



## **DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT** **FARMHOUSE**

Riseley Farm, Part Lane, Swallowfield, RG7 1TB

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*The purpose of this report is to accompany a planning or Listed Building application. A DAS provides a framework for applicants to explain how a proposed development is a suitable response to the site and its setting, and demonstrate that it can be adequately accessed by prospective users*

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Job number: 2198  
Riseley Farm, Part Lane, Swallowfield, RG7 1TB

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Project Address: Riseley Farm, Part Lane, Swallowfield, RG7 1TB

Local Authority: Wokingham Borough Council

Conservation Area: Riseley Farm Area of Special Character

Current Building Use: Residential.

Proposed Building Use: Residential.

Listing Status: Farmhouse Grade II

List entry no. 1118070

### Project Overview:

Repair and renovation of the existing Grade II listed farmhouse, including internal alterations and external landscaping. No roof works



## 2. SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

Riseley sits on the border of Berkshire and Hampshire, approximately halfway between Reading and Basingstoke, with the A33 passing about 0.5km to the west of the village. The course of The Devil's Highway – a Roman Road - passes through the south of the village. Within 2km north-east lies the slightly larger village of Swallowfield, which serves as the administrative centre of the Swallowfield parish of Wokingham borough – a semi-rural parish covering over 14km<sup>2</sup> of villages (including both Swallowfield and Riseley), hamlets, farms and surrounding countryside, with a population of around 2200.

Riseley Farm is situated off Part Lane, a single track road, running north south, lined with trees and hedges, that connects the villages of Riseley and Swallowfield. The site sits approximately halfway along the lane's 2.5km length, equidistant between the villages. Despite the narrowness of the lane, it has been developed along most of its length with detached dwellings, generally set back from the lane in moderate grounds, or farms. Buildings range in age from the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards.

Views from Part Lane into the site are mostly limited by the hedges and trees with the roofline just visible above hedges, however the access road into the farm is quite open, giving uninterrupted views to the brick and corrugated metal barn directly in fronting the lane. This and the adjoining disused timber threshing barn form the central axis of the farmstead's reversed z-plan. Open sided timber shelters form the south side of the front yard, while a brick and weatherboarding barn and the Grade II listed 16<sup>th</sup> Century farmhouse form the north and east sides of a rear courtyard respectively. Two small brick barns, a brick piggery and a metal clad barn, all set to the north of the rear yard, complete the farmstead. This arrangement of barns shields the farmhouse from all views from the lane. The disused driveway along the south of the site, connecting to the farmhouse, is lined with taller hedging, preventing views into the site either from Part Lane or the drive.

The site was sold to the current owners after a series of failed planning applications. It is used as a domestic residence and continues its agricultural purpose through the owners equestrian business. There is no wish to change the use of the site.



*Image taken from Google Earth to illustrate context*

### 3. PLANNING HISTORY

App. No.: 231196      iLap Ref No.: None

Description: Application for Listed Building consent for the conversion of 1 no. existing curtilage listed threshing barn into 1 no. dwellinghouse and the demolition of 1 no. existing pole barn to facilitate the erection of 1 no. new dwellinghouse.

Received : 18/05/2023      Decision Date: 01/08/2023      Decision: Refused

App. No.: 222281      iLap Ref No.: None

Description: Full application for the proposed change of use from agricultural barns to 2 no. residential dwellings, involving the demolition and rebuild of one barn and one conversion.

Received : 25/07/2022      Decision Date: 24/07/2023      Decision: Refused

App. No.: 141769      iLap Ref No.: MB/2014/2777

Description: Prior approval submission for the conversion and change of use of existing agricultural building to one dwelling (Use Class C3).

Received: 18/12/2014      Decision Date: 10/02/2015      Decision: Application Withdrawn

App. No.: 142867      iLap Ref No.: MB/2014/1982

Description: Prior approval submission for the conversion and change of use of existing agricultural building to one dwelling (Use Class C3).

Received: 03/09/2014      Decision Date: 08/10/2014      Decision: Application Withdrawn

App. No.: 001358      iLap Ref No.: F/2000/2342

Description: Proposed change of use of grazing area to sand school for carriage driving.

Received: 11/09/2000      Decision Date: 03/01/2001      Decision: Approve

## **4. DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS**

### **Use and Amount:**

There is no change of use to the farmhouse. The proposals support the building's long term conservation in its original design purpose and improve existing functionality through new bathrooms, kitchen, and utility without intensification of use. The adjustments to the master ensuite/dressing room result in a larger ensuite that better serves the needs of the occupants without harm to the historic fabric. The new secondary glazing also supports the use of the building by improving the thermal comfort of the occupants as well as reducing energy costs.

The works do not propose an increase in the footprint, floor area, nor number of bedrooms.

### **Layout and Scale:**

No extension is proposed other than an increase in the size of the patio to the east (rear) of the property.

There is therefore no change to the arrangement of private and public spaces within the farm.

The proposals involve minimal changes to the layout of the farmhouse. The main change is the removal of modern walls dividing the master dressing room and ensuite to create a larger master ensuite with new sanitaryware. New sanitaryware will also be fitted to the other first floor bathroom (family bathroom off hallway), with no change to the location or size of this bathroom.

To the ground floor, new units are to be fitted in the existing utility and kitchen spaces, with the only change to walls being the removal of the aga and the modern brick piers around it. New woodburning stoves are proposed to two of the three existing fireplaces following repair/alteration works. Windows, external and internal doors shall be repaired and redecorated like for like with no change to their sizes or locations. No other changes are proposed to the layout of the property.

### **Scale Height and Mass:**

There is no change to the scale or massing of the existing farmhouse as a result of the proposals. External works are like-for-like repairs and landscaping only.

### **Trees and Landscaping:**

Two alterations to the landscaping are proposed. Firstly, the cutting back of hard surfaces against existing building externally and installation of a 200mm wide pea shingle French drain to the building perimeter to remedy damp issues caused by rain splashback, and secondly, a new sandstone patio, matching the size of the existing patio along the south of the house alongside an enlarged patio to the east. The path connecting these two patios is to be replaced to match the new patios. The enlarged east patio will require the removal of a very small fruit tree 3m off the current patio edge. No other trees will be effected by the proposal. There is no impact upon habitat other than a small area of lawn.

## **Appearance:**

The proposed works relating to the appearance of the farmhouse are:

- Redecoration and repair of external doors and windows
- Redecoration and repair of existing cast iron rainwater goods
- Repointing of existing chimneys in lime
- Paint removal and repair of brickwork plinth to building. Lime pointing repairs.

The works are to be like-for-like, and so will have little impact on the elevations or appearance of the farmhouse, but will help to maintain the building in good condition so its appearance will continue to positively contribute to the setting, including to the Riseley Farm Area of Special Character.

## **Access and Parking:**

There is no proposed change to the existing parking or access arrangements. There is no increase in the demand for parking as a result of the works.

## **Heritage:**

Details of the impact of the works on the heritage of the buildings and surroundings can be found in the accompanying Heritage Statement. Details of the procedures to be followed to ensure minimal impact on the historical fabric can be found in the Method Statement.

## **5. POLICY ASSESSMENT**

### **Principle of Development:**

The proposals maintain this Grade II listed building to ensure its long term conservation, so it can continue to benefit the Area of Special Character and surrounding area. The changes proposed improve the existing functionality without loss of heritage detailing or harm to the value of the historic setting.

### **Sustainable Development:**

The proposal includes new secondary glazing throughout. This will improve the thermal performance of the farmhouse and reduce the energy costs without needing to alter the windows. The new secondary glazing will sit in the existing window openings, and will not hide the historical window detailing.

### **Character and Appearance of the Area:**

Riseley Farm is an 18 acre farm located between the villages of Riseley and Swallowfield. The farm still has agricultural purpose, and was sold as such to the current owners in 2022. The majority of the farmstead, including the farmhouse, are located within Riseley Farm Area of Special Character, a predominantly agricultural area covering four 16<sup>th</sup> century Grade II listed buildings along Part Lane, alongside the locally listed Riseley Lodge, bordering the farmstead to the south. All buildings are well set back from Part Lane and, for the most part, well screened by boundary hedging and mature trees. Baring the agricultural buildings within Riseley Farm, the buildings are used as residential properties.

The agricultural buildings that form the remainder of the reversed z-plan farmstead with Riseley Farmhouse at the eastern end, are of varying ages, sizes and materialities including corrugated metal, timber, and brick and weatherboarding.

The proposals retain the form and appearance of the listed farmhouse and have no negative impact upon the wider farmstead setting or the character of the wider area. There is no impact upon the surrounding buildings as a result of the works.

### **Amenity – Impact on Site Users:**

The changes proposed as part of the works are minimal yet achieve the desired improvement in functionality.

Thermal comfort is improved through new secondary glazing, electric heating mats to the utility, kitchen, dining and family bathroom, and wood burning stoves to dining room and southern most reception room. New flue liners are proposed alongside the new wood burners to improve the efficiency by allowing the air to be drawn up the chimney effectively and reduce fire risk.

### **Amenity – Impact on Neighbours:**

The proposal will have no effect on the neighbours, in part due to the distance between the farmhouse and the nearest neighbour (all neighbours are over 100m from the farmhouse), but mostly since the works are minor.

None of the works will change any of the outlooks from any windows, nor is any change to the building shape proposed.

## **Transport, Parking and Cycle Provision:**

No change is proposed to transport or parking arrangements.

No change is proposed to cycle provision as part of these works.

## **Refuse Provision:**

No change is proposed to the refuse provision as part of these works.

## **Air Quality:**

The site is outside of air quality management areas.

The proposals will have no impact upon air quality.

## **Drainage and SuDS:**

To remedy damp issues caused by rain splashback, hardstanding against existing building is to be cut back and a 200mm wide pea shingle French drain to be installed.

Existing cast iron rainwater goods are to be repaired and redecorated like for like. There is no increase in the capacity needed in the rainwater drainage system.

No other changes are proposed to the drainage system.

## **Contamination:**

There is no risk of site contamination as a result of the works.

## **Archaeology:**

No changes to the footprint of the house are proposed nor will any of the internal alterations require changes to the foundations. As such, the only below ground works within this proposal relate to the limited landscaping; disturbance of the topsoil area to extend the existing patio. Therefore this has not been further assessed as part of this reporting.

## **Ecology:**

While the site is in the amber Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zone, the proposals do not involve any extension or cause any affect to newt habitats.

The works do not include any roof works that could potential disturb habitats. No disturbance to roof spaces is required as part of the works.. It is therefore unlikely for the works to cause disturbance to bats.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

The proposals are minor in nature and principally concern the like for like restoration and repair of the Grade II listed farmhouse to ensure its long term conservation in its original design purpose, while maintaining the form and appearance, allowing it to continue to positively contribute to the character of the surrounding area.

Improvement in the thermal efficiency through new secondary glazing, and minor changes to the layout and landscaping support and improve the existing functionality of the building. Only modern fabric is due for removal, so no heritage detailing will be lost as a result of this proposal.

The proposals act in accordance with both local and national planning policy and should be supported by the local authority.