

2025/0300

Mr R Auckland

Green Farm, New Row Lane, Ingbirchworth S36 7GG

Conversion and alterations (including partial demolition) of 2 existing agricultural buildings to form 2no. dwellings with associated works.

Site Description

The site lies to the south of Ingbirchworth just off New Row Lane. The site comprises of two large agricultural barns, both buildings have a duo pitch roof with a traditional agricultural shallow pitch. Barn 1 has a symmetrical roof with a central ridgeline running South East to North West. Barn 2 has a non-symmetrical duo pitch roof with an off-centre ridge, forming a cat slide roof, with the roof apex also running South East to North West. Both barns are predominantly block built with sheeted cladding above and on the roof. The site is spacious and is directly accessed off New Row Lane, where there is an existing access with suitable hardstanding, wall and visibility splays in place.

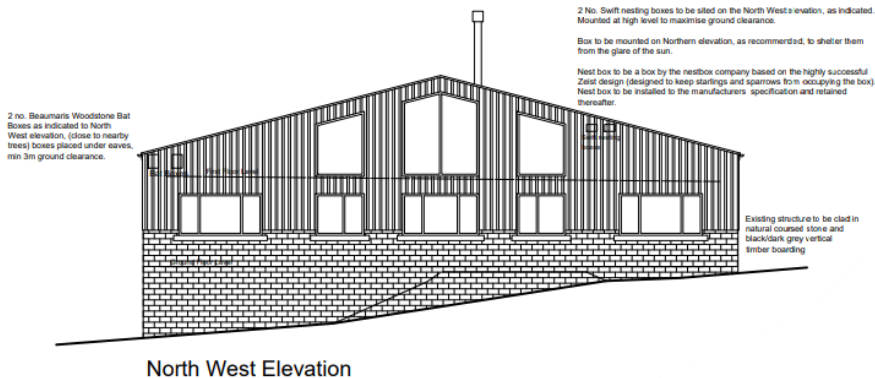
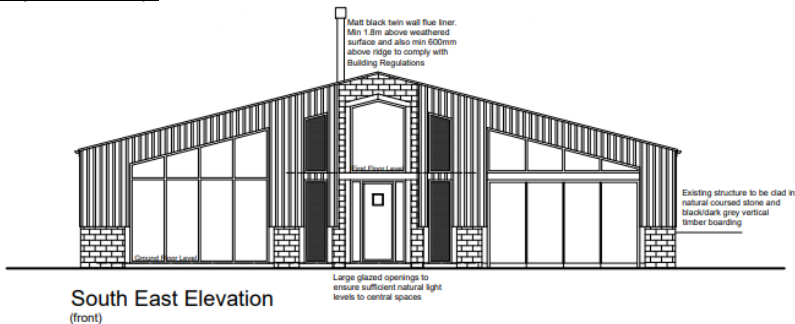
Planning History

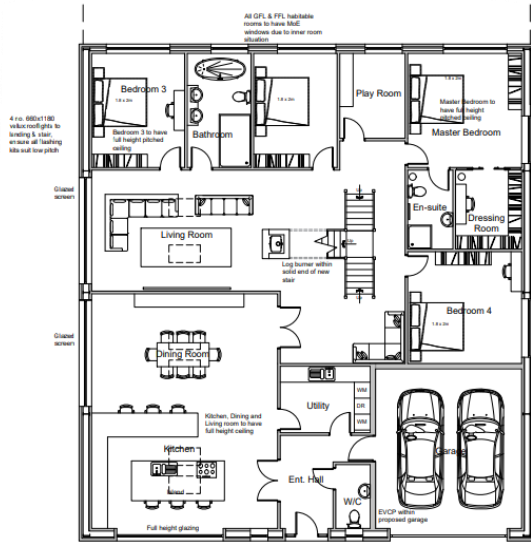
There is no planning history on this part of the site.

Proposed Development

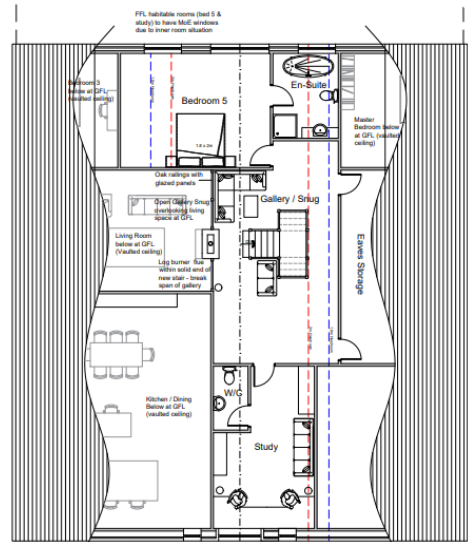
This application proposes to part demolish and convert two separate agricultural barns into residential dwellings.

Barn 1 (Northern):



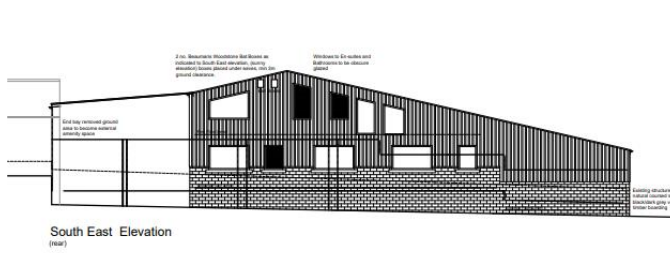


Ground Floor Plan

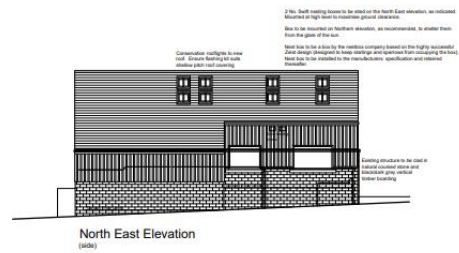


First Floor Plan

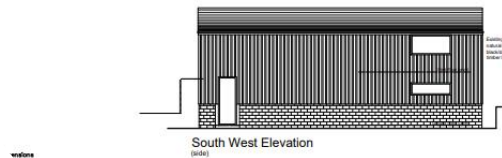
Barn 2 (Southern):



South East Elevation (side)



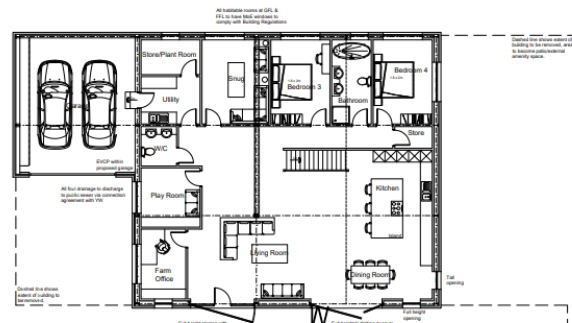
North East Elevation (side)



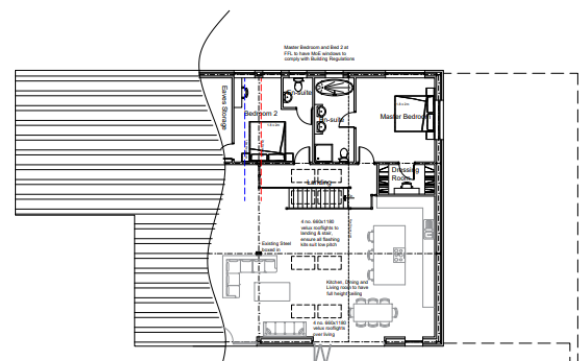
South West Elevation (side)



North West Elevation (front)

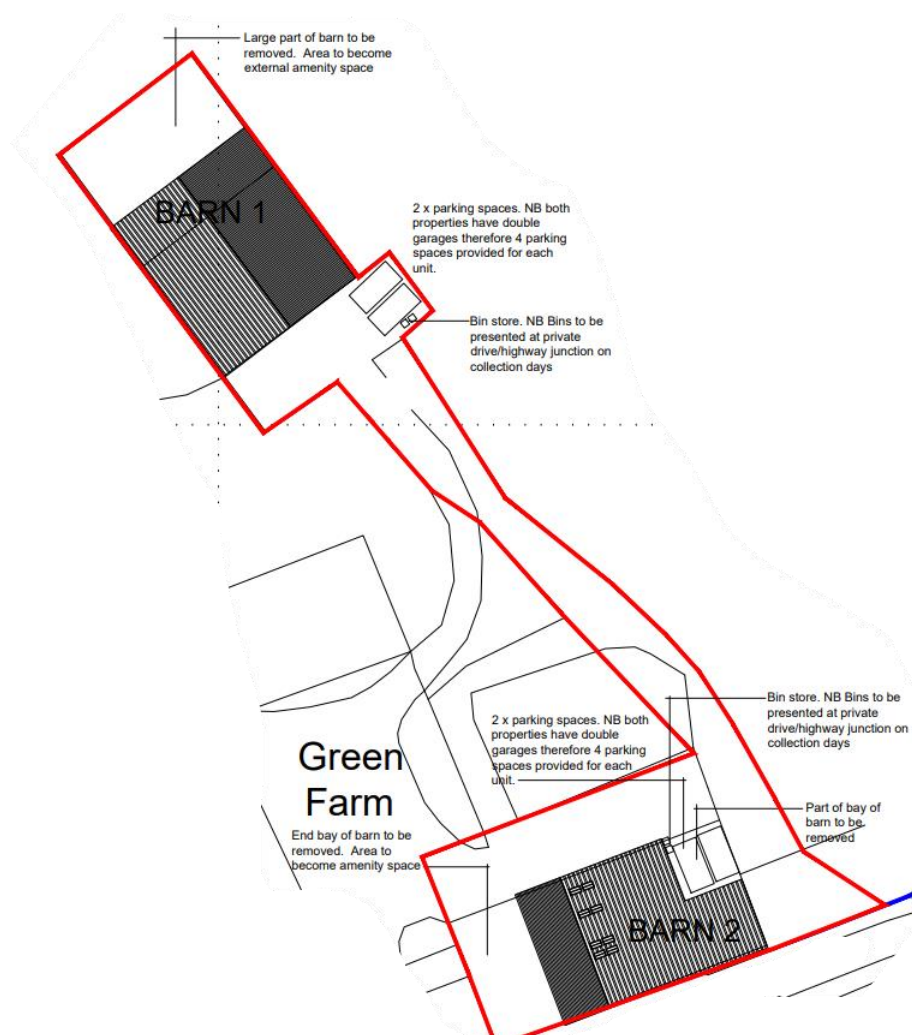


Ground Floor Plan



First Floor Plan

Site Layout:



Policy Context

Planning decisions should be made in accordance with the current development plan policies unless material considerations indicate otherwise; the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. The Local Plan was adopted in January 2019 and is accompanied by seven masterplan frameworks which apply to the largest site allocations (housing, employment, and mixed-use sites). In addition, the Council has adopted a series of Supplementary Planning Documents and Neighbourhood Plans which provide supporting guidance and specific local policies which are a material consideration in the decision-making process.

The Local Plan review was approved at a full Council meeting held 24th November 2022. The review determined that the Local Plan remains fit for purpose and is adequately delivering on its objectives. This means, no updates to the Local Plan, in whole or in part, are to be carried out ahead of a further review, which is due to take place in 2027, or earlier, if circumstances require it.

Local Plan Allocation –

The development site is washed over by green belt as shown within the adopted Local Plan. The site is also within the Ingbirchworth Conservation Area. Therefore, the following policies are relevant:

- ***Policy SD1: Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development.***

- **Policy GD1: General Development**
- **Policy D1: High Quality Design and Place Making**
- **Policy HE1 – The Historic Environment**
- **Policy SD1: Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development**
- **Policy T3: New Development and Sustainable Travel.**
- **Policy T4: New Development and Transport Safety**
- **Policy POLL1: Pollution Control and Protection.**
- **Policy CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction.**
- **Policy GB3: Changes of use in the Green Belt**

Supplementary Planning Document(s)

- **Barn Conversions (Adopted May 2019)**
- **Design of Housing Development (Adopted July 2023).**
- **Sustainable Travel (Adopted July 2022).**
- **Parking (Adopted November 2019).**
- **Sustainable construction and climate change adaptation (July 2023).**

National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies and how these are expected to be applied. The core of this is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Proposals that align with the Local Plan should be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In respect of this application, relevant sections include:

– **Section 5: Delivering a sufficient supply of homes**

Paragraph 61 states that to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay. The overall aim should be to meet an area's identified housing need, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community

– **Section 9: Promoting sustainable transport.**

Paragraph 116 Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.

– **Section 12: Achieving well designed places.**

Paragraph 131. The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.

Paragraph 135. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) *will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*

- b) *are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- c) *are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
- d) *establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
- e) *optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
- f) *create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users⁵¹; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.*

– **Section 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.**

Paragraph 210 states that:

In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- b) *the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- c) *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*

Other Material Consideration(s)

- **South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide 2011.**
- **National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) (as amended).**

Consultations

Highways Development Control	<i>No objection subject to conditions</i>
Pollution Control	<i>No objection subject to a condition regarding construction hours.</i>
Yorkshire Water Services Ltd	<i>No objection subject to conditions</i>
Biodiversity Officer / Ecologist	
Forestry Officer	<i>No comments received</i>
Historic England	<i>No comments to make</i>
Local Ward Councillors	<i>No comments received</i>
Conservation Officer	<i>No objection subject to conditions</i>
Drainage	<i>No comments received</i>

Representations

Neighbour notification letters were sent to surrounding properties and a site notice was posted adjacent to the site. One comment was received noting that the existing roof sheets contain asbestos.

Assessment

The main issues for consideration are as follows:

- The principle of the development
- The impact on visual amenity and character of the conservation area
- The impact on neighbouring residential properties
- The impact on highways safety
- The impact on ecology / biodiversity
- Consideration of representations

For the purposes of considering the balance in this application the following planning weight is referred to in this report using the following scale:

- Substantial
- Considerable
- Significant
- Moderate
- Modest
- Limited
- Little or no

Principle of Development

The application proposes to change the use of two existing barns/agricultural buildings and convert them into two individual dwellings.

Policy GB3 states that we will allow the change of use or conversion of buildings in the Green Belt provided that:

- The existing building is of a form, scale and design that is in keeping with its surroundings;
- The existing building is of a permanent and substantial construction and a structural survey demonstrates that the building does not need major or complete reconstruction for the proposed new use;
- The proposed new use is in keeping with the local character and the appearance of the building; and
- The loss of any building from agricultural use will not give rise to the need for a replacement agricultural building, except in cases where the existing building is no longer capable of agricultural use.

The existing buildings are similar in terms of their form, scale and design to the surrounding properties and wider rural area. A structural survey has been submitted with the application which confirms that the buildings are both structurally sound and are therefore suitable for conversion without the need for full reconstruction. There are also various residential dwellings in the area and the proposed new use would therefore be compatible with the surrounding uses. No other agricultural buildings are proposed, at the time of the site visit the buildings were empty. The applicant advised the pigs that previously occupied the buildings have been moved to another area on the wider farm due to noise/odour complaints therefore it is not considered any replacement buildings would be required.

Overall, the proposal is considered to meet the above criteria set out in policy GB3 and the application would therefore be acceptable in principle. This weighs significantly in favour of the proposed development.

Policy GB3 goes on to set out a number of other considerations such as, amenity and highways safety which will all need to be complied with to enable development. These will be discussed in more detail below.

Conservation / Design

The Conservation Officer raised some initial concerns with regard to the overall design, particularly the glazing, of Barn 2 which sits in the most prominent position at the front/roadside of the site. Alterations have been made in line with the Conservation Officers comments and are summarised as follows:

- Omitted the GF window to the store/plant room.
- Omitted the sloping heads to all the windows (First Floor) to the SE elevation.
- Reduced the width of the GF Snug & Bedroom windows
- Reduced the GF Bed 4 window size.
- Reduced and repositioned the FF master bedroom window
- Reduced the FF dressing area window size.
- Reduced the master ensuite window size.

These amendments reduce the visual intrusion and ensure the overall conversions are sympathetic and restrained. The conversions do not involve extensions or intrusive new elements and do not significantly impact the character of the conservation area. The setting of most sensitivity to the listed buildings is limited to the areas to the west of the stone wall and the barns are not in this. These factors allied to the relatively sympathetic materials enhance the agricultural aesthetic, means the overall impact on the setting is likely to be minor positive.

The overall design and visual appearance would have limited harm on the surrounding listed buildings or conservation area and therefore is in accordance with policy HE1, HE3 and D1 of the Local Plan. This weighs significantly in favour of the development.

Impact on Residential Amenity

The proposed dwellings are positioned at a sufficient distance from neighbouring residential properties, meeting the separation standards outlined in the South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide (SYRDG). Consequently, the development is unlikely to result in overlooking or a loss of privacy.

The buildings will largely retain their existing form, with only minor demolitions proposed. This will result in a slight reduction in overall scale and massing, ensuring that any existing overshadowing is not worsened and that neighbouring amenity is preserved.

Internally, the dwellings comply with the space standards set out in the SYRDG, providing adequate living space for future occupants. External amenity space is also sufficient, contributing to a high standard of residential accommodation.

In summary, the proposals are not expected to harm residential amenity, either for existing residents or future occupiers. The scheme is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policies GD1 and D1 of the Local Plan.

Highways Safety

Highways Development Control officers have reviewed the proposal and, while some concerns remain regarding the capacity of New Row Lane and High Lane to accommodate additional traffic, it is not considered that the impact would be severe enough to justify refusal on highway safety grounds.

As such, no objection is raised, subject to the inclusion of two conditions regarding suitable surfacing and drainage. The proposal is therefore compliant with policy T3 and T4 of the Local Plan. This weighs moderately in favour of the development.

Ecology/Biodiversity

The proposed barn conversions are exempt from the mandatory biodiversity net gain requirements.

Relevant information has been submitted to justify why no bat activity surveys were undertaken on the site. The Ecologist is satisfied that a data search is not required to support the assessment provided the development incorporates ecological enhancements such as bird and bat boxes. Bird and bat boxes are indicated on the proposed plans on both proposed dwellings and the Ecologist considers this sufficient.

As such the proposal is in accordance with policy BIO1 and this weighs significantly in favour of the development.

**Recommendation -
Approve with Conditions**