Heritage Impact Assessment

Partial Demolition and Reconstruction Renovation of Two Grade 2 Listed Farm Houses, including the Reconstruction of Demolished Two Storey Attached Building and Single Storey Lean Too

At

Thornbush Farm,
Miry Lane,
Liversedge,
WF15 8JJ

Site Aerial View looking West.

Prepared By
Code L6 Architecture Ltd
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Ref: 23-211-61

Introduction:

This full planning and listed building application is for planning permission, to:

Partial Demolition and Reconstruction and Renovation of Two Grade 2 Listed Farmhouses, including the Reconstruction of Demolished Two Storey Attached Building and Single Storey Lean Too

This report will explain how the scheme design has addressed national and local planning requirements.

This statement forms part of the Planning Application submitted by Code L6 Architecture. The drawings to which this statement and the planning application relates, list as follows:-

23-011-50-Site Plans As Existing -A1.pdf

23-011-51-Farm Houses As Existing -A1.pdf

23-011-52-Farm Houses Partial Demolition -A1.pdf

23-011-53-Outbuildings As Existing -A1.pdf

23-011-55-Site Plan As Proposed -A1.pdf

23-011-56-Farm House Plans As Proposed -A1.pdf

23-011-57-Farm House Elevations As Proposed -A1.pdf

23-011-58-Outbuildings As Proposed -A1.pdf

General

The site is located in Hightown , Liversedge and is bordered by residential developments to the north, Windy Bank Lane to the west and agricultural land to the south. The site is access via Miry Lane off Second Avenue, which serves the site and one residential dwelling.

The existing buildings on the site are Thornbush Farm a Grade II listed building (Farm Houses 01 and 02) to the north, which was formerly attached by a two storey building now demolished, to a single storey Cow Shed to the south and two single storey out buildings in the form of a double garage and store to the west.

The main farmhouses are in a very poor condition and it is considered too dangerous to enter the building, a drone has been used to photograph the interior however it has not been possible to fully survey and record the existing features. We are proposing to enter the building following the removal of the most dangerous element and fully record and assess the historic features.

Listing

The listing for Thornbush Farm states:

“Also Known As: Lousy Farm, OFF WINDY BANK LANE & SECOND AVENUE, Hightown Farmstead, Late C18 with later additions and alterations, coursed rubble, some brick, stone slate roof and brick ridge chimney stacks. Two storeys, main range of single room depth, and ruinous wing to left.

EXTERIOR: Original pair of cottages with end ridge stacks, central adjoining doors, each with two- light stone mullioned ground floor window, one with surviving shutter but both without glazing, plus one two-light and one three-light stone mullioned windows on first floor, with later sash frames, glazing gone. Two light first floor window has been altered. Left hand door blocked with stone, right hand doorway has six-panelled wooden door. Further cottage added to right, with end ridge stack, having a door to the left, and a three-light stone mullioned window to ground and first floor. Wing to the left, largely ruinous, remaining gable to front in C20 brick with large stone quoins and window opening on ground and first floor, right return to main range of coursed rubble with doorway to left and ground floor window opening, rest demolished. Rear elevation has one single light to first floor in earliest part, one ground floor window to later cottage. To the right are the remains of a lean-to building in brick.

INTERIOR: not inspected: information from photographs supplied with application. Stone flag floors, original cornices and skirting boards. C19 range in cottage to right, other fireplaces, doors etc said to survive elsewhere.

HISTORY: The farm, then known as Lousy Farm, was occupied by Reverend Patrick Bronte, father of the Bronte sisters, at the beginning of the nineteenth century. He lodged there with his landlords, Mr and Mrs Bedford, at the start of his ministry at Hartshead, from 1811 to around 1815. He met his wife Maria Branwell while living here, and published "Cottage Poems", his first major work. It is possible that Maria and Elizabeth were also born here. There is also a connection to the Luddite riots, with a march to Rawfolds Mill passing the door; an event that Charlotte Bronte used in her novel "Shirley". It is not clear when Patrick left the farm, but it may not have been until his move to Thornton in 1815.

SOURCES Barker, J. "The Brontes" 1994 Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, T J Winnifrith, "Patrick Bronte"

SUMMARY OF IMPORTANCE This is a set of cottages dating to the late eighteenth century, converted into a single dwelling probably in the nineteenth century and little altered since. The building is partly derelict, with one wing mostly demolished, but it has significant historic interest as the home of Patrick Bronte when he took up his first full ministry, met and married his wife, published his first major work and where one or perhaps two of his children were born. It is in the main for this historic interest that the building should be listed..”

The significance of the buildings and historical nature of the site are mainly due to their part in the story of the Bronte Family. The farm, originally known as Lousy Farm, was occupied by Reverend Patrick Bronte, father of the Bronte sisters, at the beginning of the nineteenth century. He lodged there with his landlords, Mr and Mrs Bedford, at the start of his ministry at Hartshead, from 1811 to around 1815. He met his wife while living there, and published "Cottage Poems", his first major work. It is possible that Maria and Elizabeth were also born here. There is also a connection to the Luddite riots, with a march to Rawfolds Mill passing the door; an event that Charlotte Bronte used in her novel "Shirley". It is not clear when Patrick left the farm, but it may not have been until his move to Thornton in 1815.

The buildings are located away from the public highway with a public footpath running to the rear of the property so it was not possible to undertake a detailed visual inspection of all elevations of the buildings. The building has aesthetic value as a former agricultural dwelling / cottage and has maintained the appearance of a rural structure although the building is in very poor condition which reduces this value somewhat. It is apparent from the lack of windows in the west elevation and from the Listed Building description that the front of the building was designed to face east and the rear of the building was designed to face the west. The most likely reason for this was due to the location of the footpath and wanting to maintain privacy.

The property has some value to the wider community with its links with the farming community and the collective memory of the landscape although the primary value is through its link to the Bronte family.

The age of the buildings indicate that the construction of these farms in the late 18th century may have been as a result of the enclosure act. The majority of the field boundaries around the site have been lost but the boundaries in the immediate vicinity and the boundary in line with the quarry provide associative historical value. The footpath running to the rear of the property could have existed prior to the construction of the cottage and as such has some historic value.

The open nature of the land immediately surrounding the farmstead provides a rural setting to the asset and contributes positively to the significance of the buildings. From the design of the building and the lack of any windows in the west elevation it is apparent that the primary outlook was towards the brook and the mills to the South East.

The footpath to the rear of the property is a historic route and as such is a heritage asset. Loss of this elements of the setting would cause substantial harm to the Asset.

Condition Photos Below

Single Storey extension to north elevation removed.

Two storey extension between Farm House 02 and Cow Shed removed

The buildings are in extremely poor condition and in need of total renovation and restoration. The roof tiles are missing to the Farmhouses and Outbuildings with rafters exposed for around 5 years, which has led to their structural failure. The walls to Farmhouse 01 are bowing and will require rebuilding. A single storey lean too extension to the northern end of Farmhouse 01 has been removed and a two storey building between Farmhouse 02 and the Cow Shed has also been demolished with all materials removed from site. The isolated nature of the site has led to the demolition and theft of all material.
The farmhouse is built in natural coursed stone, which would have had a stone slate roof now missing and was historically arranged as two dwellings. The two outbuildings are in red brickwork, which would have originally had natural slate roofs, now missing.

Farmhouse – Stone slates removed and first floor collapsed.

Farmhouse – Front wall bowing and near to collapse

Farmhouse – First floor collapsed

Farmhouse – Roof Removed

Farmhouse – Roof Removed

Outbuilding 01 - Internal

Outbuilding 01 – External

Outbuilding 02

Outbuilding 02

Discussions have taken place with Kirklees regarding reinstating the use of the buildings as residential and therefore the proposal is to renovate and re-build the properties to their original form and condition, rebuilding the single storey lean too to the north and two storey building between farmhouse 02 and cow shed. Some modernisation will be necessary to make the properties liveable with including insulation to the external walls, and central heating etc.. Photos below.

The lean too attached to Farmhouse 01 will be rebuilt in brick to match its original.

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Two storey building between farmhouse 02 and cow shed to be rebuilt.

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The outbuildings will be renovated to provide additional storage space.
Parking is proposed to front of the dwellings.

Design and Appearance:
As noted above we are proposing to renovate and restore the existing buildings and where possible materials will be re-used and where this is not possible all new materials will match as closely as possible those used in the original construction.

Windows and doors will be in painter timber with the fenestration matching the original windows. See photo below.

Landscaping:
We are proposing brick paving to the parking areas and concrete stone effect paving to the paths terrace areas around the building. All these areas will be naturally drained to the adjacent soft landscaped borders.
The proposed boundaries are to be post and 3 rail agricultural type fences.

Conclusion:

The existing buildings are in very poor condition and in need of extensive rebuilding, renovation and repairs. If left much longer we feel they will be beyond what could reasonably be classed as repairable.

The proposal is to return the buildings and site to what we consider to be close to their original condition and layout with the reconstruction of the demolished buildings.

The proposed renovation works will greatly improve the quality and setting of the listed building ensuring their long-term survival.

Brief Schedule of Works:

1. Farmhouse 01 and 02
    a. Remove roof trusses and rafters with arising materials stored for review.
    b. Remove masonry and stonework as detailed on drawings and store materials arising for review. It is noted within the structural report that the face stonework is seriously delaminated and with the amounts available for reuse limited.
    c. Remove stone heads, cills, jambs and mullions and retain for cleaning and repair.
    d. Remove timber floor joists and retain for review.
    e. Clear area of previously demolished extension and expose foundations.
    f. After reporting and setting out, repair and upgrade foundations to include damp proofing and new floor. Tying into the existing structures as the approved details.
    g. Commence rebuilding in approved and agreed materials.
    h. Install floor joists using as many of the original units where possible, it should be noted that a majority of materials have been removed by others nefariously, where installation is taking place structural elements must be adhered to and allow for strapping of joists where possible.
    i. Install previously set aside stone work to the windows and doors, cleaning and repairing as work progresses.
    j. Rebuild small extension that appears to have originally been oven room or kitchen. Complete the roofing inline with the main roofing works.
    k. At roof level, install wall plates and structurally attached in the approved method.
    l. Carry out installation of roof trusses, using as much of the original units as possible, noting the conditions from the structural reports, considering that one is beyond repair. Install infill rafters, again using as many of the original rafters as possible. Install new ridge plate.
    m. Complete gables and chimneys to match original units.
    n. Over lay with breathable membrane to roof structure and re-roof in imitation stone slates, of diminishing sizes. Imitation is proposed to reduce the stress on the roof and allow the retention of as many original timbers, rather than replace all with the consideration of potentially using steel to take the weight of stone.
    o. Compete internal works to match the original in a manner and finish as agreed. Lime plaster, lathes and timber partitions are to be used throughout.
    p. Repair fireplaces and complete chimney works.
    q. New floorboards from reclamation source and approved by LBO.
    r. Install new frames and doors internally, with architraves and skirtings to match expectations. All approved with LBO.
    s. Install new windows to replace the missing units which are as previously agreed timber casements with single glazing. All windows to be approved prior to installation.
    t. Insulate roof and walls internally in breathable wool/ rockwool.
    u. Install electric hot water and heating system to be agreed.
    v. Carry out decoration.
    w. Install new front doors and entry control system.

2. Outbuilding 02
    a. Remove rotten roof trusses and dispose.
    b. Remove rotten frames and steel door.
    c. Take down brickwork to side elevation facing entrance way to 2 courses below visible cracks.
    d. Retain bricks as whole.
    e. Remove existing floor.
    f. Install new concrete floor in C30 Concrete to 150mm thick and appropriate dpm
    g. Rebuild brickwork in 1:1:4 mortar using retained bricks from minor demolition and retained from site. Repointing retained masonry.
    h. Install lintels were missing.
    i. Install new windows and doors.
    j. Install wall plates and rafters, to Structural Engineer's design,
    k. Apply Breathable membrane to rafters and fit blue grey slate.
    l. Complete eaves, ridge and verge detail.

3. Outbuilding 01
    a. Remove rotten roof trusses and dispose.
    b. Remove rotten frames and steel door.
    c. Remove any damaged brickwork.
    d. Remove existing floor.
    e. Install new concrete floor in C30 Concrete to 150mm thick and appropriate dpm
    f. Repair brickwork in 1:1:4 mortar using retained bricks from minor demolition and retained from site. Repointing retained masonry.
    g. Install lintels were missing.
    h. Install new windows and doors.
    i. Install wall plates and rafters, to Structural Engineer's design,
    j. Apply Breathable membrane to rafters and blue grey slate.
    k. Complete eaves, ridge and verge detail.

4. External Works
    a. Carry out all drainage connections as detailed by Structural Engineer, proposing interceptor.
    b. Install new water and electrical connections.
    c. Carry out reduced level excavations to site area.
    d. Install hard and soft landscaping as approved drawings.
    e. Install fencing in 1200mm high 3 rail and post fencing to boardary.
    f. Complete parking and footpath areas.
    g. Complete access road, lighting and security works.