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Your ref: 3/2015/0734

Our ref: ASM/ASP/PDI

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FAO A Dowd

Dear Mr Macholc,

Planning Application 3/2015/0734: Conversion of barn to form one dwelling; New Hall Barn Ribchester Road Clayton le Dale PR3 3ZQ

This application is for a scheme of conversion of this barn which differs significantly from that in application 2015/0321. That earlier application was granted consent although the matter of the Listed status of the building and the need for a heritage record of the building prior to works commencing does not seem to have been addressed, despite some correspondence on this matter.

Listing

The present application is accompanied by a Heritage Statement (C J O'Flaherty, dated January 2015) which includes the following on page 12:

"Whereas New Hall Barn, when built, appears to have been part of a farmstead established at New Hall, it is not now considered as a curtilage building to the listed building, but does exist within the setting of the listed building."

Whilst the building may no longer be in the same ownership as the adjacent Grade II* Listed New Hall, it seems most probable that it was part of the functional group of buildings at New Hall at the date of Listing (1958) and as the building clearly pre-dates 1948 Section 1 (5) (b) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 would appear to apply and indicate that this should be considered a curtilage structure and thus also Listed. As the Listed (or not) status of the building is a material planning consideration, this matter needs to be clarified before a planning decision is taken.

Design Issues – Roof

Whilst we would not object in principal to the conversion of this structure to domestic use, there are some items of concern in the detail of the design which may have an unacceptable impact. The first of these is the impact of the proposals on the existing roof structure in the main barn. The Heritage Statement illustrates these in Figure 10, titled "*Interior of original barn ... original trusses with trenched purlins, struts and upper ties*" and again notes their originality in section 3.2.1, where it also states that this section of the building is of 18th century date. The locations of these five trusses is set out in drawing 1471 / EX02. The significance of the roof structure is set out in section 3.3:

"Of most significance are the largely authentic roof structure and the original walls which enclose an interpretable six bay structure with front cart entry door. These features define part of the barn's evidential value."

Unfortunately the trusses are not shown on the proposed plans (drawing 1471 / PL 00) or elsewhere and it is difficult to see how the southern three trusses can be incorporated within the proposals for the new first floor in that part of the building without replacement or at least substantial alteration. This issue is not discussed in the heritage statement or the Design and Access Statement and the matter will need to be clarified with the applicants and an assessment of the impact of the proposals upon the historic roof structure made. This assessment should also look at the originality of the purlins, common rafters and roof coverings, and the impact of the proposals upon them. If any of the original timbers cannot be retained, consideration should be given to detailed recording (below) and perhaps also their dating by dendrochronology.

Design Issues – North Gable End

The second design issue of concern is the substantial alterations proposed to the northern gable end of the original barn. The removal of the later lean-to extension here is acceptable, but the proposed large gable window is a different matter. The insertion of this window will make a considerable change to this elevation of the building, removing much original fabric including a set of three doorways at ground level in this gable. These doorways are shown on drawing 1471 / EX02 and illustrated as Figure 9 in the Heritage Statement. The Statement (p.11) confirms that these doorways formed the access to a shippon at this end of the building and, with the central cart-entry bay and southern storage areas, mean that this barn is an example of the Lancashire Combination Barn type.

The externally-visible feature that makes it clear that this is specifically a Lancashire Combination Barn is the location of these doors in the gable end and it is proposed to remove these. This loss will mean that, with the necessary changes to the interior, this part of the building will no longer be interpretable – which is as noted above "*of most significance*". This aspect of the changes proposed is not considered in the Heritage Statement, although a brief justification for the new gable window is presented in section 4.3.3 where it is noted that retaining the openings was an option, but that this was discarded as the bases of the doors would have been obscured. The alternative which is proposed, the complete removal of the doors and surrounding masonry, is considered to have an unacceptable impact on the historic character of the building. It is recommended therefore that this detail is removed from the proposals.

Building Recording

Finally there is the issue of recording the structure. The Council for British Archaeology's *'An Archaeological Research Framework for North West England: Volume 2, Research Agenda and Strategy'* (Brennand 2007) has indicated that *"there is an urgent need for all local authorities to ensure that farm buildings undergoing adaptation are at least considered for recording"* (p. 140) so that *"a regional database of farm buildings can be derived and variations across the region examined."* (ibid.)

This appears to be a farm building of some merit and of reasonably early date, although impacted by later additions and alterations. It may also be considered to be a Listed curtilage structure (above). Consequently should the Local Planning Authority be minded to grant planning permission to this scheme (once the issues above are resolved) or any other scheme for this building, Lancashire County Archaeology Service would recommend that an archaeological record of the building be made and that such work is secured by means a planning condition. The following wording is suggested:

Condition: No works shall take place on the site until the applicant, or their agent or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of building recording and analysis. This must be carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, which shall first have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure and safeguard the recording and inspection of matters of archaeological/historical importance associated with the site.

This is in accordance with government guidance as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, para. 141 *"Local planning authorities should...require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible"*.

Please note that the above comments have been made without the benefit of a site visit. If you have any questions or require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Peter Iles

Peter Iles
Specialist Advisory Services