scheme. There is no evidence to suggest that the outbuilding had ever been used as threshing barns, and the one storey construction would preclude the option of large cart doors. The buildings are of much smaller scale than the two barns and farmhouse. The introduction of floor to eaves windows not only had no historical grounds but also had the appearance of being in competition aesthetically with its much larger neighbouring buildings. The neighbouring buildings could justify this appearance both through scale and historical usage. Consequently the final scheme toned down the aesthetical appearance of the outbuildings by removing the large glazed panels in favour of traditional style windows. As the building has historically appeared as a secondary

building within the farmstead it now subtly blends in within the development. As the farmstead is to be subject to adaptive re-use, a natural progression is for the redundant buildings to be used as cottage style accommodation which suits the form and scale of the existing buildings.

EVIDENCE SUPPORTING 'VERY SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES' FOR NEW BUILD IN THE GREEN BELT FOR THE ANNEX BUILDINGS

JUSTIFICATION FOR ADAPTIVE RE-USE OF ANNEX BUILDINGS.

The Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings by English Heritage states ' a small proportion of buildings – whether protected through listing, unlisted but set within designated landscapes or simply unlisted buildings – will not be capable of adaptive re-use, because their scale precludes this '

Although the remains of the annex buildings are set within greenbelt, they are not listed and do not appear to be of intrinsic importance.

The historical photographs suggest the form of the annex buildings benefitted the farmstead in a number of ways. Historically it demonstrates the flow of process, previously identified, within the courtyard plan. More recently it acted as an acoustic barrier from the nearby M1 Motorway. Indeed the remaining wall still has acoustic benefits and standing in the courtyard the noise from the Motorway is substantially reduced compared to nearby areas outside the courtyard. As the proposed scheme slightly increases the height of the building this benefit is to be increased.

The overall scheme, and in particular the area previously occupied by the annex buildings, has the support of the nearby neighbours, as can be seen in the neighbour consultation letters.

Utilising the area previously occupied by the annex buildings as dwellings adds to the sustainability of the overall site and the effectiveness of its intended adaptive re-use.

It is the intention of the Applicants for the proposed buildings to be occupied by relatives. The three applicants all have elderly relatives over retirement age with health issues. The houses have all been designed to Part M compliance and with the relevant WC amenities. It is proposed that the staircase will be designed to facilitate the retrospective fitting of a stair lift.

Additional occupation of the buildings not only gives the farmstead a sense of place but will increase the overall security of the site. The courtyard will be the central feature of the site and will be enveloped by sustainable residential developments. To enable the courtyard to retain this feeling and remain uncluttered, private and visitor parking has been allocated outside this area. Each proposed building also has its own external space and store.

As the courtyard is to become a focal point within the development it is important that it is complementary to the scheme as a whole. Currently the courtyard is of a concrete construction and has no aesthetic merits. It would appear that the surface is relatively new but is in a poor state with numerous cracks. To enhance the courtyard it is proposed to have a stone cobble effect finish, as indicated below.



Fig 2 – Courtyard Finish

The cobble effect finish, along with paved areas to the front of the barns / farmhouse and small grassed gardens to the former annexes will enhance a sense of community to the development.

As can be seen from the current photographs the Annex building is currently in a state of disrepair. Recently areas of the derelict annex buildings have been removed by the client. The main elements removed are the steel sheet roof and the blockwork frontage. I have been informed, by the Client, that this was done for safety reasons. The Client now lives in a caravan on site, immediately adjacent to the Buildings and was concerned as to the structural integrity of the elements removed. During periods of high wind, the integrity of the steel sheet roofing was of particular concern to Mr Dickinson, who occupies the site with his wife and daughter. Neither of these elements would have been retained in any scheme and neither had any intrinsic value. Indeed the blockwork wall was a very recent addition to the buildings and was not even tied into the structure. In its current state the remaining wall serves little purpose other than that of a boundary wall with acoustic properties. However the wall is a stone rubble fill construction with a render course. Like other outbuildings on the site the remaining wall is in disrepair. Exposed rubble filled walls often settle over time with the movement of sediment through the wall caused by the egress of water. Should development not be permitted within this area it is likely that over time this wall will continue to deteriorate and have to be replaced with a boundary wall, which would probably be smaller. Should this be the case both the acoustic value of the wall, alongside the form of process of the working farmstead, will be lost.

PLANNING POLICIES

Barnsley Unitary Development Plan – Volume 2 Barnsley Urban Community Area.

General

Higham falls within the Barnsley Urban Community Area and the site area is 'washed over' as being within the green belt. Below are direct extracts from this document that is relevant to the application for the former annex buildings.

Sections of Relevance.

1.5 The Barnsley Urban Community Area is generally well placed to contribute to the overall objectives of the Unitary Development Plan in terms of :

b) revitalisation of existing communities

2.3 Between 1981 and 1991 population in the Community Area declined from 89,050 to 87,450.

2.5 Within the Community Area the emphasis is on reducing the rate of decline in population.

The Unitary Development Plan specifically covering Higham and its surrounding area, clearly identifies the need for housing within the area with one of the overall aims of the UDP being the revitalisation of existing communities. The Royd Hill Farm Development is ideally located and idiosyncratically suited in its nature to help fulfil this criteria. Presently to the East there are houses built within the past 5 years and existing, with more established houses to the West. Currently the existing farmyard, and outbuildings are not inkeeping with the surrounding buildings and are considered an eyesore by Local residents (See Neighbour Consultations – Appendix A). Development of the Annex buildings would enhance the area by forming a mini hamlet. The development of the Annex building, in addition to the other buildings, would help reduce the rate of decline within the area.

*4.9 The primary purpose of Green Belt in this Barnsley Community Area is to prevent the built up areas merging with the surrounding settlements of Royston, Cudworth, Darfield, Wombwell, Worsbrough, Dodworth and **Higham**, maintaining the separate identity and character of these settlements in relation to surrounding countryside and having particular regard to the landscape features of that countryside. The Green Belt is intended to contain further pressures for encroachment on the countryside.*

4.10 Two major areas of countryside extend into the centre of the Urban Area along the Dearne Valley and Measborough Dyke. Green Belt designation provides access to the countryside for the urban population and helps create and distinguish one neighbourhood from another.

4.11 In addition to the primary functions it performs of preventing the uncontrolled sprawl of development into the surrounding countryside and protecting greenspaces extending into the built up area, the Green Belt also serves to enhance the image of Barnsley and is a positive and integral part of the Boroughwide regeneration strategy.

4.18 Within areas of Urban Greenspace, the following locations are the principal areas of open space all or parts of which are suitable for active, recreational use as they contain pitches (and/or other facilities) suitable for the playing of organised/participatory sport :

b) Higham cricket ground

The proposed Annex development is on the footprint of the existing Annex buildings. Although the overall volume of the proposed from the previous has increased significantly, the footprint has remained the same. The primary purpose of the Green Belt within the Barnsley Community Area is to prevent built up areas merging with rural areas such as Higham. As the footprint is no larger than existing the proposed work are not contrary to this main aim. Likewise the development of the Annex buildings does not create an uncontrolled sprawl into the countryside and green spaces. It can be clearly seen that the Annex development does not contravene any of the Green Belt Policy for the areas (4.09-4.11 incl.) whilst taking advantage of principal areas of public open space (4.18). Higham Cricket Ground is situated directly adjacent to the Annexes.

Planning Policy Guidance 2: Green belts

Purposes of including land in Green Belts

1.5 There are five purposes of including land in Green Belts:

- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;*
- to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;*
- to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;*
- to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and*
- to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.*

PPG2 is general guidance for Green belt policy and also identifies the importance of restricting sprawl into the countryside and preventing the merging of towns. It also identifies the need to assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict land.

New buildings

3.4 *The construction of new buildings inside a Green Belt is inappropriate unless it is for the following purposes:*

- agriculture and forestry (unless permitted development rights have been withdrawn - see paragraph D2 of Annex D);*
- essential facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation, for cemeteries, and for other uses of land which preserve the openness of the Green Belt and which do not conflict with the purposes of including land in it (see paragraph 3.5 below);*
- limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings (subject to paragraph 3.6 below);*
- limited infilling in existing villages (under the circumstances described in the box following paragraph 2.11), and limited affordable housing for local community needs under development plan policies according with PPG3 (see Annex E, and the box following paragraph 2.11); or*
- limited infilling or redevelopment of major existing developed sites identified in adopted local plans, which meets the criteria in paragraph C3 or C4 of Annex C1(See Below)*

Infilling

C3 Limited infilling at major developed sites in continuing use may help to secure jobs and prosperity without further prejudicing the Green Belt. Where this is so, local planning authorities may in their development plans identify the site, defining the boundary of the present extent of development and setting out a policy for limited infilling for the continuing use within this boundary. Such infilling should:

- (a) have no greater impact on the purposes of including land in the Green Belt (paragraph 1.5) than the existing development;
- (b) not exceed the height of the existing buildings; and
- (c) not lead to a major increase in the developed proportion of the site.

The proposed annex buildings may be classed as limited infilling in existing buildings.

(a) The development would have no greater impact on the five purposes identified in paragraph 1.5, as discussed above.

(b) The overall height of the building would not exceed the height of the existing farmhouse, located directly opposite.

(c) The current overall volume of the site is 2422 m³. The development size with the new annex buildings would be 2880m³ – an increase of approximately 15 %. As previously stated the overall footprint of the site would be unchanged.

2.11 Guidance on the treatment of existing villages in Green Belts is given in the box below.

The advice on affordable housing in paragraph 3.4 is also relevant.

Existing Villages

Development plans should treat existing villages in Green Belt areas in one of the following ways.

If it is proposed to allow **no new building** beyond the categories in the first three indents of paragraph 3.4, the village should be included within the Green Belt. The Green Belt notation should be carried across ("washed over") it.

If **infilling only** is proposed, the village should either be "washed over" and listed in the development plan or should be inset (that is, excluded from the Green Belt). The local plan should include policies to ensure that any infill does not have an adverse effect on the character of the village concerned. If the village is washed over, the local plan may need to define infill boundaries to avoid dispute over whether particular sites are covered by infill policies.

If **limited development** (more than infilling) or **limited expansion** is proposed, the village should be inset. Development control policies for such settlements should be included in the local plan.

In the UDP for Barnsley Urban Community, the site is 'washed over' within the Greenbelt and infilling only may be suitable.

Planning Policy Statement 3: PPS3 (Housing)

30. In providing for **affordable housing in rural communities**, where opportunities for delivering affordable housing tend to be more limited, the aim should be to deliver high quality housing that contributes to the creation and maintenance of sustainable rural communities in market towns and villages. This requires planning at local and regional level adopting a positive and pro-active approach which is informed by evidence, with clear targets for the delivery of rural affordable housing. Where viable and practical, Local Planning Authorities should consider allocating and releasing sites solely for affordable housing, including using a **Rural Exception Site Policy**. This enables small sites to be used, specifically for affordable housing in small rural communities²⁰ that would not normally be used for housing because, for example, they are subject to policies of restraint.

²⁰ Small rural settlements have been designated for enfranchisement and right to acquire purposes (under Section 17 of the

Housing Act 1996) by SI 1997/620-25 inclusive and 1999/1307.

Rural exception sites should only be used for affordable housing in perpetuity. A Rural Exception Site policy should seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection, whilst also ensuring that rural areas continue to develop as sustainable, mixed, inclusive communities.

PPS3 Section 30 identifies that as opportunities for affordable housing within rural areas is limited, planning approaches should be pro-active and positive in delivering affordable targets. Although it is not the intention to use the Rural Exception Site Policy, this policy again identifies the need for 2/3 bedroom houses within rural areas. As previously mentioned all 3 proposed dwellings will be occupied by relatives of the occupants of the other 3 proposed dwellings on the site. This would encourage the area to develop as a sustainable community.

Planning Policy Statement 1: PPS1 (Delivering Sustainable Development)

5. Planning should facilitate and promote sustainable and inclusive patterns of urban and rural development by:

- making suitable land available for development in line with economic, social and environmental objectives to improve people's quality of life;*
- contributing to sustainable economic development;*
- protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment, the quality and character of the countryside, and existing communities;*
- ensuring high quality development through good and inclusive design, and the efficient use of resources; and,*
- ensuring that development supports existing communities and contributes to the creation of safe, sustainable, liveable and mixed communities with good access to jobs and key services for all members of the community.*

As the Applicants intend to occupy all of the dwellings they are committed to using renewable energy sources which will reduce carbon emissions way in excess of that recommended by SAP and Building Regulations.

Appendix E is an initial feasibility study carried out for Plot 2. The report identifies the possible use of both Ground Source Heat Pumps and Air to Water Heat Pumps. There is also an option to use Solar in conjunction with these heat sources. A further feasibility study is underway to introduce a carbon neutral boiler using wood pellets. The preferred method of supplying hot water and heating is likely to reduce SAP Level Carbon emissions by 25 – 50 %, possibly in line with a Code Level 4 house. This type of system will be used on Plots 1,2 &3.

For the Former Annex buildings it is anticipated that solar panels will be used to generate hot water. It is likely that such a system will reduce SAP Level Carbon emissions by 25%, possibly in line with a Code Level 3 house.

Plots 2 & 3 have an allocated external lockable boiler store, large enough to facilitate a bio mass boiler.

As sustainable development is becoming increasingly required by the Local Authorities, it is not unusual for a condition to be included within a Planning Approval. Such a condition may state that no works shall commence until a report has been submitted to and approved by the Authority identifying how the predicted CO₂ emissions from the development will be reduced by at least 10% through the use of on site renewable energy equipment.

The overall commitment to sustainable heating and hot water supply will reduce the carbon emission on the site to in excess of this requirement. Although the heating and hot water systems have yet to be finalised the applicants are committed to long term sustainability.

In conjunction with the renewable heat source all dwellings within the site offer the following:

- Provision of a Home Office
- Outdoor drying spaces
- Adequate space for internal and external recycling bins
- Adequate space for external storage, suitable for cycle storage
- All insulants used will have a Global Warming Potential of less than 5
- Provision will be made for cycle storage to all units
- A minimum of 75% of light fittings will be energy efficient
- All dwellings to have water butts.

SUMMARY

The application for very special circumstances within the greenbelt should be supported for the following reasons:

- Revitalisation of existing communities by providing high quality housing capable of sustainable, social and environmental development.
- Provision of housing in a rural area without contravening any of the primary or other purposes of the Green Belt, both at Local and National Level. Housing levels have been identified as declining in the area within the Local UDP.
- A commitment to providing renewable energy sources to reduce carbon emissions of the development.
- A commitment to provide, where possible, other facilities in accordance with the Code for Sustainable Homes.
- Redevelopment of a derelict building in a manner sympathetic not only to the existing building but also the overall Farmstead. The site is currently considered an eyesore by nearby residents, who support this application.