

North Hertfordshire District Council

Building Conservation comments

File Ref: 25/00253/FPH & 25/00254/LBC

Date: 02/05/2025

Planning Officer: MT

Address: Cammocks, Chapel Street, Hinxworth, Hertfordshire SG7 5HN

Subject: See below.

- **25/00253/FPH** - Conversion of part of barn to form additional annexe ancillary to main dwelling
- **25/00254/LBC** - Internal and external alterations to barn to facilitate part barn conversion to form additional annexe ancillary to main dwelling.

1.0 Recommendation

- 1.1 I have attached great weight to this asset's conservation including the significance of its setting. The significance of the barn at Cammocks is derived from its:
- C17 timber frame construction,
 - Vernacular form including its header-stripped, round bale, long straw with flush wrap-over ridge roof,
 - Position onto Chapel Street, and
 - Ancillary use to Cammocks.
- 1.2 Although the proposed gable end alterations are reasonably well-handled, I am concerned that the building as whole (with focus on the gable end) does make a particularly positive contribution to Cammock's setting and to the character & appearance of the Hinxworth Conservation Area. There is a case to say that the proposal may not fully satisfy the provisions of Sections 16(2) (LBC only), 66(1) (FPH only) and 72(1) (both) of the Planning (LB & CA) Act 1990 or fully accord with Section 16 of the Framework or Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2031. At my site visit on 30 April 2025, I sought to justify an alternative approach which is worth pursuing considering the impact of the amount of glazing proposed to this gable end.

2.0 The Local Plan and NPPF (Dec 2024)

- 2.1 Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 - 2031 is relevant as are the following paragraphs of the NPPF:
- **135 c)** (*sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment*),
 - **207** (*local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting*)
 - **210** (*desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness*),
 - **212** (*great weight should be given to the asset's conservation*),
 - **213** (*clear and convincing justification*), and
 - **215** (*harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use*).

3.0 Site and Surroundings

- 3.1 Cammocks and a detached barn to the east thereof are separately listed grade II and both are in the Hinxworth Conservation Area. The buildings and the area are Designated Heritage Assets for the purpose of applying the aims of Section 16 of the NPPF. The list entry for the barn reads as follows:

Barn. C17. Timber frame. Weatherboarded. Thatched roof, half hipped on SW end. Painted brick base. 5-6 bays. Road elevation has 3 C19 glazing bar casements. The SW end has a canted angle.

4.0 The Proposal

- 4.1 The key issues relate to the impact of the proposal upon i) the listed building's special character and ii.) the character or appearance of the Hinxworth Conservation Area.

- 4.2 The barn makes a particularly positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Hinxworth Conservation Area and ensuring the building has a long term and sympathetic use will hopefully ensure that it is well maintained for this and future generations. I was involved in the following applications in 2020 which serve this very purpose:

20/01432/FPH - Conversion of part of barn to form an annexe ancillary to main dwelling and single storey side extension to existing dwelling following demolition of workshop.

CP 20.08.2020

20/01433/LBC - Internal alterations to barn to facilitate conversion to an annexe ancillary to main dwelling; Single storey side extension to existing dwelling following demolition of workshop; Internal alterations to main dwelling to create first floor en-suite bathroom.

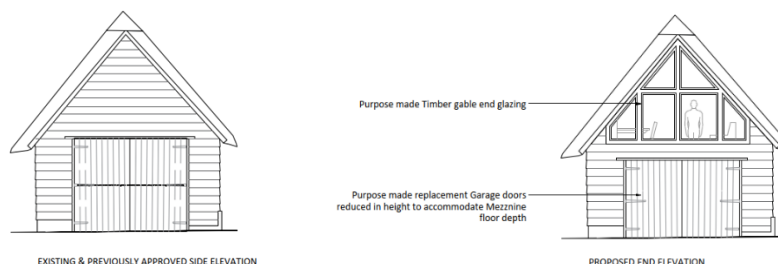
CCON 20.08.2020

- 4.3 In 2021, I was case officer for the following:

20/02973/LBC - Rethatch barn in header-stripped, round bale, long straw with flush wrap-over ridge (amended description confirmed on 09/02/2021)

CCON 11.02.2021

- 4.4 I met with the applicant on site at which I misinterpreted the plans as I thought the existing barn doors were to remain with the new internal first floor dropping down behind the doors effectively creating a bulkhead. This is not the case. The existing opening is to be modified to receive barn doors reduced in height so that the first floor can run through without impeding the opening.



- 4.5 The alternative would be to keep the existing opening/doors and to either create a bulkhead behind or alternatively, step up onto a raised platform where the sofa bed is positioned. The latter is my preferred option and one that I explored with the applicant. I would welcome the architect's thoughts on this.



- 4.6 If the applicant is willing to consider retaining the existing doors (this would minimise works to the building) then the apex glazing would be set slightly higher, thus would cover a slightly smaller area and would therefore have less impact on the listed building. The gable end framing and the existing doors are of no special interest so a modification either way could be made to the gable end without necessarily occasioning harm. However, considering the Google Maps image above there is merit in seeking to slightly reduce the amount of glazing.



- 4.7 The tie chord and diagonal struts in the image below are also consider not to possess significance and their removal is unobjectionable.



- 4.8 At 3.8 of the submitted Planning Design and Access Statement & Brief Heritage Statement it says:

On the Northern elevation, the existing garage doors are replaced to suit the new opening height, with the only other alteration being to the gable end upper level,

changed from weatherboarding to a timber frame glazed feature to introduce natural light and ventilation to the mezzanine level accommodation. This glazed panel could include some of the existing studs.

- 4.9 Details of mechanical ventilation to the kitchen and bathroom under refs: 20/01432/FPH & 20/01433/LBC was not conditioned. However, this would be worth considering under the current applications. Furthermore, whilst natural ventilation is proposed to the mezzanine accommodation there is no indication in the submission as to how this might be achieved.
- 4.10 I advise that a similar condition to Condition 3 imposed under ref: 20/01432/FPH (see below) is considered here.

The residential annexe hereby permitted shall not be occupied at any time other than for purposes ancillary to the residential use of the dwellinghouse known as Cammocks.

Reason: To avoid the creation of a new dwelling contrary to the planning policies applicable to the area and to avoid the occupation of two separate dwellings by persons unconnected with each other as this would result in an unsatisfactory relationship and inadequate standard of amenity for both properties.

Mark Simmons
Senior Conservation Officer