

2022/1021

Mr and Mrs James and Rebecca Stafford and Crossfield

Conversion of barn to form 2no. dwellings and associated work

Barn adjacent Green Farm, High Lane, Ingbirchworth, Sheffield, S36 7GG

Background

No Planning History

Description

The site is located off High Lane, Ingbirchworth, situated on the edge of a courtyard of farm buildings known as Green Farm. The property is a stone built two storey barn with its principal elevation facing east and towards the courtyard of Green Farm. The west facing elevation looks over a private courtyard serving South View Farm. The building has several barn style openings at ground and first floor level.

The site is set within the Green Belt and Ingbirchworth Conservation area as allocated within the Local Plan. There are a number of Listed Buildings within the vicinity of the site, including Green Farmhouse and Green Barn set to the north and east of the building. The curtilage of the site is split due an access running through to Green Farmhouse to the north.



Proposed Development

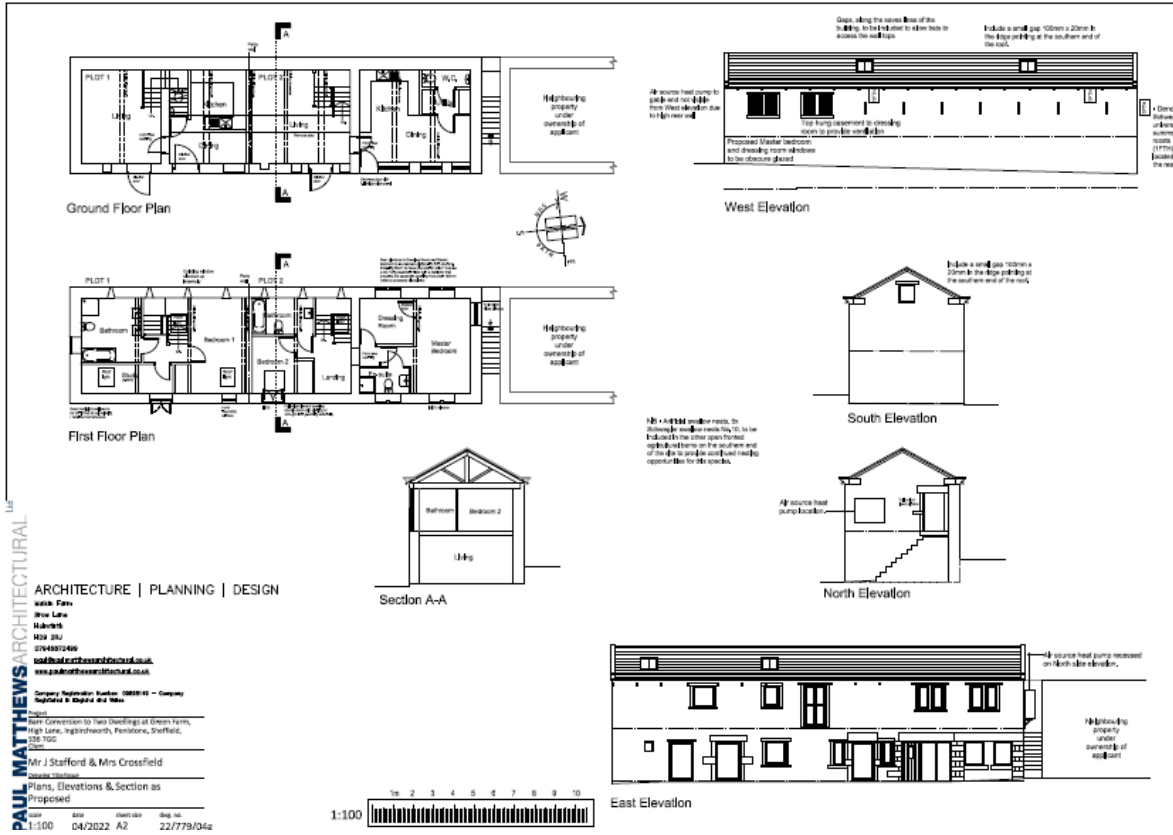
The proposals involve the conversion of the barn into two dwellings. The plans have been amended during the course of the application to show plot 1, a 1 bed unit (with a small study area) and plot 2, a 2 bed unit. The proposed windows to the west elevation at first floor facing South View Fold have also been obscurely glazed.

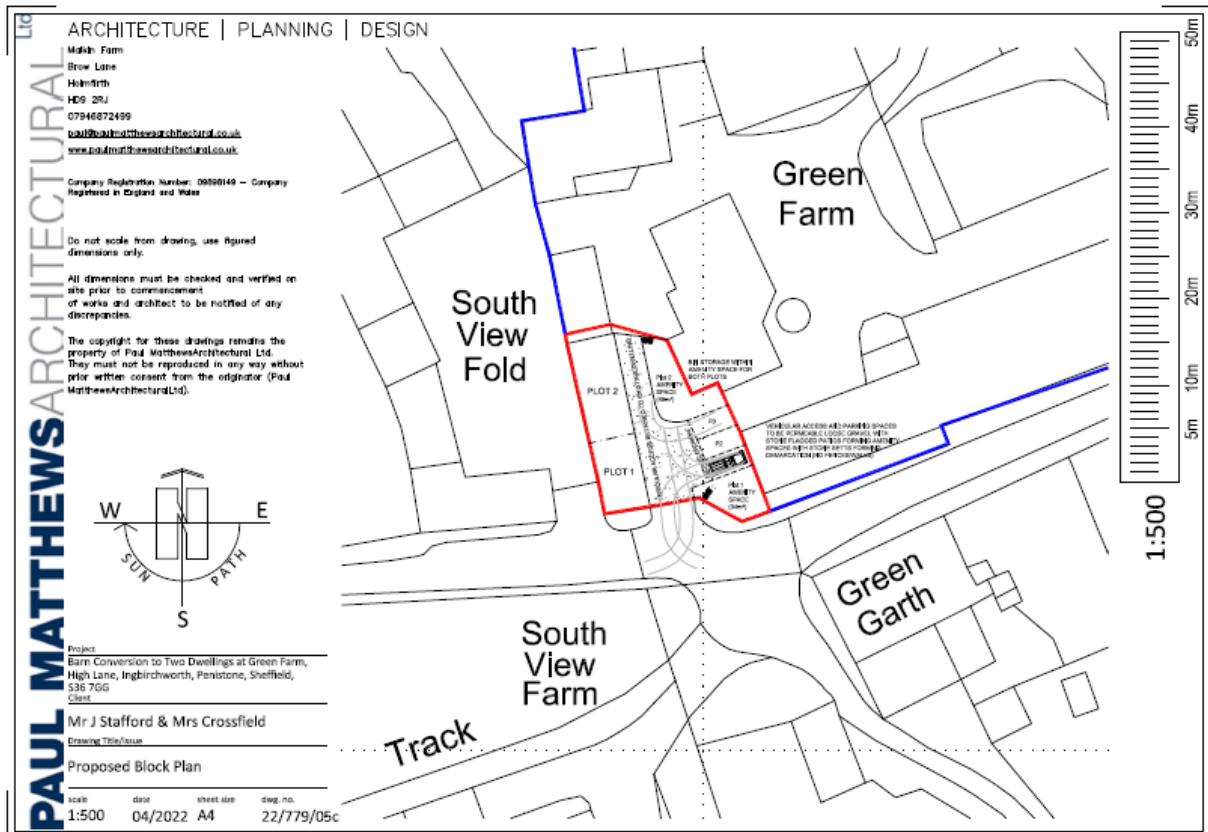
Internally plot 1 features a lounge, kitchen and diner at ground floor level and a bathroom, bedroom and small study area at first floor. Plot 2 features a kitchen/diner, utility and wc and

living room at ground floor and at first floor a master bedroom with dressing room and ensuite and a further bedroom and bathroom.

The garden areas to the proposed dwellings are separated by an existing access road and are set to the east of the site. Plot 1 garden area measures 34sqm and plot 2 garden area measures 49sqm. 3 parking spaces are provided, 1 for the 1 bed unit and 2 spaces for the 2 bed unit. Bin storage areas are also provided.

The applicant has provided a structural report and a bat survey in support of the planning application.





Policy Context

Local Plan

Planning decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise and the 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 also now 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 and are a material consideration in the decision-making process.

The Local Plan review was approved at the full Council meeting held 24th November 2022.

The review determined that the Local Plan remains fit for purpose and is adequately delivering 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. The next review is due to take place in 2027 or earlier if circumstances, require it.

Local Plan Policies

The site is in the Green Belt as shown on the adopted Local Plan, where Local Plan Policy GB1 protects land from development in accordance with national green belt policy.

Policy GB2 allows for the replacement, extension and alterations of existing buildings in the green belt.

Policy GB3 allows for changes of use to buildings in the Green Belt.

Policy HE1 The Historic Environment: Positively encourage developments that help in the management, conservation and understanding of the historic environment

Policy HE3 Developments affecting Historic Buildings will be expected to:

- Respect historic precedents of scale, form, massing, architectural detail and materials
- Capitalise on opportunities to better reveal the significance of a building where elements exist that do not contribute

Policy HE3 Developments affecting Historic Buildings: Proposals involving historic buildings should conserve and where appropriate enhance, respect historic precedents, and capitalise on opportunities to reveal significance

D1 High Quality Design and Place Making

Supplementary Planning Documents

- Barn Conversions
- House Extensions and Other Domestic Alterations

NPPF

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. At the heart is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework as a whole; or where specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted or unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Consultations

Gunthwaite and Ingbirchworth Parish Council – No comments received

Ward Councillors – No comments received

Highways – No objections subject to conditions

Drainage – No objections details to be checked by Building Control

Conservation – No objection subject to conditions

Pollution Control – No objections subject to condition

Ecology Officer – No objection subject to conditions

Representations

2 objections have been received which raise the following concerns:-

- Our only objections are to the bat related proposals on the western side, also a concern of the windows again on the western side, these need to be obscure glass.
- Our main worry is that our overlooking view turns into that of a carpark overrun with vehicles and a drastic change to the unspoilt farming landscape
- The main area for concern is the unadopted land between us and the proposed conversions. This is already a problematic issue not taking into account additional residents vehicles and access.
- Parking currently occurs on the unadopted land which has resulted in blocked accesses

Assessment

Principle of development

The proposal involves the conversion of a former agricultural barn into two dwellings. The site is in the Green Belt as allocated on the adopted Barnsley Local Plan where inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful and should not be allowed except in very special circumstances. Local Plan Policy GB3 does, however, allow for changes of use of existing buildings in the Green Belt, subject to various criteria. In terms of the change of use of the existing barn, the structural survey states that the existing building is considered to be in good overall condition and at the time of inspection there was no evidence of ongoing structural movement cracking or bowing defects to any of the structural elements, apart from one of the floor beams which has extensive longitudinal cracking and requires further assessment. The structural survey demonstrates that the building does not need major or complete reconstruction for the proposed new use.

The building being converted is a traditionally built farm outbuilding which is largely accepted to be no longer suitable for modern agricultural use but do have a value in terms of their contribution to the character of the area and the existing Green Farm collection of buildings, therefore its retention is welcomed. Given the close proximity of the building to the existing residential uses, a residential use of the building is acceptable. The proposed alterations have been sensitively designed and the proposed new use is in keeping with the residential nature of the site. The building has clearly not used for modern agricultural purposes for some time, therefore its loss for residential purposes is considered to be in keeping with the site and would ensure that this building is retained and restored in accordance with policy GB3 of the Local Plan. Permitted Development rights should be removed so that further extensions cannot be added to the property without planning permission.

Visual Amenity/Impact on Heritage Assets

This proposal seeks permission for the conversion of the long barn (short gable directly fronting High Lane) at Green Farm Ingbirchworth. Green Farm includes two principally listed buildings namely the C17 Green Farmhouse at the rear / north end of the farm (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1151109?section=official-list-entry>) and the C17 barn immediately east and adjacent (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1191348?section=official-list-entry>). The barn this proposal is the focus of is later (likely late C18 to C19) and appears on the first edition 1850 OS much as it does today.

The D&A advises that: *The subject barn is, in its own right, a building of evident historic significance as part of the farm's history.* Consequently, whilst later and not identified as a

principal listed building in the list, the Conservation Officer contends that the barn is curtilage to the farmhouse and should be considered listed by virtue of Part I, Chap 1 (5) b of the Listed Building Act. The Conservation Officer states that 'I also note we have historic applications for planning that include parallel listed building consents in 1991. Despite the requirement for a listed building consent application, I would not see this as an impediment as the proposal as drafted is generally acceptable and sympathetic to the setting. The submission pack includes a heritage statement that adequately sets out the context and the impact of the proposal which on the whole I agree with. The application proposes a set of restrained alterations to the envelope to convert the barn to a dwelling (currently drafted as 2 No. units). Existing openings are numerous and so re-use of these is logical and requires minimal new openings (these amount to a single first floor window in the eastern elevation and four rooflights). The first-floor pitching hatch is retained and re-purposed as a Juliet balcony which in this case is acceptable. Windows and doors are generally framed in white painted hardwood timber with all existing dressings (heads / sills / jambs etc.) retained. One deviation from the traditional of note is the air source heat pump mounted on the northern wall to the left of the stone steps. This would ordinarily be a matter for concern in terms of visual intrusion (incl. into the setting of the farmhouse). However, the installation location is screened from view by the neighbouring building to the north being set down to be as unconscious as possible. Given the other options for renewables (such as PV's) are likely to be visually harmful I would not object to the proposal for the ASHP. Beyond this, the envelope is unaltered and is essentially repaired and conserved which will not in my view harm the significance of the building or the setting of its neighbours. One minor point is that an EVC is proposed in the D&A but the plans do not show this or its location. However overall, I see no harm in the conversion'

The site is set in a sensitive Green Belt location, where the impact of the proposals upon the visual amenity and openness of the Green Belt must be carefully assessed. The Barn Conversion SPD requires that any proposed alteration or extension is architecturally consistent with the existing building and respects its height, shape mass and plan form and existing external materials. The proposal does not include any further extensions to the building and the parking and amenity areas are set within the existing curtilage and do not extend further into Green Belt land. The alterations have been sympathetically designed to meet the guidelines of the SPD Barn Conversions and any new openings are limited to what is necessary and the proposed alterations will be made good with matching stone work. The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable when measured against the Barn Conversion SPD and will not harm the character and appearance of the conservation area or adjacent Listed Buildings in accordance with policies D1, HE1 and HE3 of the Local Plan.

Residential Amenity

The SPD Design of New Housing Development states that *'in order to ensure adequate levels of privacy are provided/ maintained, to ensure residential development does not result in unacceptable levels of loss of outlook and in order to provide adequate amenity, development will be expected to comply with external spacing standards'*.

As the building is existing, the proposed layout of the site is constrained due to existing buildings and the existing access which is set through the site. The amended plans show that the windows to the west elevation are obscurely glazed and are not main habitable room windows so they should not cause any significant overlooking of the adjacent properties at South View Fold. The habitable room windows to the eastern elevation would face over the access and parking areas and the existing listed barn over the courtyard. The relationship between the existing dwellings and the new properties and their habitable room windows would be acceptable and should not cause any significant overlooking impact in accordance with the Design of Housing Development SPD.

With regards to the residential amenity of the future occupants, the proposed dwellings are 1 and 2 beds, with the 1 bed having a small study area. The overall floor area of the dwellings exceeds the technical guidelines set out in the South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide.

In terms of external amenity space, the SYRDG states that dwellings with 2 bedrooms should have private amenity spaces exceeding 50sqm and 3 or more bedrooms should have a private amenity space exceeding 60sqm. The garden areas to the proposed dwellings are separated by an existing access road and are set to the east of the site. Plot 1 garden area measures 34sqm and plot 2 garden area measures 49sqm. 3 parking spaces are provided, 1 for the 1 bed unit and 2 spaces for the 2 bed unit. Bin storage areas are also provided. Whilst the garden area to the 2 bed unit falls short of the recommended 50sqm required by the SPD, the dwellings are set close to open countryside and this rural location provides easily accessible opportunities for external recreation, therefore the reduced garden areas are considered to be on balance acceptable in this instance. Permitted development rights should be removed, in order to protect the amenity areas from further developments without planning permission.

Impact on Wildlife

The applicant has submitted a Bat Survey with the application. The survey states that 'there is no evidence that bats have or are using the building for roosting despite the moderate potential. Bat numbers in the area were unremarkable and, although bats may use the building from time to time, the building is not considered essential to the survival of bats in the area.' The Ecology Officer has been consulted and has no objection to the proposal. The Ecology Officer states that 'I welcome the biodiversity enhancements within the Bat Survey to Green Farm Report dated 29th July 2022 including the addition of two Schwegler universal bat summer roosts 1FTH, the provision of bat roosting features within the converted building including a small gap 100mmx20mm in the ridge pointing at the southern end of the roof and gaps along the eaves lines of the building. The provision for barn swallow comprising 5x Schwegler swallow nests No.10 artificial swallow nests in adjacent barns is also welcomed.

The Ecology Officer has confirmed that they have no objection to the proposal or the submitted information subject to conditions and informatives, in accordance with Local Plan Policy BIO1.

Highway Safety

The site is located on High Lane a single track rural access route with no footways or street lighting, that is bounded by highway verge and stone walling and is subject to a 30mph speed limit. The application proposes to convert an existing farm building to provide two 1 and 2 bed dwellings with access being gained from High Lane, a substandard width rural access route however, as the proposal to provide residential dwellings will be unlikely to generate additional vehicle movements over the potential number of agricultural movements that could be generated by the existing use, access to the site is unlikely to be intensified. The Highways Officer has therefore confirmed that they have no objection to the proposal.

The site plan shows 3 parking spaces which is in excess of the requirements of the SPD Parking which states that 2 bed units should have 1 parking space each. The proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of highway safety subject to conditions, in accordance with Local Plan Policy T4.

Other Matters

Permitted development rights should be removed by condition to ensure that the property cannot be extended further without planning permission in order to protect the openness and visual amenity of the Green Belt.

Recommendation

Grant subject to conditions