

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 8/2(e)**

<b>Parish:</b>	Runcton Holme	
<b>Proposal:</b>	<b>Extension to rear of existing barn to provide permanent function space and kitchens following removal of existing marquee</b>	
<b>Location:</b>	<b>The Red Barn 12 College Lane South Runcton Norfolk</b>	
<b>Applicant:</b>	<b>Rockliffe</b>	
<b>Case No:</b>	<b>18/02195/F (Full Application)</b>	
<b>Case Officer:</b>	<b>Mr K Wilkinson</b>	<b>Date for Determination:</b> 4 February 2019 <b>Extension of Time Expiry Date:</b> 2 April 2019

**Reason for Referral to Planning Committee** – Due to concerns expressed by Historic England

**Neighbourhood Plan:** No

**Case Summary**

College Farm is located on the western side of the A10 at South Runcton. The farm complex is situated to the south of the farmhouse and is accessed from College Lane. To the south of this complex of more contemporary agricultural buildings lies Red Barn, which is a Grade 2\* listed building which has been renovated and used as a venue for weddings, parties etc.

This application seeks full planning permission for an extension to the rear/north of the existing barn, to provide permanent function space and kitchens following removal of the existing temporary marquee.

The application is accompanied by an additional application for listed building consent (18/02196/LB) which is also on this agenda.

**Key Issues**

Principle of development  
Impact upon the character and appearance of this heritage asset

**Recommendation**

**APPROVE**

## **THE APPLICATION**

College Farm is located on the western side of the A10 at South Runcton. The farm complex is situated to the south of the farmhouse and is accessed from College Lane. To the south of this complex of more contemporary agricultural buildings lies Red Barn, which is a Grade 2\* listed building which has been renovated and used as a venue for weddings, parties etc.

The application is accompanied by an additional application for listed building consent (18/02196/LB) which is also on this agenda.

As part of the application a Design, Access & Heritage Statement is submitted.

This application seeks full permission to build an extension to the rear of the existing barn to provide permanent function space and kitchens following removal of the existing marquee. The extension would be slightly longer than the existing marquee and set back at each end to facilitate a simple junction of walls. The proposed roof is to be kept at a relatively low pitch. The walls of the extension would be faced with horizontal timber cladding, which would be decorated black to emulate the cladding on the existing barn. The roofs would be in corrugated plastic-coated steel sheet with a colour to match the existing roof (red). Windows will be contained in the rear elevation and glazed opening doors to the eastern gable end leading onto a raised patio area.

The walls would be joined to the main building by linking rather than bonding into the structures. The roofs would be linked with a wide valley set at a level to avoid disturbing the present roof and interfering with the roof timbers. There are no proposals to interfere with or alter the existing structure except for linking on. Above the entrance into the extension a pitched linking roof is proposed, which will contain a central patent glazed area to allow light to enter into the central section and to highlight the doors and the opening.

Whilst not part of this full planning application, the proposal also includes modifications to the main tithe door (midstray) which will be addressed in the listed building application.

The hipped western end of the extension incorporates a slight lean-to element, where it connects to the main barn, which affords access into a disabled toilet. This negates the need to breach the original structure to create access to the western lean-to element of the main barn. No external changes will be required to facilitate this addition.

## **SUPPORTING CASE**

The agent has submitted the following statement in support of the application:

“The structure on College Farm known as The Red Barn is a Grade II\* listed structure with origins in the sixteenth century that has more recently found use as a venue available to hire for weddings, balls and similar functions and prevented it becoming redundant.

As a business The Red Barn’s popularity has seen it achieve an international client base and bookings that stretch well into the next decade but with this success has come a call for expansion in order to accommodate larger functions. Given that the Barn itself is the crux of its attraction, relocation of the business is in no way an option leaving extension the only means to expand the premises.

Approximately 10 years ago a soft-skinned marquee was installed to the rear of the main barn to house kitchen, bar and seating spaces and whilst this provision has been successful,

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the fundamental nature of the marquee has since had its time with a demand for a more permanent and fitting extension to be formed.

At its inception, the brief for the extension was to achieve a number of clear aims in providing a more permanent enclosure for the function, barn and kitchen areas; it is to be more sympathetic to the nature of the main barn than the tent, more economical to heat and illuminate and it must also allow for the improvement of the facilities and access for those with mobility restrictions.

The scheme proposed to fulfil these criteria has been carefully considered in terms of layout and appearance to ensure that an appropriately scaled and detailed extension can be achieved to the rear of the Barn. This not only allows the removal of the very prominent marquee but does so in a manner that is respectful to the scale and nature of the original building allowing it to remain predominant, with the extension more subservient than the present marquee.

Having consulted with the Councils' Conservation team and with representatives from Historic England in the very early stages of design, it was with quite some surprise, and a great deal of disappointment that an objection was received from the latter being made against elements of the design that had been discussed with them previously.

In response to the commentary made by HE, the designs have been revisited to omit the glazed doors between the existing barn and the extension (despite their original recommended inclusion) to allow the new and old to be 'closed-off' from each other. However, the comments made regarding the size and position of the extension affecting the existing barn is disputed. The proposed extension not only fits wholly within the silhouette of the main barn but it does so (by utilising a hipped roof) using an appropriate architectural language and which occupies a lesser footprint than the present "temporary" structure.

The extension is required to fulfil practical requirements for space and commensurate improvements in disability provision/access but it also greatly improves the visual appearance of the barn as a result. Whilst there are commercial considerations to be accounted for, these have been allowed to take a back seat to the design parameters that, in the opinion of the Applicants and their Architects, are paramount to the setting of the barn and through their enacting will visually enhance and celebrate the barn as well as ensure a practical and financial future for an important and significant listed building that would otherwise struggle to find a viable use."

### **PLANNING HISTORY (Relevant)**

18/02196/LB: Under consideration and pending decision: Extension to rear of existing barn to provide permanent function space and kitchens following removal of existing marquee

15/01811/F: Application Permitted 20/01/2016: Replacement of existing polyester textile roof and wall cladding to marquee with profiled metal cladding

14/01629/F: Application Permitted 06/01/2015: Variation of Condition 1 of permanent retention of screen fence and oil tank to allow the continued retention of the polyester textile marquee until 31 January 2022

13/01790/LB: Application Permitted: Retention of sub-floor heating system and paved barn floor, repairs to timber frame, corrugated iron roof and electrical wiring. Retention of works and conversion of outbuilding at west end of barn to Registrar's office. Permission for repair works listed in 2010 reports, repairs to lean to roof and replacement plastic windows

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08/01351/CU: Application Permitted: 08/07/08 - Use of barn for wedding receptions and events

08/00591/LB: Application Permitted: 20/05/08 - Listed building application: alterations in connection with change of use from barn to venue for weddings, receptions and events

## **RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION**

### **Parish Council: SUPPORT**

**Local Highway Authority (NCC): NO OBJECTION** - I observe from the history of the site that this extension is to replace a marquee of similar size which gained approval under a planning application determined in 2015. Given that traffic generation would ultimately be similar I believe that it would be difficult to substantiate an objection to the application on highway grounds.

**Environmental Health & Housing – Community Safety & Neighbourhood Nuisance: NO OBJECTION** - The location is shielded by the physical structure of the main barn and will be an improvement to the marquee structure in terms of noise attenuation.

**Historic England: CONCERNS EXPRESSED** - No objections to the proposals in principle but are concerned that some elements of the scheme could result in harm to the significance of the listed building in terms of the NPPF, Paragraphs 194 and 196. Historic England would not support the application as it stands, but recommend the proposed extension is kept to the westward extent of the barn and does not project beyond it and that solid, rather than glazed doors are used in the mid-stray doorway. This would provide much of the additional accommodation required but better preserve the character and significance of the exterior and interior of the listed building. This would reduce the harmful impact and better achieve the NPPF's overarching aim of promoting sustainable development.

(Officer note: The doors have subsequently been confirmed to be retained as solid features to the main opening).

**Conservation Officer: NO OBJECTION** - The loss of the marquee is to be welcomed, and this application reflects time spent both by Historic England and BCKWLN in pre-application discussions seeking a better long term arrangement for the complex's extension, mindful of the sustainable use the current function provides for this important Grade II\* building. Red Barn itself sits in a complex of modern farm buildings all of which are of a different and unsympathetic scale and appearance to the historic barn. The key comparatively unspoilt views of the barn are from the south and east – the key approaches used in Red Barn's current function. Any development therefore needs to take place to the north of Red Barn where the setting is already compromised by the modern farm complex.

The impact upon historic fabric is limited; therefore the key issue here is the impact of the new extension upon the appearance of the historic barn. Any extension of this proposed size is likely to cause a degree of harm to the significance of the historic asset. However in my view, due to the location of the proposed extension to the north of Red Barn, combined with the lack of physical harm to the fabric of the building, this constitutes less than substantial harm as defined in Paragraph 196 of the NPPF. In accordance with Paragraph 196 this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use. The current use is an optimum use for the building, providing a long term use with negligible impact upon the buildings fabric and its internal arrangement. In my view the public benefits of the proposal outweigh the less than substantial harm and the application should be approved.

**REPRESENTATIONS**

None received in relation to this specific application, but 10 letters of support received with regards to the associated listed building application.

**LDF CORE STRATEGY POLICIES**

**CS06** - Development in Rural Areas

**CS08** - Sustainable Development

**CS10** - The Economy

**CS11** - Transport

**CS12** - Environmental Assets

**SITE ALLOCATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES PLAN 2016**

**DM1** – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

**DM15** – Environment, Design and Amenity

**DM17** - Parking Provision in New Development

**NATIONAL GUIDANCE**

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)  
Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

National Planning Policy Framework – sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

**PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

The main considerations in the determination of this application are as follows:

Principle of development  
Impact upon the character and appearance of this heritage asset

**Principle of development**

The NPPF is supportive of a prosperous rural economy – paragraph 83 encourages the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside.

This is echoed in Core Strategy Policies CS10 & CS12 of the LDF which seeks to promote and sustain rural enterprise.

The historic and built environment play a crucial role in delivering environmental quality and well-being. Therefore the Council will preserve and where appropriate enhance its qualities and characteristics.

The proposed development is therefore considered to be acceptable in principle. Its impact upon the listed barn will be addressed below.

**Impact upon the character and appearance of this heritage asset**

Temporary planning consent was granted for the retrospective construction of a proprietary polyester textile marquee measuring 6 x 24m with a linking section to the rear barn doors in 2015 and 2016. The marquee created an area for catering preparation and bar, plus a quiet area away from the activities in the barn. Whilst it was felt that the marquee was not an appropriate structure to place in the setting of the Grade 2\* listed Barn, it was recognised that the marquee did contribute to the public benefit of keeping the Barn in its present use as a wedding venue, which outweighed the negative impact of the retention of the marquee for a limited duration. The temporary consent was granted until 2022, and this current submission for a permanent structure reflects the requirement for a permanent solution. Historic England supported the previous grant of temporary permission for the marquee, although highlighting that the marquee is not of suitable style or materials for the barn and crucially it obscures the midstray doorway.

Pre-application advice was undertaken between the applicants and Historic England surrounding the construction of a permanent structure, in which the applicant proposed a strip of glazing to the roof to ensure that the midstray door would be evident in any proposed extension. Historic England confirmed that if a glazed strip could be incorporated into a modest, traditional building subordinate to the barn in scale an acceptable permanent extension could result.

Historic England have subsequently not objected to the proposals in principle but are concerned that some elements of the scheme could result in harm to the significance of the listed building in terms of the NPPF, Paragraphs 194 and 196. Historic England has also not objected to the adaptation of the lean to at the west to incorporate a disabled toilet.

The westernmost end of the extension should respect the barn and not project beyond it - The barn has been extended over time to include a lean to element at the western end probably constructed in the 19th century. This lean to accommodation also incorporates a lean to roof which abuts up to the roof of the main barn. The proposed extension projects beyond the line of the main historic barn but does not project beyond the end of the barn complex. The roof of the extension sits comfortably below the roof line of the existing buildings. At the east end of the barn, the proposed extension sits behind the line of the main barn. As part of this application, the layout of this lean to section is altered to incorporate disabled toilet facilities.

Whilst ideally the extension would sit within the building lines of the main barn to both east and west, the east end is the more important elevation to incorporate this, given the greater views of this elevation from people using and visiting the venue. Additionally, by extending in line with the lean to, access is provided into proposed disabled toilets. Without this access from the extension, an internal access from the main barn would have been required, affecting the intact internal space to the main barn.

Historic England do not support the application as it stands, but recommend the proposed extension is kept to the westward extent of the barn and does not project beyond it. However, Historic England's comments do not state that the proposal causes substantial harm to the significance of the heritage asset. They have also confirmed verbally that whilst

they maintain their concerns, this is not an application which they would seek to call in if listed building consent and planning permission are granted, but would expect the local authority to determine the application mindful of the NPPF.

Paragraph 193 of the NPPF states: "When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset great weight should be given to the assets conservation and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harms amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance."

Paragraph 194 goes on to state that any harm to, or loss of the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting) should require clear and convincing justification.

Clearly as a Grade II\* listed structure, even greater weight should be given to this historic asset's conservation. Whilst the western projection will have some impact upon the appearance of the barn when viewed from the farm yard and the west, there will be negligible visual impact from the south and the east. Moreover the intact interior of the main listed barn will be retained, as the access to the disabled toilet will be via the new extension, hence ensuring that more of the asset's historic fabric will be conserved in line with paragraph 193 of the NPPF. This comprises the clear and convincing justification for the development/harm to the listed building as required by Paragraph 194. The degree of harm must also be assessed in conjunction with Paragraphs 195 & 196.

In the Officer's view, the projection beyond the west end of the main barn will lead to 'less than substantial harm' to the significance of the heritage asset as opposed to 'substantial harm'. Therefore Paragraph 196 of the NPPF, rather than Paragraph 195 applies, which states: "Where a proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use."

In this case, the continued use of the Barn as an events venue provides a sustainable use creating revenue for the future maintenance and longevity of the building. The important interior would remain intact and only the north/west elevations of the main building would be effected which are less visible from public areas. On balance this less than substantial harm to the Grade 2\* listed building is considered to be justified and acceptable in the context of the guidance set out in the NPPF.

## **CONCLUSION**

In accordance with paragraph 193 of the NPPF, great weight should be given to a heritage asset's conservation. In this case, the proposed extension will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of this heritage asset mainly by virtue of one aspect of the proposed design, namely the extension projecting beyond the main barn to the west. However, the long-term public benefits of securing a sustainable use for this building, without impacting upon its intact interior, outweigh this less than substantial harm. Historic England has accepted that paragraph 195 is not applicable and the harm should be judged against paragraph 196. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that the purpose of the planning system is to achieve sustainable development and that protection and enhancement of the historic environment is an overarching objective (paragraphs 7 and 8); this application on balance complies with this aim. Whilst Historic England have raised concerns, it is important to note that they continue to support the use of the building and the principle of development.

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The application is therefore duly recommended for approval subject to certain conditions stated below.

### RECOMMENDATION:

**APPROVE** subject to the imposition of the following condition(s):

- 1 Condition: The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
- 1 Reasons: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004.
- 2 Condition: The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 3/124/2H.
- 2 Reasons: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.