

CONSERVATION TEAM CONSULTATION APPLICATION RESPONSE

APPLICATION REF:	25/01420/FP
CASE OFFICER:	SK
APPLICATION SITE:	Highover Farm, Highover Way, Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 0RQ
DESCRIPTION OF WORKS:	Change of use and external alterations to former agricultural buildings comprising grade II listed threshing barn and non-listed courtyard buildings. Partial demolition of courtyard building between proposed Units 1 and 2 to facilitate access. Single-storey rear extension to facilitate Unit 10. Subdivision and two-storey rear extension to farmhouse to form Units 11 and 12. Erection of new building for two dwellings (Units 13 and 14). Partial demolition and modify building for cycle storage to Units 2 to 8 inclusive. Erection of building to accommodate 2 car port spaces for Unit 5 and refuse storage for Units 2-8 inclusive. Detached bin enclosure / cycle store buildings for Units 9 - 14 inclusive. Hard and soft landscaping in association with the provision of private and communal space. Boundary treatment, installation of 14no. EV charging points, installation of solar PV array on south facing roof slopes of Unit 14 and both the cycle and refuse storage buildings serving Units 2 -8 including provision of BNG area (as amended by drawing nos. 2208.PL.02C, - PL03C; - PL04B; - PL05C; - PL06C; - PL07B; - PL08B; - PL09B and – PL12A received on 19/08/2025, amplified by Structural Appraisal of removal of Roof Covering to Existing Corner & Threshing Timber Barns dated 27/08/2025 and received on 28/08/2025 and by drawing no. 2208.PL.10B received on 11/09/2025).

RECOMMENDATION:

As you will see I have further updated the description above to reflect latest submissions. I raise **NO OBJECTION** on the basis that the proposal will satisfy the provisions of Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the aims of Section 16 of the NPPF and Policies HE1 & HE2 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031.

DETAILED ANALYSIS AND CONSIDERATIONS:

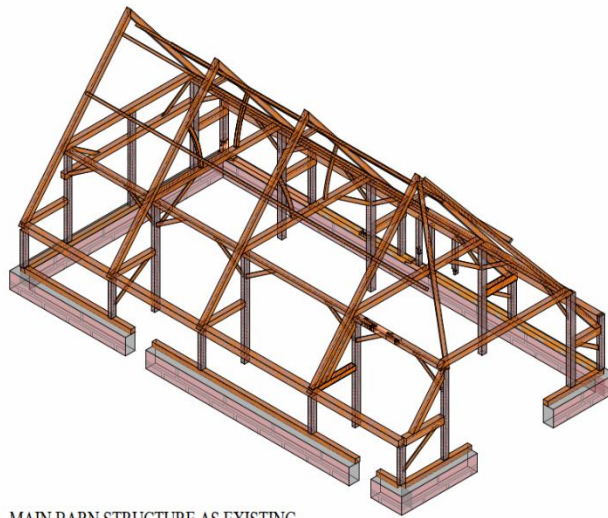
I previously said that I was not anticipating a pair of side-hung casement windows in the side elevation of Unit 2 facing onto the vehicular access to the courtyard, however, I note the applicant's response on 11 September 2025 that this window is a means of escape from bedroom 1 and that a single flush casement window wouldn't be possible. I accept the explanation given and withdraw my concern on this point.

Another outstanding point related to the carport to Unit 5 where I had previously questioned the need for two double-casement windows serving this car port (Elevations 21 and 23). Drawing no. PL10 has now been amended and is considered acceptable.

Finally, I respond to email received on 30 September and entitled **Plot 2 Structural Mark Ups** and note the following:

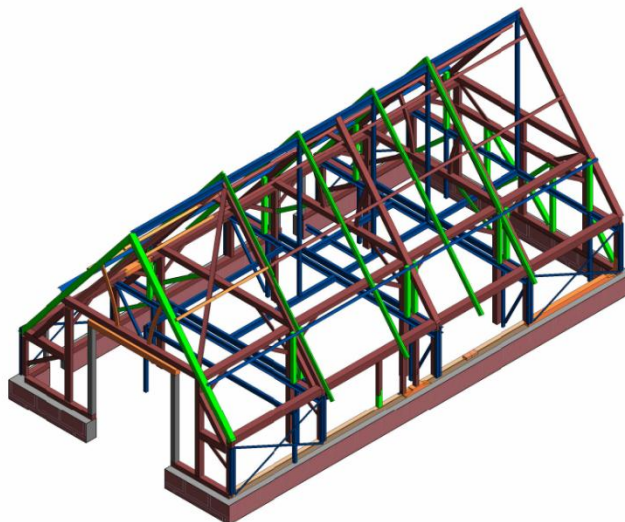
- **Ground floor plan** – 10no. internal steel columns and 2no. beams
- **First floor plan** – 14no. internal steel columns, 2no. beams, 1no. cranked beam and 3no. purlins.
- **Section drawing**

Before commenting further, I copy below extracts from drawing CE23-4293/05 prepared by AFP Consulting Engineers Ltd submitted in association with the scheme to convert a barn at Manor Farm, Kelshall. The reason for doing so is that these visuals are an incredibly helpful tool in visualising the extent of steel frame intervention in that scheme.



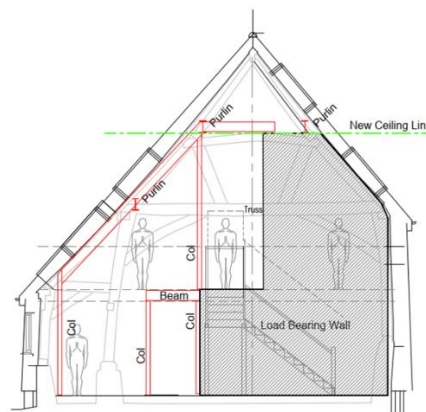
MAIN BARN STRUCTURE AS EXISTING

- EXISTING TIMBER MEMBERS – BROWN
- NEW TIMBER MEMBERS – GREEN
- NEW STEELWORK MEMBERS – BLUE



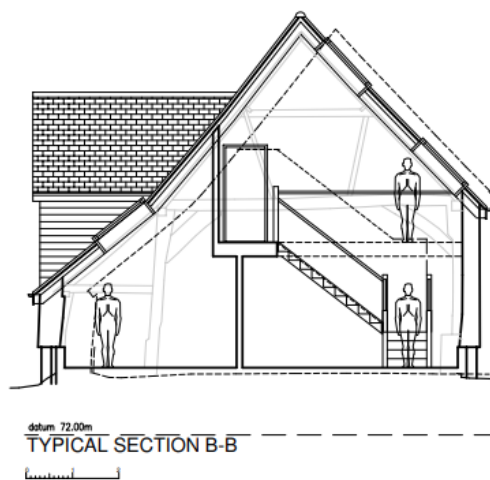
MAIN BARN STRUCTURE SHOWING ADDED STRUCTURE "A"

I understand the highest horizontal steels in the section drawing below will act like raised collars and that these would sit above the existing timber collar ties and would be screened by new ceilings but I feel that the character of the existing interior would be diminished if ceilings ran the length of the building concealing the timber frame in its entirety at the highest level. Where steels are not 'hidden' within walls or above ceiling finishes I would like to understand how these will appear along exposed sections of timber frame. Retaining exposed roof framing right up to the ridge is encouraged in the bedrooms and over the entrance hall void but I accept that ceilings over the bathroom and ensuite 1 would probably be acceptable. I am also slightly confused in that the roughly central column in the section drawing below does not correspond to the column position on plan i.e. is not directly under the purlin. Furthermore, it is unclear as to where this section is exactly taken from, but it would have been helpful if a section is also introduced through the new gable on Elevation 6 of drawing no. 2208.PL.08B i.e. as per Typical Section B-B below to understand how the gable projection would be formed. I would like to see this constructed in oak framing with the frame exposed internally. It is also noted that if the double lines in front of the rafters in the image below denote roof light positions, then there are no doubling-up of roof lights on Elevation 6.



Typical Section

It is noted that the typical section above does not completely correspond to the building's form in Typical Section B-B below – they subtly different.



I have also introduced a further draft condition (no.5 below) and changed the reason for some conditions as these incorrectly referred to a listed building of which the Threshing Barn is the only one.

Suggested conditions (draft only and may need to consider others or amendments).

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out wholly in accordance with the details specified in the application and supporting approved documents and plans listed above.

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with details which form the basis of this grant of permission.

2. As agreed by the case officer by email on the existing slates shall be temporarily removed and stored securely on site ready for reuse. The roofs shall be temporarily covered with as agreed by email on As part of the conversion works and prior to occupation the temporary roof coverings shall be replaced with either salvaged or new natural slate.

Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to protecting the special architectural and historic interest and integrity of this grouping at Highover Farm under Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Policy HE1 of the Local Plan.

3. The roofs of all buildings shall be recovered with natural slate unless otherwise agreed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. A sample of the slate shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the roofs being covered. The roofs thereafter shall be built in accordance with the approved slate sample.

Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to protecting the special architectural and historic interest and integrity of this grouping at Highover Farm under Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Policy HE1 of the Local Plan.

4. Details of any steelwork interventions to the barn forming Unit 2 shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of any steel work. Thereafter the steel work shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to protecting the special architectural and historic interest and integrity of this grouping at Highover Farm under Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Policy HE1 of the Local Plan.

5. Details of the method of constructing the south-west facing projecting gable to Unit 2 (Elevation 6 of drawing no. 2208.PL.08B) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the construction of this gable. Thereafter the gable shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to protecting the special architectural and historic interest and integrity of this grouping at Highover Farm under Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Policy HE1 of the Local Plan.

6. Section details of all roof and wall insulation work for units 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior

to the commencement of the insulation works. Thereafter this work shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to protecting the special architectural and historic interest and integrity of this grouping at Highover Farm under Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Policy HE1 of the Local Plan.

7. A sample panel(s) of the facing brickwork for:

- i) North wall of Unit 1,
- ii) Units 9 and 10,
- iii) Units 11 & 12, and
- iv) Units 13 & 14

shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the plinths being constructed. Thereafter these areas of brickwork shall be built in accordance with the approved sample panel(s).

Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to protecting the special architectural and historic interest and integrity of this grouping at Highover Farm under Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Policy HE1 of the Local Plan.

8. The arches over window and door openings in Units 13 and 14 shall be brick-faced unless otherwise agreed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to protecting the special architectural and historic interest and integrity of this grouping at Highover Farm under Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Policy HE1 of the Local Plan.

9. All new windows and doors shall be manufactured in timber unless otherwise agreed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to protecting the special architectural and historic interest and integrity of this grouping at Highover Farm under Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Policy HE1 of the Local Plan.

10. Section details of all new vertical sliding sash windows to be installed at the farmhouse shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to their manufacture. Thereafter, the windows shall be installed in accordance with the approved window section details.

Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to protecting the special architectural and historic interest and integrity of this grouping at Highover Farm under Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Policy HE1 of the Local Plan.

11. Where new windows are indicated to be side hung casements, these shall be flush casements unless otherwise agreed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to protecting the special architectural and historic interest and integrity of this grouping at Highover Farm under Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Policy HE1 of the Local Plan.

12. The vertical-boarded sliding screens to the front elevations of Units 6, 7 and 8 shall be installed prior to the occupation of these units unless otherwise agreed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to protecting the special architectural and historic interest and integrity of this grouping at Highover Farm under Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Policy HE1 of the Local Plan.

13. All new rainwater goods shall be black metal or cast-iron effect, details of which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the rainwater goods shall be installed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to protecting the special architectural and historic interest and integrity of this grouping at Highover Farm under Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Policy HE1 of the Local Plan.

Note: Also suggested removing Class E PD rights.

CONCLUSION:

The scheme is acceptable in heritage terms subject to ironing out i) the steel frame interventions to Units 2, 3 and 4 and ii) the number and precise wording of conditions.

OFFICER: Mark Simmons

DATE: 02/10/2025