

Conversion of farm buildings at Kirby Manor Farm

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

PLANNING SUBMISSION

KIRBY MANOR FARM

REV.A



PREPARED BY

CRAWSHAW ARCHITECTS

NOVEMBER 2024

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SUBMITTED DRAWINGS LIST

AS EXISTING

164 OS 00 LOCATION PLAN

164 SVY 01 SITE PLAN AS EXISTING

164 SVY 05.01 FLOOR PLANS AS EXISTING

164 SVY 05.02 FLOOR PLANS AS EXISTING

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164 SVY 06.03 ROOF PLANS AS EXISTING

164 SVY 10.01 ELEVATIONS AS EXISTING

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164 SVY 10.03 ELEVATIONS AS EXISTING

164 SVY 20 SECTIONS AS EXISTING

AS PROPOSED

164 PP 01 SITE PLAN AS PROPOSED

164 PP 05.01 FLOOR PLANS AS PROPOSED

164 PP 05.02 FLOOR PLANS AS PROPOSED

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164 PP 10.06 ELEVATIONS AS PROPOSED

164 PP 20.01 SECTIONS AS PROPOSED

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164 LD 01 LANDSCAPE PLAN

164 INFO 01 VISUALISATIONS

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164 INFO 03 VISUALISATIONS.

1. Introduction

This statement has been prepared by Crawshaw Architects LLP to accompany a planning application for the conversion of existing agricultural buildings situated north of the village of Ashwell to C3 use comprising 8 residential units of 1000 square meters in total gross internal area (GIA).

Prior approval for the principle of the development has been confirmed (24/02712/PNQ) under the permitted development provisions of Class Q of Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015.

The proposals relating to the conversions of the buildings to 8 dwellings remain unchanged from those in the Class Q prior approval. Issues relating to transportation, access, parking, refuse storage and collections, garden amenity and access, privacy and ecology, which were not relevant to the Class Q approval have been added to the proposed designs in order to improve and complete the development proposals and are described in what follows.

2. Location

The site of Kirby Manor farm lies at the north end of Ashwell Parish, is located outside of the settlement boundary, about 2 miles (3.2 km) to the north of Ashwell village (identified as Category A) and within the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt (CGB1), as classified by the North Hertfordshire Local Plan.

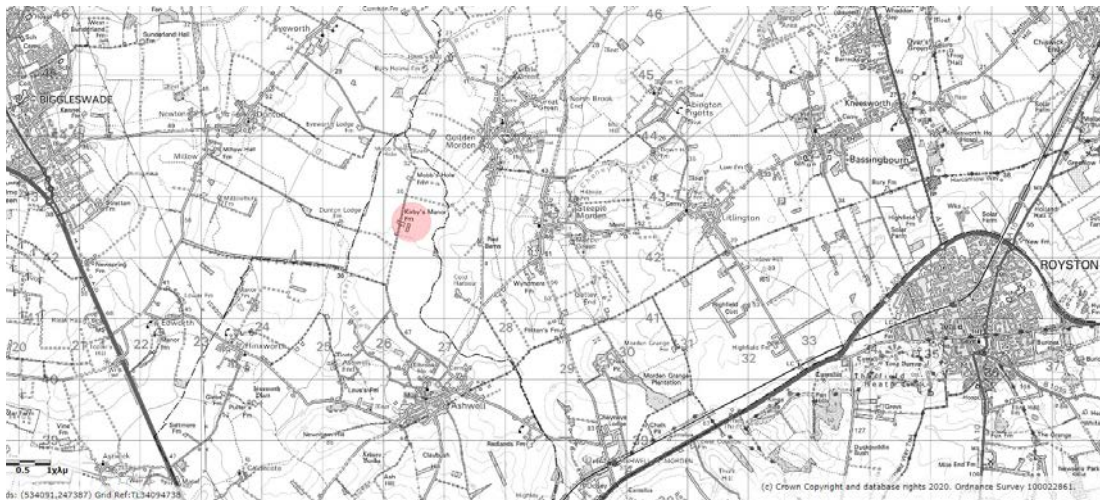


Figure 1. Showing location of the site north of Ashwell village

The Landscape classification of the subject site is designated as: National Character Areas (NCA) – 87 East Anglian Chalk. The parish of Ashwell, within which the site is situated, is designated as rural area under Section 157 of the Housing Act 1985. There are no other statutory, historic or non-statutory designations attributed to the proposed development site.

The site and building are part of an agricultural holding known as Kirby Manor farm of approximately 80 Hectares. The agricultural holding is currently in use as a farm. The holding exceeds 5ha in extent and agricultural permitted development rights flow from this activity and holding size. The site was in agricultural use on the 20th March 2013 and remains in agricultural use.

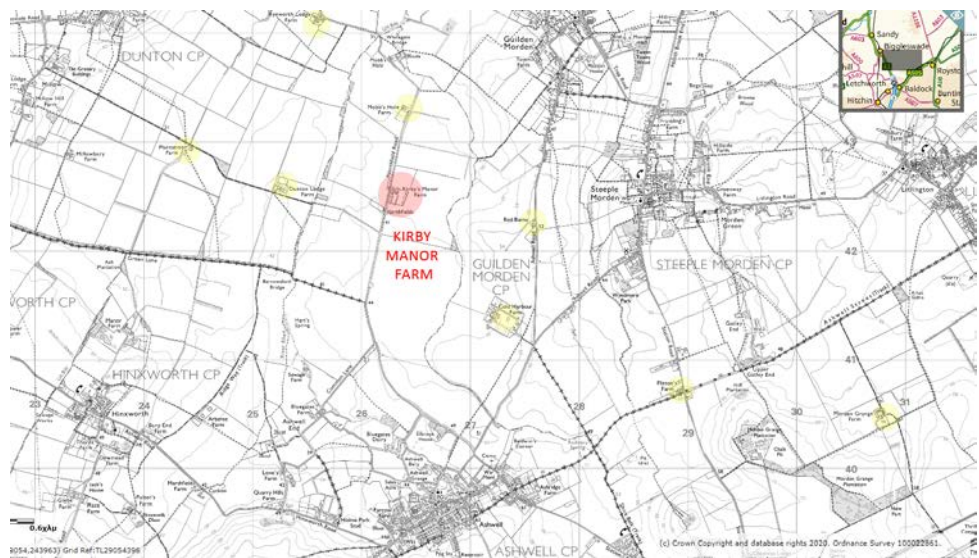


Figure 2. Showing location of the site north of Ashwell village



Figure 3. Location plan of Kirby Manor Farm

3. Site Context

The subject site, approximately 0.57 hectares in size, is adjacent to Northfield Road to the west and agricultural land to the north and east. To the south is Kirby Manor Farmhouse, a substantial two-story dwelling in separate ownership. To the west, on the other side of Northfield Road, is the smaller Kirby Manor Cottage, which is owned by the applicant.

There are two access points to the site. The southern access is via a metal gate situated between two buildings, while the northern access is open to the road, has more frequent use, and can accommodate larger agricultural vehicles.

The site contains three detached, single-storey buildings and one building attached to the north side of the neighbouring Kirby Manor. They vary in scale, form, and appearance and much of the open area is hardscaped with concrete. The group, including Kirby Manor and one other dwelling across the road, forms a small cluster within the otherwise open agricultural landscape.

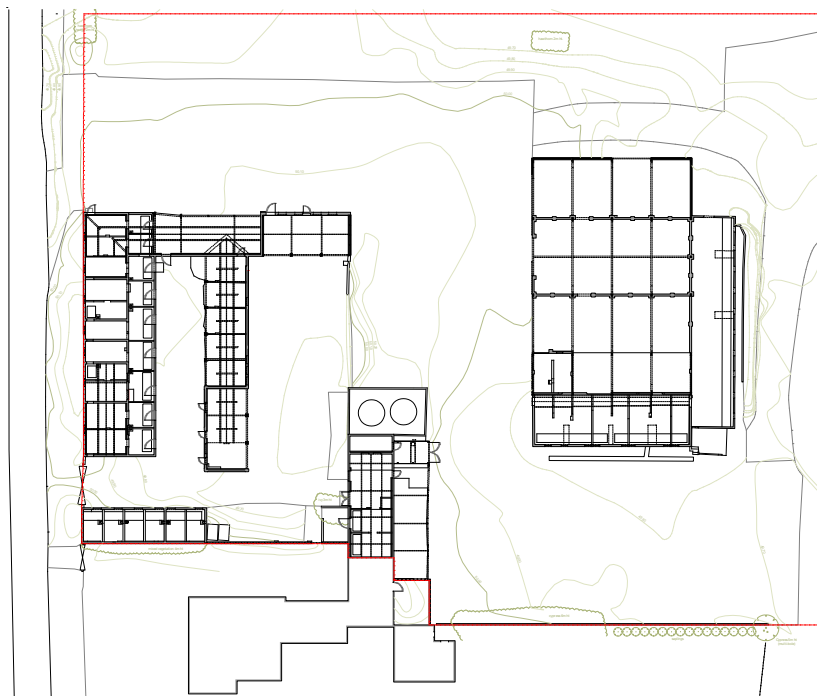


Figure 4. Site plan as existing

4. Existing Buildings

The first subject building, as annotated on the key plan below, is located along the west boundary of the agricultural holding and is adjacent to the public road.

The structure is composed of three single-storey wings. Two wings are oriented north-south, and the third wing to the north is oriented east-west. All three wings have double-pitched roofs, and there is a lean-to structure along the east elevation of the west wing. The majority of the north wing and the entirety of the east wing are open-fronted.

The walls of all three wings are constructed of facing yellow stock brick, while the lean-to structure on the west wing is made of concrete blocks. The pitched roof structure is composed of timber trusses, beams, and rafters in poor condition, with plastic corrugated roofing sheets. The roof of the lean-to structure is clad with fiber-cement corrugated roofing sheets.

The west wing measures 23.2m long and 5.2m wide, the east wing measures 24.9m long and 5.1m wide and lastly the north wing measures 30.9m long and 5m wide. The whole structure has a footprint of approximately 481m² and the overall internal floor space is approximately 436m².

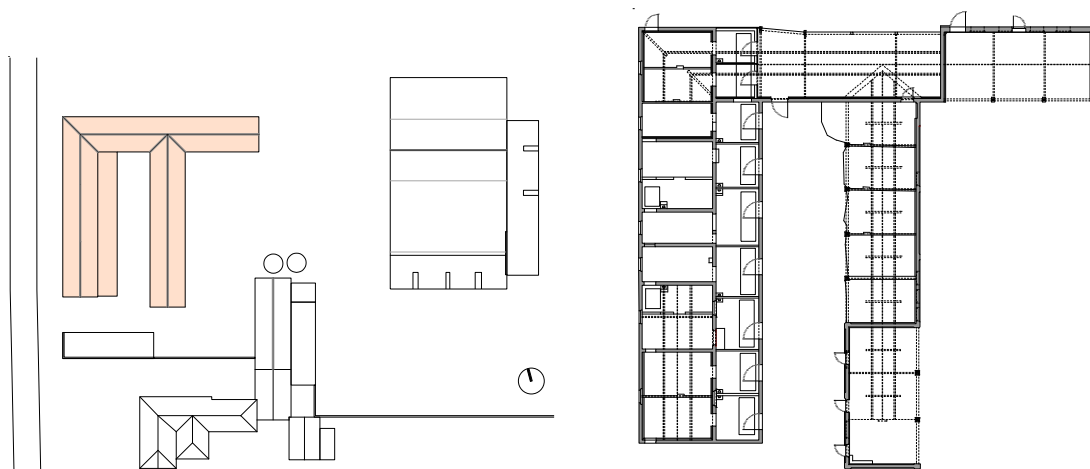


Figure 5. Left: Key Plan as existing. Right: Floor plan as existing



Figure 6. West elevation of west wing



Figure 7. North elevation of north wing



Figure 8. East elevation of east wing



Figure 9. South and east elevations of west wing



Figure 10. West elevation of east wing and south elevation of north wing

The second subject building, as annotated on the key plan below, is located at the south-west corner boundary of the agricultural holding and is adjacent to the public road and Kirby Manor Farmhouse.

It is a single-storey former pigsty with a mono-pitch roof and is orientated east-west. The walls are constructed of facing yellow stock brick and the roof is clad with fiber-cement corrugated roofing sheets.

The building measures 14.5m long and 4.1m wide. The structure has a footprint of approximately 60.3m² and the overall internal floor space is approximately 52.3m².

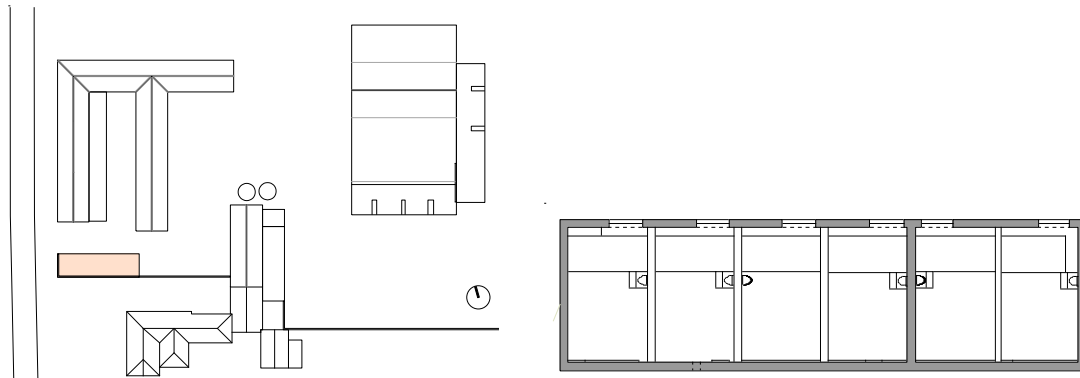


Figure 11. Left: Key Plan as existing Right: Floor plan as existing



Figure 12. West elevation (Northfield Road)

The third subject building, as annotated on the key plan below, is located at the south boundary of the agricultural holding and is adjacent to Kirby Manor Farmhouse. The building is divided between the subject agricultural holding and Kirby Manor Farmhouse. It serves as a garage for Kirby Manor Farmhouse at the south gable end.

The building is a single-volume rectangular structure with a double-pitched roof, oriented north-south. There is a small two-storey extension at the north end of the east elevation, as well as an adjoined timber pergola covering the entire east elevation. Additionally, there are two silos at the north gable end.

The walls are constructed of facing yellow stock brick and, in some places, concrete blocks, while the roof covering is a combination of slate tiles and fiber-cement corrugated roofing sheets at the north gable end. The two-storey extension is constructed of a steel frame and is clad in timber boards, with the roof covered in fiber-cement corrugated roofing sheets. The roof of the lean-to pergola is covered with plastic corrugated roofing sheets.

The building measures 14.2m long and 5.3m wide, while the 2-storey extension measures 4m long and 2.6m wide. The entire structure has a footprint of approximately 86.9m², excluding the pergola, and the overall internal floor space is approximately 77.9m². The pergola has a footprint of approximately 55.2m².

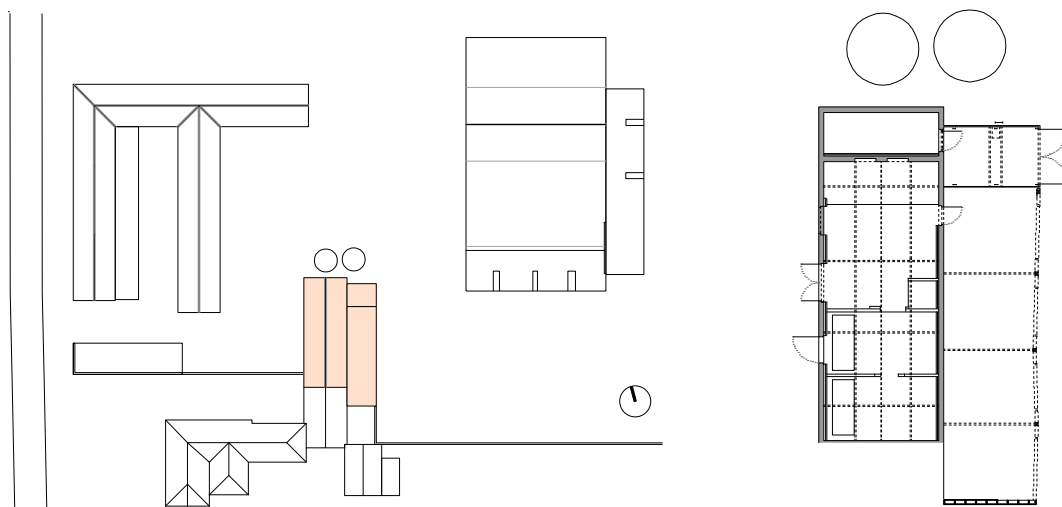


Figure 13. Left: Key Plan as existing Right: Floor plan as existing



Figure 14. East elevation



Figure 15. East and North elevations



Figure 16. North elevation

The fourth subject building, as annotated on the key plan below, is located at the east boundary of the agricultural holding and is set back from the Northfield Road behind the agricultural sheds, at a distance of 55m.

It is a concrete framed structure with concrete block infills and fiber-cement cladding, and a similarly clad roof. The building has 2 lean-to structures, on the south and east sides and is partly open on the west and north elevations.

The building measures 33.4m wide and 23.5m long. The structure has a footprint of approximately 743.2m² and the overall internal floor space is approximately 735m².

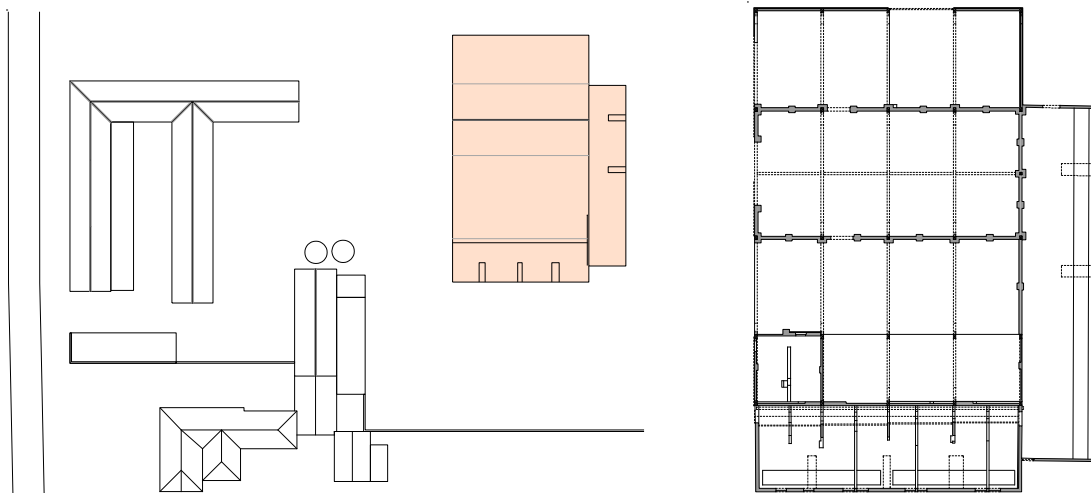


Figure 17. Left: Key Plan as existing Right: Floor plan as existing



Figure 18. West elevation



Figure 19. North elevation



Figure 20. East elevation



Figure 21. South elevation

5. Proposed Design

The proposal involves converting the existing agricultural holding into eight separate dwelling houses. The design is guided by the existing form and internal structures, and adheres to the nationally described space standards, addressing concerns regarding privacy, overlooking, and natural daylight.

Access to the development will be provided via a new access drive situated in the same location as the current access point, leading to the core of the cluster where parking spaces and turning areas will be located. Access to Unit 1 will be provided via a gated private drive in the same location as the current gated access point.



Figure 22. Proposed site plan

5.1. Layout

The first subject building has been divided into three 3-bedroom residential units, each situated in one wing. The lean-to structure along the east elevation of the west wing is proposed to be demolished, as the eaves are too low for habitable space.

- Unit 1 has a gross internal area of 123.61m² and features a private gated drive directly from the public road. The common areas face east to an enclosed garden, while the private areas face west to the public road.
- Unit 2 has a gross internal area of 105.15m² and is accessed via the core of the cluster. The common areas face east, while the private areas face west to an enclosed garden.
- Unit 3 has a gross internal area of 100.54m² and is also accessed via the core of the cluster. The common areas face south and north, while the private areas face only north.

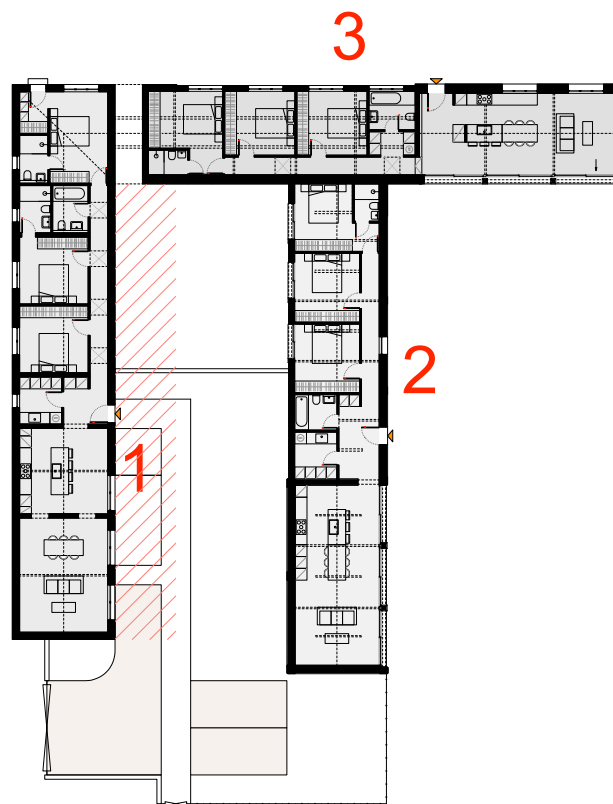


Figure 23. Proposed floor plan of Units 1, 2 and 3

The second subject building is proposed to be partially demolished, as the eaves are too low for habitable space.

The remaining structure will serve as a waste collection store for Units 1, 2, and 4, accessed from Northfield Road via a gate. The external walls that will remain are those along the boundary with Kirby Manor Farmhouse and the public road.

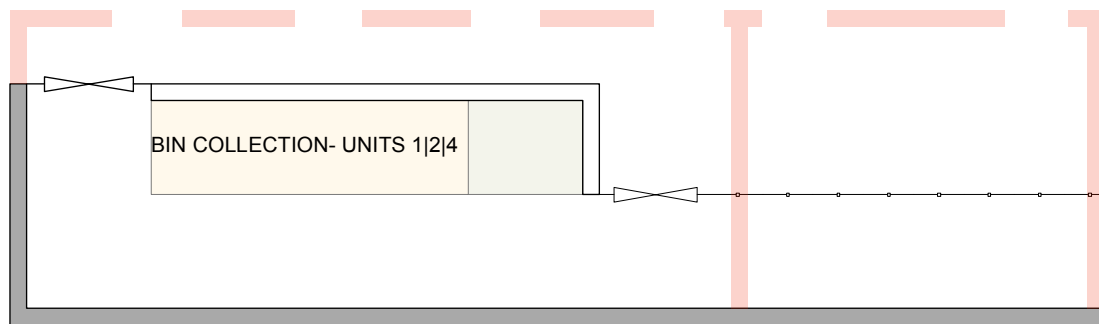


Figure 24. Waste collection for Units 1,2 and 4

The third subject building is proposed to be converted into a 2-bedroom residential unit with a gross internal area of 101.98m². The adjoined timber pergola along the east elevation is proposed to be removed, as well as the two silos at the north gable end.

A single-storey extension is proposed along the east elevation (rear), extending 3.9 meters beyond the existing building's wall. The extension will have a lean-to roof with eaves lower than those of the existing building and will house the two bedrooms of the converted unit.

Unit 4 is accessed via the core of the cluster through its north gable end. The common and private areas face east. The west elevation has only one glazed door providing access to the bin store. It is proposed that this door have obscure glass to prevent

overlooking issues between Unit 4, Unit 2 to the west, and Kirby Manor Farmhouse to the south.

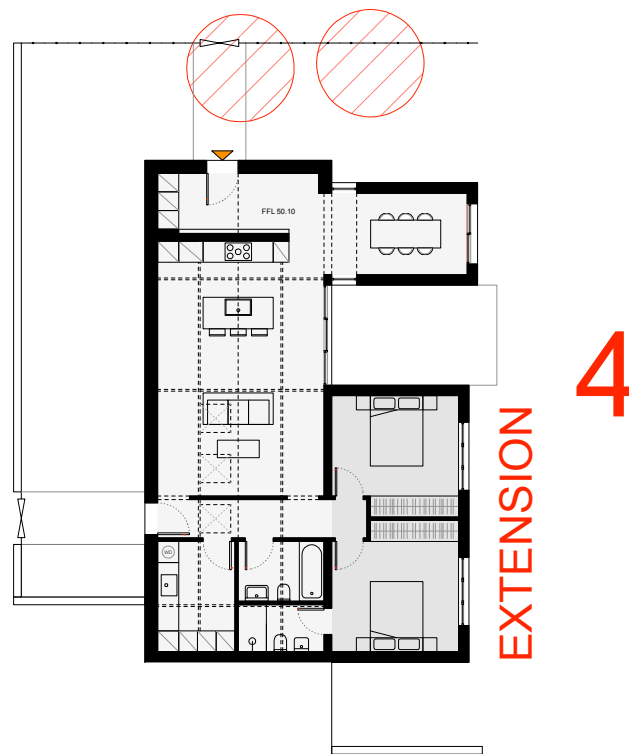


Figure 25. Proposed floor plan of Unit 4

The fourth subject building has been divided into four residential units, guided by the internal structure. Each unit is accessible via the core of the cluster to the west of the building.

- Unit 5 has a gross internal area of 118.72m² and comprises three bedrooms. The common areas face west, towards a private garden and north, while the private areas also face north.
- Unit 6 has a gross internal area of 150.00m² and includes two bedrooms. The common areas face west towards a private front garden, while the private areas face east to the rear. The west wall is recessed from the existing building footprint

by approximately 3.4 meters to provide a larger front garden and enhanced privacy.

- Unit 7 has a gross internal area of 150.00m² and comprises three bedrooms. The common areas face west towards a private front garden, similar to Unit 6, while the private areas face east to the rear. The west wall is recessed from the existing building footprint, also similar to Unit 6.
- Unit 8 has a gross internal area of 150.00m² and includes four bedrooms. The common areas face west towards a private front garden, while the private areas face south. Part of the west wall is recessed from the existing building footprint by approximately 3.4 meters, similar to Units 6 and 7.

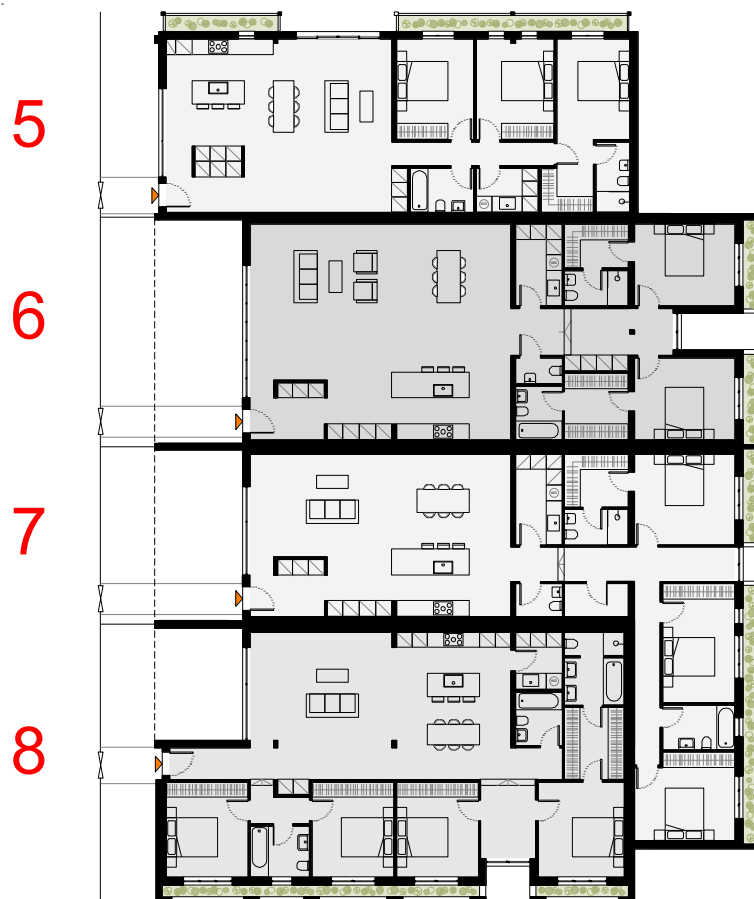


Figure 26. Proposed floor plan of Unit 5, 6, 7 and 8

5.2. Appearance & Materials

The existing buildings have the raw and undomesticated appearance typical of working farm buildings. While the structures are in a serviceable condition, the external cladding materials and roof coverings require replacement.

For the first building (Units 1, 2, and 3), we propose to replace the existing roofing material with slate tiles, incorporating high-standard insulation and roof lights to serve the rooms below. The existing external brick and block walls will be rendered in a red brick colour, while the new walls in the open-fronted volumes will be clad with vertical timber battens stained black.

All windows and doors of the first subject building will be aluminium, double-glazed, and powder-coated in matt dark grey colour.

The brick enclosure of the waste collection store for Units 1, 2, and 4, located in the altered second subject building, will also have rendered walls in a red brick colour to match the material choice for the first building.

For the third subject building (Unit 4), we propose to retain and repair the existing slate tile roofing where necessary, and replace the corrugated fiber-cement roofing at the north gable end with matching slate tiles. The existing external brick and block walls of the main volume will also be rendered in a red brick colour.

The existing double-storey height volume at the rear of the north gable end is proposed to have a combination of horizontal and vertical timber cladding stained black on the walls and dark grey standing seam zinc roofing sheets.

The walls of the proposed lean-to extension will also have vertical timber batten cladding stained black, and the roof will incorporate dark grey standing seam zinc roofing sheets to match the material palette of the double-storey height volume.

All windows and doors of the third subject building will be aluminum, double-glazed, and powder-coated in matt dark grey, matching those of the first subject building.



Figure 27. Bird's eye view of the proposal from south-east, as envisioned following subsequent planning applications for the approval of associated gardens and landscaping.



Figure 28. Visualization of the proposal from the access drive at the core of the cluster, as envisioned following subsequent planning applications for the approval of associated gardens and landscaping.

For the fourth subject building (Units 5, 6, 7, and 8), we propose to replace the existing roofing material with standing seam zinc roofing sheets in a natural finish (light grey), incorporating high-standard insulation and roof lights to serve the rooms below (Units 7 and 8). Along the west elevation, it is proposed to have recessed wall areas of approximately 3 meters with a perforated sloping roof. This roof will consist of new aluminium rafters (100mm) installed on top of the existing horizontal concrete rafters, with tension wires in between to support climbers.

The external walls will be clad with a combination of horizontal and vertical timber battens and slats in a natural finish. Slim planters will be integrated into the walls along the east and south elevations. On the north elevation, aluminium planters will be attached along the external wall. Above the planters, a timber frame will be installed with tension wires to facilitate climbing plants

All windows and doors of the fourth subject building will be aluminium, double-glazed, and powder-coated in matt light grey colour to match the zinc roofing.



Figure 29. Visualization of the proposal from north-west, as envisioned following subsequent planning applications for the approval of associated gardens and landscaping.

The proposed residential units have Gross Internal Areas as follows:

	GIA		GIA
Unit 1	123.61m ²	Unit 5	118.72m ²
Unit 2	105.15 m ²	Unit 6	150.00m ²
Unit 3	100.54m ²	Unit 7	150.00m ²
Unit 4	101.98m ²	Unit 8	150.00m ²
TOTAL	1000m ²		

The submitted plans illustrate that the existing buildings are capable of complying with the nationally described space standard.

Provision of natural light in all habitable rooms.

The design drawings submitted with this notification illustrate that natural light is to be provided to all of the habitable rooms within each of the units. This is to be achieved by means of both new roof-lights and new windows.

5.3. Landscaping

The core of the cluster has been designated for access and parking arrangements, along with common planting areas and a bin collection store serving units 3, 5, 6, 7, and 8.

A landscape scheme, including the private gardens for each unit, planting and boundary treatments, has been included with this application.

Each residential unit will include generous front and rear gardens, enclosed by wooden clapboard fencing and hedgerows of indigenous species. The proposal includes a 2m high garden wall rendered in a red-brick colour to enhance privacy between Units 2 & 3, as well as Units 2 & 4, along with a 2m high brick garden wall along the boundary with Kirby Manor Farmhouse at the neighbour's request.



Figure 30. Bird's eye view of the proposal from south-east, as envisioned following subsequent planning applications for the approval of associated gardens and landscaping

6. Access & Parking

6.1. Access

Vehicular and pedestrian access to the site will be retained via the existing entrance off Ashwell Road. The access is suitable in width and visibility to accommodate the modest increase in residential traffic generated by the proposed conversion of agricultural barns to eight residential dwellings.

A full Transport Statement prepared by Paul Basham Associates and submitted with this application confirms that:

- The proposed development will generate a relatively low volume of vehicular trips, comparable to the lawful agricultural use of the site, and well within the capacity of the local highway network.
- Visibility splays from the site entrance comply with national standards, ensuring safe ingress and egress from Ashwell Road.
- The internal layout provides adequate turning space for service and emergency vehicles.
- Parking provision has been designed in accordance with North Hertfordshire District Council standards, with two dedicated spaces per dwelling, including provision for visitor and accessible parking.

The report concludes that the proposed development is not expected to give rise to any adverse impacts on the local highway network and is fully supportable in transport terms. Cycle parking provision and opportunities for electric vehicle charging have also been incorporated, supporting sustainable modes of travel.

6.2. Parking

2 parking spaces and 2 bicycle parking spaces have been provided for each residential unit as well as 4 additional visitor/delivery parking spaces. This is in line with the residential parking standards published in North Hertfordshire District Council's (2011), *Vehicle Parking at New Development, Supplementary Planning Document*.

Class Use C3	Car Parking Standard	Cycle Parking Standard
2+ Bedrooms	2 spaces per dwelling (Minimum)	1 secure covered space per dwelling (minimum). None if garage or secure area provided within curtilage of dwelling.
Visitor/ unallocated	Between 0.25 & 0.75 spaces per dwelling (rounded up to nearest whole number), with the lower standard being applied where there are no garages in the proposed scheme and the higher standard applied where every dwelling in the scheme is to be provided with a garage.	If no garage or secure area is provided within curtilage of dwelling then 1 covered and secure space per dwelling in a communal area for residents plus 1 space per dwelling for visitors

7. Flood risk

The proposed development site is within Flood Zone 1, the lowest designation that refers to land assessed as having less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of river or sea flooding and is therefore not thought to be at significant risk of flooding.

It is intended that surface water from roofs should be directed into storage tanks for irrigation of the gardens in the summer months or into soak-aways to mimic the natural discharge of water into the ground- thereby reducing the risk of flash flooding. Additionally, the use of permeable materials on the surfaces of the new access drive and parking spaces, as well as the hardscape around the buildings (gravel & pavers with grassed or sand spaces) will contribute towards the avoidance of water runoff.

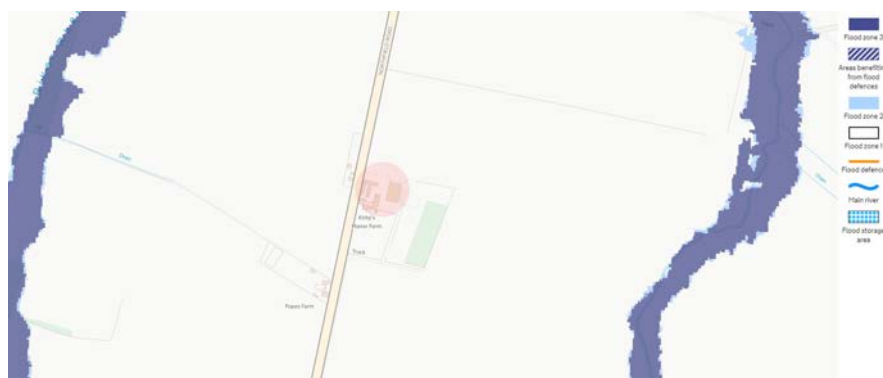


Figure 31. Flood map (source: <https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/>)

8. Sustainability

Approach

Mindful of the need to reduce long term energy demands the proposed development will give consideration to renewable technologies during the course of its implementation.

Renewable sources of energy

There is ample opportunity for solar panels to be installed on the south facing pitched roofs. Ground-source heat pumps or air-source heat exchange systems could also be considered as suitable forms of renewable energy for these proposals.

Thermal performance

Following a favorable planning outcome, data on projected energy use and the possible contribution from renewable energy sources should be assessed using the Government SAP tool and IES soGware with the aim of achieving an improvement over the Part L Building Regulations. Fabric U-values for walls, roofs and floors should be reduced to minimize energy losses using insulation composed of natural or renewable materials. The proposed dwelling should incorporate A+ rated appliances as well as high efficiency light fittings (LED lamps).

Ventilation

The residential units will require no mechanical ventilation except low watt systems fitted with heat recovery units in the bathrooms and over the kitchen hob. Background trickle vents should be installed where appropriate.

Water conservation

All baths and showers should be mains fed subject to local mains water pressure tests. Showers should have a maximum flow of 7.5 litres per minute, basin taps should be

restricted to 4.0 litres per minute at 0.3MPa. Baths should have a maximum capacity of 100 litres. WC cisterns should hold no more than 6 litres.

Home working

A high-speed broadband connection should be provided to facilitate working from home.

Waste management

Space has been provided for general, recycling and garden waste. A composting bin should also be placed in a suitable location in each garden.

Electric Vehicle Charging point

An Electric vehicle charging point have been provided for each unit.

9. Ecology and Biodiversity

9.1 The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal identified that, while the site is not designated for nature conservation, it has the potential to support protected species and habitats. The habitats present include hard standing, buildings, and adjacent field margins and trees. Recommendations are as follows:

Hedgerows and Trees: Existing hedgerows and trees will be retained where possible, supplemented by native species hedgerow planting along new boundaries to improve biodiversity connectivity.

Bird Boxes: A minimum of four bird boxes will be installed across the site to support nesting birds, including sparrow terraces and open-fronted boxes.

Bat Boxes: As per the bat survey findings, a minimum of four integrated bat boxes (e.g., Schwegler 2FR or similar) will be installed within suitable south and west-facing elevations.

Lighting Strategy: External lighting will be low-level, motion-sensor activated, and directed downward to prevent light spill onto potential foraging routes or roost entrances.

Soft Landscaping: The soft landscaping scheme will include native flowering and fruiting species to support pollinators and other wildlife, enhancing foraging opportunities.

9.2 Bat Emergence and Return Survey (BERS)

Surveys confirmed the presence of a low-use day roost by common pipistrelle bats in one building proposed for conversion (Building 3).

Licensing Requirement: A Bat Low Impact Class License (BLICL) will be obtained from Natural England prior to any work affecting the identified roost structure.

Timing of Works: Any works to the roof or eaves of Building 3 will be undertaken outside the main maternity season (May–August), ideally between September and October, or March to April, under supervision of a licensed ecologist.

Replacement Roost Provision: Integrated bat bricks will be installed into the fabric of the new dwellings, particularly within Buildings 1 and 4. Locations will be selected based on thermal preference and proximity to foraging routes.

Ecological Clerk of Works: A licensed bat ecologist will oversee soft-strip operations and supervise critical works within Building 3.

These ecological enhancement and mitigation measures will be secured by condition and/or detailed through a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP), to be submitted and agreed with the local authority prior to commencement.

9.3 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment has been undertaken using the Natural England Metric to evaluate the ecological enhancement of the site. The baseline ecological value of the site was calculated at 0.368 habitat units and 0.012 hedgerow units, with no watercourse units recorded. Through the integration of native hedgerow planting, soft landscaping with pollinator-friendly species, and targeted ecological enhancements (including bat and bird boxes), the proposed development delivers a measurable net gain in excess of 10% in biodiversity value. These improvements will be secured via detailed landscape proposals and managed in accordance with a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP), ensuring compliance with both the Environment Act 2021 and Local Plan policies on biodiversity.

9.4 Ecology conclusion

This Design and Access Statement incorporates robust ecological and protected species mitigation measures, in line with current planning policy and best practice. The scheme proposes a high-quality conversion of existing agricultural buildings into eight residential dwellings, while respecting the rural setting, built form, and local ecological sensitivities.

The proposals provide substantial biodiversity net gain, secure protected species enhancement, and contribute to sustainable rural development.

10. Conclusion

These proposals satisfy all of the criteria set out in the permitted development provisions of Class Q of Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, and have recently gained prior approval. The current planning application introduces high quality provisions in the areas of landscaping, garden amenity, transportation, access, parking, refuse storage and collections, privacy and ecology,

The proposals may be regarded as a significant enhancement of the existing buildings and of the immediate surroundings and of benefit to the existing houses in the setting.

For all the reasons set out in this statement we ask that these proposals be consented and we therefore respectfully request that planning permission is granted.

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