Dear Ms Tait,

Long Barn, Home Farm House, Deene, Northamptonshire, NN17 3EJ. Application No. 18/01776/LBC

Thank you for consulting the Council for British Archaeology (CBA) on the above case.

Summary
- Home Farm is an intact example of a Model Farm, as such it has substantial significance.
- Whilst the CBA are not opposed to the adaptive reuse of Long Barn, we feel it MUST be informed by a more comprehensive Heritage Statement and in turn a masterplan for the full range of 19th century buildings.

Significance
Long Barn is curtilage listed to Home Farmhouse (List number 1040138). Curtilage listed buildings, structures and objects are afforded the same protection and restrictions imposed as a listed building with its own listing entry; Long Barn should therefore be considered as listed at Grade II within the planning process.

Long Barn forms one side of a yard of buildings all dating to the 19th century. They were clearly conceived of as a piece. Home Farm represents an example of a ‘Model Farm’; a 19th century revolution to farming practices, contemporary to, and required by, the Industrial Revolution.

Model Farms were designed to sustain a holistic arable and animal farming system, which was developed to best manage the land (in terms of soil health) and sustain food production. The move to efficient and holistic farming practices was crucial to the societal changes in the 19th century, which saw massive population movement to urban centres. A consequence of urbanisation was the requirement of domestic agriculture to increase efficiency in order to feed an urban population, which it successfully did.
For the reasons stated above, Model Farms have enormous communal, evidential, and historical value. Added to this, the conception of a range of buildings, constructed to mutually complement each other, contain many features of functional design, as well as a strong regard to their collective aesthetic appearance. From the photographs submitted in support of this application the range of farm buildings at Home Farm have survived remarkably intact. As a range of buildings, Home Farm has huge significance. It is arguable that this range of farm buildings warrant designation in their own right.

Comments
The CBA are sympathetic to the redundancy of small agricultural buildings, and the need for these buildings to be economically viable to maintain their upkeep. The CBA does not object to a proposal to find a constructive reuse for the buildings at Home Farm in order to secure their future.

However, as referenced in point 1.6 of the Design and Access Statement, in support of this application, there is a long-term plan to convert all of the buildings within this range. We urge the Local Planning Authority to advise the applicant to withdraw the current application until it is better informed by a detailed Heritage Statement, which demonstrates a proportionate understanding of these buildings to their heritage significance. The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is clear;

“Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal.” (paragraph 190).

The CBA considers the formulation of a master plan for the whole site to be crucial in underpinning all consequent proposals for reuse. Without this, the piecemeal adaptation of this complex of buildings will erode their significance as being inter-related parts of a whole. Again, the NPPF is clear;

“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. Substantial harm to or loss of ... grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional.” (paragraph 194).

The CBA is pleased to note the proposed use of lime-based mortar for building repairs. We feel a conservation led approach to be crucial to the success of any adaptations to the Home Farm building range. We also recommend that the applicant follows Historic England’s excellent guidance on the sustainable reuse of farm buildings, in order to minimise harm to their significance and maintain their legibility as a Model Farm (The Adaptive Reuse of Traditional Farm Buildings, 2017 and Adapting Traditional Farm Buildings, 2017). Both are available online.
Recommendation
The CBA strongly recommends the withdrawal of this Listed Building Consent application until a more comprehensive Heritage statement has been drawn up for the whole complex and used to inform a masterplan for this site. A piecemeal approach to this listed Grade II Model Farm will cause harm to its significance.

The CBA are happy to offer further advice concerning the adaptive reuse of this range of farm buildings.

I trust these comments are useful to you; please keep the CBA informed of any developments with this case.

Kind Regards,

Catherine Bell. MA(cons), ACIfA
Assistant Listed Buildings Caseworker for England