

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Mark Simmons.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
24/01919/LBC	External alterations including glazing to Utility door and 2no. roof lights to front elevation and 1no. roof light, 4no. single casement windows and pair of French doors to rear elevation. Internal alterations. (as amended by drawing nos. 1508_G2_P001-Rev A; - P006-Rev A; - P007-Rev A; - P008-Rev A; -P009-Rev A; P010-Rev A and -P011-Rev A received on 14/11/2024).	Belfry Manor Farm Church End Barley Royston Hertfordshire SG8 8JW

Submitted Plan Nos

1508_G2_P001 - REV A 1508_G2_P007 - REV A 1508_G2_P006 - REV A 1508_G2_P008 - REV A
1508_G2_P009 - REV A 1508_G2_P010 - REV A 1508_G2_P011 - REV A 1508_G2_P002
1508_G2_P003 1508_G2_P004 1508_G2_P005

HE1 Designated heritage assets

SECN16 Conserve + enhance historic environment

2.0 Site History

2.1 Belfry forms part of the listing that is described as 'Barns 50M Ne Manor Farm House' and appears to have been implemented under refs:

95/00384/1 - Alterations and conversion of existing barns into 6 dwellings with garaging, new single storey dwelling with attached double garage, associated parking, landscaping and ancillary works

CP 28/09/1995

(NOTE: Condition 3 of 95/0384/1 removed Permitted Development rights, however, please see 5.3.3 below).

95/00385/1LB - Alterations and conversion of existing barns into 6 dwellings with garaging following demolition of lean-to additions.

CON 27/09/1995

The full planning history can be viewed on file, but the following are the most recent applications/decisions.

20/02839/LBC - Internal alterations and insertion of window to new study on north (rear) elevation.

CCON 26.01.2021

20/02840/LBC - Insertion of roof light to south (front) elevation.

CCON 26.01.2021

21/00020/FPH - Relocate existing shed within rear garden.

CP 25.02.2021

22/02868/FPH - Insertion of rooflight to existing first floor to south (front) elevation, insertion of ground floor window to north (rear) elevation, installation of No.2 EV charging points to existing driveway and relocation of existing shed to rear garden.

CP 13.02.2023

3.0 Policies

3.1 Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2031 is relevant as are the following paragraphs of Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework:

- **200** (local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting)
- **203** (desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness),
- **205** (great weight should be given to the asset's conservation),
- **206** (clear and convincing justification), and
- **208** (harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use).

4.0 **Representations**

4.1 **Barley Parish Council** – No comments received.

Press & site notices – No comments received.

5.0 **Planning Considerations**

5.1 **Site & Surroundings**

5.1.1 Manor farmhouse, an outbuilding 15M N of the farmhouse, barns 50M NE of the farmhouse, The Staddle Barn 35M ENE of the farmhouse and an aisled barn 25M ENE of the farmhouse are all separately grade II listed and are located within the Barley Conservation Area. Belfry forms part of the complex of agrarian buildings serving Manor Farm and the relevant list description reads as follows:

Barns 50M NE Manor Farmhouse

Two conjoined barns. C17. Timber frames on brick bases. Weatherboarded. Steeply pitched corrugated asbestos roofs. 12 bays and 5 bays. Larger barn is in 2 sections of 6 bays each. Openings in 3rd bay from centre of each section, doors to left. Short lean-to to rear of right-hand open bay. Interior: high brick base. Jowled posts with arched braces to cambered tie beams. Double butt purlins with angled struts and collars to principals, curved windbraces. Studding, mid-rails and tension braces in walling. Slightly lower 5 bay barn adjoins at right end at right angles. Large central doors, small lower and loft doors. High brick walling to rear. Interior: jowled posts with arched braces to cambered tie beams. Single butt purlins, angled struts and collars to principals.

5.2 **Proposal**

5.2.1 The proposal was originally described and advertised as 'New Skylights to Open Plan Space/Kitchen, New Bi-fold Doors to Kitchen, Kitchen Relocation, Stair Relocation, Utility door altered, New Heritage Doors to Kitchen, Wall Opened in New Living/Dining Room, New Stairs in Living Room, New Study in West Wing, Raised window sill in Kitchen, New Window in Kitchen, New East Wing Stairs with Cupboard, New East Wing Landing, New Window in Bedroom 3, Enlarged Bedroom 2 with En-suite, Box Room Removed for Stair Location, Master Bedroom En-suite Alterations'.

5.2.2 During the course of considering this application the applicant/agent was invited to consider the following description which has now been adopted: 'External alterations including glazing to Utility door and 2no. roof lights to front elevation and 1no. roof light, 4no. single casement windows and pair of French doors to rear elevation. Internal alterations. (as amended by drawing nos. 1508_G2_P001-Rev A; - P006-Rev A; - P007-Rev A; - P008-Rev A; -P009-Rev A; P010-Rev A and -P011-Rev A received on 14/11/2024)'.

5.3 **Key Issues**

- 5.3.1 The key issue here is to consider the impact of this proposal on the special character of this grade II listed building and upon the character or appearance of the Barley Conservation Area. With reference to Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the following should be noted: "In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special interest or historic interest which it possesses".

External alterations

- 5.3.2 Before commenting further I turn to Historic England's publication entitled 'Adapting Traditional Farm Buildings Best Practice Guidelines for Adaptive Reuse' (Reissue date: September 2017), the following is noted (my emphasis in bold):

Respect the architectural and historic interest of the building

*Any adaptation will need to strike a balance between the practical requirements of a new use and protection of the historic character of the existing farm building and its setting. Thoughtful and innovative design can usually resolve these potential conflicts, but **users may have to accept some degree of compromise – for example restricted headroom or slightly lower daylight levels than might be ideally desired.** (page 17);*

Adding new roof elements

roof *One of the most sensitive issues with any farm building adaptation is the insertion of*

***lights.** Farm buildings rarely had any form of glazing at roof level, though sometimes glazed tiles or slates were used. Numerous new roof lights poorly positioned can have an intrusive impact, particularly where the roof is the dominant characteristic and is steeply pitched. More sensitive alternatives can include carefully inserted new openings, such as the gable end of timber-framed buildings and the use of borrowed light.*

***Where rooflights are to be added it is often better to locate them on the least prominent roof-slope when viewed from a public vantage point.** It is always preferable to use the flush 'conservation type' roof lights as these have less impact on the roof surface, particularly if non-reflective glass is used. New dormer windows are generally inappropriate in all farm-building adaptations except where there is already evidence of their use. (page 28)*

- 5.3.3 With respect to the 3no. roof lights to the front elevation, one roof light was granted under listed building consent under ref: 20/02840/LBC but not implemented (consent lapsed on 26.01.2024) and the same roof light was granted planning permission under ref: 22/02868/FPH (CP 13.02.2023). Planning permission has previously been required for external alterations on the basis that Permitted Development rights were removed under Condition 3 of application ref: 95/00384/1, that condition read as follows:

Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning General Development Order 1988 as amended, no development as set out Classes A, B, C, D, E, G, H of Part 1 of Schedule 2 to the Order shall be carried out without first obtaining a specific planning permission from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: Given the nature of this development, the Local Planning Authority considers that development which would normally be "permitted development" should be retained within planning control in the interest of the character and appearance of the listed buildings and its location within the Conservation Area.

However, advice has been sought from the Principal Planning Officer and I confirm that unless the wording of the condition has in it a reference to any subsequent version of

the General Permitted Development Order 1988 then the condition is considered obsolete and the conversion reverts to having its PD rights back. I confirm, therefore, that planning permission is not required for the external alterations.

- 5.3.4 Whilst the right-hand front roof was granted planning permission previously, there is a case to suggest that the other two roof lights should be positioned on the rear i.e. the 'least prominent roof-slope'. A compromise, however has been reached whereby, two roof lights are shown on the front elevation and one positioned on the rear.
- 5.3.5 In the original submission, three of the 4no. proposed windows on the rear elevation are at ground floor (study, kitchen/dining and one which has the benefit of planning permission - lobby). The proposed bi-fold doors would also serve the kitchen/dining. At point 2 under 3.1 Ground Floor Alterations of the DAS it says that the new bi-fold doors will replace an existing opening to provide better access and improve the connection between indoor and outdoor spaces. Whilst that may be so, the intervention requires the removal of frame elements and when considered alongside the existing large opening at the rear, the openings have a more dominant impact. A single door onto the garden was considered more acceptable but it has been agreed that no external rear door would be provided off the kitchen but instead access would be provided via the dining room.
- 5.3.6 At point 9 under 3.1 Ground Floor Alterations the new window to the Study is mentioned whilst at point 11 it says that a new window is to be added in what would be the relocated kitchen improving natural light. This window will require the removal of historic fabric and further impact upon the barn's external appearance. It is advised that these two windows are reduced to single lights placed between the studs.
- 5.3.7 The window to Bedroom 3 is mentioned at point 2 under 3.1 First Floor Alterations and is justified in the DAS as providing additional natural light and means of escape while being sympathetic to the barn's historic character. It is advised that this window too is reduced to a single light and placed between the studs.
- 5.3.8 An alternative scheme was put forward by the applicant on 08/11/2024 but further changes were suggested and secured in the final revisions received on 14/11/2024 and which are considered unobjectionable.

Internal alterations

- 5.3.9 Whilst noting that the mezzanine stair impacts upon the ground floor space, the mezzanine itself ensures that the roof structure of three of the barn's five bays are visible from the ground floor. The proposal includes the infilling of the space at first floor in line with the mezzanine balustrade which would reduce the view of the underside of the roof of these three bays by a third. It is assumed that when standing in what would be the new Bedroom 3 that the view from the bedroom entrance would be of a blank plastered wall. I am unconvinced that this will preserve the building's special character.
- 5.3.10 On 05/11/2024, the architect was informed of the following:

Whilst noting that the mezzanine stair impacts upon the ground floor space, the mezzanine itself ensures that the roof structure of three of the barn's five bays are visible from the ground floor. The proposal includes the infilling of the space at first floor in line with the mezzanine balustrade which would reduce the view of the underside of the roof of these three bays by a third. It is assumed that when standing in what would be the new Bedroom 3 that the view from the bedroom entrance would be of a blank plastered wall. I am unconvinced that this will preserve the building's special character. I suggested that a more sympathetic yet potentially more costly approach may be to introduce glazing above tie chord level which would serve three purposes: i) for the bedroom one could then see the roof structure of the two bays over the kitchen; ii) from

the proposed kitchen one could look up and through the glazing to see the roof structure of the third bay and iii) the kitchen would benefit from maintaining some borrowed light.

If this alternative approach is to be agreed, I would like to see an internal elevation of the mezzanine as viewed from the kitchen. Furthermore, if not offered 'up front' as part of the application I would be seeking to condition structural details in relation to extending the mezzanine floor across to where the staircase is to be removed.

5.3.11 The applicant responded very positively to the 'glazed screen' concept above the tie chord and the plans were amended accordingly.

5.3.12 No further issues are raised with respect to the other internal changes which include relocating the kitchen, relocate stairs, Utility door altered, Heritage doors to Kitchen, wall opened in Living/Dining Room, stairs in Living Room, Study in West Wing, East Wing stairs with cupboard, East Wing landing, enlarge Bedroom 2 with en-suite, Box Room removed for stair location and Master Bedroom en-suite alterations.

5.4 **Alternative Options**

5.4.1 None applicable.

5.5 **Pre-Commencement Conditions**

5.5.1 None applicable.

5.6 **Conclusion**

5.6.1 It is considered that the proposed alterations (as amended) will preserve the listed building's special character and preserve the appearance of the Barley Conservation Area. The proposal would therefore satisfy the provisions of Sections 16(2) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the aims of Section 16 of the NPPF and the aims of Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031.

6.0 **Recommendation**

6.1 That Listed Building Consent be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

1. The work to which this consent relates shall be begun by not later than the expiration of the period of 3 years from the date of this notice.

Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. Structural construction details of the extended mezzanine level and the glazed screen above the tie chord to Bedroom 3 shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of that part of the development hereby consented. Thereafter the mezzanine and glazed screen shall be implemented 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 the grade II listed building under Section 16 of the

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Policy HE1 of the Local Plan.

Signed  Shaun Greaves Determining Officer	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Date: 19 November 2024	