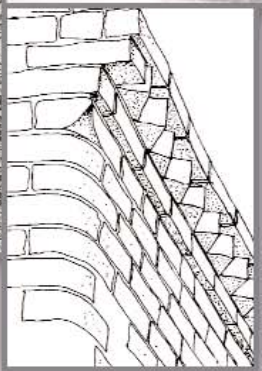


NEWARK AND SHERWOOD LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

CONVERSION OF TRADITIONAL RURAL BUILDINGS

NEWARK & SHERWOOD
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT
FRAMEWORK



SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

Newark and Sherwood District Council
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Document Passport

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Conversion of Traditional Rural Buildings,
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Summary: This document sets out the Council's policy and design guidance for the conversion of traditional rural buildings

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Consultation Summary:

The Council undertook consultation with stakeholders, including English Heritage, the Government Office of the East Midlands, The East Midlands Regional Assembly, Parish Councils, neighbouring Local Authorities, English Nature, Countryside Agency and other local interest groups.

The overriding theme of responses to the Draft SPD was supportive, however several respondents felt that the nature conservation aspect should be strengthened - these changes have been made. A list of the comments received and how these have been addressed is available within the Statement of Consultation Responses and Sustainability Issues in relation to this document on the Council's website.

Document Availability:

Copies of the SPD and the Statement of Consultation Responses and Sustainability Issues are available at Kelham Hall Planning Reception (open between 8.30 and 5.15pm Monday to Thursday (closing at 4.45pm on Friday) and on the Council's website:

www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/planningpolicy

Please note: This document is available in alternative formats on request

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The District has a wealth of traditional rural buildings and this Draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) sets out what is required from applicants when applying for permission to change their use, and the issues that will be taken into account when considering such applications.
- 1.2 This document is a revised, expanded and updated version of an earlier policy note on the Conversion of Agricultural Buildings To New Uses, which was adopted originally in December 1989 and was revised several times over the years.
- 1.3 This Draft SPD supports several policies in the adopted Newark & Sherwood Local Plan (March 1999), a full list is included at Appendix A. Policy NE2 Conversion of Rural Buildings is the main policy which this SPD supports, however it is important to remember that all policies of the Local Plan could have an impact on any decision to grant or refuse planning permission.

Policy NE2 - The Conversion of Rural Buildings
<p><i>Planning permission will be granted for the conversion or re-use of agricultural and other rural buildings in the countryside for employment, community, recreation or tourist uses where:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><i>1. The building is of permanent and substantial construction, in generally sound structural condition and capable of conversion without substantial alteration or extension;</i><i>2. Its form, bulk, design and general appearance are in keeping with its surroundings and would not be adversely affected by the conversion proposals; and</i><i>3. The proposals are acceptable in relation to the provisions of Policies DD1.</i> <p><i>Planning permission will be granted for conversion to residential use subject to the above and provided also that:-</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><i>4. The creation of a residential curtilage would not have a harmful impact on the character of the surrounding countryside;</i><i>5. Existing uses in the vicinity would not lead to an unsatisfactory standard of amenity for occupiers of the converted building; and</i><i>6. The creation of a residential unit would not prejudice the future use of associated buildings or structures for employment, community, recreation or tourist uses; or</i><i>7. Residential conversion satisfies 1-5 of the above and is a sub-ordinate part of a scheme for an employment, community, recreation or tourist use.</i> <p><i>Any application for a residential re-use outside settlements should be accompanied by a statement outlining:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><i>(a) The efforts that have been made to secure an employment, community, recreation or tourist re-use; and</i><i>(b) The reasons why such a use could not be accommodated within the buildings concerned.</i> <p><i>Where the re-use of an agricultural building is proposed, the District Council will take into account the history of the building and likely future requirements for new farm buildings on the holding.</i></p>
Continued

Permitted development rights will be removed, by means of a planning condition, where minor additions or alterations to a building or curtilage would be likely to adversely affect the general appearance of the building or its setting. Where such a condition has been imposed, subsequent applications will be considered in the light of the above provisions.

- 1.4 Since the adoption of the Newark and Sherwood Local Plan (March 1999) the Government has issued new policy guidance in the form of Planning Policy Statement 7 Sustainable Development in Rural Areas. This document sets out the high level issues that councils should consider when preparing Local Plan policies. Paragraph 17 of PPS7 states that the government “support[s] the re-use of appropriately located and suitably constructed existing buildings in the countryside where this would meet sustainable development objectives.” It goes on to set out criteria which should be taken into account when considering such re-use, namely:
- The potential impact on the countryside and landscape and wildlife;
 - specific local economic and social needs and opportunities;
 - settlement patterns and accessibility to service centres, markets and housing;
 - the suitability of different types of buildings and of different scales of re-use;
 - the need to preserve, or the desirability of preserving, buildings of historic or architectural importance or interest, or which otherwise contribute to local character.

2. Architectural, historic, and scenic value

- 2.1 This guidance applies to traditional rural buildings, which possess some architectural or historic value, make a positive contribution to townscape, or provide scenic value in the landscape.
- 2.2 At the outset, it is essential to establish the architectural, historic, townscape, or scenic qualities that the building possesses. Not all rural buildings are of value either architecturally or historically, and generally these buildings will not be considered worthy of conversion. Traditional rural buildings vary greatly. A threshing barn is likely to have a single undivided internal space and no windows, whilst a stable range may have a row of small cellular internal spaces, each with a door and a window. Acceptability of proposed conversion schemes will be determined with regard to the sensitivity and respect for the qualities of the specific building(s) concerned. The general rule is *the less alteration that is required; the more appropriate the new use*.
- 2.3 Some buildings are difficult, if not impossible, to convert. For example, dovecotes with interior nesting boxes intact, and open sided cart sheds. In the case of other historic structures or features such as wells and water pumps, where they are part of a redundant group under consideration for conversion, it is not unreasonable to require such features to be retained as relics.

- 2.4 Some can be put to low-key use (e.g. storage of garden equipment). Buildings such as dovecotes and cart sheds can potentially be used as habitats for bats, owls, or birds.
- 2.5 If they are in poor condition or require some repair, there may be scope to cross fund this from the more profitable elements of a scheme, especially where residential conversion is involved. In such cases, a legal agreement will usually be required to ensure that work is carried out to a suitable standard within a specified time scale, and that the building is maintained in its repaired state in the future.
- 2.6 Relatively few traditional rural buildings are sufficiently important to have the status of being *listed as buildings of special architectural or historic interest*. There is a strong general presumption in favour of the preservation of such buildings. Consequently, a more precious approach must be taken when considering new uses for listed buildings. Residential use is unlikely to be acceptable unless it can be demonstrated that the very special architectural and spatial qualities that such buildings possess are to be left virtually unaltered.
- 2.7 Restoration of buildings that have been altered and degraded since their original construction should be carried out only in accordance with good conservation practice. Normally, conjectural restoration should be avoided. Some buildings may be so seriously degraded that they have lost any qualities they once may have had. In such cases, creation of a largely new building that attempts to replicate the original is likely to be justified only where the end result makes a strong contribution to townscape or scenic value in the landscape.

3. Alterations and extensions – Design guidance

External alterations

- 3.1 To retain the character and architectural integrity of traditional rural buildings, alterations to existing fabric must be kept to the minimum necessary to facilitate the new use. Alterations should not obliterate or remove essential features, such as a wall patterned with ventilation holes. Every effort should be made to ensure that new windows are only inserted into existing openings.
- 3.2 Alien features such as dormer windows; windows and doors of domestic or suburban character, masonry chimneys, and external meter boxes fixed to the building must always be avoided.
- 3.3 More modest alterations such as the introduction of flush rooflights and small vents will be acceptable only if they are used with restraint and placed in discrete positions. If the overall affect of a particular proposal

destroys the essential character of the building, the conversion will not be allowed.

- 3.4 Where the introduction of new windows is unavoidable they should be sensitively positioned so that the overall character of the building is not compromised. Care must be taken to ensure that the detailing of them is compatible with the character of any other joinery work on the building, and they should not visually dominate the elevations to which they are being introduced. Unnecessarily large new openings will not be allowed.
- 3.5 If there are more openings than required, as sometimes happens on stable conversions, the excess doors should be retained as dummies or kept as shutters to simple, recessed glazing, in order to retain the original external appearance. The filling in of door or window openings as part of conversion schemes will not normally be allowed.
- 3.6 Wholesale re-pointing should not be carried out simply to give a unified appearance. Such work should be limited to where it is absolutely necessary.
- 3.7 The standard of joinery work is a particularly important factor in ensuring that a good overall conversion scheme is achieved. Standard 'off the peg' joinery is almost always inappropriate. Generally, schemes will require doors and windows to be purpose made to fit existing openings. Existing doors and windows should be utilised wherever possible, and redundant doors should be retained and used as shutters and for additional security.
- 3.8 Consequently, designers will have to produce large-scale joinery details, both for approval and for the joiner to manufacture from. These design details should take their lead from examples found on the building in question, and where appropriate should replicate the size and profile of any existing window frames, and look to produce door and door frame detailing compatible with the building. A dark coloured paint is usually the most appropriate finish for external timber. Modern stains are often an inappropriate finish because of their harsh tones and, in the case of softwoods, their transparent nature.
- 3.9 Cart sheds should be utilised as stores or, where they are deep enough, should be used for garaging purposes. Cart-sheds are notoriously difficult to convert, mainly because their intrinsic character is invariably lost when their open bays are infilled. Stand-alone cart sheds can be rarely converted successfully to residential use, as the alterations needed to provide the necessary degree of privacy will destroy the essential character and visual balance of the structure. Cart sheds attached to Threshing Barns or other buildings may convert in a more successful way, so long as the screens inserted are visually lightweight and allow the piers in the open bays to be expressed externally.

Interiors

- 3.10 Internal alterations do not, in themselves, require planning permission but the material change of use of a building does. Securing appropriate uses for redundant historic buildings is a fundamental principle of good building conservation. *Appropriateness* is dependant on the overall impact of the new use on the host building. Consequently, the affect of proposals on interiors, as well as exteriors and surroundings, will be taken into account when determining applications for changes of use. Whilst it is inevitable that many new uses will result in significant internal alteration (often simply to meet the requirements of the Building Regulations), the design of conversions should aim to retain the internal character and spatial qualities of the buildings concerned. Room layouts should respond to the bays of the existing building.
- 3.11 Conversion schemes (such as many residential proposals) that require the insertion of floors throughout, internal subdivision into numerous cellular spaces, and insertion of windows to each new cell, seriously degrade the character and quality of such buildings. Where some internal division cannot be avoided, the threshing bay, at least, should be kept open to its full height.
- 3.12 It is common for roof structures to be visible internally. Roof structures can be the most impressive feature of a non-residential, rural building. Sensitively designed schemes will seek to repair and retain traditional roof structures and leave them open to view. As the additional of insulation will be a common requirement, submitted plans must show how insulation, and any associated ventilation, is to be accommodated.
- 3.13 Whilst *warm roof* construction (i.e. continuous insulation fixed above the rafters) enables the roof structure to be fully visible internally, the additional thickness can alter the profile of the building and can be particularly conspicuous at the verges. This form of change is considered to be inappropriate under the terms of this Policy and will, if it adversely affects the character and appearance of the building, be deemed to be an unacceptable alteration. Similarly raising of a barn roof or part of the roof structure merely to provide additional headroom at first floor level will be similarly considered inappropriate and will not be allowed.

Extensions

- 3.14 As a general rule, proposals to convert traditional rural buildings should be contained within the confines of the existing building shell. Proposals, which rely on substantial new-build elements in order to make them work will not be permitted.
- 3.15 Exceptions may be made within a defined settlement boundary where an extension is designed with sensitivity for the host building and does

not conflict with any other planning requirements. Extensions should enhance the character and appearance of its immediate surroundings, and, where possible, should make a positive contribution to its wider townscape context.

- 3.16 In these cases, the new build element should be strictly subordinate in scale to the existing building and respectful in its design detailing to the parent building.
- 3.17 Outside village envelopes the current planning policy requires that buildings in the countryside should be capable of conversion without substantial alteration, major rebuilding or extension. The local planning authority will examine carefully any proposal to extend such buildings, to ensure that neither the character nor appearance of its wider landscape setting is affected by the proposal, and to be certain that its architectural integrity and building form is not compromised.
- 3.18 Consideration may be given to proposals where reconstruction of a previously demolished element would reinstate the completeness of a group of buildings. The local planning authority will expect that before consideration is given to extending building groups in this way that applicants provide photographic, cartographic or other evidence that a building formerly existed on the site under consideration. In such cases it will be important to establish beyond doubt the nature and particularly the size of any demolished element and applicants should not rely exclusively on cartographic evidence. Photographic evidence is the preferred proof of the previous existence of a building on the site. The local planning authority will not permit the erection of a substantial, maybe two-storey, extension where there are doubts if one previously existed.
- 3.19 Farm groupings vary in type, but in this area most of the more commonly recognisable layouts can be found. Although there may be subtle variations, most farm building groups can be classified as either Elongated, Parallel, L-shaped, U-shaped or Courtyard.
- 3.20 Proposals that suggest extending existing farm buildings in a way inconsistent with the traditional form of farm groups found in the area will not be permitted. Proposals should respect the underlying “grain” of the farm-building group under consideration and develop a scheme complimentary to it.
- 3.21 In any event it will almost always be inappropriate to extend cart sheds, (especially to provide larger garaging facilities), dovecotes or other minor buildings, and it will not be acceptable for any additional elements to be used to create a new and separate dwelling in any case.
- 3.22 In order to protect sensitively converted traditional rural buildings from damaging changes, both to the building and within its curtilage, such as the introduction of inappropriate domestic features; patio doors,

conservatories, porches, greenhouses, garages, sheds, and fences, the local planning authority will, as a matter of course, remove *permitted development* rights at the time of granting planning permission. The presumption is that these changes will not be acceptable unless they can be shown to have no adverse impact on the barn-like character of the building.

- 3.23 It is highly unlikely, therefore, that conservatory extensions and standard patio doors will ever be considered an appropriate alteration to a traditional farm building. This does not mean converted buildings can never be changed but the removal of permitted development rights ensures that proposals are subject to appropriate scrutiny to determine if it is a suitable change to such a building.
- 3.24 A Section 106 legal Agreement will be required in certain cases, for example where a dovecote is to be retained as a repaired structure within the grounds of a larger, converted, building.

Extensions to existing conversions

- 3.25 The phenomenon of converting agricultural buildings to residential use has been a relatively recent one, but already there are signs that first and second generation barn conversions are now being marketed and being considered by prospective purchasers with expectations that they will be allowed to develop the buildings to provide an increased level of accommodation well beyond that which the local planning authority would have originally considered appropriate.
- 3.26 Consideration of proposals to alter and extend previously converted buildings will always take into account the original objective explained in previous sections of this Policy document to respect the architectural qualities, character, appearance and setting of the traditional building(s) and be subordinate in scale to the originally converted building. Sometimes changes will not be permitted.

The setting of the building and its immediate curtilage

- 3.27 A simple, functional setting is often an essential part of the character of traditional rural buildings. Where this is the case, proposals for conversion should consider sensitively the character of all external spaces, both in the vicinity of the building and in any wider landscape or village context. These matters should be considered as an integral part of the overall design process, in order that the building's character, appearance and setting are not adversely affected.
- 3.28 Residential schemes will often require private gardens or adequate private amenity space, which must be designed with care to retain the character of the original arrangement. Schemes that depend upon or involve the insertion of intrusive suburban features into their setting,

such as the fencing-in of crew yards, excessive paving, over fussy planting, or inappropriate garages, will not be permitted.

- 3.29 The enclosing of newly created residential curtilages with high, close-boarded fencing and other suburban solutions to define newly created land ownerships will not be allowed. It is most likely that simply derived and well integrated hard and soft landscaping proposals will be more appropriate. Schemes should be based upon appropriately scaled brick boundary walls close to buildings, with native hedgerow and field type fencing where it is more important to consider the wider landscape or village context of the proposals.
- 3.30 Trees can soften the hard edges of conversion schemes and link the new development into the wider farmed landscape. Tree planting, using locally occurring species, should be encouraged in these areas. The intention should not be to hide the buildings, but rather to integrate them into the landscape. Ornamental species planted as quick growing screens, particularly Leylandii, must be avoided.
- 3.31 Wherever possible, proposals for garages, workshops and other ancillary buildings should be accommodated within existing buildings on site such as cart sheds. New garages and other new ancillary buildings will only be permitted as a last resort where there are no suitable existing buildings, and they must be designed with sensitivity for the parent building(s) and their setting. Where schemes propose business and commercial uses, provision for car parking and servicing must be designed and located to ensure that vehicles do not intrude into or dominate the scene.

Materials

- 3.32 Most traditional buildings possess a subtle character and patina of age that derives from their constituent materials. To ensure this is not lost during the course of conversion, works such as re-roofing, masonry repairs, and re-pointing will be required to be carried out using natural materials and traditional techniques.
- 3.33 Generally, preference will be given to the use of sound, second-hand materials for localised, small-scale works. Larger scale operations, such as the re-covering of a substantial roof should generally utilise new, natural slates or tiles that accurately replicate the originals. In many cases it is possible to salvage sufficient viable slates, pantiles or plain tiles to recover one side of the building. The other slopes can be recovered in suitable new roofing materials to match the original. It is not appropriate to import large volumes of second-hand materials from unknown sources.
- 3.34 The use of modern substitute materials such as concrete roof-tiles, uPVC windows and gutters, or reconstituted stone for cills, will almost

always degrade the character and appearance of the original building and will not be permitted.

4. Protected species

- 4.1 Traditional, non-residential, rural buildings such as farm buildings, often provide a habitat for a variety of species, some of which may be protected by law. Several species of bats, as well as barn owls, swallows, swifts, and other birds regularly make use of such buildings as roosts or breeding sites. The cumulative effect of the loss of these buildings and structures is to place further stress on already threatened and declining species.
- 4.2 The presence of a protected species will be regarded as a material consideration in the determination of any planning application. Local Plan Policy NE17 states that *planning permission will not be granted for development which would adversely affect species protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), unless provision is made to protect the species and their habitats. Where appropriate, planning conditions or obligations will be used to secure the protection of the species concerned.*
- 4.3 Maintaining the favourable conservation status of protected species will be a priority but it should not be inferred that the presence of a protected species would always prohibit conversion to a new use. Design solutions should be able to make provision for protected species. Within farm groups, there is sometimes the opportunity to retain certain buildings unaltered and these may be able to provide the habitat for the species in question. Buildings such as dovecotes and cart sheds are inherently difficult to convert and particularly suitable for retention as habitats. Dovecotes were purpose designed for birds in the first place.
- 4.4 Each case will be taken on its merits and the scope for relocation, mitigation, or compensatory measures at the developer's expense will always be considered.

5. Application plans

Survey information

- 5.1 In order that proposals for the conversion of traditional rural buildings can be properly assessed, all applications must be accompanied by accurate and detailed **measured survey drawings** of the existing fabric at a scale of not less than 1:50. In addition to elevation drawings and floor plans, the survey must include cross and longitudinal sections showing floor and roof structures, drawn to indicate critical dimensions

such as headroom under beams. Unusual construction details may need to be drawn at a larger scale.

- 5.2 In addition, applications must be accompanied by a **building condition survey** (often referred to as a structural survey) carried out by an appropriately qualified and experienced person, such as a qualified architect, surveyor, or engineer, which must identify the full extent of defects in the structure. Surveys that are little more than descriptive reports will not be acceptable.
- 5.3 It is rare for redundant traditional buildings not to be in need of some repair. Areas of masonry may be perished, walls may have been subject to movement, and structural timber may be partly decayed. Defects will require some form of reinforcement, repair, replacement, or reconstruction. Consequently, it is essential that the associated proposals indicate the location, nature and extent of necessary remedial work.
- 5.4 It will be expected that schemes will have been developed with a view to carrying out the minimum of demolition works, with, for example, new cross walls being introduced to help structural stability, rather than demolishing areas of historic fabric.
- 5.5 Written specifications of repair works are rarely adequate and should be supported by hatching or shading and annotations on the proposals drawings. This will enable the Local Planning Authority to, first, assess whether the extent of any repair and reconstruction is reasonable, and, secondly, to establish the extent and nature of any such work authorised by any subsequent permission.
- 5.6 Applications must also be accompanied by an **ecological survey**, which must be carried out using appropriate methods (following English Nature guidelines if available) by a suitably experienced and appropriately trained/licensed person or group. The survey must indicate the species targeted, the methodology used, the date, start and finish times of survey, the time spent carrying out the survey, other sources of information used, and the presence of any protected or Biodiversity Action Plan (national or local) species. It must state any limitations to the survey and any further survey work if necessary. The survey must also give details of proposed mitigation work and whether work needs to be licensed.
- 5.7 Planning Policy Statement 9 'Biodiversity and Geological Conservation' (August 2005) now requires that both protected species *and* Biodiversity Action Plan species be a material consideration in a planning application. In Nottinghamshire the relevant Action Plan is the 'Local Biological Action Plan for Nottinghamshire' (1998). The document is available within most libraries. If you would like to buy a copy of the full plan (£25 each including UK postage and packaging) or to get hold of a free summary version please contact the

Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Officer on 0115 9774213 or write to the Biodiversity Officer, c/o Rural Environment Group, Nottinghamshire County Council, Trent Bridge House, Fox Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 6BJ.

Proposals

- 5.8 The detailed design of the proposed conversion must be indicated on drawings at a scale of not less than 1:50, which must show precisely where all new fabric is to be introduced. This includes new walls, lining of existing walls, structural supports, floors, staircases, doors, windows, and flues. It is essential that the plans contrast new fabric and any rebuilding from the fabric of the original structure to be retained, by means of shading or hatching.
- 5.9 For example, the insertion of insulation to meet Building Regulations for thermal efficiency, upper floor opening windows to provide for fire escape, or flues from commercial kitchens to satisfy Environmental Health legislation, often necessitate alterations to meet the requirements of other legislation.
- 5.10 Such requirements are predictable and should be included in the plans submitted for planning permission. Requests to alter schemes to meet prevailing Building Regulation requirements if they were not considered in the original submission, will normally require the submission of a new application.
- 5.11 Large-scale drawings will be required for items such as joinery. Critical sections through the latter are shown best at full or half size.
- 5.12 The application plans must include appropriate landscape treatment for the external areas, which should be conceived as an integral part of the new use. Full details are required of any proposed garden area associated with residential schemes or parking and service areas associated with commercial schemes. It is not acceptable to leave consideration of external areas to a later date.
- 5.13 The proposals must include satisfactory provision for the conservation of any protected species that have been identified by the ecological survey. This may include mitigation or compensatory measures. In any event, the acceptability of a conversion scheme is likely to be enhanced where habitat creation initiatives are incorporated.
- 5.14 In accordance with the general requirement in PPG1: *General Policy and Principles*, Annex A, the application plans should be accompanied by a short written statement setting out the architectural, historic, townscape, or scenic qualities that the building(s) possess, and the design principles that have been adopted.

6. Grant aid

- 6.1 Residential conversion of traditional rural buildings is more profitable by far than any other form of re-use and there continues to be a high demand for such schemes. Consequently, there is little justification for financial assistance from public funds towards the cost of any associated repairs. As a result, repairs to traditional rural buildings, which are the subject of residential conversions, will not normally be eligible for grant aid. Buildings, which remain in agricultural use, or are in the process of conversion to an appropriate non-residential use, may be eligible for grant aid.
- 6.2 Conversion to low-key business uses can provide the twin advantages of being both less damaging to the character and appearance of traditional rural buildings and at the same time a stimulus to the local economy, contributing to economic regeneration and sustainability. Whilst grant regimes can vary from year to year, the District Council will usually encourage grant applications for repairs to historic rural buildings that offer these joint benefits. The Council's *Rural Grants Scheme* generally offers higher rates of grant for repairs to buildings being converted to business or commercial use.
- 6.3 The Council will seek to reclaim any grant aid paid towards the cost of repairs to buildings that are converted to non-residential use, if they are subsequently converted to dwellings

Appendices

Appendix A

Policy Background

1. This guidance supports the following policies of the Newark and Sherwood Local Plan (March 1999):
 - C1 Development in conservation areas
 - C7 Conversion of buildings in Laxton
 - C10 Alterations, extensions and changes of use to listed buildings
 - C24 Archaeological evaluation elsewhere [outside Newark's Historic core]
 - C25 Archaeological record
 - DD4 Design of new development
 - FS10 Conversion and re-use of buildings in the Green Belt
 - H13 Housing development in large villages
 - H14 Housing development in small villages
 - NE2 The conversion of rural buildings
 - NE6 Farm diversification
 - NE17 Species protection.
 - TO2 Tourist accommodation
1. These policies set out the primary considerations to be taken into account with regard to proposals for new uses for traditional non-residential, rural buildings. The following sets out more detailed, subordinate considerations and provides design guidance.
2. The majority of such buildings will be farm buildings but the term *non-residential rural buildings* is used to include similar buildings such as coach-houses, stables and outbuildings associated with houses, and workshops, mills, maltings, stores and other structures not built for agricultural purposes.
3. As a general rule, there is little or no difference between the character, appearance, and design of traditional rural buildings located within settlements as compared with those in the open countryside. Whilst the implications of the local plan policies referred to above vary dependant on the location of the building(s) in question, the following guidance is for the most part generic and refers to types of buildings without regard to location. However, the impact of conversion proposals on the landscape and the affect on the settings of traditional rural buildings will usually be a more important consideration when a proposal is located in the open countryside.

4. When considering conversion to residential development outside settlements, a statement, setting out what efforts have been made to market the property for alternative uses must be included.
5. This statement must specify how, when and for how long the property was marketed, what other uses were considered, and the reasons why such uses could not be accommodated in the building.

Appendix B

Application checklist

SURVEY INFORMATION

Measured survey drawings (minimum scale 1:50)

- elevations and floor plans
- cross and longitudinal sections showing floor and roof structures
- any unusual details

Building condition survey (structural survey) by a suitably experienced and qualified person:

- identify the full extent of defects in the structure in a report
- identify locations and extent of defects or rebuilding with hatching, shading, and annotations on the survey plans
- desirable to support with photographs

Short written statement setting out the architectural, historic, townscape, or scenic qualities of the building(s)

Ecological survey by a suitably experienced and qualified person or group:

- indicate the species targeted and methodology used
- time spent carrying out the survey
- the date, start and finish times of survey
- other sources of information
- the presence of any protected or Biodiversity Action Plan (national or local) species
- state any limitations to the survey and further areas of study if necessary
- give details of proposed mitigation work and whether work needs to be licensed

PROPOSALS

Proposals drawings (minimum scale 1:50)

- elevation drawings and floor plans
- cross and longitudinal sections
- identify all new fabric and any rebuilding, including; new walls, lining of existing walls, structural supports, floors, staircases, doors, windows, and flues.
- the extent of any repointing or rebuilding must be accurately marked on elevational drawings, and the extent of all works should be contrasted on all drawings by means of colour, shading or hatching.
- identify alterations necessary to comply with other legislation (Building Regulations, Environmental Health legislation, etc.)

- large scale joinery details (critical sections shown best at full or half size)
- landscape treatment for the external areas, including any garden areas, parking and service areas, hard-surfacing, means of enclosure, and planting
- three-dimensional illustrations and models are always helpful in assessing proposals fully

Short written statement setting out the design principles that have been adopted.

satisfactory provision for the conservation of any protected species identified.

- this may include mitigation or compensatory measures
- include any habitat creation initiatives

Appendix C

Types of Rural Buildings

Threshing barns

1. The most familiar rural building is the Threshing Barn. The barn was a building for housing and threshing corn and the storage of hay and straw. Barns are generally the largest building in a farm group and are made up of three or more roughly equal sized bays. One of the central bays has large doors on either side, and a stone flag threshing floor. Larger barns can have two threshing bays
2. The bays to either side of the threshing floor(s) were used for storage. The solid walls of these areas were punctured with ventilation holes to prevent the crops from becoming mouldy and these vents are often arranged in geometric patterns. Similar small openings are sometimes seen on the gable ends. Barns often have one or two window like openings covered with wooden shutters, called pitching eyes, located at high level in the sides or ends, which were used for pitching corn or hay into the barn from a cart. The large doors and patterns of ventilation holes often give a strong symmetry and formality to the appearance of threshing barns. Barns were usually built with a single, undivided internal space. A floor was sometimes inserted into one of the side bays, presumably to give flexibility for storage.
3. The most suitable new uses for threshing barns are those that can utilise the internal space without significant subdivision and do not require blank areas of brickwork to be punctured with window openings. If detailed sensitively, the large openings can be glazed and the doors retained, giving an interior of contrasting natural light levels. However, areas of masonry patterned with ventilation holes flanking the threshing bay are extremely sensitive to new window openings

Cart-sheds

4. Cart sheds are usually long, slender, open fronted structures that became common in the eighteenth-century to provide shelter for carts, wagons, ploughs, and harrows, and in the nineteenth-century for more specialised equipment such as drills, threshing and reaping machines. Construction of the open side required a series of brick or stone piers, timber posts, or cast iron columns (usually about 2.4-3.0 metres apart) supporting shallow arches or a timber lintel above, which gives a characteristic rhythm to the principle facade. Whilst they can be very long, the depth of such buildings is generally no more than five to seven metres.
5. Proposals to re-use cart-sheds that involve in-filling the open bays invariably destroy the essential characteristic of such buildings.

Consequently, they are most suitable as stores of some sort or carports.

Stables and small cow-houses (byres).

6. These buildings may be of similar external appearance, although stables are more likely to have a loft above for storage of hay and straw. Overall proportions are often similar to those of cart-sheds but they are fully enclosed, and the principal facade is likely to have a roughly equal number of door and window openings. Doors may well be of the ubiquitous split stable type with strap hinges and windows are likely to incorporate louvers for ventilation.
7. Interiors were usually subdivided by a series of partitions to create stalls, each with a trough, feeding rack, and tethering ring. A separate tack or harness room may have been provided in a stable. Floors are likely to incorporate provision for drainage and those in stables sometimes have attractive clay pavers.
8. Where the interiors are complete and of some quality, such buildings are best used for housing animals but there are some imaginative examples where stalls have been retained and used as table bays within pubs and restaurants. If the partitions have been removed or can be sacrificed, stables and cow-houses are relatively easy to adapt for human uses, as there is usually a reasonable provision of doors and windows.

Dovecotes or pigeon-houses.

9. Dovecotes (also known as pigeoncotes or pigeon houses) accommodated pigeons, which were kept primarily to provide fresh meat. It is said that no two are exactly alike, but the earliest examples are generally round in plan. They are almost always relatively small buildings, rarely more than five metres across.
10. Dovecotes are sometimes found free-standing, well away from other buildings but equally may be incorporated into another farm-building or group of such buildings. Free-standing dovecotes are usually at least twice as high as they are wide. If there was a floor, the lower level would normally function as a store but some have a single, open internal space
11. The interiors of dovecotes were dimly lit and lined with nest-holes constructed from brick, stone, timber, and sometimes, mud. These can be a remarkable sight and, where an interior survives intact, it is not uncommon for it to be the most interesting and precious part of the building.
12. The small size and lack of door and window openings in dovecotes often makes them unsuitable for conversion to human uses unless they

are combined with other buildings. Where interiors survive intact, every effort should be made to conserve them. This may be possible only by preserving the dovecote as a relic, cross-funded from the more profitable parts of a larger conversion scheme.

Coach-houses

13. Coach-houses were the pre-cursor of the modern garage but were only constructed as an adjunct to the larger, higher status houses of wealthier people. They are characterised by a large door or doors to accommodate the carriage(s) and often have a first floor or loft for storage, access to which may be by way of a ladder or simple, open-tread stair.
14. As the doors are usually the most obvious characteristic, it is essential to try and retain them, even if they become shutters with a recessed glazed screen behind. It is common to find a stone or clay pavers floor where the carriages stood and these can often be re-laid.
15. Inevitably, coach-houses are often located adjacent to the parent building they served, in which case the relationship between the two will always be important. It is essential to ensure that any re-use does not create an unnatural severance or conflict, such as loss of privacy or garden setting. If conversion of a coach-house is likely to result in a requirement for a new garage building, an acceptable site and design should be agreed at the same time as the approval for the conversion.