

1508-G2-P015 Design + Access Statement

Belfry

Barley, Royston, SG8 8JW

Internal + External alterations to a Grade II
Listed barn.



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4.1 Conclusion Summary

1.1 Executive Summary

1.1.1 This Design and Access Statement supports the application for proposed internal and external alterations to Belfry Barn, a Grade II listed building located in Barley, Royston, SG8 8JW.

1.1.2 Summary of works:

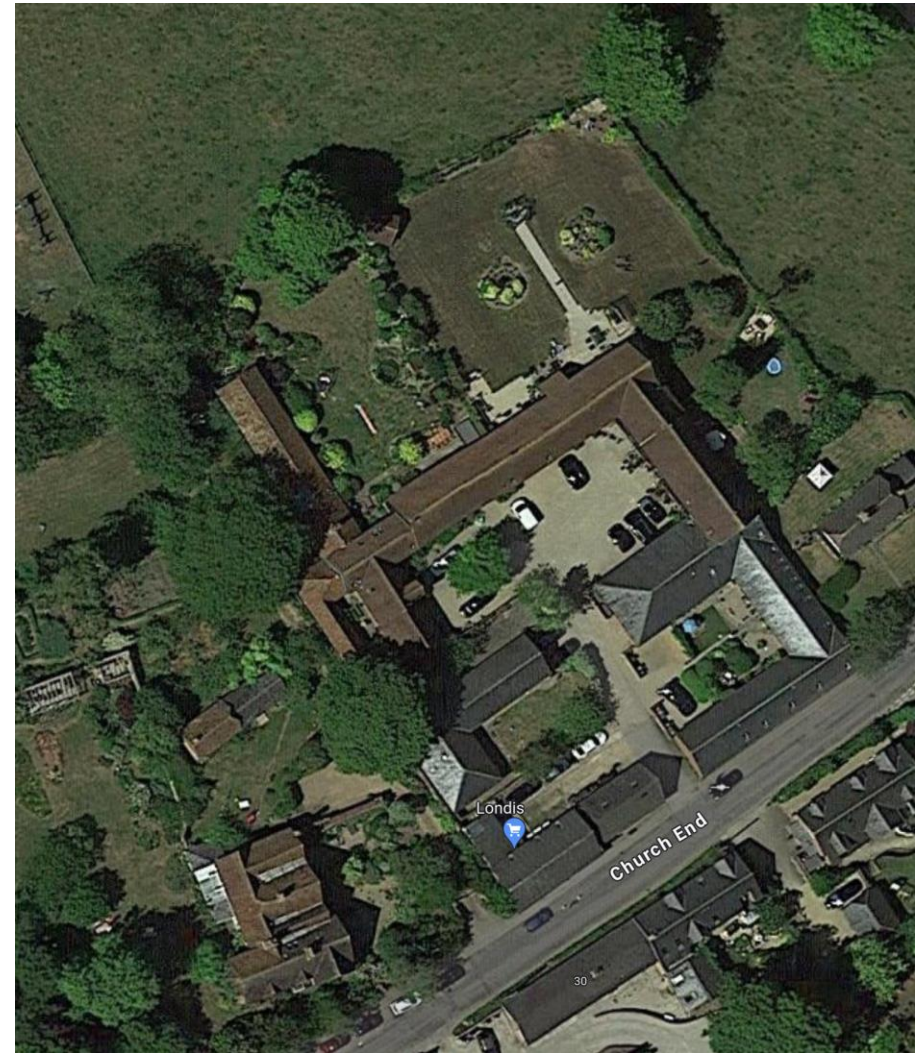
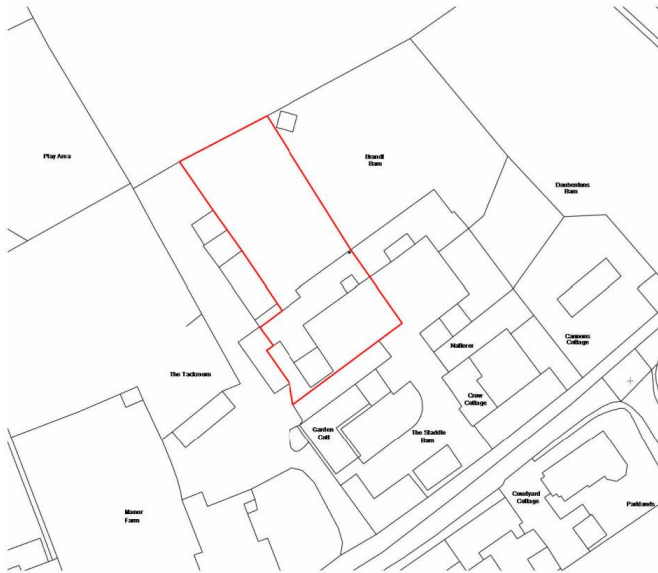
The proposal involves re-ordering and remodelling the ground and first floors to enhance the functionality of the property while preserving its historical significance and ensuring compliance with local planning and heritage conservation policies. This statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying Heritage Asset Statement and Impact Assessment.



2.1 Site Overview

2.1.1 Belfry Barn is situated within the former farmyard of Manor Farm, which comprises several other Grade II listed agricultural buildings, all of which have been converted into residential properties. The barn itself was converted into a dwelling in the late 1990s. The property lies within the Barley Conservation Area, and its setting is integral to the character of this historic village, which includes the adjacent Manor Farmhouse and other nearby listed buildings.

2.1.2 The barn is a key component of a group of agricultural structures that contribute to the rural and historic character of Church End. The barn's significance stems from its 17th-century timber frame construction, which includes jowled posts, arched braces, and a steeply pitched roof. The building's architectural features, combined with its historical function, contribute to its listing as a Grade II building.



2.2 Significance of Belfry Barn

2.2.1 The barn's significance is linked to its original function as an agricultural building and its robust timber frame construction. The 1990s conversion to residential use was carried out with sensitivity, retaining much of the barn's original character while adapting it to modern living. The proposed alterations continue this approach by enhancing the building's usability without compromising its historical and architectural significance.



2.3 Site Photos



Photo 1

View from the rear garden.



Photo 2

View from the front driveway.

2.3 Site Photos



Photo 3

View of the existing living area from the mezzanine floor.



Photo 4

View of the low beam through existing bedroom 1.

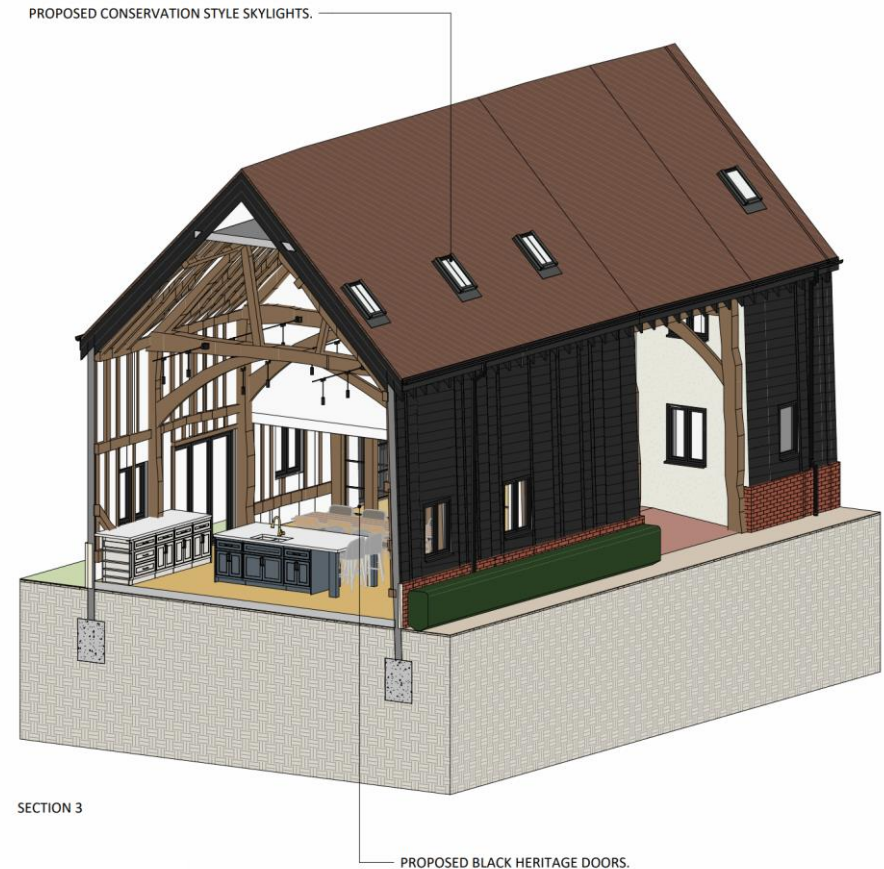


Photo 5

View of the existing mezzanine floor and stairs.

3.1 Ground Floor Alterations

1. New Skylights to Open Plan Space/Kitchen (Original Barn):
The proposal includes additional skylights to the existing open-plan kitchen area. Previous permissions allow for one skylight and one window in this space. The new skylights will enhance natural light within the interior, improving the living conditions while being carefully positioned to minimise visual impact on the barn's exterior.
2. New Bi-fold Doors to Kitchen (Original Barn):
Bi-fold doors will replace an existing opening to provide better access to the exterior and improve the connection between indoor and outdoor spaces.
3. Kitchen Relocation (Original Barn):
The kitchen will be relocated within the original barn, optimising space utilisation. The kitchen is a central hub for modern family life, and by reimagining the barn as a key living space, it would become a more appreciated area where the family could spend a significant amount of time.
4. Stair Relocation:
The proposal involves changing the location of both staircases, one of which is within the original barn. These changes are necessary to improve the flow and usability of the interior spaces while ensuring minimal disruption to the historic fabric of the building.



5. Utility door changes:
The proposal involves changing the current utility door to one with more glazing to let more natural light into the already dark space. The proposed door will be the same size as the existing.
6. Heritage Doors to Kitchen:
The installation of heritage-style doors within an existing opening respects the barn's original character. The new doors will match the period features and enhance the barn's internal aesthetics.
7. Wall Opened in New Living/Dining Room (New Part of Building):
To improve spatial connectivity, a wall in the new part of the building will be opened, creating a more cohesive living and dining area. This alteration will not impact the original barn structure.
8. New Stairs in Living Room (New Part of Building):
A new staircase in the living room will provide access to the first floor in the new part of the building. The design of the staircase will complement the existing architectural style.
9. New Study in West Wing (New Part of Building):
The west wing will be re-purposed to include a study, featuring a new window for natural light. This alteration provides a functional space without affecting the historic parts of the building.
10. Raised Windowsill in Kitchen (Original Barn):
The existing kitchen windowsill will be raised by 140mm to align with the height of the new kitchen units, ensuring a functional work surface. The top of the structural opening will remain unchanged, preserving the barn's exterior appearance. This modification will be carried out with careful attention to maintaining the building's original character.
11. New Window in Kitchen (Original Barn):
A new window will be added to the kitchen, improving natural light. The design will be in keeping with the barn's existing fenestration pattern.
12. New East Wing Stairs with Cupboard (Original Barn):
A new staircase with a cupboard underneath will be introduced in the east wing, enhancing storage and access without altering the original barn structure.

3.1 First Floor Alterations

1. New East Wing Landing (Original Barn):
The first-floor landing in the east wing will be reconfigured to go under an existing beam, improving access to the bedroom. This alteration respects the structural integrity of the original barn.
2. New Window in Bedroom 3 (Original Barn):
A new window will be added to bedroom 3, providing additional natural light and means of escape, while being sympathetic to the barn's historic character.
3. Enlarged Bedroom 2 with En-suite (New Part of Building):
Bedroom 2 will be expanded and an en-suite bathroom added. This change enhances the functionality of the space without affecting the original barn.
4. Box Room Removed for Stair Location (New Part of Building):
The box room will be removed to accommodate the new stair location, optimising the use of space.
5. Master Bedroom En-suite Alterations (New Part of Building):
The master bedroom en-suite will be reconfigured, removing a cupboard and adding a shower, enhancing modern living standards.



4.1 Impact on heritage assets Conclusion Summary

Impact on Heritage Assets

The proposed alterations have been carefully designed to minimise any potential harm to the character, appearance, and significance of Belfry Barn as a Grade II listed building. The new openings and internal reconfigurations are sympathetic to the barn's original structure and layout. The alterations also respect the setting of the nearby listed buildings within the former farmyard and the wider conservation area.

Conclusion

The proposed changes to Belfry Barn are considered to be necessary for modern family living while remaining respectful of the building's historical and architectural significance. The alterations are designed to preserve the character of the Grade II listed barn, with careful consideration given to maintaining its key features and ensuring the barn continues to contribute positively to the Barley Conservation Area.

The current internal layout is not conducive to modern family living. The original barn, which should serve as the centerpiece of the house, is currently a large, dark, and underutilised space, making it feel wasted. It has the potential to be transformed into a vibrant area for everyday living and entertaining. Additionally, the mezzanine floor represents a significant amount of valuable space that is currently underutilised and could be more effectively repurposed as additional bedroom space.

