

From: Andrew Robley

Sent: 23 September 2016 14:23

To: June Pagdin

Cc: Planning

Subject: Hatfield: Greta Nast Hyde Barn, Wilkins Green Lane; 16/1646/FUL & 1650/LB.

June,

This was the subject of a pre-application and my comments were as follows: in italics

The site is within the curtilage of Great Nast Hyde and should be considered as listed because of its location and former use which was as threshing barn and also its current use, as storage associated and subservient to the House.

It is a C17th or early C18th timber framed barn with weather boarded walls on brick plinths and a red

clay peg tiled roof, forming part of a group of mostly historic former farm buildings. Externally, it retains

much of the typical character of this building type which can be summarised as; largely blank walls and

roofs, imperforated by doors, windows and roof lights.

Internally it also retains the typical character of a large semi-dark open undivided space exposed timber

carpentry and rustic finishes, which add detail and interest.

It's current use as storage associated with the great house is ideal because it has preserved these characteristics.

There is evidence of former openings some of which were clearly windows, others which may have been

loading hatches.

The great threshing doors have gone from the central bay and the openings infilled with more modern

studwork and smaller doors (NB the east doors may be the correct height and the studs above need further checking)

The floor appeared to be concrete but there may be an historic threshing floor beneath.

The proposed use is for occasional “entertainment”. As such the basic open internal form would be retained but there would be a need for insulation. Full insulation would cause the intricate timber framework to be covered up, which would harm the character of the interior space. However, it may be

possible to argue intermittent use in respect of the Building Regulations so that relatively thin insulation

could be used which would allow a reasonable part of the studs to remain exposed. If this were coupled

with a cladding of horizontal timber boards between the studs and the frames, the characteristic appearance could be reasonably retained. NB This technique could be applied to the roof as well as the

walls.

The proposals envisage the two main threshing openings being opened up to their original size and re-

hung with external barn doors ( research would be needed to establish the location of original hook and

ride hinges and care should be taken to avoid removal of any evidence of the former housing for boards

formerly used across the openings at low level to help retain the threshed grain and keep it clear of encroaching farmyard manure.

The proposed glazed inner doors are rather more controversial as usually these tend to be left open to

external view and therefore to dilute the characteristic plainness of this building type.

Given that this is for occasional entertaining, natural light should not be a crucial issue and therefore it is

recommended that the inner glazed doors are omitted.

Several small former openings are intended to be fitted with windows and this is in principle acceptable,

although as some of them may have been former hatches, we should reserve the right to judge the effect of them when we have elevation drawings .

The addition of a fireplace in the North wall would not be advised, as there would be a loss of historic

fabric and it would be a domestic element unsuited to the character of the barn. Normally free-standing

wood burning stoves with industrial type twin wall metal stove pipes, are considered more suitable.

The provision of a door in the vicinity would also be destructive and seemingly unnecessary as there is an

existing doorway in the same elevation.

Roof lights in the magnificently unsullied roofscape would not be advised.

The provision of an insulated floor might help in negotiations with Building Control officers and should be

possible but with the proviso that some investigation would be needed to ascertain whether there is an

historic floor level beneath the concrete, especially between the threshing doors. However, this is unlikely, due to the level of the current floor.

Cleaning timbers would be acceptable but needs to be gentle to avoid losing historic tooling, carpenters

and "witching" marks and also possible historic graffiti. Abrasive blasting or jet washing are not acceptable and the method of cleaning would be controlled by condition on any consent..

Building Control will want to know the level of heating and are more likely to relax their insulation requirements under part L if the heating system is obviously intermittent. Therefore I would think that

underfloor is probably less likely to be accepted.

Conclusions:

In principle the change of use maybe acceptable if the use is intermittent and the applicant can be persuaded to compromise on natural daylight, heating and insulation and to treat the building as for intermittent use. The architectural majesty of the structure would thus be better appreciated and would

complement the use of the building for entertaining. Furthermore the setting of Great Nast Hyde and

other curtilage buildings would be maintained .

,However, the success of a full listed building application will depend on the details as well as these same

issues.

In reaching this advice; I have been aware of the NPPF 2012 paras 7, 8, 9, 131, 132, 134 and the Local

Plan D1, D2, R25, R26. Emerging Core Strategy CS11.

The application proposals would omit the internal glazed doors to the former cart entrances and proper

cart entrance doors would be introduced. The front doors would have a glazed fanlight introduced and

although this is not a typical feature of barn doors it would be a reasonable compromise in this case.

However, the evidence of the timber framing is that the original door opening was full height to the eaves and therefore the whole assembly should be heightened accordingly. Whilst the design of the doors would be satisfactory, it is more normal locally for the doors to have a central mid rail.

The proposed windows in the front and rear elevations would be into existing /previous openings and

would be so small as to not harm the overall character of the barn. However, the proposal to make a doorway into the end elevation of the barn would involve irreversible loss of historic fabric, including part of the brick plinth and timber frame including the sole plate which is an important member.

The purpose of this is to allow a new kitchen which is to be constructed to serve directly into the barn.

The alternative to this would be to utilise one or more of the existing window openings in this elevation

as serving hatches, which would avoid the harm and be a reasonable compromise. The heritage statement also advises that the door would also give "disabled access", However, it would be preferable

for this to be from the main entrance so as to be more truly inclusive as well as less damaging to the historic fabric. The general and "disabled" access could be made more convenient by fitting one of the

barn doors with a "pass" door or "wicket gate" which was a common feature in barn doors historically.

The proposed kitchen would be built partially within an existing open timber framed structure but no

existing historic fabric would be lost and the resultant building would remain subservient to the barn and would not be significantly harmful to its setting. However, the kitchen units should preferably not

return against the side of the existing historic cart shed to avoid covering up the existing brickwork and

it is suggested that the return could be at the other end against the new fabric.

It is proposed to insulate the barn. This has the potential to have an adverse effect on the internal character which as is typical, relies to a great extent on the intricacies of the timber frame and the rustic

finish of the inside of the weatherboarding. In this case, as the use of the building would be intermittent,

it is proposed to limit the width of the insulation and to locate it partly externally and partly between the timber frame. However, the set back would be minimal and given the uneven section of the frame,

would in some cases be nil. For these reasons, I would advise the omission of the front counter batten and the internal batten to which the internal cladding is fixed ( which could be replaced by a plastic angle). This should give a nominal 50mm recess to the internal cladding, which would better define the timber frame. Insulation should be breathable but this could be subject to condition.

The drawings give no indication of how the floor is to be dealt with.. At pre-application stage, a replacement insulated floor was put forward. However, the site investigation has now shown that an historic clay floor lies beneath the modern concrete slab and therefore it would be preferable to work

with this.

The roof is shown to be fitted with bonnet tiles to the hips and , whilst this is a nice detail, there is no

evidence that it was historically used here and barns in this area normally use ridge tiles in this situation.

Conclusions: As it stands, the proposals would harm the character of the listed building because of the irreversible loss of historic fabric caused by the new doorway to the proposed kitchen to which there are reasonable alternatives. The proposals would not conform to NPPF 2012 , paras 7, 8, 9 , 131, 132, 134; The PPG 2014, Historic England- "Conservation Principles" and Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 1 , Local Plan R25, R26; Emerging Core Strategy CS11; The Planning( listed buildings and Conservation Areas )Act 1990 .

I would advise that we seek amended drawings to omit the new door to the kitchen and make

amendments to the barn doors and to the insulation as discussed. I have spoken with the Architect and he has intimated that they would be prepared to do this. In which case we would still need to apply conditions as follows:

1. C.5.1 Samples of materials standard condition
2. 2 Prior to the commencement of any works on site, precise details of the following must be submitted to and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority;-a) roof eaves, verges, hips-at 1:5 min, b) windows/shutters- 1:20 elevations and 1:5 sectional details, c) doors – 1:20 elevations and 1:5 sectional details, d) roof and wall details including plinth, walls, eaves, corners window and door openings, insulation, internal timber cladding, new floor if any -1:5 min. e) details of heating and artificial lighting
3. The barn doors should be hung from the original pintles if serviceable. If not they should still be retained, along with all other items of ferrements which should be part of the recording.
4. .Prior to the commencement of any works on site a scheme of archaeological recording shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority
5. Notwithstanding the approved drawings, the timber frame within the proposed wc area shall remain exposed.
6. Standard condition for no cutting of timber frame c.5.17.

Regards,

Andrew