

MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL
DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE A - 30 March 2016

AGENDA ITEM NO	2
APPLICATION NO	0150/16
PROPOSAL	Works associated with the change of use and conversion of former dairy building to two dwellings.
SITE LOCATION	Dagwood Farm, Ashfield Road, Elmswell, IP30 9HJ
SITE AREA (Ha)	0.08
APPLICANT	Mr J Cunningham
RECEIVED	January 12, 2016
EXPIRY DATE	March 10, 2016

REASONS FOR REFERENCE TO COMMITTEE

The application is referred to committee for the following reason:

(1) a Member of the Council has requested that the application is determined by the appropriate Committee and the request has been made in accordance with the Planning Code of Practice or such other protocol / procedure adopted by the Council. The Members reasoning is included in the agenda bundle.

PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE

1. Pre application advice was given by the planning officer.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

2. Dagwood Farm, Elmswell is a converted barn which, together with the building proposed to be altered, were formerly related to Dagwood Farmhouse, this being a grade II listed building positioned approximately 35m to the south of the application site. Both the principle converted barn, Dagwood Farm, and associated outbuildings regarded as being curtilage listed for planning purposes by virtue of being within the curtilage of Dagwood Farmhouse at time of listing.

Dagwood Farm is situated approximately 400m to the north of the settlement boundary for the village of Elmswell, with vehicular access off Ashfield Road. Its residential curtilage is limited to the area of land immediately surrounding the dwelling itself and there are paddocks to the east and southeast and an additional parcel of non-domestic land to the west of the dwelling, which are also within the applicant's ownership

The building subject of the application is an agricultural livestock building situated to the west of the converted barn of Dagwood Farm. The building has been significantly altered in recent years. The walls are constructed in block work and brick with a brick plinth and timber cladding. The roof has clay

pantiles. The building has timber doors and openings to the front and side. The roof of the building has recently been reconstructed to replace the former flat tin roof with a new structure to support a clay pantile roof and solar panels (applications 1982/13 & 1719/13). The building is adjacent to another former agricultural building to the east which is currently being converted into a two bedroom dwelling (1599/15 & 1600/15). A small linked extension between the two buildings has recently been demolished, as granted by 1982/13.

HISTORY

3. The planning history relevant to the application site is:

0150/16	Works associated with the change of use and conversion of former dairy building to two dwellings.	
0072/16	Change of use and conversion of former dairy and adjoining workshop into 2no. one bedroom dwellings.	
3538/15	Works associated with conversion of agricultural barn to form two dwellings with one bedroom accommodation	Refused 07/12/2015
3437/15	Prior notification under Class Q(a) and (b) of Part 3, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 - Proposed change of use of existing agricultural building and land within its curtilage to residential use to form two dwellings (Use Class C3) and associated operational development.	Refused 12/11/2015
1599/15	Change of use and conversion of former agricultural barn to form 2 bedroom residential accommodation and associated parking	Granted 03/07/2015
1600/15	Works associated with conversion of former agricultural barn to form 2 bedroom residential accommodation and associated parking	Granted 03/07/2015
1682/14	Conversion of former agricultural barn and existing annex/bedroom 5 of Dagwood Farm to form 3 bedroom dwellinghouse.	Refused 12/09/2014
1683/14	Alterations associated with conversion of former agricultural barn and existing annex/bedroom 5 of Dagwood Farm to form 3 bedroom dwellinghouse.	Refused 12/09/2014
1719/13	Restoration and repair of pitched roof to former dairy and associated barn. Installation of 26no. solar panels.	Granted 21/10/2013 10:15:24
1982/13	Restoration and repair of pitched roof to former dairy and associated barn with installation of 26no. solar panels	Granted 21/10/2013
3071/10	Repair and replacement of roof coverings to	Granted

2514/10	existing outbuilding. Repair and replacement of roof coverings to existing outbuilding.	11/01/2011 Granted
3049/08	Alterations to existing farm buildings.	09/12/2010 Refused
2482/08	Change of use of land to domestic garden. Alterations to existing farm buildings.	22/01/2009 Refused
1877/08	Erection of boundary fence.	22/01/2009 Granted
2057/06	Erection of garage and two sheds.	11/09/2008 Granted
0361/06	New separate and dedicated vehicular access to dwelling house.	25/10/2006 Granted
0513/06	Conversion of existing barns to dwelling house (amendments to scheme previously permitted under Listed Building Consent LB/156/04)	19/05/2006 Granted
0351/06	Retention of windows to front, rear and side elevations.	05/09/2006 Refused
2214/05	Conversion of redundant barns and other farm buildings to form a detached 4 bedroomed house with carport/store.	06/07/2006 Refused
2215/05	Works to a building within the curtilage of the listed building to enable conversion of barn and other redundant buildings to a house (unit two).	21/12/2005 Refused
1575/05	Conversion of redundant barn and other farm buildings to form a detached 5 bedroom house with car port/ store.	21/12/2005 Refused
1581/05	Conversion of barns and other redundant building to form dwellinghouse	19/09/2005 Refused
0915/05/	Conversion of redundant barns and other farm buildings to form a detached five bedroom house with carport/store	20/09/2005 Refused
0156/04/OL	CHANGE OF USE OF REDUNDANT FARM BUILDING TO RESIDENTIAL.	09/06/2005 Granted
0770/04	CHANGE OF USE OF REDUNDANT FARM BUILDING TO RESIDENTIAL.	10/08/2004 Granted
0244/02/LB	REPAIRS TO THATCHED ROOF. RENDERING EXTERNAL WALLS, RETENTION OF INTERNAL WORKS. REPLACE SASHES AND WINDOWS.	10/08/2004 Granted
0159/95/LB	INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ALTERATIONS.	14/02/2003 Withdrawn
0040/82/LB	Alterations.	12/02/2003 Granted
0048/81/LB	Part demolition alterations and extension and extensions to cottage and extension to garage	20/07/1982 Granted
0547/81	Part demolition, alterations and extensions to cottage, and extension to garage	15/10/1981 Granted
81/0048	Use of part of dwelling for the accommodation of paying guests	15/10/1981 10/02/1981
77/0066	Internal alterations to form new lounge,	

	improvements to form container and bottled beer store and improvements to toilets	11/01/1978
0006/77/LB	Alterations and additions including two storey rear extension and raising of roof height to give additional first floor accommodation.	Refused 10/03/1977
0066/77	Alterations and additions including two storey rear extension and raising of roof height to give additional first floor accommodation.	Refused 10/03/1977

PROPOSAL

4. Planning permission and listed building consent is sought for the change of use and associated conversion work of a former dairy and adjoining workshop to 2no. one bedroom dwellings.

POLICY

5. **Planning Policy Guidance**

See Appendix below.

CONSULTATIONS

6. **Elmswell Parish Council**

- supports the proposal

Heritage Officer

Dagwood Farm was listed on 15th November 1954. The building the subject of this application is not listed in its own right, but forms part of the historic curtilage of Dagwood Farm and therefore is to be regarded as part of that "listed building" for all planning purposes. It also lies within the setting of Dagwood Farmhouse. The Farmhouse and its outbuildings form a coherent historic farmstead group of some historic interest. The main heritage consideration is the effect of the proposal on the setting of Dagwood Farmhouse and its significance as a designated heritage asset. The character of the historic farmstead and the character, amenity and appearance of the surrounding countryside are also material considerations.

The applicant contends that only the physical changes to the application building itself should be considered in determining the listed building consent application and that the effect on the setting of the Farmhouse, in particular the effect of the change of use to residential, should only be considered in relation to the planning application. The heritage team does not share this view. The application building forms part of the historic curtilage of Dagwood Farmhouse. As such, it is to be considered as part of Dagwood Farmhouse as a "listed

building" and as a heritage asset. It is not listed in its own right and any heritage value it may possess is primarily as part of the curtilage and setting of Dagwood Farmhouse and as part of the historic farmstead group.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 lays on the LPA a duty, in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Thus, the heritage team contends that it is not only appropriate to consider the effect on the setting of the Farmhouse, including the effect of the change of use, in considering the listed building consent application; it is, in fact, a requirement laid on the LPA by the Act.

In practice, it is hard to separate the physical works to the application building from the change of use, because the works to the building that require listed building consent are only being carried out in order to affect the conversion. These comments are therefore to be read in connection with both applications, for listed building consent and for planning permission.

The physical changes to the application building itself are not innocuous. They represent an unwelcome domestication of its appearance and a further erosion of its agricultural character. The addition of new windows on the west and east elevations with an overtly domestic appearance and new doors and roof-lights on the north elevation will break up the existing, mostly blank, elevations which at present retain at least some of their agricultural character. There will be internal changes to the layout associated with the conversion, including the addition of a new first floor. The application building has apparently already been substantially rebuilt and now contains very little *in situ* historic fabric. Nevertheless, if consent is granted for the works as now proposed, any remnants of agricultural character will be further eroded, to the detriment of the character, setting and significance of the listed building.

Dagwood Farmhouse and its outbuildings, as noted above, form a coherent historic farmstead group. This has already been subject to considerable alteration, including the conversion of an existing barn on the site to a dwelling and the granting of a further permission for conversion of another curtilage building which has yet to be implemented. The creation of two new curtilages in addition to those already permitted will have a cumulative effect on the setting which, in the heritage team's view, is harmful to significance. The curtilages of the new dwellings will have new boundaries, marked by a post-and-rail fences and new hawthorn hedges. These new subdivisions of the farmyard will be harmful to the setting and significance of the listed building. If permission for two new domestic curtilages is given, however, it is difficult to see how the pressure for some form of physical boundary treatment could reasonably be resisted. Conditions could be imposed, but in practice, the LPA may have to accept a number of apparently minor, but very damaging developments. Most of this development would be located very close to the listed farmhouse and would have a considerable harmful effect on its setting, on the character of the historic farmstead and on the character, amenity and appearance of the surrounding countryside. The level of harm is assessed as considerable, but less than substantial.

Subdivision of a farmstead is generally accepted with a view to securing the future of historic curtilage farm buildings, but in this case the arguments for

preserving the application building by conversion are considerably diluted by the extent of rebuilding to which it has already been subjected.

The case officer should now weigh the harm to the heritage asset against the public benefits of the scheme. In this case, the level of harm to the heritage asset is such that, unless the public benefits are considered to be significant, they will not outweigh the harm to heritage interests and the scheme should be refused.

LOCAL AND THIRD PARTY REPRESENTATIONS

- 7.
- Dagwood Farm is situated on land occupied since the 12th century and therefore is of historical significance
 - Not possible to separate Dagwood Farmhouse from Dagwood Farm
 - Land was farmed by monks of Bury St Edmunds Abbey
 - advised by the applicant that farm buildings were listed by dint of curtilage of Dagwood Farmhouse
 - milking shed/dairy was demolished except back wall (facing north) by current owner in Spring 2105
 - current building has no relationship to the original shed which blended into its setting and had character
 - original shed had no roof
 - new building resembles a modern facsimile of a barn conversion
 - applicant contends density is justified by development in vicinity but there are empty fields around site
 - windows overlook Farmhouse
 - only outside space for residents directly faces Farmhouse, potential for noise and disturbance
- farmhouse and outbuildings suffered neglect in the 1990's
 - new owners have renovated farmhouse and large barn and made good job of preserving this traditional Suffolk farmstead
 - now looking to find long term use for the old dairy which is supported.

ASSESSMENT

8. The application falls to be considered under the following matters:
- Principle of Development
 - Site History
 - Impact on the character and appearance of the building and area
 - Suitability of the building for conversion (including the extent of new build and rebuilding)
 - Heritage

Principle of Development

The building lies within the curtilage of Dagwood Farmhouse, a Grade II listed building and is deemed to be 'curtilage listed'. It is considered that policies GP1, H9 and H13 of the Mid Suffolk District Local Plan and policy CS5 of the Mid Suffolk Core Strategy 2008 and policy FC1.1 of the Mid Suffolk Core Strategy

Focused Review 2012 apply and provide criteria in relation to the design and appearance of buildings and the conversion of non-residential buildings into a residential use. Policy HB3 of the Local Plan states that proposal for the alteration of listed buildings will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and will be required to meet high standard of detailing design, materials and construction. Proposals should not detract from the architectural or historic character of the existing building or its setting. These policies carry significant weight in the determination of this proposal as they are compliant with the requirements of paragraphs 55 of the NPPF.

Policy CS2 of the Core Strategy provides a list of categories of development which the Council will consider acceptable in the countryside. The list includes the conversion of rural buildings to residential use. This policy reflects the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which confirms at paragraph 55 that the reuse of redundant or disused buildings can be an acceptable form of residential development in the countryside.

Policy H9 of the Local Plan provides detailed guidance. It states: -

-In the countryside, the conversion and change of use of agricultural and other rural buildings whose form, bulk and general design are in keeping with their surroundings, will be favourably considered, subject to the following criteria:-

- the proposed conversion must respect the structure, form and character of the original building and retain any important architectural features. Existing openings should be utilised wherever practicable and new openings kept to a minimum;

- where proposed extensions are essential they should not dominate the original building in either scale, use of materials or situation. Proposed extensions should not detract from the appearance or character which warrants the original building being retained as a feature in the countryside. Domestic features, such as porches and chimney stacks, unrelated to the traditional appearance of the building will be considered inappropriate. The creation of a residential curtilage around a newly converted building should not impose adversely on the character of the surrounding countryside;

- the extent to which any residential conversion detracts from the **original** character of the building or its rural surroundings will be treated as a material consideration. In order to protect the character and appearance of the converted building or the amenity and appearance of the surrounding countryside the district planning authority may impose conditions removing permitted development rights under the General Permitted Development Order 1995.

Site History

There is extensive history of planning and listed building applications relating to this site. The building subject of this current application was previously proposed for conversion in 2005 (application 2214/05). That particular application included the application building and the adjoining building ('Barn 3') which is now currently being converted under permission (1599/15). In June 2005 planning permission was refused and that decision was subsequently appealed against. In November 2006 an appeal Inspector dismissed the appeal. This scheme which was dismissed was a significantly larger scheme for the conversion and extension of the barn subject to the current application and the

adjoining/adjacent 'Barn 3'. The Inspector made reference to 'Barn 3' in her decision notice and noted that 'with the exception of 'Barn 3' there is little of the original building that warrants retention'. She dismissed the appeal on the grounds that the overall structure would need considerable overhaul and the scheme as a whole would represent a 'substantial reconstruction', and the 'resulting building would bear a passing reference to the shape of what exists now but there is very little of note to respect in terms of structure or character'. Subsequent to this appeal decision the planning permission and listed building consent was granted in 2010 for the replacement of the roof of Barn 3 with a traditional pantile roof, and subsequently in July 2015 permission was granted for conversion to a two bedroom dwelling. This decision took into account the observation of the appeal inspector with regard to the historical merits of the building and the relevance of policy H9 relating to the retention of traditional buildings in the countryside.

With regard to the application building applications for planning permission and listed building consent to restore the pitched roof and install solar panels were made in 2013 (1982/13 & 1719/13). This application was supported by photographs which indicated that the building has historically had a pitched roof. It was the applicants stated intention to restore the building as part of the historic grouping of buildings which comprised Dagwood Farm, for agricultural purposes. The supporting Design and Access Statement stated: "The existing building will continue to be used for predominantly agricultural usage associated with the current small holding (number 78241)". The floor plans which accompanied that application indicated the use of the building as only having a ground floor with no first floor, to be used for an agricultural use. It was stated that "The layout of the building will remain as existing with the Old Dairy area and the associated barn remaining as is". The applicant always indicated that it was his intention to restore this grouping of agricultural buildings, there was no indication of introducing a residential use into the application building. The site is still a registered smallholding and the applicant still has a low key agricultural activity on the land, as evidenced by some sheep, therefore he still has need for an agricultural building. This would be lost by conversion to residential use.

Impact on the character and appearance of the building and area

The appeal Inspector in 2006 considered that the original building which remained at that time did not warrant retention in the form proposed. It is considered that this is a material consideration to the current application. Subsequently the applicant has implemented a restoration of the building in a form which effectively results in a new building with minimal elements of the original building remaining.

The recent work which has been undertaken to the building to construct a new roof structure and install solar panels (1982/13) has resulted in a building which is considered to be more a sympathetic to the historic context than the previous corrugated flat roof. Permission was granted for this work to improve the appearance of the building, and thereby enhance its character and appearance and the contribution it makes to the setting of both the curtilage listed Dagwood Farm and grade II listed Dagwood Farmhouse to the south. It is considered that this has been achieved, but it is effectively a new building. The work which has been implemented is more extensive than envisaged by the original application. There has been a first floor introduced which was not part of the original plan. The building which has been constructed forms part of the overall hierarchy of

buildings comprising the main Dagwood Farmhouse, the converted barn of Dagwood Farm and the subservient associated outbuildings.

Suitability of the building for conversion (including the extent of new build and rebuilding)

The applicant in the submitted Design and Access Statement makes reference to the Planning Inspector's appeal decision notice relating to application 2215/05. He highlights the reference by the Inspector to 'Barn 3' which is the barn subject to this current application. The Inspector noted that 'with the exception of 'Barn 3' there is little of the original building that warrants retention'. She goes on to state that in order to carry out the conversion it's structure and fabric would require considerable overhaul and would represent a 'substantial reconstruction', and the 'resulting building would bear a passing reference to the shape of what exists now but there is very little of note to respect in terms of structure or character'. She states her opinion that 'the conversion cannot be justified in the interests of preserving a building of quality or of significant importance'. She concludes that the proposal would amount to a new dwelling in the countryside which cannot be justified on the basis of policies that allow conversion or re-use of rural buildings.

While Policy H9 of the development plan makes provision for conversion traditional rural buildings to residential use, the application building proposed for conversion has been subject to such significant re-construction with the addition of a replacement roof, rebuilt walls and internal floors, and there is little in the way of historic or architectural merit to warrant conversion. If approved, the resulting building would be tantamount to a new dwelling in the countryside contrary to development plan policies that seek to restrict new dwellings in the countryside and to national planning guidance that seeks to achieve sustainable development.

Heritage

The Heritage Officer has commented on this application following a site inspection. He confirms that the building forms part of the historic curtilage of Dagwood Farm and is therefore regarded as a curtilage listed building for planning purposes, within the setting of Dagwood Farmhouse. The building has recently been subject to extensive rebuilding following the granting of planning permission and listed building consent in 2013 for the replacement roof, and as such it contains very little *in situ* historic fabric. The main heritage consideration therefore is the effect of the proposal on the setting and significance of Dagwood Farmhouse. The character of the historic farmstead and the character, amenity and appearance of the surrounding countryside are also material considerations.

When the application in 2013 for the reroofing of the application building was being considered the Conservation officer was of the opinion that the flat roof on the building at the time was uncharacteristic and created a weak visual edge to the overall site which include Dagwood Farmhouse. He was therefore supportive of the scheme to reinstate a pitched roof on the building. The applicant had stated that it was his intention to reinstate the form of the grouping of agricultural buildings and it is considered that this has been achieved with the work which has been implemented. The building is a new agricultural building which contains minimal historic elements of the original building. In essence the

building is a new building containing elements of the original, it is still regarded as a curtilage listed building. The additional work required to subdivide the building into two dwellings relates to the insertion of a first floor and window openings. These are considered to be relatively minor changes to the character of the building, however, the proposal to convert the building into two dwellings with associated curtilages is considered to be an unfortunate subdivision of the historic grouping of buildings which comprised Dagwood Farm and Farmhouse. This is considered to be the detriment of the historic setting of the listed building and contrary to the applicants original intentions with regard to the buildings.

Dagwood Farmhouse and its outbuildings, as noted above, form a coherent historic farmstead group. This has already been subject to considerable alteration, including the conversion of an existing barn on the site to a dwelling and the granting of a further permission for conversion of another curtilage building which has yet to be implemented. The creation of two new curtilages in addition to those already permitted will have a cumulative effect on the setting which, in the heritage team's view, is harmful to significance. It would result in a much greater level of activity and minor development, particularly in relation to vehicles, than is presently the case. The curtilages of the new dwellings are shown to be sub-divided with hedging and a post and rail fence. The development would be located close to the listed farmhouse and would have a considerable harmful effect on its setting, on the character of the historic farmstead and on the character, amenity and appearance of the surrounding countryside. The level of harm is assessed as considerable, but less than substantial.

RECOMMENDATION

That Listed Building Consent be refused for the following reason:

The proposal would cause harm to setting and significance of the designated heritage asset, through inappropriate changes to the application building itself and over-intensification of the use of the site. The harm would be considerable, but less than substantial; as such, the application fails to meet the requirements of NPPF 126, 128, 131, 132 133 and 134. It also fails to meet the requirements of saved LP policies HB1, HB3, HB5 and H9 as they relate to the conservation and protection of heritage assets.

Philip Isbell
Corporate Manager - Development Management

Stephen Burgess
Planning Officer

APPENDIX A - PLANNING POLICIES

1. Mid Suffolk Local Plan

HB1 - PROTECTION OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS
GP1 - DESIGN AND LAYOUT OF DEVELOPMENT

2. Planning Policy Statements, Circulars & Other policy

NPPF - National Planning Policy Framework

APPENDIX B - NEIGHBOUR REPRESENTATIONS

Letters of representation have been received from a total of **1** interested party.

The following people **objected** to the application

The following people **supported** the application:

[REDACTED]

The following people **commented** on the application: