

LANDSCAPE-LED CASE STUDY 4

FARMSTEAD CONVERSION

Site Name: Barlavington Farm, Barlavington

Status: Permitted 23rd January 2019.

Description

Change of use of barn, byre, stables/workshop and cart shed to form five dwellings (including one Estate worker/Affordable dwelling)

South Downs Integrated Landscape Character Area: East Meon to Bury Greensand Terrace (J2)

Summary

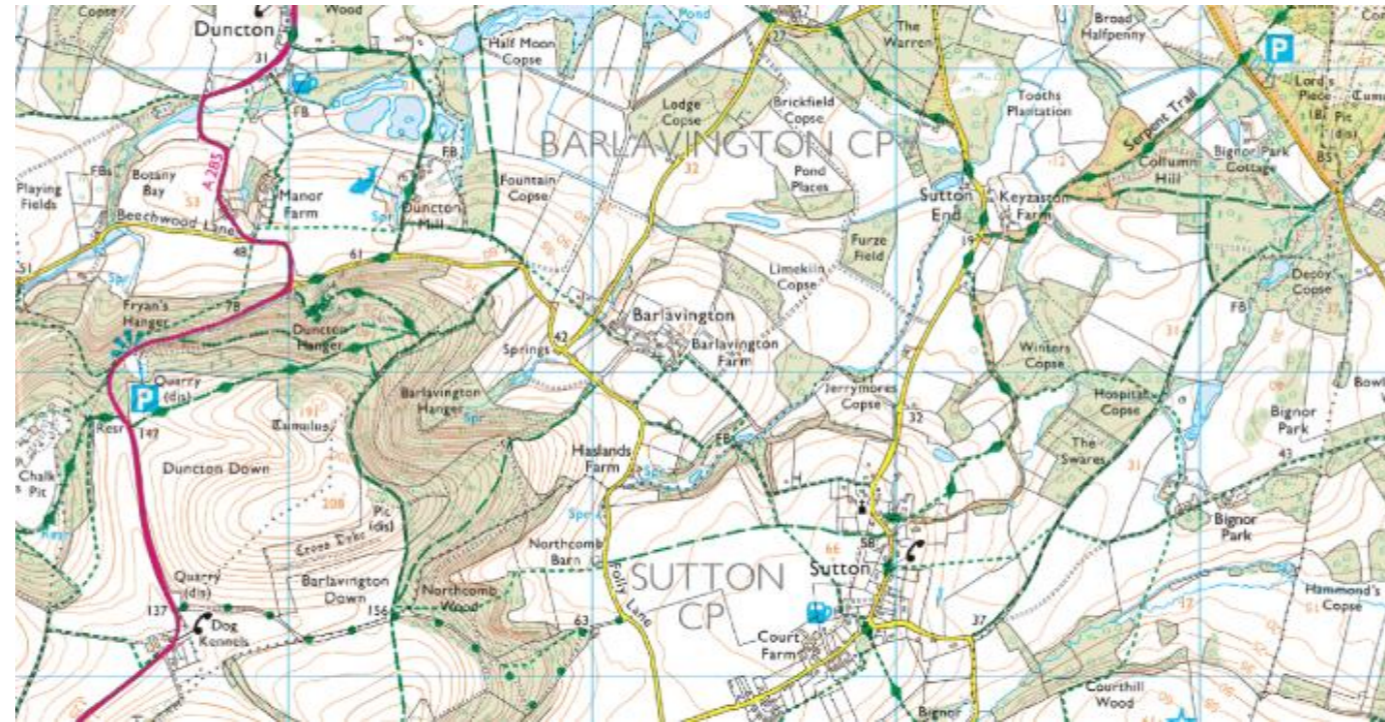
The key landscape characteristics that were identified for this site are listed opposite. These, in particular the farmstead and its individual buildings, directly influenced the type of change proposed and the way in which the change was designed.

These two key things have been critical in ensuring a sensitive landscape-led approach to this site were undertaken. Working within both the existing farmstead's character and each building's existing structure has ensured a scheme where character and history will continue to be understood through a strong sense of place.

Opportunities to generate enhancements, albeit relatively small ones, have been taken and cumulatively have the potential to make a big difference to the final outcome.

The design could have done more in relation to sustainable water management.

The final success of the scheme will be subject to conditions and to good quality construction



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Key Landscape Characteristics for the existing site and context

① **Woodland & Trees 1:** Small-scale occasional pockets of woodland which tend to follow contours. Sinuous bands of woods follow watercourses. Trees associated with settlements, many orchards lost.

② **Landform, Soil & Water 2:** Watercourses are often within deeply incised valleys. Narrow streams often historically dammed, creating mill ponds.

Field Patterns N/A

③ **Settlements, Buildings & Spaces 1:** 'Working' shared (unenclosed) spaces are highly characteristic of dispersed farmsteads such as Barlavington.

④ **Settlements, Buildings & Spaces 2:** Grade II listed threshing barn, cart shed and more recent stables, comprise the farmstead today.

⑤ **Settlements, Buildings & Spaces 3:** Situated in the setting of the Parish Church of St Mary listed at Grade I.

⑥ **Settlements, Buildings & Spaces 4:** Dispersed plan farmstead situated within a surviving medieval landscape.

⑦ **Roads, Tracks & Paths 1:** Tracks link settlements, many are historic and are now used as rights of way.

⑧ **Perceptual Qualities 1:** Dark Night Skies – reserve status and valuable perceptual quality.

⑨ **Perceptual Qualities 2:** Deep sense of rural, historic character. Tranquillity is very high. Agricultural and historic character contributes significantly to sense of place.

Summary of Landscape-led Design Proposals

Woodland

① A new orchard – typical of edges of farmstead, and the local soils. Allotment gardens provided.

Landform, Soil & Water

② Pond added in yard.

Settlement, Buildings & Spaces

③ Reinstatement of open, shared yard, simple materials proposed with no defined parking to avoid suburbanisation.

④ Visually permeable boundary respects character of shared spaces around farmstead.

④ Barn and other buildings respected by retention of historic fabric and forms, avoidance of new window openings and care to minimise subdivision of internal space. **Proposed steps to Threshing Barn have mild adverse effect on setting of listed building.**

⑤ Setting of Grade I listed church respected by careful conversion response to the farmstead's existing character

⑥ Plan form of farmstead respected, each building retained.



Roads, Tracks & Paths

⑦ Right of way retained and continues to allow people to experience the historic farmstead and its buildings from it.

Perceptual Qualities

⑧ External lighting minimised

⑨ Sense of Place conserved through sensitive design and characteristic treatment of buildings and open spaces.

Landscape-led Proposals

Woodland & Trees

① The characteristic of orchard gardens close to historic farmstead is restored through the conversion of this site.



Fig 1: Traditional orchard – © Wealden Downland

Landform, Soil & Water

② Site development responds to character. Using characteristic landscape elements to provide multiple benefits. A pond will contribute to surface water management, provide space for nature and positive amenity space for residents. It will not be enclosed or fenced, in to respect the character of this shared space.

Settlement, Buildings & Spaces



Fig 3: Aerial image of existing yard

③ Reinstatement of local shared and open yard – currently enclosed as shown in Fig 3. A simple permeable surface within the yard would restore a working character to this space. Parking spaces will not be marked out to avoid suburbanisation. There will be a legal covenant to prevent washing lines and bins contributing to an over-domestic character of the farmstead.

④ The barn conversion has sought to retain the historic fabric, with internal layouts minimising the need for additional openings. Importantly, the vast catslide roof remains, with a single small heritage roof light proposed to light the mezzanine below. Cast iron rainwater goods are locally characteristic.



Fig 4: Proposed north elevation



Fig 5: Grade II. listed threshing barn (north elevation) before conversion

The stable building has been equally sensitively treated. The reuse of existing openings and retention of timber doors and covers, conserves character and helps to mitigate any light spill.

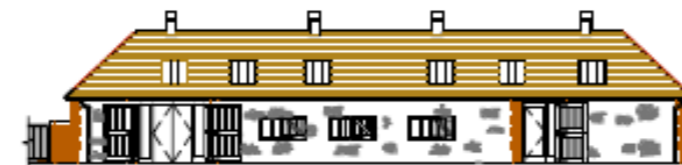


Fig 6: Proposed south-west elevation of stables

The third cottage will be retained as a key Estate-worker cottage and includes PV 'slate' tiles on the roof, reducing energy use and bills.

Steps allowing access into the threshing barn (replacing crude concrete ramps) do generate minor negative effects on the building, as it requires balustrading (domestic in character) and it extends

into the shared space of the yard. See Fig 7 below. No rainwater capture at source (e.g. water butts).

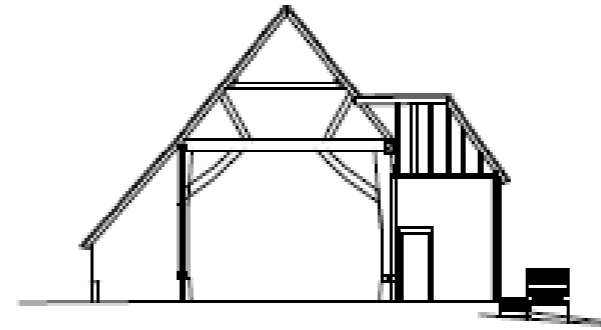


Fig 7: Proposed section through barn showing steps (right)

⑤ The whole farmstead lies close to the Church of St. Mary which includes part of the original late 12th century building. The historic farmstead contributes significantly to the setting of this church and its sensitive conversion preserves and enhances this setting.



Fig 8: Cart shed with Church listed at Grade I behind.

⑥ The farmstead dispersed cluster pattern and plan type has been retained. Its pattern contributes significantly to character and a plan type typical of the site's wider landscape context – a landscape dominated by woodlands and pasture. No new buildings have been proposed and all existing buildings have a proposed sensitive new use.



Fig 9: Map showing that the whole farmstead survives from 1897, adds to the site's sensitivity.

Roads, Tracks & Paths

⑦ Rights of way, which are key characteristics of this farmstead, are retained and how people experience the farm from these routes have been considered. The open character of shared spaces, has been retained and traditional, visually permeable post and rail fencing has been selected for gardens. This means people will still be able to get a sense of walking through the farm, seeing and experiencing the historic buildings and their character.

Perceptual Qualities

⑧ External lighting is kept to a bare minimum. No external lighting is proposed and the commercial units will be restricted to operating during working hours only.

⑨ Overall, each intervention has helped to conserve the deeply historic and rural sense of place at this site. Avoiding 'suburbanisation' or being too neat and tidy are important elements in the design. Retaining the ownership and management of the site within the Barlavington Estate is a positive way to conserve and enhance this site into the long term.