

Conversion of Listed Historic Farm Buildings

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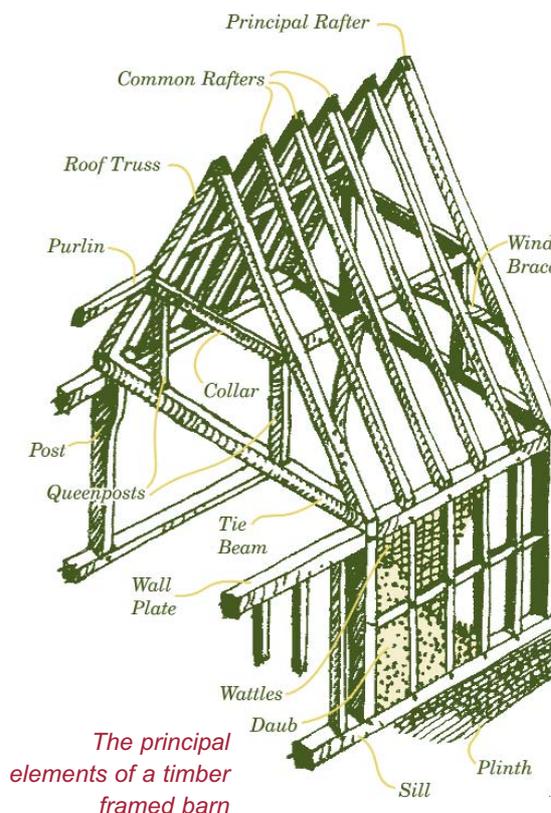
Aylesbury Vale District Council's Design Guide 2 gives general advice on the conversion of traditional farm buildings. It also contains advice for the conversion of historic farm buildings, which are listed either in their own right or are curtilage buildings to listed farm houses.

Listed or Curtilage farm buildings will have this advice applied more strictly when being considered for conversion.

There is also additional legislation and guidance which applies to Listed and Curtilage buildings. These are the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, National Planning Policy Framework

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

and the English Heritage Statement, The Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/conversion-of-traditional-farm-buildings/>



The only reason for granting consent for the conversion of an historic farm building to another use should be to ensure its future as a building of special historic or architectural interest, whilst retaining its character in the process. To achieve this, the English Heritage definition of the essential features of farm building need to be firmly kept in mind:

- the original permanent fabric of the walls, whether brick, earth, stone or timber-frame, and of the roof structure
- an exterior appearance characterised by extensive blank walls and roofs with unbroken lines and few opening
- an unpartitioned interior, often of impressive proportions and long sightlines, with the structural elements exposed. There may be fittings of interest
- an agricultural setting, often as part of a group of farmstead buildings, without a separate boundary. The site on which the building stands may have archaeological importance

Only alternative uses which require minimal alterations to the historic fabric and retain the essential features will be acceptable.

Not acceptable are high density conversions requiring the creation of many new internal subdivisions and the subsequent need for additional doors, windows and roof lights. Open-plan layouts retain the sense of internal volume and open space and are the preferred option.

Not acceptable are the insertion of upper floors, where this puts stress on the existing building and may also require underpinning. Carefully designed, free standing internal two-storey elements can be an acceptable alternative.

An application for Listed Building Consent needs to be accompanied by:

- Survey drawings. These should include internal and external elevations as well as detailed plans. In the case of timber framed structures the framing details of long walls, cross walls and trusses need to be included to a scale no smaller than 1:50 with some details shown in 1:20 scale. The drawings should be annotated to highlight problems, repair needs and solutions. These drawings should be cross referenced to a structural survey.
- An evaluation of the significance of the historic building by an historic buildings consultant or buildings archaeologist.
- Structural Survey. This needs to be carried out by a professional with experience and a proven track record of working with historic buildings.
- A repairs schedule and method statement detailing methods of repairs. Traditional repairs will be expected.
- Drawings based on survey drawings to a scale no smaller than 1:50 with some details shown in 1:20 showing proposed changes to the historic structure in plan, elevation and cross section as well sections showing depth of new floors and details e.g. windows, doors etc. All excavations need to be carried out at 45° away from the historic wall foundations.
- Details of the use of traditional materials for new floors, which allow the building to breathe and breathable insulation materials for existing walls and roofs. These need to be discussed early on in the project as Building Regulations requirements may be incompatible with the needs of the historic building. The application should provide details of insulation, bat mitigation, boiler exhaust vents and flues. ↗

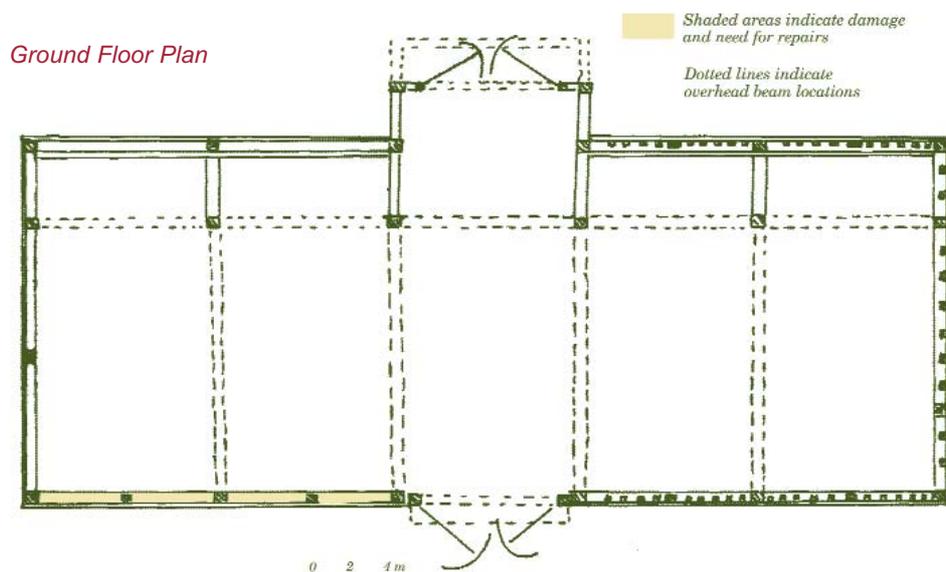
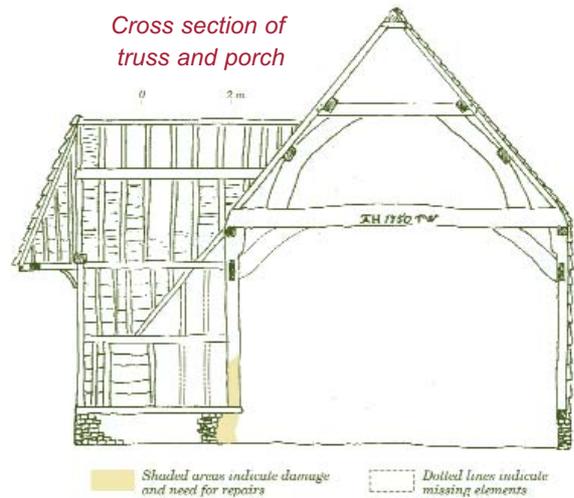


Illustration 'The principal elements of a timber framed barn' is taken from Guidance Notes on Timber Framed Buildings and used with the permission of the publishers, East Hertfordshire

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