Agricultural storage building and driveway

Report Item No A2

Land East Side Of Austrey Lane Appleby Parva Derby

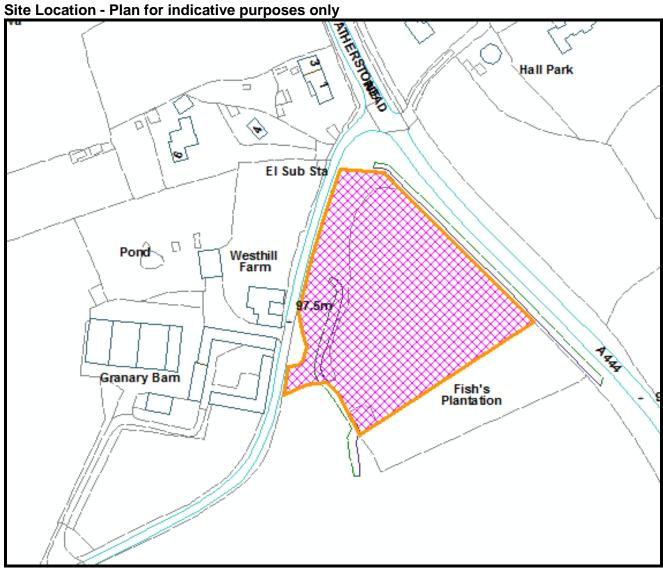
Application Reference 16/00568/FUL

Applicant: Date Registered
Mr G Clarke 1 July 2016

Case Officer: Target Decision Date
James Mattley 26 August 2016

Recommendation:

PERMIT



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

Call In

The application is brought to the Planning Committee at the request of Councillor Blunt due to public concern and the impact upon the countryside.

Proposal

Full planning permission is sought for the erection of an agricultural storage building and driveway on land to the east of Austrey Lane in Appleby Parva. The site is located outside the Limits to Development in the North West Leicestershire Local Plan Proposals Map 2002 and is outside the Limits to Development on the Policy Maps to the publication version Local Plan.

Consultations

Neighbour objections have been received to the proposal. All statutory consultees have raised no objections subject to the imposition of conditions on any permission granted.

Planning Policy

It is considered that the development would remain generally compliant with all relevant Paragraphs of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as well as the relevant policies of the adopted and publication version Local Plans and other guidance.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the NPPF supports the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based businesses. The site is situated outside the Limits to Development, however the building proposed is considered to be reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture and would therefore be partially compliant with Policy S3 of the adopted Local Plan, Policy S3 of the publication version of the Local Plan and Paragraph 28 of the NPPF.

The scheme is not likely to give rise to any significant material impacts upon the occupiers of neighbouring dwellings, visual amenity and the character of the area, heritage assets, highway safety or trees. The proposal would thereby accord with saved Policies S3, E3, E4, E7 and T3 of the adopted Local Plan and Policies D1, D2, IF4 or He1 of the publication version Local Plan. There are no other material impacts identified that would indicate that the proposal is not in compliance with the NPPF or local development plan policies. Accordingly the application is recommended for planning permission, subject to the imposition of planning conditions.

RECOMMENDATION - PERMIT, subject to conditions.

Members are advised that the above is a summary of the proposals and key issues contained in the main report below which provides full details of all consultation responses, planning policies, the Officer's assessment and recommendations, and Members are advised that this summary should be read in conjunction with the detailed report.

MAIN REPORT

1. Proposals and Background

Full planning permission is sought for the erection of an agricultural storage building and driveway on land to the east of Austrey Lane in Appleby Parva. The applicant proposes to use the building for storage of agricultural machinery and equipment. The application site is a field measuring approximately 0.7 hectares (1.73 acres). The site is located outside Limits to Development, as defined by the adopted and publication version Local Plans.

This application is for the erection of an agricultural building and construction of an access track. A previous planning application (15/00775/FUL) had raised various concerns including its impact on trees and ecology and therefore the application was withdrawn. A subsequent planning application (15/01071/FUL) was refused for the following reason:

Paragraph 17 of the NPPF states one of the core principles of the NPPF is that the planning decisions should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it. Paragraph 28 of the Framework supports growth and expansion of all types of rural business. Saved Policy S3 of the adopted Local Plan states that development will only be permitted on land outside the Limits to Development, where it meets certain criteria. In this case the building must be shown to be essential for the efficient long-term operation of agriculture or forestry.

The application site lies in an area defined in the adopted North West Leicestershire Local Plan as Countryside (saved policy S3 of the adopted Local Plan) and as such it is protected against unwarranted development. It has been determined that the proposed building is unnecessary for the operations carried out at this site. Whilst generally agricultural buildings can help to support the rural economy, it is not considered that a building of this scale and size in this location would be essential for the efficient long-term operation of agriculture or forestry. The small size of the application site would lend itself for use of hobby farming but would not require this excessively large building for the efficient operation of a farming enterprise. It is therefore considered that this development is unacceptable in principle given that the proposed development is unjustified in a rural open countryside location. The adverse impacts of approving development in this case would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies within the Framework taken as a whole. The scale and design of the building would also be to the overall detriment of the visual characteristics of the area and would not allow it to assimilate into the rural environment. The application would therefore not meet the requirements of the Council's Saved Local Plan Policies S3 or E4 or the NPPF's core planning principles of preventing development that would be harmful to the intrinsic open character of the countryside.

The current application has been amended and a smaller building is now proposed on the land. The footprint of the building now measures 4.57 metres x 6.09 metres whereas the previous application proposed a building measuring 9.15 metres x 4.57 metres.

Relevant planning history:

15/00775/FUL - Erection of agricultural building and construction of access track (Withdrawn 22 October 2015).

15/01071/FUL - Erection of agricultural building and construction of access track (Refused 28 April 2016).

2. Publicity

10 neighbours have been notified (Date of last notification 12 July 2016)

Site Notice displayed 14 July 2016

Press Notice published 20 July 2016

3. Consultations

Appleby Magna Parish Council consulted 12 July 2016
County Highway Authority
Severn Trent Water Limited
Head of Environmental Protection
NWLDC Tree Officer
LCC ecology
NWLDC Conservation Officer
Mr A Coombe

4. Summary of Representations Received

Council's Environmental Protection Section has no environmental observations.

Council's Contaminated Land Officer has no objections subject to planning conditions.

County Ecologist has no objections subject to a suitable note to applicant.

A total of five letters of representation and one letter signed by twelve residents have been received raising the following objections:

- An access was not previously formed in this location;
- The access is unsafe:
- There have been accidents along Austrey Lane;
- Application form contains misleading information:
- The building is not in keeping with the properties in the village;
- The building would be highly visible and too large for the site;
- Proposal would result in flooding and drainage issues;
- Impact upon existing services i.e water pressure;
- Increased security risk of theft for existing properties if proposal houses agricultural machinery:
- Impact upon protected species;
- Concern over the actual intention of the future:
- Some trees have been cleared on the site;
- Building should be re-sited;
- Applicants behaviour:
- Impact upon heritage assets;
- No agricultural activity has been carried out on the land.

5. Relevant Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF (Paragraph 215) indicates that due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing development plans adopted before 2004 according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF. The closer the policies in the development plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater weight they may be given.

Save where stated otherwise, the policies of the adopted Local Plan as listed in the relevant section below are consistent with the policies in the NPPF and, save where indicated otherwise within the assessment below, should be afforded weight in the determination of this application.

The following sections of the NPPF are considered relevant to the determination of this application:

Section 3 - Supporting a prosperous rural economy

Section 7 - Requiring good design

Section 10 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Section 11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Section 12 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Adopted North West Leicestershire Local Plan (2002)

The application site is outside Limits to Development as defined in the adopted Local Plan. The following adopted Local Plan policies are relevant to this application:

Policy S3 - Countryside

Policy E3 - Residential Amenities

Policy E4 - Design

Policy E7 - Landscaping

Policy T3 - Highway Standards

Policy T8 - Parking

Publication Version North West Leicestershire Local Plan

The publication version of the Local Plan was agreed by Council on 28th June 2016 with a view to its submission for examination in September 2016. Given the advanced stage that has now been reached it is considered that weight can be attached to the following policies: -

Policy S3 - Countryside

Policy D1 - Design of New Development:

Policy IF4 - Transport Infrastructure and New Development:

Policy IF7 - Parking Provision and New Development;

Policy En1 - Nature Conservation;

Policy En2 - River Mease Special Area of Conservation

Policy En6 - Land and Air Quality:

Policy Cc2 - Water - Flood Risk;

Policy Cc4 - Water - Sustainable Drainage Systems;

Policy He1 - Conservation and enhancement of North West Leicestershire's historic environment

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that when considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Other Guidance

National Planning Practice Guidance - March 2014.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (the 'Habitats Regulations').

Circular 06/05 (Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - Statutory Obligations and Their Impact Within The Planning System.

River Mease Water Quality Management Plan - August 2011.

River Mease Development Contributions Scheme - November 2012. 6Cs Design Guide (Leicestershire County Council).

6. Assessment

Principle of Development

The overarching principle of the NPPF is to protect the countryside but to allow sustainable development where appropriate. The NPPF states that there are three dimensions to sustainable development. The site is located outside Limits to Development where permission for new development would not normally be granted unless it is essential for the efficient long-term operation of agriculture or forestry or other specific uses as set out in Policy S3 of the adopted and publication version Local Plans. The aims of Policy S3 are to prevent inappropriate development in the countryside.

Following advice from the Council's agricultural advisor the previous application on the site was refused. The agricultural consultant considered that there was no need for a building of the scale previously proposed. Therefore, to permit that application would have allowed for the establishment of a structure which would have been inappropriate and excessive in scale and would have represented unnecessary development in the countryside, and as such would be contrary to the fundamental aims of Policy S3 of the adopted Local Plan.

The proposed building has now been reduced in size. The proposed building now measures approximately 6.09 metres x 4.57 metres with a height to eaves of approximately 4.57 metres and to ridge 5.2 metres. Therefore, the building has a floor area of approximately 28 square metres.

The Council has again sought advice from an independent Agricultural Planning Consultant. The advice received as part of this application states the following:

Your Local Plan Policy at Policy S3 of the Adopted North West Leicestershire Local Plan states 'That the proposed development can be shown to be essential for the efficient long-term operation of agriculture and forestry.' As I stated in my previous letter dated 4th February, 2016 - agricultural buildings are also required to be on agricultural land, which means land in use for agriculture for the purposes of a trade or business. I still consider a unit with approximately 0.4 of a hectare or 1 acre of land with 3-5 sheep and approximately 10 head of poultry could not be classed as a trade or business but would effectively be a hobby or an interest.

I consider the size of the proposed building would be of a size capable of storing the tractor and miscellaneous items which the applicant proposes to use on the land.

In conclusion, I advise that the now proposed building is more in keeping with the size of the unit, and although not essential for the efficient long-term operation of agriculture and forestry may now be acceptable to the Local Planning Authority in planning terms, as it may partially comply with Policy S3 of the Adopted North West Leicestershire Local Plan, as it could now be classed as reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture within the unit.

Whilst the proposal would not be wholly compliant with Policy S3 in the adopted Local Plan it is also necessary to have regard to more up to date advice in the NPPF and any policies in the publication version Local Plan. Paragraph 28 of the NPPF supports growth and expansion of all types of rural business and Policy S3 in the publication version Local Plan allows for agricultural development and the expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas including the erection of new buildings.

A condition is recommended to ensure that the building is used only for the purposes specified in the application and a note to applicant is also recommended advising the applicant that further agricultural buildings on the site are unlikely to be acceptable.

In conclusion, having regard to all of the above, the principle of the development is considered to be acceptable but it is still necessary to consider other material planning considerations including in respect of highway safety, design and amenity criteria.

Siting, Scale and Design and Impact upon the Countryside

Paragraph 17 of the NPPF also states that planning should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it.

In terms of material, the barn is proposed to be constructed from concrete blocks and tin sheeting roof. These materials are likely to have the appearance of a typical agricultural barn and would therefore not be out of keeping with the countryside location. Conditions could be attached to any planning permission requiring the precise materials and colours to be agreed prior to the building being erected on the site.

Policy E4 of the adopted Local Plan, adopted in 2002, expects new development to respect the character of its surroundings in terms of, amongst other things, scale, height and materials of construction. There are boundary trees and hedgerows which form a dense screen and would help to screen the barn from public vantage points. The reduced size of the building would ensure that it does not become an unduly dominant feature in the surrounding area.

Overall, the design, appearance and scale of this proposal is acceptable and would not look out of keeping with the character and appearance of the surrounding area and is considered to be compliant with the advice in the NPPF, Policy E4 of the adopted Local Plan and would also accord with the provisions of Policy D1 of the publication version of the Local Plan.

Impact upon Residential Amenity

Several objections have been received regarding this development which includes the use of the site. Residents have raised concerns that the building will not be used for agricultural uses as it may be used for residential or business purposes. This application can only consider the proposal as submitted, which is for an agricultural building. Any alternative uses proposed would require permission through a further planning application and this is therefore not considered further in this report. If the development was deemed to be acceptable it would be recommended that the building should be conditioned to be used as per that which has been applied for.

The nearest property to the development would be in excess of 50 metres away and at this distance it is not considered that the development would have an overbearing, overlooking or overshadowing impact on neighbouring residential properties.

In respect of matters raised relating to protection of neighbour's views from their properties, this is not a material planning consideration and cannot be taken into account in the determination of this application.

Many residents have objected on the grounds of the development's impact on flooding in the area. It has been stated by neighbour's that there is a culvert on site which, if affected, could lead to flooding on neighbouring sites. Whilst there may be existing problems in the area with

flooding the site is not categorised as being within a flood zone. By moving the development away from its location as proposed in the originally submitted application (15/00775/FUL), it is now further from the culvert thereby reducing the overall impact. Furthermore, a condition could be attached to ensure that the surface water runoff is diverted to a soakaway to adequately discharge any additional surface water resulting from the development. Issues regarding the culvert have previously been raised with Natural England and they advised that they have no objections to the development.

The Council's Environmental Protection team have been consulted on this application and have not raised any objections, but they have requested some land contamination conditions. One objection referred to hours of use of the building. Environmental Protection have not recommended any conditions restricting the hours of operation, this is usually considered unreasonable for an agricultural building.

A neighbour has stated that the building would be a security risk leading to an increase in crime in the area. There is no evidence to suggest that this development would lead to an increase in crime however if this were to occur it would be at the applicant's own risk.

For the reasons set out above, it is not considered that there would be any significant loss of amenities by means of overbearing, overshadowing, overlooking impacts or noise and disturbance impacts. The proposal therefore complies with the provisions of Policy E3 of the adopted Local Plan and Policy D2 of the publication version Local Plan.

Impact to Heritage Assets

The site lies to the south-west of a grade II listed building which is on the northern side of the A444 and to the north-east of Westhill Farm, a grade II listed building. As such in determining any application special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, their settings or any features of special architectural interest which it possesses as set out in Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The conservation officer has no objection in principle to the erection of an agricultural building. It is noted that the parcel of land is somewhat separate to the adjacent buildings and is well landscaped. Although the proposal is not of traditional materials or design, the conservation officer advises that the proposed building is agricultural in character which is another prevailing character of the area. As the building is set on a separate parcel of land which is well landscaped, and is offset to the north of the farm, it is considered that the setting of the listed buildings would not be harmed. This therefore complies with Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The conservation officer advises that a landscaping scheme should be secured in order to maintain the soft landscaping that separates the sites in accordance with saved Policy E7 of the adopted Local Plan. In the absence of landscaping details being provided with this application, this could be dealt with by condition.

Highway Considerations

It is noted that several neighbour objections have been raised regarding the access to the site and intensification of this road junction. The County Highways Authority has referred to their comments from the originally submitted application which did not raise any objections to the development.

Neighbours state that this access has not been used previously due to the steep incline of the access from this part of the site and the levels have been altered prior to the submission of a planning application. The neighbours also have concerns regarding the visibility at the access. The neighbours' concerns have been raised with the County Highways Authority during this application and the previous application, however Leicestershire County Council Highways have raised no concerns regarding this development.

Access for this development would be from Austrey Lane near to the junction with Atherstone Road. It is anticipated that there will be additional vehicles on site during the construction phase and in association with the agricultural use. However, this is not considered to significantly intensify the vehicular movements to the site in the long term given the agricultural nature of the site. The scheme is therefore considered to be in accordance with saved Policies T3 and T8 of the adopted Local Plan, IF4 of the publication version Local Plan, the advice in the NPPF and the County Council's 6Cs document.

Impact on the River Mease Special Area of Conservation/SSSI

The site lies within the catchment area of the River Mease Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Discharge from the sewage treatment works within the SAC catchment area is a major contributor to the phosphate levels in the river. Therefore an assessment of whether the proposal would have a significant effect on the SAC is required. The River Mease Developer Contribution Scheme (DCS) has been produced to meet one of the actions of the River Mease Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP). The DCS advises that all new development which contributes additional wastewater to the foul water catchment areas of the treatment works within the SAC catchment area will be subject to a developer contribution. The DCS is considered to meet the three tests of the 2010 CIL Regulations and paragraph 204 of the NPPF.

The scheme would result in an additional area of hardstanding, which will form the base of the building and the access track. The applicant has confirmed that the surface water will drain into a soakaway. The scheme does not propose to increase any foul water discharge and is not connected to the foul water system. Accordingly a request under the DCS cannot be justified nor requested. As surface water should discharge to a soakaway, a condition would be necessary to ensure this would happen, in accordance with Natural England's advice.

It is also considered reasonable to impose a condition restricting the use of the building solely to agricultural use at the site due to the potential for other uses to impact on the River Mease SAC.

Therefore based on the above it can be ascertained that the proposal site would not, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, have a significant effect on the internationally important interest features of the River Mease SAC, or any of the features of special scientific interest of the River Mease SSSI.

Ecology

No protected species survey has been provided with this application however, the habitat would appear to be suitable for protected species. Concerns were raised with the previous application (15/00775/FUL) by Leicestershire County Council Ecology due to impact on badgers. It was recommended that the development be re-located away from the north western part of the site. The County Ecologist is now satisfied with the current application and have advised that they do not object, they have only requested that a note to applicant be included to advise about badgers.

Other

Neighbours have stated that some trees on site have already been removed. The site is not located within a Conservation Area and no trees are subject to Tree Preservation Orders and, therefore, any removal of trees prior to the submission of the application would not require planning consent.

Neighbour objections have been raised regarding a culvert which runs directly under the proposed development. The neighbours have concerns that the development will have a negative impact on flooding in the area and will exacerbate the current situation. The Environment Agency have not raised any objections to the application. Natural England have also been consulted on this application and have raised no objection subject to a condition that a soakaway is provided and maintained.

Other objections have been raised by neighbours. Those which have not been covered by the above sections are not material planning considerations and have therefore not been considered.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the NPPF supports the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based businesses. The site is situated outside the Limits to Development, however the building proposed is considered to be reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture and would therefore be partially compliant with Policy S3 of the adopted Local Plan, Policy S3 of the publication version Local Plan and Paragraph 28 of the NPPF.

The scheme is not likely to give rise to any significant material impacts upon the occupiers of neighbouring dwellings, visual amenity and the character of the area, heritage assets, highway safety or trees. The proposal would thereby accord with saved Policies S3, E3, E4, E7 and T3 of the adopted Local Plan and Policies D1, D2, IF4 or He1 of the publication version Local Plan. There are no other material impacts identified, that would indicate that the proposal is not in compliance with the NPPF or local development plan policies. Accordingly the application is recommended for planning permission, subject to the imposition of planning conditions.

RECOMMENDATION - PERMIT, subject to conditions.

1 The development shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason- to comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

The proposed development shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the following plans, unless otherwise required by a condition of this permission:

Site Location Plan deposited with the Local Planning Authority on 1 July 2016; Block Plan deposited with the Local Planning Authority on 1 July 2016; Elevations deposited with the Local Planning Authority on 1 July 2016.

Reason - To determine the scope of this permission.

The external materials to be used in the development hereby permitted shall be in strict accordance with those specified in the application unless alternative materials are first agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason- to ensure a satisfactory standard of external appearance.

- 4 No development (except any demolition permitted by this permission) shall commence on site until a Risk Based Land Contamination Assessment has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in order to ensure that the land is fit for use as the development proposes. The Risk Based Land Contamination Assessment shall be carried out in accordance with:
 - BS10175:2011+A1:2013 Investigation Of Potentially Contaminated Sites Code of Practice:
 - BS 8576:2013 Guidance on Investigations for Ground Gas Permanent Gases and Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs)
 - BS8485:2007 Code of Practice for the Characterisation and Remediation from Ground Gas in Affected Developments; and
 - CLR 11 Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination, published by The Environment Agency 2004.

Should any unacceptable risks be identified in the Risk Based Land Contamination Assessment, a Remedial Scheme and a Verification Plan must be prepared and submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Remedial Scheme shall be prepared in accordance with the requirements of:

- CLR 11 Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination, published by The Environment Agency 2004.

The Verification Plan shall be prepared in accordance with the requirements of:

- Evidence Report on the Verification of Remediation of Land Contamination Report: SC030114/R1, published by the Environment Agency 2010;
- CLR 11 Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination, published by The Environment Agency 2004.
- If, during the course of development, previously unidentified contamination is discovered, development must cease on that part of the site and it must be reported in writing to the Local Planning Authority within 10 working days. Prior to the recommencement of development on that part of the site, a Risk Based Land Contamination Assessment for the discovered contamination (to include any required amendments to the Remedial Scheme and Verification Plan) must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and retained as such in perpetuity, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- Reason To ensure that the land is fit for purpose and to accord with the aims and objectives of paragraph 120 of the NPPF.
- Prior to occupation of any part of the completed development, a Verification Investigation shall be undertaken in line with the agreed Verification Plan for any works outlined in the Remedial Scheme and a report showing the findings of the Verification Investigation relevant to either the whole development or that part of the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Verification

Investigation Report shall:

- Contain a full description of the works undertaken in accordance with the agreed Remedial Scheme and Verification Plan;
- Contain results of any additional monitoring or testing carried out between the submission of the Remedial Scheme and the completion of remediation works;
- Contain Movement Permits for all materials taken to and from the site and/or a copy of the completed site waste management plan if one was required;
- Contain Test Certificates of imported material to show that it is suitable for its proposed use:
- Demonstrate the effectiveness of the approved Remedial Scheme; and
- Include a statement signed by the developer, or the approved agent, confirming that all the works specified in the Remedial Scheme have been completed.

Reason - To ensure that the land is fit for purpose and to accord with the aims and objectives of paragraph 120 of the NPPF.

Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 and the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any order revoking and re-enacting these Orders) the building shall be used only for the purposes specified in your application and for no other purposes whatsoever.

Reason- other uses would be harmful to the amenities of the area.

Notes to applicant

- Badger setts may be present in the woodland adjacent to the application site and along the access track. Badgers and their setts are fully protected by UK law, and the applicant must avoid any harm, damage or disturbance to setts, if present.
- Given the size of the site, the Local Planning Authority are unlikely to support additional agricultural buildings on the site.
- Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. The Local Planning Authority acted pro-actively through early engagement with the applicant at the pre-application stage which led to improvements to the scheme. The Local Planning Authority has therefore acted pro-actively to secure a sustainable form of development in line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 186 and 187) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.