

Statement of Significance

(Heritage Statement)

Conversion of a redundant agricultural barn to two residential
dwellings at
Croxden Farm, Croxden

On behalf of
Trustees of Late M A B Bolton

Prepared by

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Statement of Significance is submitted in support of the application for the conversion of an existing redundant agricultural barn at Croxden Farm, Croxden into two, two storey residential dwellings.
- 1.2 The barn, which is the subject of this application, is a Grade II listed building. The listing itself identifies the barn as "Croxden Farmhouse". This statement therefore refers to the barn henceforth as Croxden Farmhouse.
- 1.3 Within close proximity of Croxden Farmhouse, there is an English Heritage Site, a Scheduled Ancient Monument and seven additional listed buildings.
- 1.4 The listed buildings include the Grade I listed *Croxden Abbey remains* and six Grade II listed buildings; *Abbey Farmhouse, Granary and linking service wing of Abbey Farmhouse, Abbey Lodge, Group of 5 memorials, Carrington Family Memorial and the Church of St Giles*.
- 1.5 This Statement of Significance has been produced in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) where paragraph 128 requires an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposal, including any contribution made by their setting.
- 1.6 It is concluded that proposed minor external alterations and internal alterations will not detrimentally affect the character or external appearance of Croxden Farmhouse.
- 1.7 The proposed development will have minimal impact on the character and setting of the listed buildings and scheduled monument that surround the proposed application site.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

- 2.1 Croxden Farm is located within the settlement of Croxden and falls within the jurisdiction of East Staffordshire Borough Council, within the county of Staffordshire.
- 2.2 Croxden itself is located approximately 2.0km south of Alton, 5.5km south east of Cheadle and 5.5km north of Uttoxeter.
- 2.3 Croxden Farmhouse is sited on the holding of the disused Croxden Farm and accessed via a private driveway to the east of Keelings Lane. Croxden Farm measures approximately 0.98 hectares in size. It comprises a large barn and a number of large, derelict agricultural buildings which have not been in use for a number of years.
- 2.4 Croxden Farmhouse is capable of being converted, as demonstrated in the Building Condition Survey Report submitted with this application. The dwelling is of stone construction and has a clay tile roof.

3.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The proposal is for the conversion of the listed barn into two dwellings, each with their own curtilage. These residential units will be separated by a natural internal divide.
- 3.2 The conversion will include internal alterations with minor external alterations. Modifications will be kept to a minimum and the scheme will make use of existing openings in order to conserve the structures' architectural character.
- 3.3 It is further proposed to remove the unsympathetic additions to the southern elevation, restoring it to its natural state and remove the additional dilapidated agricultural buildings from the site.
- 3.4 Following pre-application advice from East Staffordshire Borough Council, it is proposed to provide garage and bin space for the two residential units on the footprint of existing agricultural buildings.
- 3.5 As part of the proposal all dilapidated agricultural buildings from the site will be removed, apart from the Grade II Listed farmhouse.
- 3.6 Further details of the proposal are contained in the Planning, Design and Access Statement submitted with this planning application and on plan refs: B190.2-001, B190.2-002 and B190.2-003.
- 3.7 The existing access to the site from Keelings Lane will be utilised to support the two residential units.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

National policy and guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published on the 27th March 2012 sets out the Government's economic, environmental and social planning policies for England. Taken together, these policies articulate the Government's vision for sustainable development, which should be interpreted and applied locally. The following chapters and paragraphs from the NPPF are considered relevant to this proposal:
- 4.2 Paragraph 128 states that when determining planning applications, Local Planning Authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposal, including any contribution made by their setting. Furthermore, the level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.
- 4.3 Paragraph 137 states that "Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development... within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.
- 4.4 Paragraph 132 of the NPPF seeks to ensure great weight is given to the conservation of a heritage asset when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Furthermore, it clearly states that substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building should be exceptional.
- 4.5 However, paragraph 134 continues that where a development 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.

Development Plan Policy

East Staffordshire Borough Council Local Plan, Saved Policies (July 2006)

- 4.6 None of the saved policies relate to heritage assets.

Emerging East Staffordshire Local Plan: Pre-submission Version (October 2013)

- 4.7 The policies relating to historic features and heritage assets within the Emerging East Staffordshire Local Plan are listed below:
- 4.8 *Policy NBE16: Development Affecting a Listed Building:* This policy states that planning permission for development will only be granted where it does not have an adverse impact upon the special character or setting of a listed building.
- 4.9 *Strategic Policy 25: Historic Environment:* This policy states that development proposals should protect, conserve and enhance heritage assets and their settings, taking account of their significance, as well as the distinctive character of the Borough's landscapes.
- 4.10 *Detailed Policy 5: Protecting the Historic Environment: All Heritage Assets, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas.* This policy states that alterations or extensions to listed buildings or development within the listed curtilage or that which affects the setting of a listed building will be considered if accompanied with a Statement of Significance which sets out how the proposal would potentially affect the significance of the asset.
- 4.11 *Detailed Policy 6: Protecting the Historic Environment: Other Heritage Assets.* This policy states that planning permission will be permitted for development proposals that can demonstrate that the integrity and setting of a heritage asset will be protected and enhanced, through the use of high quality design, materials with appropriate scale and massing

5.0 SIGNIFICANCE OF ASSETS

5.1 As set out previously, Croxden Farmhouse is a Grade II listed building and therefore an asset of significance which needs to be considered in this report. There are eight other heritage assets in proximity to Croxden Farmhouse; Croxden Abbey Scheduled Monument and English Heritage Site and seven listed buildings. These heritage assets of significance are detailed below.

Croxden Farmhouse – List Entry Number: 1230577: Grade II



Image 1.0 North and west Elevation



Image 2.0 South and west Elevation

5.2 Croxden Farmhouse is a former barn located approximately 135 metres east of the Croxden Abbey scheduled ancient monument. English Heritage suggests that it is early 16th Century in origin, largely rebuilt in the 19th century. It is rough faced, constructed of squared and coursed stone blocks with a clay tile roof.

5.3 The farmhouse is two storeys with 9 roof bays, 8 visible bottom opening windows to ground floor, 7 boarded loft openings and 2 ridge louvres to right.

5.4 Internally there are three eastern roof trusses of 19th century construction with the other 5 trusses are of 16th century construction. There are two struts between the beam and collar, double purlins, curved wind braces and a ridge piece which sits in a notch formed by the crossing of principles at the apex.

5.5 There is evidence to suggest that the barn was originally timber framed, this includes surviving lengths of wall plate, one surviving wall post with curved brace extending to the tie beam, empty mortises and peg holes.

5.6 The size of the building is indicative that it may have been attached to Croxden Abbey as a tithe barn.

Croxden Abbey Scheduled Monument and English Heritage Site: List Entry Number: 1011448

- 5.7 Croxden Abbey is a well-documented example of a Cistercian monastery with historical records dating from its construction in the 12th century, through to its dissolution in the 16th century. Croxden Abbey was founded by Bertram de Verdun in 1176, and was colonised by Cistercian monks from Aunay in Normandy in 1179.
- 5.8 As image 3.0 shows, the scheduled monument consists of two separate areas including the standing remains and earthwork remains of Croxden Abbey and associated features.
- 5.9 The extensive earthwork and standing remains of the monument reflect not only the secular activities of a monastery but also the agricultural, industrial and domestic elements of Croxden Abbey's history.

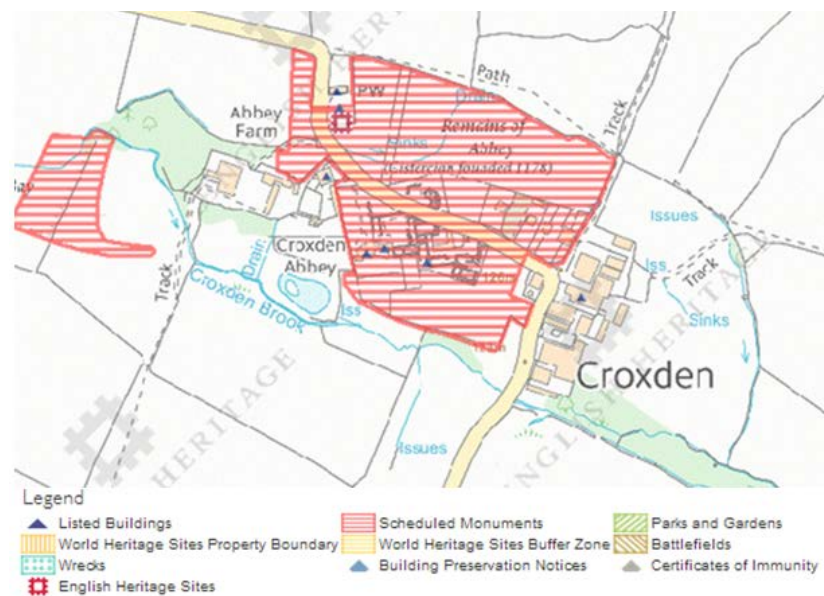
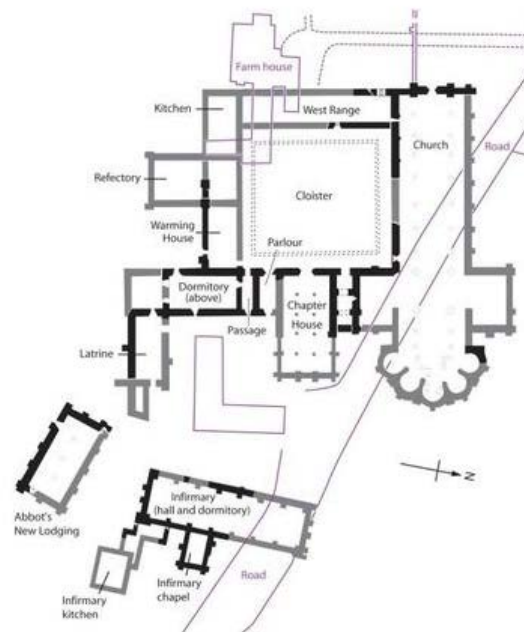


Image 3.0: English Heritage Map

Croxden Abbey Remains- List Entry Number: 123057: Grade I



Plan of the abbey with surviving walls shown in black.

Image 4.0: Croxden Abbey Remains (Source: English Heritage)

- 5.10 These Grade I listed remains are of the Cistercian Abbey built between 1179-1280 with an addition to provide Abbot's Lodging constructed in 1335-6. The remains are of cruciform church, constructed from sandstone ashlar with nave, aisles, transepts, and choir of chevet type, sacristy, a chapter house, parlour, slype, dormitory undercroft, reredorter, day stair, warming house, Abbot's lodging and infirmary.

Abbey Farmhouse– List Entry Number: 405519 – Grade II**Image 5.0:** Abbey Farmhouse

- 5.11 This Grade II farmhouse dates back to the 18th century with later additions. The building is constructed of red brick on moulded sandstone plinth; with a clay tiled roof with coped verges. The building is two storeys with first floor band and gable lit attic. There are five windows, casements with segmental head, moulded surround and cornice hood to central glazed door and oblong over-light, approached by short flight of stone steps. There is a 20th century extension to left with flat roof and floor to eaves glazing.

Abbey Lodge– List Entry Number: 1230611 – Grade II**Image 6.0:** Abbey Lodge

- 5.12 Abbey Lodge is a Grade II listed house dating back to the late 18th Century. It is constructed of ashlar with a clay tile roof with coped verges on kneelars and brick intergral end stacks. It has an L-shaped plan with later extensions and a central entrance passage containing staircase. It has two storeys and gable lit attic. It has 3 windows, glazing bar casements those to ground floor have single-span lintels and keystones that to first floor centre is round-headed with keystone and is flanked by plain pilasters. There is a central 6 panelled door with a 20th Century open sided wooden porch. There is a low 2-storey extension to right with one glazing bar casement to ground floor.

Granary and Linking Service Wing East of Abbey Farmhouse–List Entry Number: 1230574–Grade II



Image 7.0: Granary and Linking Service Wing

- 5.13 The Granary and service wing are Grade II listed dating back to the early 19th century. They are constructed of coursed and squared large stone blocks with a clay tile roof. The service wing projects to east of Abbey Farmhouse and granary forms a cross wing to the east with tallet steps to north and central entry to east with small 4-pane window to the left of it. There are ventilation loops to the north gable. The service range has 2 storeys; 4 bays, 2-light flat face mullioned windows containing glazing bar casements; large garage doors to left and door to right of centre.

Group of 5 memorials (Probably former wall monuments) South of Church of St Giles; List Entry

Number: 1230622 – Grade II



Image 8.0: Group of 5 memorials

5.14 This group of 5 memorials date back to the 18th century. They are former wall monuments (probably) of dressed stone mounted on low plinths, mostly rectangular, two pedimented aedicules. One inscribed to Simon and Ann Robinson, another to Dorothy Wood died 1772.

Carrington Family Memorial: List Entry: 1230575- Grade II



Image 9.0: Carrington Family Memorial

- 5.15 The Carrington family memorial is a chest tomb from the mid-19th century. It is constructed of ashlar, is of an oblong plan with 2 panels to each side and to each end all with quadrant corners.

Church of St Giles: List Entry Number: 1278522- Grade II



Image 10.0: Church of St Giles

- 5.16 The Church of St Giles is Grade II listed, constructed between 1884-1885. It has rough faced ashlar with clay tile roofs with coped verges. It has a 3 bay nave, 2 bay chancel, south chapel and south porch; constructed in a mid-14th century style. There are 2 pointed west windows, a single trefoil headed light with trefoil over, buttresses to left, right and centre, the latter supporting an engaged column with moulded capitals flanked by moulded corbels with stiff leaf ornament, 2 cinquefoil headed arches spring from capital and corbels and carry the belfry; pointed nave windows of 2 lights with ogee trefoiled heads and quatrefoil over; pointed east window of 3 cinquefoiled lights with cusped flowing tracery above; gabled south porch with pointed entrance arch springing from nook shafts with moulded capitals; gabled south chapel with ashlar octagonal shafted stack.

6.0 IMPACT ON ASSETS



Image 11.0: Location of Listed Buildings in Relation to Proposed Site

Croxden Farmhouse

- 6.1 Croxden Farmhouse is located on a relatively level site with land to the west gently sloping down to the barn. As a result, the barn is lower than the rest of the village and views from the west are intercepted by the residential property west of Keelings Lane. Consequently, the proposed conversion is not considered a cause of concern in terms of visual amenity.
- 6.2 Furthermore, the development comprises the conversion of a building in situ, with no extensions and only minor external alterations.
- 6.3 Croxden Farmhouse is at risk of falling into further disrepair if an alternative sustainable use is not provided. It could be further argued that the redundant agricultural buildings have a detrimental impact upon the heritage assets of Croxden and their removal will improve the setting.
- 6.4 Consequently, the extent of the proposed conversion is not considered to detrimentally affect the character nor external appearance of those heritage assets, in fact it is considered to enhance them further.

Croxden Abbey Remains and Croxden Abbey Scheduled Monument

6.5 The Croxden Abbey Scheduled Monument and Croxden Abbey remains are located approximately 135m to the west of the proposed site. Due to the close proximity it is considered that the conversion of the barn and removal of the agricultural building will not have a detrimental effect on these assets, and will enhance the rural character and appearance of the surrounding landscape and contribute to the visual amenity and setting in which Croxden Abbey sits.

6.6 If the barn is not converted and the buildings not removed then there is a risk that they will remain redundant as they are not able to fulfil their agricultural purpose and fall into further structural and visual degradation.

Abbey Lodge, Abbey Farmhouse, Church of St Giles, Group of 5 Memorial, Carrington Family Memorial and Granary and linking service wing

6.7 It is considered that Croxden Farmhouse is not visible from these listed buildings as the dwelling west of Keelings Lane intercepts the view and therefore the proposal will not directly impact upon these buildings. However, the conversion of the barn to a sustainable use, and the removal of the redundant agricultural buildings would undoubtedly enhance the wider setting of these listed buildings.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The proposed development is considered to accord with all relevant and national policy. The proposal is for the conversion of a Grade II redundant agricultural barn at Croxden Farm, Croxden into two residential units. The principle of development is considered to be acceptable.
- 7.2 The proposed works will ensure the continued longevity of the Grade II listed barn by bringing it into a sustainable use. Given the minor external alterations proposed, it has been demonstrated, within this statement, that the proposed development will have minimal impact on the character of the listed building itself and on the other nearby listed buildings.
- 7.3 The removal of the redundant agricultural buildings will improve the setting of the heritage assets of Croxden, particularly when viewed from an easterly direction.
- 7.4 As a result it is considered that the proposed development will sit well within the historic environment of Croxden.