Planning, Design and Access Statement in support of change of use of agricultural building to a single dwelling house (use class C3) including extension of the same at Top Lodge Farm Gidding Road Sawtry PE28 5UL

1. Planning policy and history

Prior approval was granted for the conversion of the existing agricultural building to a single dwelling (use class C3) on 3rd August 2023 under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015

2. Current Planning Proposal and Policy

Full planning approval is sought for the conversion of and extension to the agricultural building previously approved for change of use under the GPDO.
Extending the building precludes a prior approval application.
Planning Policy LP33 Rural Buildings will be supported where it can be demonstrated that:

A the building is:

i redundant or disused
ii of permanent and substantial construction
iii not in such a state of dereliction or disrepair that significant reconstruction would be required; and
iv structurally capable of being converted for the proposed use; and

B the proposal:

i would lead to an enhancement of the immediate setting; and
ii any extension or alteration would not adversely affect the form, scale, massing or proportion of the building.

The building was partially used for general storage, but is surplus to current requirements for Top Lodge Farm, which comprises of a wider holding, owned and farmed by the Close family and extends to approximately 214 acres.

The proposal would provide suitable accommodation for the applicant, his partner and three children. The applicant works on the farm holding but currently lives in rented accommodation.
This dwelling would allow the applicant and his family to reside on the holding and provide greater opportunities to grow the farming enterprise.

The existing barn has a footprint of 168m^2, it is proposed to add a single storey extension of 123m^2, with an external amenity area of 196m^2, with additional driveway, parking and turning area. There is no agricultural tenancy over the site.
The existing agricultural barn is of a timber frame construction with brick infill panels up to 1.8m high and corrugated fibre cement panels over up to eaves level. The roof is supported by timber purlins and clad with corrugated fibre cement panels. The barn floor is smooth concrete and access into the barn is via twin sliding full height door running for full height in the East gable end.
A structural appraisal accompanies the application.

Scale Visual Impact and Appearance

The proposal is to convert the existing agricultural building and provide a subservient single storey extension that is shorter narrower and lower than the existing building. This will provide a suitable level of accommodation for the applicant and his family.
Due to the location of the building there will be no adverse impact on the countryside. The existing wall cladding will be replace with Western Red Cedar boarding which, with weathering, will fade to a natural grey to match the existing timber frame.
The roof covering will be replaced with insulated corrugated sheeting to the North Elevation and solar panels to the complete South Elevation to provide sustainable heating and hot water.
The existing full height sliding doors will be re-furbished and retained. Additional windows and doors in powder coated black aluminium will be added to provide compliant levels of light and ventilation.

Amenities/Parking

The proposal will benefit from ample parking and amenity area as shown on the site plan.

Flood Risk

The site is situated in Flood Zone 1 at the very top of a hill. There is minimal probability of flooding and the proposal will not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.

Ecology

A Phase 1 Habitat and Protected Species Survey and Ecological Assessment accompanies the application.

Contamination

There is no evidence of any contamination on site.

Noise

The proposal will have no adverse impact on any neighbouring properties and there are no nearby noise sources which would make residential occupancy inappropriate.

Landscaping

The existing rural agricultural landscape will be retained

Conclusion

The proposal complies with planning policy. It would have no effect on either Highways, flooding or the environment. The proposal is well designed and with weathering will enhance the immediate setting.