

**COPELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL
DELEGATED PLANNING DECISION**

1.	Reference No:	4/20/2265/OF1	
2.	Proposed Development:	BARN CONVERSION TO RESIDENTIAL DWELLING	
3.	Location:	BARN ADJACENT BARWICKSTEAD, BECKERMET	
4.	Parish:	Beckermet with Thornhill	
5.	Constraints:	ASC;Adverts - ASC;Adverts, Conservation Area - Conservation Area, Flood Area - Flood Zone 2, Safeguard Zone - Safeguard Zone, Coal - Off Coalfield - Data Subject To Change, DEPZ Zone - DEPZ Zone	
6.	Publicity Representations & Policy	Neighbour Notification Letter	Yes
		Site Notice	Yes
		Press Notice	Yes
		Consultation Responses	See Report
		Relevant Policies	See Report
7.	Report:		
	Site and Location	<p>This application relates to a detached barn at Barwickstead, located within the centre of Beckermet. The barn is located within the Beckermet Conservation Area and is Grade II Listed along with the hennery-piggery located at the entrance to the site. The building is accessed from Morass Road and is set back from the highway behind a sandstone wall.</p>	

Proposal

This application seeks planning permission for the conversion of the existing barn to a residential dwelling. The proposal is to form a single dwelling using the existing footprint and structure of the building. Part of the existing rear ginnery is to be retained, however the remaining modern alterations to the rear of the barn are to be removed to reinstate the existing barn and to create a walled garden and parking area.

As part of the proposed conversion the lower ground floor will remain unchanged and will not be converted. Within the proposed upper ground floor of the property the development will create a large open plan living/kitchen/dining room, a utility room, two bedrooms and a bathroom. The proposed first floor of the dwelling will incorporate a mezzanine study, two double bedrooms and a bathroom. In order to accommodate the proposed conversion four additional windows will be installed within the north elevation of the property and an existing opening within the west elevation will be extended to create a doorway. Within the proposed east elevation, the existing corrugated lean to roof will be replaced with slate, and a glazed Juliet balcony will be installed on the upper ground floor door opening.

The application originally sought permission to convert the detached piggery barn to annex accommodation and also to reposition the existing boundary wall so that it is set back from the front of the site. However, following concerns these elements were removed from the application. Furthermore, the application originally also sought to completely remove the ginnery to the rear of the site. Following concerns raised this part of this structure will now be retained.

This planning application is being considered alongside a Listed Building application for the same works (ref: 4/21/2124/0L1), following the listing of this site in December 2020 during the initial consideration of the planning application.

Consultation Responses

Beckermet Parish Council

No comments received.

Cumbria County Council – Cumbria Highways & Lead Local Flood Authority

27th August 2020

Highways:

It is proposed to further improve the access by setting back and reducing the boundary wall height to 900mm at the frontage of Morass road which is demonstrated on provided Doc 1205_Block _plan, this is welcomed by this authority.

The applicant should consider demolishing the old pig sty building (proposed as an annexe) and a reduction in height of the boundary wall of the land adjacent which is within the applicants control which would improve the visibility and have an overall improvement in terms of highway safety when using the access.

Further details are required of how the applicant will reduce the potential for surface water to flow out onto the highway from the development entrance.

The Highway Authority has no objections to the proposal subject to the inclusion of conditions relating to existing boundary walls on the site frontage, surface water discharging onto the highway, and access gates.

Lead Local Flood Authority:

The entrance and a minor portion of the site in the vicinity of the old pig sty are within flood zone 2, the applicant needs to submit a flood risk assessment and should detail any mitigation that is required to minimise the risk of flooding in this area and also provide further surveys in relation to the following:

- The existing site levels and the levels of your proposed development
- A cross-section of the site showing finished floor or road levels and any other levels that inform the flood risk

The LLFA recommends refusal for the following reason:

Inadequate information has been submitted to satisfy the Local Planning Authority that the proposal is acceptable in terms of Flood Risk.

21st January 2021

I am content that the ground floor of the development is to remain as storage so there is no increased risk of vulnerability.

In regard to the requested level cross sections and FRA I have attached hereto the latest flood mapping from the Gov.uk website and the mapping we use as LLFA for reference.

There is, albeit a minor ingress of water into the development site, through local knowledge although I cannot be certain I believe that the driveway is a rising gradient up from the highway, leading to water pooling at this location the developer needs to show this has been considered and that flood risk has been assessed by way of cross section drawing and short statement to that effect.

12th April 2021

Having reviewed the submitted information in relation to previously raised issues I can confirm that these have now been satisfied and the LLFA has no further objections. Your authority should ensure that surface water drainage design complies with the Building Regulations process.

9th May 2022

The original proposal to reduce the walls either side of the existing entrance and introduce a splayed access was welcomed by this authority, however with the development being located within a conservation area and the implications this brings, the Highway Authority is content that the access arrangements be unchanged given the original use of the access and its ongoing use to allow vehicles to park within the property boundary.

It is considered also that the change of use from commercial to residential will not have an increase in intensification of this access and therefore no increased impact on the local highway network.

Your authority needs to consider vehicle movements associated with construction aspects of this development as there is a school nearby and I would suggest a condition to avoid deliveries/movements during school muster times.

The Highway Authority has no objection to the proposed development.

United Utilities

No comments received.

Natural England

29th July 2020

No comments to make on this application.

Copeland Borough Council – Conservation Officer

4th September 2020

Conclusion: Request more information

Summary:

This proposal is generally of good quality and will enable the survival of the majority of the historic character of this farmstead while facilitating its adaptation. However, it should be considered to entail both harm to both the majority of the structures and to the character and appearance of the conservation area (primarily in the sense of adding rooflights to the main barn and removing/replacing the complete pen of the piggery). In the case of the piggery, I would consider this harm to be more serious.

Some aspects I would like more information on, and so pose the following points and questions:

- What is the intention for the three pairs of doors dividing the horse gin barn from the adjoining stable?
- I should like more detail of the alteration that will be made to the ancillary spaces to the west to turn them into gardens. Will this entail removal of doors, floors, sections of wall etc.?
- The staircase leading down into the byre on the ground floor appears uncomfortably close to the door in the north façade – will there be a circulation issue here?
- The small-paned existing window(s) at the rear elevation of the barn is stated in the D&A statement to be although appears to be missing some of its panes. I request clarification on whether this means such historic windows will be repaired in situ or that the style of them will be retained in the form of replacements.
- I request a description of the internal wall treatment to the main barn as presumably this will require insulating and thereby covering the existing stone finishes.

Some aspects appear problematic, so I would like information on what alternatives have been considered and might be viable:

- The proposal to extend the piggery harms this heritage asset and also has a negative effect on the character and appearance of the conservation area. I am keen to explore alternative uses and proposals that would allow the retention of all or most of its existing fabric. (See 1990 Act Sec. 72 below).
- There is some harm to the main barn and the conservation area from the rooflights in the eastern aspect. Is it viable for them to be limited to the western aspect instead? If this would not be viewed as possible, could they be arranged with equal spacing, or at the very least in a symmetrical pattern? (See 1990 Act Sec. 72 below).
- The proposal to remove all of the horse gin barn except its rear wall is potentially problematic and I do not feel that enough is yet known about it. Clearly the front has been replaced with corrugated iron, but the remainder of it may conceivably be part of the original planned composition of this farm. This proposal is harmful both to the structure in itself, and to the composition of the buildings as a whole.
- The proposal to alter the height and position of the wall dividing the yard from the road entails some harm to the character of the conservation area (See 1990 Act Sec. 72 below).
- The addition of the rooflights to the eastern aspect of the barn roof, the conversion of the piggery, and the alteration of the road-side wall constitute less-than-substantial harm to a designated heritage asset (the conservation area) under paras. 201 and 196 of the National

Planning Policy Framework.

18th November 2020

Looking through the agent points, I think generally speaking it all sounds like stuff I could support in principle, however, in the case of most of these, and particularly Point 3 about the former horse gin space, I don't think I should give full feedback before the LBC application comes in, as that's where the main heritage assessment is done. Without it, I'd essentially be making a call about proposals before the assessment had been done – I'm thinking of NPPF 189 here.

So, I'm happy to say that these ideas sound supportable, but I'd have to reserve full judgement until following the LBC application.

On Point 4 about the three pairs of doors, these are located in the west wall of the horse ginnery space, dividing it from the stable on the other side. They make an attractive feature and evidence how the space was used, so I wondered how they would be affected by the plan to alter it.

19th April 2020

Conclusion: Request further information and design

Assessment:

- The hennery-piggery conversion has been removed from the planning application, previously made in 2020. This was problematic from the point of view of the conservation area, and even more so from the perspective of a listed building, but I would be happy to see a sensitive conversion proposal come in at a future date.
- The front boundary wall should not be rebuilt or moved. The continuity of this line with the side of the road, punctuated by gate piers, is important and should be retained.
- Main barn – Proposal entails conversion of upper floor
 - The majority of the barn's interesting features lie in the ground floor, which is sensibly being excluded from this proposal.
 - The first floor – the main volume of the barn's interior – is mostly open, although features an inserted pigeon loft that doesn't appear to be of particular significance.
 - The conversion will entail the subdivision of the space and the removal of the pigeon loft, which I could consider less-than-substantial harm, justified on the grounds of giving the building a more secure and viable future, and mitigated in the sensitivity of the conversion and retention of ground floor unaltered.
- Ginnery – Proposal is to remove the main part of the volume, justified on grounds of removing fabric that detracts from the assets.

- The wall to the rear is unlikely to be stable alone. This will probably need some kind of structure for support and structural advice should be taken. Tom Short's report covers the main barn only, so it seems likely that designing any intervention here will be contingent on the results of such an assessment.
- The loss of this volume will leave a gap in the middle of the group of buildings, which is considered harm as the buildings are a collection that work together.
- Could both of these problems be addressed in a way that brings benefit? A timber frame that occupied the same volume as the existing building would support the wall, and essentially play the role of a pergola used for growing plants that would create a translucent form maintaining the building massing but allowing light access and lines of sight to the house, as well as some cover for the cars parked below. This might even enable retention of the large timber beams inside, which are a striking agricultural feature.
- Outbuildings – The proposal to create walled gardens is an attractive and sensitive one. The spaces are currently unroofed and the low impact of this proposal strikes me as well judged.
 - Would any removal of floor surfaces, e.g. historic flagstones, be needed?
- The heritage statement needs a couple of updates to reflect the updated circumstances and applications:
 - P.2 (Volume) refers to the hennerly-piggery conversion, which has now been removed. The hennerly-piggery is also mentioned on p.5
 - P.2 (Layout & Scale) refers to the barn as unlisted, though it has since been listed grade II
- The following information also needs adding to the application to allow sufficient specificity:
 - Sample of the slate to be used over the new courtyard entrance (images rather than a physical example)
 - Details of the proposed windows and rooflights
 - Details of new doors and staircases to be used inside and out

Summary:

I am supportive of the proposal to give this vacant building a the following element of the design should be either removed from the application or better justified:

- Works to the front boundary wall onto the road and yard entrance.

The following element of the design should be worked up more:

- Work to the former horse ginnery should be a clear response to any need for structural stability the rear wall will need, and explore options for how the visual mass of the building could be retained in a playful and creative way. The pergola suggested may be one such avenue, but I'd be very happy to look at other design solutions;
- Building Control may be able to advise on the extent to which the rear wall would need supporting. Any stipulations from their end should be sought prior to finalising the design to prevent any need to revisit work after consent.

The following pieces of information need adding to the application to clarify the proposals:

- Any removal of floor surfaces from within outbuildings to permit use as gardens;
- Image sample of slate for roof replacing corrugated metal;
- Details of the proposed windows and rooflights;
- Details of new doors and staircases to be used inside and out.

The following updates need making to the heritage statement to reflect the updated proposal:

- P.2 (Volume) refers to the hennery-piggery conversion, which has now been removed. The hennery-piggery is also mentioned on p.5;
- P.2 (Layout & Scale) refers to the barn as unlisted, though it has since been listed grade II.

16th June 2020

Conclusion: Request more information

Assessment:

As before, I'm supportive of the principle of converting this building, and supportive of most of the execution which I view as sensitive and reasonable. There are still one or two areas where detail is needed, so I provide the following comments in the hope they'll be useful.

Following my previous consultation response, dated 19/4/21, the agent has updated the design, access and heritage statement reflecting a couple of errors that had made their way in from the first draft last year.

I have received confirmation that the front boundary wall of the yard will not be modified by the proposals.

Details of the proposed rooflights have been submitted and appear suitable.

I request info on the following:

1. Confirmation of whether it's intended to retain and reuse main barn roof trusses etc. as visible internal features
2. Confirmation on intention to remove any floor surfaces from within the outbuildings that will be used for gardens.
3. If the agent is committed to removing the horse ginnery roof and front wall as part of the vision for the proposal, the following will be needed:
 - a structural report will be needed on whether the rear wall of the horse ginnery will need any stabilising if the rest of the structure is removed.
 - More complete description of significance. In order to know whether the harm of demolishing a section of the arrangement is justifiable, we would need to have a fuller understanding of the significance of the horse ginnery – its age, use, completeness and importance of its formal arrangement to that of the other spaces. This relates to how the constituent parts of a historic farmstead contribute together to its significance.
 - NPPF 189 states: *In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.*
4. Details of new windows, doors and staircases to be used inside and out (the agent has requested to leave this to last and I personally don't object to that if these other points are resolved

20th October 2022

Conclusion: Request further information

Assessment:

Additional information has been supplied, however I still request info on the following:

- Confirmation of whether it's intended to retain and reuse main barn roof trusses etc. as visible internal features.
 - The Structural Inspection Report from 2020 notes that "the roof structure, if retained, will have to be inspected by a timber specialist".
 - In the event that structural timbers appear decayed, a microbore drilling survey will be necessary to ascertain the depth of the decay and extent of sound timber.
 - The report states that purlins and rafters will need removing as they are not in accordance with standards, but also speculates that it may be possible to strengthen

the purlins.

- The approach for surveying, replacing or modifying the roof timbers needs understanding in more detail.
- Although preferable to cover this within the application, this could potentially be conditioned to be discharged prior to removal of current timbers.
- Confirmation is needed on intention to remove any floor surfaces from within the outbuildings that will be used for gardens.
- My view on the horse ginnery is that its removal would constitute less-than-substantial harm to the significance of the building group, and that its poor condition and relative lack of originality are should be considered. There appear to be three possible approaches: repair it as-is to structural soundness (which appears less reasonable given its lack of originality and the substantial replacement of remaining material that would be needed), replace it with a new structure on the same footprint (this would introduce a multitude of other questions, but on principle does not appear to be viable), or to remove it (in which case, attention would turn to the stability of the rear wall).
 - I would not support lowering the height of the rear wall.
 - A structural report will be needed on whether the rear wall of the horse ginnery will require any stabilising if the rest of the structure is removed. A structural engineer experienced at working with traditional buildings should be consulted to produce this report.
 - This information would need to be known, and any remediation specified, in advance of consenting removal of the wall's lateral support.
 - There may also need to be discussion about the side wall on the SW side, with its timber gates into the former stables. A demolition plan should be produced indicating which parts of the structure specifically are proposed for demolition.
 - In the event of demolition, it may be desirable to ensure that any slates needed to the main barn roof are made up from the horse ginnery roof stock, so thought should be given to this.
- Details of new windows, doors and staircases to be used inside and out (the agent has requested to leave this to last and I personally don't object to that if these other points are resolved

21st March 2022

Conclusion: Request further information

Assessment:

Additional information has been supplied, however I still request info on the following:

- Confirmation of whether it's intended to retain and reuse main barn roof trusses etc. as visible internal features.
 - Clarification has been provided that the different legislative circumstances relating to the barn being listed provide enough leeway that the conversion can be carried out without need to remove the king post trusses and purlins.
- Confirmation is needed on intention to remove any floor surfaces from within the outbuildings that will be used for gardens.
 - No information appears to have been submitted yet
- Since the last consultation response, an updated plan has been proposed for the horse ginnery, shortening the structure and refronting it in a more attractive manner in order to provide a covered parking bay and home office, while providing lateral support to the rear wall and retain the building form.
 - This strikes me as a good and inventive proposal with a number of upsides that weren't captured in the previous proposal.
- Details of new windows, doors and staircases to be used inside and out
 - The design, access and heritage statement is helpfully descriptive on the topic of new doors and the proposal, however the applications are not accompanied by detail drawings or spec sheets for new doors and windows.

7th April 2022

Conclusion: No objection (See summary)

Assessment:

Previously requested:

- Details of new doors, windows and staircases
 - Details of doors and windows have been provided.
- Either a note in the design/heritage statement relating to the stone paving in the currently unroofed outbuildings of the west range, or an annotation on the proposed plan, clarifying whether it is proposed to retain this or alter/replace it.
 - Confirmation has been provided that the flagstone floors to the spaces to the west of

the horse ginnery will be undisturbed.

- Details relating to rain water goods and whether these are proposed to be retained or replaced.
 - Cast iron existing to be retained and overhauled.
- Specification sheet or similar for cladding to be used at the front of the altered horse ginnery.
 - Western red cedar has been specified. This will provide an improved appearance to the replaced front of this structure.

Summary:

All the details I previously requested have been provided, although I was not able to locate a drawing showing the two proposed new staircases. I would be happy to see this detail submitted via a condition, if that would be preferable to the applicant.

Cumbria County Council – Historic Environments Officer

The traditional farm buildings proposed for conversion date to the mid-19th century and are designed in the same extravagant Victorian Tudor style as Barwickstead house. They are a fine group of farm buildings and are some of the best examples of undesignated Victorian agricultural buildings in the county with exceptional architectural detailing including a cupola on the roof of the barn. The buildings are considered to be undesignated heritage assets and, while any sympathetic scheme that secures their long-term survival is to be supported, the proposed alterations and conversion work will have an impact on their historic fabric and its character.

The Officer therefore recommends that, in the event consent is granted, the buildings are recorded prior to conversion work commencing. This recording should be in accordance with a Level 3 Survey as described by Historic England in *Understanding Historic Buildings A Guide to Good Recording Practice, 2016*, and should be secured by attaching a condition to any planning consent.

Resilience Unit

22nd July 2020

No objections to the proposed works.

Public Representation

This application has been advertised by way of a site notice, press notice, and neighbour notification letters issued to three properties. One letter of objection has been received which raises the following comments:

- Unacceptable intrusion, invasion and loss of privacy and right to light.

- Overlooking from piggery. Also loss of privacy and loss of light from extension.
- The east elevation of the barn conversion will also create overlooking concerns and loss of privacy for garden.
- Unsuitable access arrangements that will have an unacceptable impact on road user and pedestrian safety and is also likely to increase the risk of accidents. Unsuitable for construction vehicles.
- The current access into and out of the application site is blind, extremely close to the busy Morass road/Mill Lane junction and also directly opposite objectors property and where their vehicle is parked daily.
- As Beckermet is an historical village the roads were not designed for today's usage and are only of a size acceptable for cars and agricultural vehicles.
- The access to the site does not provide a safe turning area due to width of Morass Road and adjacent properties boundaries.
- During the application process of the adjoining development Outline Planning Application Ref 4/19/2200/001 (Amended) the highways agency carried out a survey and deemed the initial planned access via the neighbouring field gate on the other side of the piggery unacceptable for daily use and construction traffic access/egress due to its proximity to the junction, narrowness of road, visibility issues and the danger it would pose to road users and pedestrians.
- There are no footpaths along this section of Morass road and so pedestrians are forced to walk on Morass road creating highway safety issues.
- The proposed lowering and setting back of the existing entrance will do very little to combat the blind aspect of the entrance/exit of the application, access issues and road safety and will also serve to alter the look and amenity of the current boundary and historical piggery building within the conservation area and this historical village.
- The works will create disruption to the village.
- This application in conjunction with the adjoining application adjoining outline Planning Application Ref 4/19/2200/001 (Amended), will adversely affect highway safety of both the road users and pedestrians.
- As per most villages in the area containing old properties that do not have the ability to facilitate off road parking, the roads outside of my house and the surrounding properties to the application are used by residents to legally park their vehicles. This is seen throughout the whole village of Beckermet.
- Increased risk of flooding due to current inadequate drainage and greater run off from

additional hardstanding area into drainage system.

- Morass Rd experiences severe flooding during heavy downpours and inclement weather due to inadequate and ineffective drainage. The drains are easily overwhelmed and overflow causing rivers to run down both sides of the road.
- Proposed conversion and extension to the Piggery and alterations to the boundary on Morass road do not conserve the essential character of the building and its surroundings within the conservation area and will change the visual aspect of both this historical building of interest and the village outlook.
- The Piggery should be restored and maintained to its former historical character and purpose as an outbuilding only. The proposed extension and change of use to living accommodation contravenes all of the above policies and objectives and will have a detrimental effect on the historical importance of this building and this conservation area.
- Level of development currently being proposed within the Beckermets Local Centre Village is excessive in scale, at a level which will damage the environment of the village and of no general or local need.
- No amenities to support additional housing.
- The application threatens the Conservation Area.
- The application states there is no adverse effect to protected or priority species, bio diversity or geological conservation however threatens the habitat and feeding grounds of protected Wildlife and due to its proximity to a tree with a TPO, any boundary works threaten damage to the protected tree's root system.
- Protected species are seen in the local area.
- The Owl and Bat survey also states: If work does not commence before 1st April 2020 an additional survey should be conducted in case bats move in to the property. Therefore this survey is out of date and it is my belief that due to the evidence I have provided that an additional survey should be conducted prior to acceptance of this application.
- The impact of this application cannot be fully appreciated unless considered alongside the adjoining outline Planning Application Ref 4/19/2200/001 (Amended)
- Application states one Residential/Dwelling unit. As the annex is well detached and separated from the main barn property, remains on land owned by the applicant and is unlikely to be attached to the sale/use of the barn, I believe there to be actually two separate dwellings within the application.
- The Application falsely states the site cannot be seen from the Public Road, Public Footpath, Bridleway or other public land. The site can be seen from several surrounding public roads

such as Morass Road, Mill Lane, Hunter Rise and other public land which does not support the claim of no visual impact.

Following the receipt of amended plans for this application consultations were undertaken to all previously consulted neighbouring properties and the previous objector. Two letters of objection were received in relation to this process raising the following concerns:

- The revised plans appear to propose an alteration to the gate posts at the entrance and to add an extension to the piggery. These would seriously damage the historic composition of the yard at Barwickstead which is clearly visible from the T junction from Mill Lane.
- Other elements that should be retained here are the 'kiosk' ventilator on the barn roof, and the bellcote which used to be on the end of Barwickstead House.
- There seems to be no indication of the surface finish planned here.
- The submitted documents for this application still refer to the conversion of the piggery, these should be removed to avoid future confusion.
- The current access into and out of the application site is narrow, blind, extremely close to the Morass road/Mill Lane junction and also directly opposite my property.
- As Beckermeth is an historical village the roads were not designed for today's usage and are only of a size acceptable for cars and agricultural vehicles.
- The existing site entrance/exit does not facilitate skip hire lorries or possibly even larger sized vehicles that may be required to deliver goods for the conversion and therefore poses an increased and unacceptable risk of damage to my property and its boundaries.
- To that effect I believe that a road survey taking into account exact measurements of the road and the required turning circles of vehicles should be undertaken and considered for all the types of delivery/construction vehicles that may be required during the conversion process.
- There could also be a consideration for the entire boundary wall to the front of the site to be removed during the conversion phase to ensure not only my properties safety but that of other road users and pedestrians. This could then be replaced as per the application and in keeping with the original structure and village outlook.
- The existing road is not safe.
- Further concerns I still have in regard to Road Users and Pedestrian Safety, Increased Flood Risk, Impact to the Conservation Area, Village Outlook and Amenity, Historical Buildings of Interest, Impact to Wildlife and Protected Species can be found as per my original representation letter dated 14/08/20.
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Planning Policy

Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Development Plan

Copeland Local Plan 2013 – 2028 (Adopted December 2013)

Core Strategy

Policy ST1 – Strategic Development Principles

Policy ST2 – Spatial Development Strategy

Policy SS1 – Improving the Housing Offer

Policy SS2 – Sustainable Housing Growth

Policy SS3 – Housing Needs, Mix and Affordability

Policy T1 – Improving Accessibility and Transport

Policy ENV3 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Policy ENV4 – Heritage Assets

Development Management Policies (DMP)

Policy DM10 – Achieving Quality of Place

Policy DM11 – Sustainable Development Standards

Policy DM12 – Standards of New Residential Developments

Policy DM13 – Conversion of Buildings to Residential Use within Settlement Limits

Policy DM22 – Accessible Developments

Policy DM25 – Protecting Nature Conservation Sites, Habitats and Species

Policy DM27 – Built Heritage and Archaeology

Other Material Planning Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

National Design Guide (NDG).

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Conservation Area Design Guide SPD (Adopted December 2017)

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (CHSR).

Copeland Borough Council Housing Strategy 2018 – 2023 (CBCHS)

Emerging Copeland Local Plan (ELP):

The emerging Copeland Local Plan 2017-2035 has recently been the subject of a Publication Draft Consultation. The Publication Draft Consultation builds upon the previously completed Issues and Options and Preferred Options consultations. Given the stage of preparation of the Copeland Local Plan 2017-2035 some weight can be attached to policies within the Publication Draft where no objections have been received. The Publication Draft provides an indication of the direction of travel of the emerging planning policies, which themselves have been developed in accordance with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Assessment

The main issues raised by this application are the principle of development; scale, design and impact on amenity; highway safety; impact on the heritage asset; ecology and drainage and flood risk.

Principle of Development

Policy ST1 and ST2 of the Copeland Local Plan supports the principle of new housing and seeks to concentrate development within the defined settlement boundaries in accordance with the Borough's settlement hierarchy. The principle of new housing is also supported by in the Copeland Local Plan through policies SS1, SS2 and SS3. These policies seek to promote sustainable development to meet the needs and aspirations of the Boroughs housing market, as well as having consideration for the requirements of smaller settlements within the Borough, which respect their scale and function.

The application site lies within the designated settlement boundary for Beckermest, which is identified as a Local Centres in Policy ST2 of the Copeland Local Plan. This policy allows for new housing developments within the defined physical limits of the settlement. This policy also allows the development of infill and windfall sites. The proposed development would utilise an existing vacant barn within the centre of Beckermest. Policy DM 13 permits the conversion of existing buildings within the defined settlement boundary.

On this basis the principle of development is considered to be acceptable.

Scale, Design and Impact on Neighbouring Properties

Policy ST1, DM10, DM11, DM12 and section 12 of the NPPF seeks protection of residential amenity, a high standard of design, fostering of quality places, and proposals, which respond to the character of the site. DM13 of the Copeland Local Plan seeks to allow for the conversion of building within

settlement limits to these which can provide adequate internal space, off street parking in accordance with parking standards, and adequate amenity space. This policy also states that conversions should conserve the character of the building and will not create amenity issues for residents of the adjacent properties.

Originally this application sought permission for the conversion of the existing barn to a residential dwelling and the conversion of the detached barn to annexe accommodation, however, following concerns raised the proposal to create an annexe was removed from this application.

The detached barn is located adjacent to the entrance for the site and is a very narrow small building. In order to accommodate the annex development a large two storey extension was proposed to the side of the building, however this was considered to significantly alter the character of the building and would therefore not comply with Policy DM13 of the Copeland Local Plan. It was considered that without this extension the detached barn was too small to provide adequate living space and was therefore removed from the proposal. Concerns were also raised with regard to impact of this element of the development upon neighbouring properties in terms of overlooking and loss of amenity.

The proposed barn conversion will accommodate the residential dwelling within the existing footprint of the existing barn with no external extension. The proposal will, however, require some external alterations to the existing barn to accommodate the proposed conversion, including the insertion of four windows within the north elevation of the property, extending an existing opening within the west elevation to create a doorway, replacing the corrugated lean to roof with slate and installing a glazed Juliette balcony. On the basis of the limited works proposed to the existing structure the proposed conversion is considered to comply with Policy DM13 of the Local Plan.

Concerns have been raised with regard to the impact of the development upon neighbouring properties in terms of overlooking and loss of privacy. Policy DM12 of the Copeland Local Plan sets out the required separation distances for new residential properties. Given the barns location the proposed dwelling is not considered to directly overlook any properties on the opposite side of Morass Road as these are all off set from the directly line of sight and it is also considered that the required separations distances can be exceeded. The barn sits directly behind the existing detached garage associated with the adjacent property 1 Barwickstead. Although one habitable window is proposed within the front elevation of the barn, this will face directly onto the rear elevation of the detached garage and is not considered to result in loss of amenity for this property. Any other windows facing over adjacent properties are within the ground floor or the barn which is to remain undeveloped as part of this proposal.

The change of use will create a four bedroom property with a large open plan living space. Whilst the property benefits from adequate external amenity space, including onsite parking and a walled garden, the site is also located within the centre of the village and is within walking distance of a number of village amenity spaces including the play park.

On the basis of the amended plans for this application, it is considered that the proposal complies with the policies of the Copeland Local Plan and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Highway Safety

DM13 of the Copeland Local Plan seeks to allow for the conversion of building within settlement limits to those which can provide off street parking in accordance with parking standards. Policy DM22 of the Copeland Local Plan requires developments to be accessible to all users and to meet adopted car parking standards, which reflect the needs of the Borough in its rural context. Section 9 of the NPPF promotes sustainable transport.

The proposed development will be accessed via the existing access from Morass Road. Originally the application sought to set back the existing boundary wall to the site in order to improve access arrangements to the barn. Concerns were raised with this element of the proposal as this sandstone wall is a key feature within the village, therefore this element of the proposal was removed and the wall is to be retained within its original position.

Although Cumbria Highways supported the original improvements to the access, they have confirmed that they note the implications this will bring to the Conservation Area and therefore they are content that the existing access is acceptable given the original use of the access and its ongoing use to allow vehicles to park within the property boundary. Cumbria Highways have therefore offered no objections to the proposal as it is not considered the change of use from commercial to residential will increase the intensification of the access and therefore will not increase the impact on the local highway network. However, It is noted that consideration should be given to potential vehicle movement associated with construction given the proximity of the site to the local school. On the basis of these comments an appropriately worded planning condition is proposed to avoid deliveries within school muster times.

On the basis of the above it is considered that the proposal complies with ST1 and DM22 of the Local Plan and section 9 of the NPPF.

Impact on Conservation Area & Heritage Asset

Policy ST1, ENV4, DM27 of the Copeland Local Plan seek to protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic, cultural and architectural character of the Borough's historic sites.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 establishes a need "in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works [for the Local Planning Authority to] have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest" [Section 16(2)]. This requirement also applies to the granting of planning permission affecting a listing building or its setting [Section 66(1)].

Section 72 of the 1990 Act states that "special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving

or enhancing the character or appearance of [a conservation] area.”

Paragraph 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that “In determining 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...”

NPPF para. 199 states, in the case of designated heritage assets, “great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation”, irrespective of whether potential harm is substantial, less-than-substantial, or total loss. Where harm to a designated heritage asset is less-than-substantial, it should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal (para. 202).

Paragraph 203 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states the effect on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account when making decisions.

Referring to assets in a conservation area, NPPF para. 207 states that loss of an element that makes a positive contribution to a conservation area should be treated as either substantial (under para. 201) or less-than-substantial harm (under paragraph 202). In new development, opportunities should be sought to enhance or better reveal the significance of conservation areas (NPPF para. 206).

As part of the original application concerns were raised by the Conservation Officer regarding the conversion of the detached barn/piggery to form an annex as this conversion and extension was considered to have serious harm to the heritage asset. Consequently this element of the proposal was removed following concerns raised.

Based on this removal extensive discussion were undertaken with the agent for this application with regard to the conversion of the main barn at this site. Although the Officer was supportive he requested additional information to justify a number of works within the site. Based on the submission of amended/additional information for this application, the agreement to the retention of the boundary wall to the front of the application site, and the retention of the ginnery to the rear of the site the Officer has offered no objections to the development, subject to securing details of the internal staircases. These details will not be required as part of this planning application, however they will be secured by condition within the Listed Building application being considered alongside this application.

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with policies ST1, ENV4, and DM27 of the Copeland Local Plan and provision of the NPPF.

Ecology

Policies ST1, ENV3 and DM25 of the Copeland Local Plan and section 15 of the NPPF outline how the Council will protect and enhance the biodiversity and geodiversity within the Borough. These policies set out the approach towards managing development proposal that are likely to have an effect on

nature conservation sites, habitats and protected species.

The building to which this application relates falls within the planning and development trigger list for bat surveys contained within the Bat Conservation Trust Bat Surveys Good Practice Guidelines. The bat and owl survey submitted for this application states that although the large bank barn appeared suitable habitat for owls, no signs of owls were seen in this building or the other two buildings subject to this survey. In terms of bats the survey concludes that no signs of bats were seen during the daytime survey. Although no signs of bats were found at the site the survey states that great care must be taken when work commences and if bats are seen or suspected then work must stop and further advice be sought from the acting consultant. The survey further states that if work does not commence before the 1st April 2020 an additional survey should be conducted in case bats move in to the property. Mitigation measures and this additional survey will be secured by way of an appropriately worded planning conditions. An informative has also been included within the decision notice to ensure that if any bats, or evidence of this species, are found during construction works the applicant informs the relevant bodies.

On the basis of the above it is considered that the proposal complies with policies of the Copeland Local Plan and the NPPF.

Drainage and Flood Risk

Policy ST1B(ii) and paragraph 163 of the NPPF seek to focus development on sites that are at least risk of flooding and where development in flood risk is unavoidable, ensure that the risk is minimised or mitigated through appropriate design. Policy ENV1 and DM24 of the Copeland Local Plan reinforces the focus of protecting development against flood risk.

The majority of the application site is located within flood zone 1, however, a small section to the front of the site surrounding the site access is located within flood zone 2. Based on this the LLFA originally requested that the applicant submit a FRA to support the application along with any mitigation required to minimise the risk of flooding. They also requested the submission of existing and proposed site elevations and a cross section of the site showing finished floor or road levels and any other levels that inform the flood risk. In response to this request the agent for this application argued that the FRA provided for the adjacent site does not show this site in Flood Risk. This FRA was used in approving the adjacent site development for the same applicant, therefore it was stated that the agent would not provide details on levels cross sections for the site unless the LLFA can prove otherwise. It was further stated that the lower ground floor of the barn retains its existing use as storage and therefore is not subject to change of use/conversion proposals and, therefore, there is no greater risk to the occupants should planning consent be granted.

Based on these comments the LLFA provided the agent with copies of the latest flood mapping from the Gov.uk website and stated that as there is a minor ingress of water into the development site and as the driveway is a rising gradient up from the highway, leading to water pooling at this location the developer needs to show that this has been considered and that flood risk has been assessed by way

	<p>of cross section drawing and short statement to that effect. Further to this clarification the agent submitted a section showing the levels in relation to the road entrance, which confirmed that the site rises 470mm from the highway to the base of the barn and therefore the development is not at risk of flooding. On the basis of the information the LLFA stated that they had no objections to the proposed development.</p> <p>The application form submitted for this proposal states that the drainage for the site will remain unchanged with surface water and foul water draining to the main sewer located on Morass Road. No objection to this have been received from any statutory consultees.</p> <p>On the basis of the above it is considered that the proposal complies with policies of the Copeland Local Plan and the NPPF.</p> <p><u>Planning Balance & Conclusion</u></p> <p>The application seeks planning permission to convert a vacant barn, located within one of the Council's Local Service Centres, delivering a new residential unit within a sustainable location. Given that there are no major external alterations to the property to accommodate the change of use, the development is considered to conserve the historic, cultural and architectural character of the Boroughs historic site. Whilst concerns were originally raised by the Council's Conservation Officer amendments have been sought to the scheme to remove the detached annex conversion from the application, and to retain the front boundary wall and ginnery to the rear of the site. The Officer has no confirmed that he has no objections to the development.</p> <p>On this basis the proposed development is considered to be compliant with the objectives of Policies ST1, ENV4, DM15a and DM27 of the Copeland Local Plan 2013-2018 and the relevant provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework and LBCA Act.</p>
8.	<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>Approve (commence within 3 years)</p>
9.	<p>Conditions:</p> <p><u>Standard Conditions:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The development hereby permitted must be commenced before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission. <p>Reason</p> <p>To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.</p>

2. This permission relates to the following plans and documents as received on the respective dates and development shall be carried out in accordance with them:-

- Site Location Plan, Scale 1:1250, received by the Local Planning Authority on the 20th July 2020.
- Block Plan, Scale 1:500, received by the Local Planning Authority on the 20th July 2020.
- Site Block Plan (Amended), Scale 1:500, received by the Local Planning Authority on the 3rd March 2022.
- As Existing First Floor Plan, Scale 1:50, Dwg No: 02, received by the Local Planning Authority on the 20th July 2020.
- As Existing Section, Scale 1:50, Dwg No: 03, received by the Local Planning Authority on the 20th July 2020.
- As Existing Plans & Elevations, Scale 1:100, Dwg No: 10, received by the Local Planning Authority on the 20th July 2020.
- As Proposed Plans & Elevations (Amended), Scale 1:100, Dwg No: 11, Rev D, received by the Local Planning Authority on the 28th February 2022.
- As Proposed Site Section, Scale 1:250, Dwg No: 12, received by the Local Planning Authority on the 31st March 2021.
- Heritage Impact Assessment (Amended), received by the Local Planning Authority on the 24th March 2022.
- Door Detail, Scale 1:2, Dwg No: 14, received by the Local Planning Authority on the 24th March 2022.
- Window/Door Detail, Scale 1:2, Dwg No: 13, received by the Local Planning Authority on the 24th March 2022.
- Material Specification, received by the Local Planning Authority on the 24th March 2022.
- Roof Light Details, received by the Local Planning Authority on the 2nd June 2021.
- Visual Structural Inspection, Prepared by WDS Ltd, received by the Local Planning Authority on the 20th July 2020.

- Protected Species Survey: Bats and Barn Owls, Prepared by John Temple July 2019, received by the Local Planning Authority on the 20th July 2020.

Reason

To conform with the requirement of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Pre Commencement Conditions:

3. Prior to the carrying out of any conversion work the existing buildings affected by the proposed development must be recorded in accordance with a Level 3 Survey as described by Historic England's document Understanding Historic Buildings A Guide to Good Recording Practice, 2016. Within 2 months of the commencement of construction works a digital copy of the resultant Level 3 Survey report must be furnished to the Local Planning Authority.

Reason

To ensure that a permanent record is made of the buildings of architectural and historical interest prior to their alteration as part of the proposed development.

4. Prior to the commencement of any conversion works an additional protected species survey must be undertaken and submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority as set out in the approved document 'Protected Species Survey: Bats and Barn Owls, Prepared by John Temple July 2019, received by the Local Planning Authority on the 20th July 2020'. The development must be carried out in accordance with and implement all of the mitigation and compensation measure set out within this approved document and retained thereafter.

Reasons

To protect the ecological interests evident on the site.

Other Conditions:

5. During the construction of the development hereby approved there must be no deliveries or movement of construction vehicles during school muster times, this includes school opening and closing.

Reason

In the interest of highway safety

6. The development must be carried out in accordance with and implement all of the mitigation and compensation measures set out in the approved document 'Protected Species Survey: Bats and Barn Owls, Prepared by John Temple July 2019, received by the Local Planning Authority on the 20th July 2020'.

Reasons

To protect the ecological interests evident on the site.

7. Access gates, if provided, must be hung to open inwards only away from the highway.

Reason

In the interests of highway safety.

8. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015, (or any order revoking or re-enacting that Order with or without modification) no external alterations, including replacement windows, doors or skylights and roof coverings, or painting or rendering shall be carried out to the property, nor shall any building, enclosure, extension, porch, domestic fuel container, pool or hardstanding be constructed within the curtilage without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason

To safeguard the traditional appearance of the buildings in the interests of visual amenity.

9. All rooflights to be installed in the building must in accordance with the approved document 'Roof Light Details, received by the Local Planning Authority on the 2nd June 2021', and must remain as such at all times thereafter.

Reason

To safeguard the traditional appearance of the converted building in the interests of visual amenity

10. The development hereby approved must be carried out in accordance with the following

approved plans:

- Door Detail, Scale 1:2, Dwg No: 14, received by the Local Planning Authority on the 24th March 2022.
- Window/Door Detail, Scale 1:2, Dwg No: 13, received by the Local Planning Authority on the 24th March 2022.

The development must be carried out and maintained in accordance with this approved detail at all times thereafter.

Reason

In the interest of protecting the heritage asset and Conservation Area.

11. The development hereby approved must be completed in accordance with the approved materials detailed within the approved documents:

- Material Specification, received by the Local Planning Authority on the 24th March 2022.

The development must be retained in accordance with these approved details for the lifetime of the development.

Reason

To ensure a satisfactory appearance of the development in the interests of visual amenity.

12. Any alterations, repairs or replacements of the existing roof slates must be local graduated green slate as per the existing building and must be carried out in accordance with the approved documents:

- Heritage Impact Assessment (Amended), received by the Local Planning Authority on the 24th March 2022.

The development must be carried out and maintained in accordance with this approved detail at all times thereafter.

Reason

In the interest of protecting the heritage asset and Conservation Area.

Informatives:

1. During construction if any bats or evidence of bat is found within this structure the application should contact the National Bat Helpline on 0345 1300 2288 for advice on how to do works lawfully.
2. The applicant should liaise with the CC Resilience Unit Office via emergency.planning@cumbria.gov.uk to allow for further discussion to ensure the applicant and their trades people/contractors are aware of the appropriate information and actions to take should there be an incident at the Sellafield site.

Statement:

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received, and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Case Officer: C. Burns

Date : 24.05.2022

Authorising Officer: N.J. Hayhurst

Date : 25.05.2022

Dedicated responses to:-