JUSTIFICATION STATEMENT
FOR
DEMOLITION OF BLACK BARNS
AT
WATERFORD HERTFORDSHIRE

Revision A – May 2013

1.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

Statement to be read in conjunction with the following:

- Savills drawings 08/02/100 rev A & 101,
- Survey by Maydencroft Land Advisory,
- Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust (HMWT) Statement, and
- Health & Safety Plan produced by Turner Construction.

The buildings at Vicarage Lane Waterford, are thought to date from the 1940s and formerly served as a depot building to a quarry, for which the site was previously used.

The main section of building is a timber portal frame structure and measures approx 22m long by 13½m wide, while the adjoining subsidiary building is of a steel frame construction measuring approximately 18m long by 5m wide.

Both buildings are covered with a profiled metal sheet cladding to both the roofs and walls.

The buildings sit on a concrete hardstanding slab which is to be retained as part of the scheme. There are also inspection pits within the building with a depth of c.2.0m below slab level. The sub-structure of the buildings is intact and substantial.

2.0 CURRENT CONDITION

Black Barns have been disused for many years and have gradually fallen into further disrepair providing a clear danger to the safety of those using the surrounding area for leisure activities.

For approximately 5 years the buildings have been encased in scaffolding in an attempt to minimise falling debris which becomes detached from the structure at times of strong winds.

The site has also been surrounded in security fencing in order that the public cannot obtain any entry to the buildings on health and safety grounds due to the dangerous nature of the building fabric and structure (see photographs).

Large areas of the roof cladding are missing and areas of wall cladding are broken. The glazed window openings have been shattered to all areas.

3.0 ECOLOGY

A Presence or Absence Survey for Protected Species has taken place, courtesy of Maydencroft Land Advisory. A copy of the report should be read alongside this Justification Statement. It is noted that the general conclusion is that demolition of the building will not have any negative effect on the ecology or natural habitat of the area.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

All waste materials within the buildings shall be removed and placed in skips before being removed from site. The cladding to roof and subsequently the walls shall be removed and stored and stacked safely at ground level before being removed from the site.

Working from front to back, the building frame shall then be dismantled and cut into small pieces to allow removal from the site.

All processes shall be carried out with due caution and the area shall be cleaned up of any debris after demolition is completed.

A copy of the Construction Phase Plan by Turner Demolition can be read alongside this statement.

Once demolition work is complete, the area will be handed over to HMWT who will incorporate the site within their wider reserve. Their statement confirms the intended approach, and importantly seeks to promote greater biodiversity by applying a soil layer over the site from other areas of the reserve and thereby discouraging invasive species elsewhere and encouraging an improvement in the overall site biodiversity. The specific details of the approach are as follows:

- *The current substructure to Black Barns comprises a substantial ground bearing slab which is positioned broadly level with the current surrounding ground areas of the buildings. The removal of this slab is disruptive to the Heath and is likely to cause unnecessary damage to ground areas and adjacent landscapes.*
- *Within 12 months of possession, the HMWT will obtain soil from the wider site and in areas at risk of the development of invasive species.*

- *The arisings will then be levelled over the Black Barns ground area to provide a minimum cover of 450 mm in order to promote the softening and development of landscape in this area. This is expected to be undertaken within 18 months of HMWT's possession.*
- *The soil cover to the site will be graded in order to reduce the larger particles within the soil and levelled to a smooth and consistent finish to merge with the surrounding landscape.*
- *It is proposed that no part of the original ground bearing slab or substructure will be exposed and that the positioning and grading of soil will allow this area of the Heath to become part of the wider site and thereby promote increased biodiversity and habitat.*

5.0 JUSTIFICATION

The site is within an important nature reserve and has great potential as an expansion of that reserve by removal of the buildings and surrounding fence by allowing HMWT to promote better biodiversity for the wider site. The methodology for removal of the buildings demonstrates the demolition to be relatively straightforward and need not cause disturbance to this important wider site. However, the current substructure of the building is substantial and would require considerable groundworks to remove. In discussion with HMWT, a scheme has been developed to help the wider site by relocation of soils to the Black Barns area and encourage better wildlife habitat to the Black Barns site. Removal of the substructure has been considered, but this would result in greater disturbance and disruption of the site unnecessarily. The overall impact of the work to this important site is therefore positive under the current scheme.

6.0 CONCLUSION

The buildings have been dis-used for a number of years and are an eyesore to the local landscape. Investigations have shown that they do not provide any meaningful habitat to support wildlife other than species passing by the site.

There are health & safety concerns to consider in that scaffolding has been supporting the building for the last decade to minimise any further debris falling from the building.

Once demolition is complete, the area shall be levelled with soil from the reserve to provide a safer more attractive site for the public. This approach is supported by the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust and will lead to better biodiversity to the wider site.

7.0 PHOTOGRAPHS



North West Elevation



North East Elevation



Eastern Corner



Part South East Elevation



South East Elevation



South West Elevation



Western Corner

Date: 12th April 2013

Signed: Savills