

Committee Report

Item 7D

Reference: DC/18/03788

Case Officer: Daniel Cameron

Ward: Battisford and Ringshall

Ward Member: Cllr Daniel Pratt

RECOMMENDATION – GRANT LISTED BUILDING CONSENT SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS

Description of Development

Application for Listed Building Consent - Works to curtilage listed barns to facilitate change of use and conversion to five dwellings

Location

Battisford Hall Barns Battisford Hall Church Road Battisford

Parish: Battisford

Expiry Date:

Application Type: Listed building consent

Development Type:

Applicant: Mr M Prentice

Agent: Whitworth

PART ONE – REASON FOR REFERENCE TO COMMITTEE

The application is referred to committee for the following reason:

The application is considered to be controversial by the Chief Planning Officer given the level of local objections against the application which have been received and due to the personal circumstances of the Ward Member at the time the applications were made may have prevented them from calling the application in

Details of Previous Committee/Resolutions and Member Site Visit

None.

PART TWO – POLICIES AND CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Summary of Policies

NPPF National Planning Policy Framework 2018

Core Strategy Focused Review 2012:

FC01 - Presumption In Favour of Sustainable Development

FC01_1 - Mid Suffolk Approach to Delivering Sustainable Development

Core Strategy 2008:

CS05 - Mid Suffolk's Environment

Mid Suffolk Local Plan 1998:

HB1 – Settings of listed buildings

HB3 – Conversion and alterations to historic buildings

HB5 - Preserving historic buildings through alternative uses

HB14 - Ensuring archaeological remains are not destroyed

Relevant Planning History

DC/18/03787 – concurrent planning application for change of use and conversion to five dwellings.

Consultations and Representations

During the course of the application consultation and representations from third parties have been received as follows.

A: Summary of Consultations

Town/Parish Council (Appendix 3)

Battisford Parish Council

Object on following grounds:

- 1) Sustainability and infrastructure – Battisford is a rural Hinterland village with no infrastructure and very limited amenities. There is no access to local services - the bus has an extremely limited service, cars are the main mode of transport and Battisford does not have a primary school or doctors' surgery. Please note that this proposed development is also outside of the settlement boundary.
 - 2) Access concerns/traffic/safety – The proposed development is in a location on a very narrow road where there is no bus service and the use of a car would definitely be required, hence, 17 parking bays have been allocated for this development. Battisford Parish Council raised concerns that the increase in traffic from the development would be very dangerous especially on sharp bends with poor visibility on Church Road where speeding is already a big concern.
 - 3) Loss of amenity – The proposed development of the cart lodge in the planning application is within very close proximity to Hall Cottage resulting in a loss of amenity to this property through loss of privacy, light and view with noise and light pollution also increasing.
 - 4) Listed building consent – It was felt by Battisford Parish Council that referring to the barns as curtilage listed barns is not valid for a listed building consent application as it is understood that none of the farm buildings are listed in their own right.
 - 5) Overdevelopment/design – Battisford Parish Council feel the design of this application creates inappropriate development for this site with five dwelling creating overdevelopment on this one plot.
 - 6) Housing Needs Survey – A housing needs survey was carried out by Battisford Parish Council at the end of 2016 and the results highlighted a need for small affordable housing and retirement houses/bungalows. These plans do not appear to show this type of housing, the plans are for the development of large properties.
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National Consultee (Appendix 4)

Historic England

No comments.

Internal Consultee Responses (Appendix 6)

BMSDC – Heritage

The amended drawings and schedule of works have addressed several of the concerns noted in our initial comments. Additional comments provided below.

Grain Barn:

- The new layout of spaces is an improvement. The subdivided spaces would be located in the newer section of the barn, leaving more void space in the older section of the barn. This would better reveal the timber structure and provide an open character to the space currently obstructed by grain bins.
- The number of rooflights is uncharacteristic and should be reduced to better preserve the unbroken plane of the roof.
- Most notes on the provision of insulation to this barn would be acceptable, but we would want confirmation that where there is brick nogging between the timber frame, this would be remain exposed internally.
- Additionally, we are concerned about the use of PIR insulation between the timber studs.
- While the principle of insulating over the studs where the plinth allows and insulating between the studs where it does not would be acceptable, a full schedule (annotated drawings) showing where each method of insulation would be used should be submitted. This could be handled through a condition.
- The drawings show insulation over the west elevation of the flint and brick wall between the new garden room/store and Bedroom 2. This wall is a distinctive historic feature which should not be covered up.

Open Barn

- The design of this barn is still acceptable.
- One note on the drawings; the drawings show a small plinth whereas, as observed on site, the plinth is currently much higher. In some areas the plinth is clearly formed from modern bricks, although there are areas of historic brick. Clarification is needed on if any works to the plinth are proposed.

Old Mill

- The amended drawings would be acceptable.
- As in the Grain Barn, the brick nogging on the first floor should remain exposed internally where the insulation would be fitted externally. The nogging is a distinctive part of the industrial character of the interior which should be preserved.

As a reminder, we would recommend the following conditions should amendments and clarifications be submitted and considered acceptable:

- Notwithstanding the information provided, further archaeological recording should be undertaken in the Grain Barn, once the storage silos have been removed.
- Notwithstanding the information provided, further expert historic building assessment should be undertaken in the Open Barn.
- Detail sections should be provided through the proposed pod structure in the Open Barn, to show how it would address the existing barn structure.
- Full structural surveys should be undertaken for all buildings, to determine the extent of repair and replacement needed to the timber frames and plinths. Annotated drawings should be

submitted with repair specification, including species of replacement timber and splicing joints, provenance of replacement bricks and flint.

- A full schedule for the use of insulation in each barn should be submitted, to show where insulation would be added externally or between the timber framing. Sections through the masonry walls, timber framed walls, eaves and floor structure should be provided to show the fitting of insulation, showing type of insulation and external and internal finishes.
- Manufacturers details of all proposed external cladding materials should be submitted.
- Large scale sections and elevations of the proposed fenestration and doors should be submitted.

B: Representations

At the time of writing this report at least 12 letters/emails/online comments have been received. It is the officer opinion that this represents 11 objections, and 1 general comment. A verbal update shall be provided as necessary.

(Note: All individual representations are counted and considered. Repeated and/or additional communication from a single individual will be counted as one representation.)

Objections received based on the following grounds (summary):

- * Road unsuitable for additional traffic, highway safety danger
- * Lack of services and infrastructure
- * Biodiversity impacts including loss of trees
- * Overdevelopment in unsustainable location
- * Little heritage value
- * Bungalows are inappropriate
- * Development does not address smaller homes demand
- * Lack of social services
- * Increased flooding risk
- * Loss of privacy
- * Adverse visual impact near a Special Landscape Area
- * Harm to rural amenity
- * Archaeological impacts

PART THREE – ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATION

1. The Site and Surroundings

- 1.1. The application site is located on the northern side of Church Road, north of Battsford. The site is located to the rear of Battsford Hall, a Grade II listed dwelling. The site comprises a complex of farm buildings that originally formed part of the Battsford Hall landholding. The site has since been sold off from Battsford Hall and is in separate ownership. None of the buildings at the site are listed in their own right. The farm complex is considered curtilage listed owing to its physical relationship and historical connection to Battsford Hall.
- 1.2. East of the site are residential properties comprising Hall Cottage and Star Ridge. These buildings are not listed. A wooded area lies to the west. Arable farmland generally surrounds the site beyond the adjacent residential properties.

- 1.3. Vehicle access is gained from Church Road, adjacent the vehicle access to Battsford Hall. West of the access is a pond that forms part of the domestic curtilage of Battsford Hall.
- 1.4. The site is not in, adjoining or within proximity of a Conservation Area or Special Area of Conservation. The site is in a Special Landscape Area.

2. The Proposal

- 2.1 Listed building consent is sought for works to four curtilage listed buildings to facilitate their conversion into five dwellings. The four curtilage listed buildings comprise the cartlodge (to be converted into two dwellings), the mill, the open barn and the grain store.
- 2.2 The conversions are largely undertaken within the footprints of existing buildings, with minor extensions proposed to some buildings. Finishing materials are all traditional and to match existing where possible, including clay pantile roof tiles, horizontal weatherboards and flint work. All openings are to be timber framed and generally limited to existing openings as far as practicable.

3. Historic Character

Conversion Works

- 3.1 Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires local planning authorities to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings and their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess when considering whether to grant listed building consent.
- 3.2 Policy HB3 allows for the conversion of historic buildings provided the works do not detract from the architectural or historic interest of the building. Policy HB5 states that the change of use of historic buildings will be approved if the proposed use preserves the building and its setting without undue alteration.
- 3.3 Paragraph 192 of the NPPF states that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:
 - the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
 - the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
 - the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 3.4 The application is supported by a comprehensive Heritage Impact Assessment. The report has been reviewed by Council's Heritage Officer who does not raise an objection to the scheme of works. The officer recommends a suite of conditions to control detailed design and these are supported. Suggested minor design changes, for example reducing the number of rooflights, can be required by condition. Original heritage building fabric is retained where possible, and new fabric has been carefully selected to ensure it matches as closely as possible to existing. Some objectors are critical of the extent of reconstruction. It is acknowledged that significant reconstruction is required. However this is not fatal to the application, and merely reflects the level of condition that the buildings are currently in. Officers would prefer to see significant

reconstruction and the resultant retention of the buildings, rather than risk the loss of the buildings, having regards to their curtilage listed status and the role this plays in understanding the setting and significance of the listed building.

- 3.5 Some objectors are critical of the semi-detached bungalows and opine that this is inconsistent with the character of the area. The bungalow development is merely an outcome of the conversion of the cart lodge. The building envelope is existing. The original form and profile of the cart lodge will remain clearly appreciable. Conversion of a cart lodge into two single storey dwellings is an appropriate design response, one that does not adversely impact the character of the area. As noted by the Heritage Officer, the design of the cart lodge conversion reflects the architectural form and features of the existing building, thereby not negatively impacting its character and significance.
- 3.6 Although not listed in their own right, the buildings are clearly of high architectural and historic interest and valued for their heritage significance given the historical connection to Battisford Hall. It is suggested that some of the building fabric dates from pre-1600. As observed by the Heritage Officer, the open barn shows evidence of C16 bricks in the plinth and timber splicing joints in the main frame and the aisles are likely original to the structure, which, if so, would make the barn a very rare example of a C16 aisled barn in Suffolk.
- 3.7 The proposed schedule of works has been carefully considered and respects the heritage significance of the buildings. The works schedule is largely commonplace for historic rural buildings of this type and is supported. The conversion works seek to minimise the loss of original built fabric (where possible) and the former agricultural buildings will retain their distinctive layout and enable their shared historic use and significance to be appreciated by future generations. These are substantial heritage benefits that are supported by local and national heritage policy and this weighs heavily in favour of the scheme.
- 3.8 The Heritage Officer's recommended conditions are reasonable, necessary and appropriate given the curtilage listed status of the buildings. Moreover, the conditions are consistent with well-established heritage practice and meet the tests set out at section 17 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Listed Setting of Battisford Hall

- 3.9 Policy HB1 of the Local Plan seeks to protect the character and appearance of buildings of architectural or historic interest, particularly protecting the settings of listed buildings. Section 66 of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Listed Building or its setting.
- 3.10 The setting of Battisford Hall will not be negatively impacted. Arguably the listed setting will be enhanced through the general visual improvement to the site that the works will bring about. This is particularly the case with the planned upgrade of the cart lodge and open barn as these structures have the strongest visual relationship with the grounds of Battisford Hall, both evident in the backdrop to the hall when viewed from Church Road. Hard and soft landscaping will offer an improved visual relationship between the subject buildings and the domestic curtilage of Battisford Hall.

- 3.11 The proposal responds favourably to local policy HB01. The proposal will not result in harm to the significance of the listed Battisford Hall, consistent with paragraph 134 of the NPPF.

PART FOUR - CONCLUSION

4. Statement Required By Article 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015

- 4.1 When determining planning applications The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 requires Local Planning Authorities to explain how, in dealing with the application they have worked with the applicant to resolve any problems or issues arising.
- 4.2 Council officers have worked with the applicant through the life of the application.

5. Planning Balance

- 5.1 The curtilage listed buildings are being conserved and great weight is attached to their conservation consistent with paragraph 193 of the NPPF. The works will not result in substantial harm to the buildings or their setting and so paragraph 194 of the NPPF is not engaged.
- 5.2 The proposed conversion works have been designed in a sensitive manner, respectful of the valued historic integrity and setting of the buildings. The amended proposal largely addresses initial issues raised by Council's Heritage Officer. Where there are outstanding issues these can be resolved by planning conditions, as recommended by the Heritage Officer.
- 5.3 The scheme of works do not conflict with local policy or paragraph 192 of the NPPF. The proposal facilitates the conservation of heritage assets, consistent with the overarching objective of achieving sustainable development as set out at paragraph 8 of the NPPF.
- 5.4 The re-use of the buildings secures their long term future and in so doing preserves the buildings, together with their special architectural features and historic interest. The proposal is therefore consistent with section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- 5.5 Any harm to the significance of the heritage assets brought about by the physical works is less than minor and demonstrably outweighed by the heritage benefits identified above.

RECOMMENDATION

That authority be delegated to the Chief Planning Officer to grant Listed Building Consent:

- (1) That the Chief Planning Officer be authorised to grant Listed Building Consent subject to conditions as summarised below and those as may be deemed necessary by the Chief Planning Officer:**

- Standard time limit

- Approved plans
- Demolition details
- Heritage officer design modifications
- Grain Barn archaeological recording
- Open Barn historic building assessment
- Open Barn pod structure sections
- Full structural surveys
- Insulation schedule
- External cladding manufacturers details
- Fenestration sections and elevations