HBL ASSOCIATES

STRUCTURAL REPORT

For

PARK GREEN FARM

FOXT



On Behalf Of

Mr V Whilock

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DRAFT

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction 4
2. Limitations 4
3. Brief Description 5
4. Observations 6
5. Conclusions and Recommendations 8
6. Standard Limitations 9

1. Introduction

1.1. We were requested by the owners of Park Green Farm, Foxt, Mr V Willock, by his agent Malcom Sales to undertake a structural appraisal of the existing agricultural buildings at Park Green Farm. We understand that it is the owners intention to submit a planning application for the conversion of these buildings into residential accommodation and that this structural report is required as part of the planning application

1.2. We visited site on Thursday 20th June under overcast and wet weather conditions.

2. Limitations

2.1. The extent of the survey was clearly defined by Malcolm Sales at the time of the site visit and covered the two storey stone built barn on the opposite side of the access driveway to the farmhouse and the adjoining single storey former stables/stock buildings.

2.2. The larger buildings that comprised the more modern section of the farm at the lower end of the farmyard were not part of this survey.

3. Brief Description

3.1. The building under consideration comprised of a two-storey barn approximately 5m x 9m, constructed in coursed stonework with stone lintels over the openings and with a traditional Staffordshire blue clay tiled roof finish.

3.2. Adjoining this building is a smaller single storey building of approximately the same plan area, again constructed in coursed stonework with a clay tile roof but with brickwork facings to the end gable and rear wall.

3.3. The two buildings on plan form an 'L' shape.

3.4. The buildings are situated on a site sloping away from the road from right to left when viewed with your back to the farmhouse. This fall continues for some distance into the bottom end of the farmyard where larger agricultural buildings are present.

3.5. A substantial conifer hedge is present immediately adjacent to the two storey section of the building running from the rear corner of this building back to the roadside and forming the boundary between the farmyard and the paddock behind.

4. Observations

4.1. The stonework to both sections of the buildings appear to be in good order and free from signs of large scale structural movement. Some slight bulging was present on both gables of the two storey building at approximately 1st floor level which would be indicative of a lack of restraint at these levels. This is relatively typical of farm buildings of this construction, and is not considered to be a serious defect.

4.2. Within the barn, no formal access appeared to be present to the first floor. Usually there would be a trap door and a timber ladder fixed to the wall. We assume that the only access would be through the hay loft door on the rear gable, as such this floor was only inspected from the underside and this revealed the floor to be plywood sitting on the original floor joists. It is unclear whether the redevelopment of the building will require this first floor to be brought into use, and whilst ample headroom is present at ground floor level, we would suggest that the first floor will require total replacement in order to meet current building regulation standards.

4.3. As no access was available to the first floor of the two storey barn, the roof structure to this particular section of the building could not be inspected internally. However, externally the roof showed no signs of dipping or deflection, and the verges were in good order. We would suspect that this roof has been reconstructed relatively recently i.e. within the last 10 years.



Fig. 4.3 1

4.4. The single storey sections of the building are again in good order structurally with no signs of movement with the stonework external walls or the external brick facings to the end gable and rear elevations. This single storey building is sub-divided into two with a 9” solid brick wall, which is again in good order.

4.5. The floors to all of the barns are constructed in in-situ concrete and these appear to be free from cracking or other signs of movement. There are a number of changes of level within these floors, which will require breaking out should the floors be reused upon conversion.

4.6. Internally, the roof of the single storey building appeared to be in very good condition and was reasonably new with fresh timbers and sarking felt beneath the tiles. The lack of any dipping in the two-storey roof would lead us to suspect that all of the roofs of the buildings under consideration were re-roofed at the same time and relatively recently.



Fig. 4.3 2

4.7. Otherwise the building is in good order structurally with no signs of structural movement or cracking of any kind.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1. From a structural viewpoint the building is in good condition both internally and externally and will require minimal works to be carried out in order to convert it into residential accommodation.

5.2. The roof should require no work at all, other than the provision of insulation. A decision will need to be made with regard to ceilings or whether the vaulted effect of the current roof is to be utilised, as this will obviously affect both the nature and positioning of any roof insulation.

5.3. The in-situ concrete floor slabs appear to be substantial and in good order, but it is extremely doubtful that any damp proof membrane or damp proof courses are present within the construction and it may be desirable to remove the existing floors and replace them with more modern reinforced concrete floors that will also include the provision for a damp proof membrane and underfloor insulation.

5.4. Due to the nature and depth of the foundations not being known, extreme care should be taken when breaking out the floor and constructing any new floors as during the excavation stage the foundations may become exposed which will remove any lateral support that the ground is currently providing.

5.5. Some impact damage is present to one of the entrance lintels, and this element of stonework will require replacement. A reclaimed stone lintel would be much more desirable than a new lintel. This can be sourced from a reclamation specialist if one is not available elsewhere on the farm.



Fig. 5.5 1

5.6. Structurally, the building is substantial and the head room should make this a straightforward conversion.

5.7. We are of the opinion that the subject agricultural buildings at Park Green Farm, Foxt are suitable for conversion into residential accommodation from a structural viewpoint and will not require any wholesale demolitions or alterations to take place in order to do so.

6. Standard Limitations

6.1. During our inspection of the premises as presently existing, which will normally be carried out in a single visit, we shall check all visible exposed and accessible elements of construction in order to identify defects and shortcomings which are likely to adversely affect the use of the property or give rise to expenditure in the future.

6.2. We shall consider the condition and durability of the building fabric in relation to the type and age of the property, the need for repairs or special maintenance and, where appropriate, comment on the suitability of the structure for its proposed use.

6.3. We shall, where possible, lift loose laid floor coverings and inspect cellars and roof voids where appropriate, but we shall not empty the contents of any fitted cupboards, move heavy furniture or lift carpets or floorboards and our report will specifically exclude all covered, and unexposed or inaccessible areas and buried elements of construction such as foundations and built-in steels and timbers.

6.4. Apart from any balconies and roofs to which external access may be available, our external inspection will be carried out from the ground level. Our report will include a summary of our findings in respect of any outhouses, boundary walls etc. which will be inspected briefly during our visit.

6.5. In accordance with our professional indemnity insurance cover we have to state that "we have not inspected woodwork or other parts of the structure which are covered unexposed or inaccessible and we are, therefore, unable to report any such part of the property is free from defect".

6.6. We will not arrange for exposure works to be carried out to the superstructure or below ground, or carry out tests for high alumina cement concrete, calcium chloride, asbestos or the use of woodwool slabs as permanent shuttering, but where appropriate, will seek further instructions for these to be carried out for an additional charge.

6.7. Regarding service installations, incoming mains, waste and drains, we shall report on any matters which come to light during our inspection as requiring further investigation by specialists, but we shall not arrange for tests to be carried out unless specifically instructed beforehand.

6.8. Although where appropriate, we will be happy to examine any lease or title documents, planning or any consents or fire certificates which are made available prior to our inspection, we shall assume in such cases that solicitors will be advising in detail upon these matters and that they will also check on the responsibility for the maintenance of all boundaries and rights of way and the existence of any easements or necessary rights of light, drainage etc.

6.9. We require to be informed, prior to the undertaking of any excavation or boring work, of the positions of any underground services or plant beneath the site.

6.10. Whilst reasonable care will be taken during the execution of field work, we cannot accept liability, either direct or consequential, for the damage to any service not clearly identified to us.