

# HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

BARN AT BARWICKSTEAD,  
BECKERMET — 22 February 2022



## 1.0 OUTLINE OF SCHEME

This application relates to the conversion of Grade II Listed bank barn and outbuildings adjacent to Barwickstead a former farmhouse in the centre of Beckermest, Cumbria. The barn is sited directly to the North of the barn and bounding the Western boundary of the farmhouse.

The barn has been in the same family ownership for over five decades and principally used as builders yard and storage for the business, there has been no agricultural use during this period.

The application barn was subject to a successful Listed Building registration during the initial planning application for the conversion the description of this reads as follows :

*Heritage Category:*

*Listed Building*

*Grade:* II

*List Entry Number:* 1472993

*Date first listed:* 21-Dec-2020

*Statutory Address 1:*

*Barwickstead, Beckermest, Cumbria, CA21 9YA*

## *Summary*

*Barn 1858, extended by the addition of a west range by 1898.*

## *Reasons for Designation*

*This bank barn, of mid-C19 date with later additions, is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons:*

### *Architectural interest:*

*\* a handsome barn of good architectural quality, detailing and materials reflecting its higher status context; \* its original multi-functional form and individual functions including animal housing, stabling and ventilated storage is highly legible; \* the original plan-form and a number of original fittings are retained, including increasingly rare timber and cast-iron horse-related fittings to the former stable, and various feeding troughs and chutes; \* a characteristic Cumbrian multi-functional barn that reflects regional character, and illustrates the diversity of past farming practice in England.*

## *History*

Beckermet developed from the late C17 as an agricultural village with linear farmsteads strung out along its main road. Barwickstead was constructed in 1858 as a prestigious planned farmstead comprising a farmhouse with a walled garden, a barn and a pig and hen house (a hennery-piggery). Its layout illustrates the more hierarchical arrangements of the C19, with the farmhouse being physically separated from the barns and ancillary buildings. The barn is present on the first edition 1:10,560 Ordnance Survey (OS) map surveyed in 1861 (published 1867) with a T-shaped plan. By the time of the map revision in 1898 (published 1900), the barn's eastern elevation had been modified by the removal of a small projection and a substantial rear ancillary west range has been added. The latter is thought to have housed a horse gang with a rear stable, and a boiler house and store. The footprint of the buildings is unchanged on subsequent OS editions to the present day.

#### Details

Barn 1858, extended by the addition of a west range by 1898 **MATERIALS:** random red sandstone with dressed red sandstone dressings and a Lakeland stone slate roof. The later extension also incorporates block work and

corrugated metal.

**PLAN:** the detached barn is oriented roughly east to west with a pair of projecting wings to either side of the rear entrance and an additional small range to the right side.

**EXTERIOR:** not inspected, information from other sources. The barn conforms to a bank barn and has two floors plus an attic and has dressed sandstone lintels, jambs and quoins beneath a pitched roof of graduated local slate with an ornate central cupola. The east elevation displays the scar of a former narrow projecting range (demolished). There is a central entrance with a double entrance to its left, both with boarded doors and strap hinges, and the double opening incorporates a six-pane window. A second single entrance with a four-pane over light is situated in the north corner. The first floor has a single centrally placed pitching door, and the attic floor is pierced by a series of six ventilation slits. The right return has an entrance with a boarded door with a four-pane over light and a window to the left with a modified multi-pane fixed casement. A second entrance also has a window to its left with a six-over-six sliding sash window. There are three stepped ventilation slits to the apex and a trefoil finial. The left return has a trefoil finial to the apex, and at attic level there is a pair of small

windows and resting ledges. The rear elevation has a wide, central opening beneath a pentice roof, and to either side is an attached, three-storey projecting outshut with pitched roofs, stone coping, finials and water tables. Both turrets have an original central eight-over-eight sliding sash window and stone feeding hatches at the base of their walls with lift-up boarded covers. Their respective north and south gables each have a small window to the apex and an owl hole with resting ledge; the right turret has a crenellated chimney pot.

*INTERIOR:* not inspected, information from other sources. The ground floor of the barn contains a byre and a stable. The former has a central feed passage with a stone flagged floor set between raised stone kerbs and opposing entrances. The walls are whitewashed and the ceiling beams and rafters exposed. All boarded doors are original. The stable has a drainage system with gullies covered by slotted iron plates, and exposed ceiling beams and rafters. The three original boarded timber stalls with ornate cast-iron columns are retained; each stall has a rectangular feeding hatch through its west wall with simple boarded doors with strap hinges and an original iron manger. There is a cast iron trough or sink at the end of the row of stalls. Each of the small rear turret projections contain a simple room that

retains stone stall divisions and the lower parts of the external feeding hatches. The wash house attached to the most southerly turret projection retains an early-C20 wash copper within a brick structure with a copper lid. The first floor of the barn (the former granary) is a large open space with upper ventilation slits, and a king post roof structure, part of which at the south end has an inserted timber pigeon loft.

*SUBSIDIARY FEATURES:* not inspected, information from other sources. Built against the right rear turret and extending westwards there is a pair of attached later-C19 additions. The first is rectangular beneath a pitched roof of slate with a central ventilator, whose gabled south elevation has scattered fenestration, and whose north wall is a modern block work and corrugated metal replacement. The building is thought to have housed a horse gang and retains two of its original three ceiling beams. Attached to the rear is a roofless building standing to eaves height with an asymmetric north gable containing a single entrance and retaining evidence of several roof lines, and it has a chimney stack to the south gable. The building is thought to have housed a stable, boiler house (to heat a former glasshouse) and a store. The stable is thought to retain the remains of stalls and has a series of

*double openings through its east wall giving access to the horse gang.*

It is noted that a full / detailed inspection was not completed to form this Listed Building Registration and the information below forms the proposal for the conversion.

## 2.0 DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY / SETTING

The building no longer serves a usable purpose in connection with the operation of a construction firm and the application seeks to re-purpose the building and use as a residential dwelling.

The building has undergone limited repairs during it's ownership and some of the original features have been removed / lost during this tenure and therefore not recorded in the LBC description.

The barn sits as a two storey bank barn to the side of the main dwelling Barwickstead. Although fronting onto the main village street the lower ground floor is obscured by a modern and ugly detached rendered garage with concrete tiled roof owned by an adjacent property.

The yard to the frontage is an original cobbled yard and although this shows some elements of settlement this is to be retained and re-laid locally to avoid depressions in the surface.

This site is bound to the North by a hennerly / piggery with a separate Listed Building description / record, which is in need of repair, this abounds a field and roadside.

The barn sits behind a high rendered stone wall with copings, this shows significant sign of distress and requires localised repairs. Originally two octagonal stone gate stoops formed the entrance to the site, this has been removed to allow improved access into the site which has limited visibility to the highway. Evidence of the right hand gate stoop remains on site.

The highway entrance to the site is shown being subject to surface water flooding on the Environment Agency mapping although this does not extend to the lower ground floor of the site.

The barn was constructed in 1858 as shown on mapping and then extended the range to the West ( uphill direction ) to form additional agricultural buildings including a gin house and stabling.

The external appearance of the barn has in part significant architectural detailing and indeed beyond the levels normally expected for agricultural barns of this time and reflect the stature of the farm / landowner within the area. This document references this and links back to the original built form of the building.



Street frontage with pitching door part obscured by modern garage

### 3.0 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED WORKS

The works to the main barn see the conversion of the barn to form principle living accommodation on the upper ground floor and introduction of a new first floor within the main barn.

The lower ground floor is to remain as its current use being storage / workshop areas for the dwelling (currently serving this purpose for the current owners).

As originally constructed this area includes the following :

*a byre and a stable. The former has a central feed passage with a stone flagged floor set between raised stone kerbs and opposing entrances. The walls are whitewashed and the ceiling beams and rafters exposed. All boarded doors are original. The stable has a drainage system with gullies covered by slotted iron plates, and exposed ceiling beams and rafters. The three original boarded timber stalls with ornate cast-iron columns are retained; each stall has a rectangular feeding hatch through its west wall with simple boarded doors with strap hinges and an original iron manger. There is a cast iron trough or sink at the end of the row of stalls. Each of the small rear turret projections contain a simple room that retains stone stall divisions and the lower parts of the external feeding hatches. The wash house attached to the most southerly turret projection retains an early-C20 wash copper within a brick structure with a copper lid.*

To connect this floor level to the new living accommodation a new internal timber staircase is proposed. The location running in a North-South direction has been selected to avoid alteration of any existing structural beams within the floor zone and to offer minimal

impact to the external opening within the barn. The floors in this area including gully channels etc remain unaffected by the works.

The lower ground floor elevation to the street are in part obscured by the modern detached garage, and this will remain. There is evidence however of alterations to this façade and the location of previous lean-to buildings now removed. This elevation in part has lime wash and render applied to the sandstone face obscuring the stone face. There are several areas of dislodged / or removed stonework and part of this works these areas will be re-instated with stone already on site.

The front elevation also sees the alteration in design for the main upper pitching door which remains as formed the introduction only to this sandstone façade is a glazed Juliet balcony to provide compliance with Building Regulations.





Main House ( now subdivided ) at Barwickstead - high level rooflight on main house replicated on barn with less formality - proposed use of dormers not appropriate for a conversion scheme.



View of barn to rear of site and partially obscured by modern detached garage. View taken from adjacent road junction, views from highway reduced due to existing boundary wall heights and location of garage.

In addition to the above it is proposed to insert conservation rooflights into the roof plane on the front façade. The purpose here is to introduce natural daylight ( morning light ) into the main living space. Whilst the preference would have been to introduce new windows the sensitivity and simplicity of the front elevation is recognised and therefore this insertion is felt to be

appropriate solution. The rooflights reflect the traditional form in black metal appearance and central glazing bars.

The Northern gable of the building is simple in form with lower ground floor windows and doors servicing the stabling & former byre.

To create suitable internal daylight it is proposed to insert four new windows within the sandstone gable of the building. To upper floor windows are enlargements of the original ventilation slots, these remain and repeat across the main façade.

Below these two further windows are introduced, given the regularised nature of the barn, these apertures mirror the upper windows in scale and proportion. In acknowledgement of the detailing below these have sandstone heads and cills to match. It is acknowledged that this alteration does see a variation to the original building and indeed on a visible elevation. The scale and proportion of the windows does align with the original building intent and with windows recessed into the walling the shadowing provides the appropriate setting for these windows.



North Gable elevation with retained cobbled paving, upper floor new windows designed to reflect detailing of the lower ground floor windows

This accommodation could have been provided to the Southern gable and therefore the windows would have been away from the public



view. This however would have resulted in overlooking of the adjacent private garden and also impacted on the retained pigeon loft.

The works as proposed now included the part retention of the gin house to the West elevation. It has been agreed to re-instate this (in part) to provide the appropriate lateral support to the Southern gable flanking Barwickstead which following advice from the Structural Engineer is required to allow retention of the gable.

Decay and rot to the current gin house structure has been identified and repairs to the original timber structure is beyond repair. The proposal seeks approval for reducing the depth of the gin house by a single bay and therefore sees the removal of the modern steel frame and block work structure to the front bay. Alongside this the corrugated metal façade will be removed and replaced with a more sympathetic timber elevational treatment.

It is unusual for corrugated sheeting to form part of a Listed Building and in the context of the scheme adds no aesthetic benefit to the host barn or range of buildings, therefore its loss does not detract from the LB status.



View looking East, modern gin house wall to be moved back to allow view of existing symmetrical turreted sandstone rear outriggers

To provide a purpose to the works in this area it is proposed to utilise the first floor attic space as usable home office space as indicated on the plans. Whilst the original gin house is likely to have had an exposed roof structure the current space created offers a practical and usable solution. The access in this area is via a new ground floor entrance area, this will be formed with timber planked entrance door,

with matching sandstone quoins to form the structural opening.

To the West of the gin house, existing outbuildings remain believed to be stabling and boiler house, with roofs removed it is not intended to complete further works in this area beyond clearing out the collapsed roofs and vegetation to open up the space. This may be reviewed if significant evidence is uncovered of further interesting historical materials within this area and referred back to the Conservation Officer.

The existing timber doorway openings between the gin house and stabling will be re-formed as part of the works and the structure stabilised. There are no proposed plans for re-roofing / re-building of this building and works will be limited to sealing / making good to wall tops to prevent further water ingress and potential wall spread, this forms standard builder works. There is no requirement to provide further survey / structural report to this area as no works are proposed.



Gable wall to South, garden to Barwickstead with profile of the gin house shown central. The Western gable forms the stabling / boiler house and is to remain unaltered

#### 4.0 WORKS TO EXISTING FABRIC

The barn sits with a lower ground floor of stabling / byre as described the alterations to this level remain limited.

The upper ground floor is a double height space with high level pigeon loft to the southern gable, which is accessed by a winding timber staircase which is in part collapsed due to woodworm infection.



Original photo 2019 prior to access stair becoming unsafe

Access to this upper floor level is via the main barn door accessed off the ramped access to the West elevation. This doorway is flanked by two turreted sandstone outriggers. This barn door opening remains unaltered and replaced with a glazed timber door screen, drawing light into the main living accommodation.

This double height living space is essential to reading the building in it's current form and allowing the new rooflights to draw daylight through the building. To the northern gable a new residential wing is formed within the existing structure.

To the south gable the current pigeon loft will be repaired / re-instated when safe access is gained, to allow this a full replacement winder stair is required to be re-constructed. This will remain as designed floating within the loft area of the barn and siting on the bottom chord of the king post truss.





Access stair to pigeon loft - collapsed winder stair shown preventing access to loft level



Double height barn with kingpost truss and pigeon loft bearing on truss chord

Works to the barn structure :

1. External walls - retained and repaired where required, elevations to be cleaned off with power washing with option for light sandblast cleaning in areas of lime wash / render. Loose mortar joints to be raked out and re-pointed in lime mortar.
2. Internal walls - the upper floors are to be altered to become residential living

accommodation and therefore subject to thermal upgrade in line with Building Regulations (it is recognised that a reduced / zero standard is acceptable for LB) The internal walls are sandstone and do not require any initial works to stabilise or repair. To construct the new structure it is proposed to construct an internal insulated timber frame within the barn, this will take support from the existing barn.



Limewash to existing wall in area of previous structure. Stonework to be patched into existing wall and sourced from sandstone on site

3. Roof Truss - the existing king post trusses will be retained within the building and exposed as a feature - all timbers will be retained and treated for woodworm following a high level inspection. It is the intention to retain similarly the purlins forming between the trusses ( in contradiction to the SE report ), this was required due to the additional loadings placed upon the structure as a result of the thermal upgrade, however as the barn is now a Listed Building the thermal upgrade can be limited to within tolerance of the current roof structure.

4. Roof rafters - the roof will be subject to renewal and replacement with existing slates removed and re-dressed before relaying with new 25 x 50mm softwood treated graded roof battens. The rafters will be visually inspected once the roof was stripped off and any repairs / replacements will be completed on like for like basis in section size. Additional roof slates will be required to make up defective / re-holed slates and this will be sourced as diminishing coursed second hand green slates, it is hoped that the reduction by one bay depth of the gin house will provide

sufficient slate for all site works therefore ensuring all slates remain on site and have historic reference to the site.

5. Lower Ground Floor - stone / concrete - no works proposed existing gully channels etc to remain
6. Upper Ground Floor - existing timber beams and floor joists retained - full floor inspection required once barn is emptied - defective timber joists repaired / replaced and treated for woodworm and wet rot. Floor coverings - existing timber plank flooring to be removed and replaced due to wear / decay - rot and replaced with 22mm timber floor deck to replicate existing coverings. Noticeable failure of floor coverings around leaking roof / roof lights and on principle routes into the building.
7. External Doors / frames - to be retained where required spliced repairs to be completed to decayed timber
8. Existing roof light above barn door to West - existing cast iron rooflight to be removed from and replaced with two new conservation rooflights in a similar location.

9. Ventilation Pergola - This is a leaded roof over timber former and requires removing from the roof and re-building at ground level. The extent of works is not known at this stage but will likely include full new Code 4 lead replacement and subject to decay on the formwork localised timber repairs. It is understood originally three pergolas were situated on the roof ridge, two were removed due to decay / wind damage historically. The retained pergola is a source of concern and fixing details / punctuation of the deck needs careful consideration to prevent water ingress on re-instatement.





## 5.0 OTHER DESIGN OPTIONS

The conversion of the main barn into residential use is a sensitive and appropriate use of the space, the original design intent to retain the 'open' lofty double height upper floor level has been retained. The opportunity to further sub-divide the upper floor and create smaller habitable rooms has been discounted and the richness of the simplicity of the barn has been retained.

Conversion of the lower ground floor could of course offered more accommodation within the barn however due to the level of works in this area in ensuring a tanked and dry environment and the original byre / stable design it was decided this was too intrusive to be considered.

The gin house has also been subject to several design options from the original intent of demolition of the rear gin house to it's current form of reducing the size and creating a more practical and useful space.

This design now allows for full retention of the gable profile of the gin house bounding Barwickstead. It also sees the removal of the modern gable elevation. Due to the extent of decay in the timbers the current timber beams, pillars and truss are due to be

removed and replaced. The overall design as proposed does allow for the retention of the gable and the outline of the gin house to remain in the barn hierarchy.

## 6.0 REVERSIBLE WORKS / FUTURE USE

The proposed works do see works to the existing barn, the lower ground floor is more ornate and detailed, as such this floor level remains with little intervention.

The new internal timber shell will allow a new living space created within the upper floors, this should it ever be required will allow for the removal and re-instatement of the barn as a whole.

New window openings in the Northern gable add to the property and usability they are to be constructed to reflect existing apertures and upon weathering will not adversely impact on the gable or setting as a whole of the building.

Works to the gin house are deemed essential and therefore the proposal is important to allow it's retention whilst omitting the corrugated cladding and blockwork to the North elevation.



Former gate stoop to North corner of site - matching gate stoop to South corner of gate now lost as part of earlier entrance widening

## 7.0 MATERIAL IMPACT ON THE SETTING

The barn does provide for an important backdrop to the street scene within Beckermeth, the architectural detailing although restrained is evident upon studying of the barn. The direct correlation between Barwickstead and the barn outside of the direct physical connection via a gated arch is less obvious to the casual observer.

It remains important to find a new use for the barns and particularly one which is a Listed Building. Whilst other uses could be considered for the barn for example commercial use, offices or workshops the issue of access/ vehicle movements and noise adjacent to domestic dwellings would become a valid planning issue.

As such whilst the barn could be retained as storage, the potential for increasing repair costs and legal liability to keep a Listed Building in good order, a new use is sought. The residential proposals does offer the most viable future use, and allow essential maintenance and on going repairs to be completed.

Residential use does require some alteration to the barn, namely in connection with providing natural daylight internally and subdivision of the larger areas to provide

practical and useful rooms. The extent of material alteration to the roadside view ( East and North Gable ) has purposely been limited in quantum. New apertures here are either in scale with the existing property or a limited intervention to not offer significant impact to the setting.



8.0 DO THE WORKS CREATE ANY HARM TO THE BUILDING ?

As identified above the works are in scale and proportion to the existing host building. The works are reversible if required however to revert back to it's original intended agricultural uses is extremely unlikely.

The on going costs of repairs will increase over time and the proposed works will allow the applicant to invest in the building and secure it, in good order for several decades moving forward. Without this new purpose expenditure on the Listed Building would at best be ad hoc and reactive more than preventative as such this Listed Building and Planning Application provides for long term security of the heritage asset.

The works although in nature have some element of intrusive works do secure the future of the property. It is noted that in part demolition of the gin house forms part of these works however and most importantly the elements to be removed are modern additions including steel and corrugated iron sheets which post date the original building and offer no architectural merit.

In summary the works to the barn are limited in nature, appropriately scaled to suit the use and will secure the buildings heritage.

Without a suitable re-use the building will remain in the balance and this is now the time to allow the investment required to maintain this building.

## 9.0 CONCLUSION

The barn whilst not in immediate danger of collapse or neglect will in a short period of time require significant financial investment by the owner. The Local Authority must consider this in assessing the suitability of the Listed Building application and this application provides a detailed explanation of the works proposed.

The weaker architectural elements of the gin house and outbuildings to the rear of the main barn are less dominant in design attributes although notably on plan add depth in knowledge of the sites development.

The proposal to remove the modern elements of this building should be welcomed by the LA allowing preservation in part of the historic elements of the structure and aligns with the NPPF regarding 'alteration of the heritage asset' providing a clear and concise explanation of the works required. The whole scale removal it is recognised would have aligned with the Conservation Officers views of significant harm and therefore the retention in part address's this concern.

The re-use of the building provides a positive enhancement to the locality and without new purpose the investment at bet would be limited. The proposal remains the most viable use for the building and therefore support from the Planning Officer is expected.



Remaining elements of the stable / boiler house with parapet and leadwork in tact, roof has been collapsed for over twenty years. Works will stabilise the wall and allow long term retention of the built form.