

Item No. 14

APPLICATION NUMBER	CB/12/01266/FULL
LOCATION	Water Lane Farm, Biggleswade Road, Upper Caldecote, Biggleswade, SG18 9BP
PROPOSAL	Proposed Farm Office Building and Car Parking
PARISH	Northill
WARD	Northill
WARD COUNCILLORS	Cllr Mrs Turner
CASE OFFICER	Nikolas Smith
DATE REGISTERED	10 April 2012
EXPIRY DATE	05 June 2012
APPLICANT	GJ Maudlin and Sons
AGENT	Richard Beaty (Building Design) Ltd
REASON FOR COMMITTEE TO DETERMINE	Applicant is related to a Councillor.
RECOMMENDED DECISION	Approve subject to conditions

Site Location:

A working farm to the south of Water Lane and set back from it by 67m. The site comprises Water Lane Farm house and a number of barns of different sizes and orientations to the west of the house. There is a large informal parking area to the north of the farm house. Planning permission was granted in 2006 for an agricultural store/farm office building to the northeast of the farm house and that development has been implemented, but not completed (the building comprised of three sections and the western section has been built Foundations have been laid for the remaining two sections). The entrance to site is demarked by a tall hedge on either side of the access road. The eastern hedge is showing signs of disease. There is a public right of way that runs down from Water Lane, along the northern part of the site and then south, past the existing barns. The site is designated as falling within an Area of Archaeological Interest.

The Application:

There would be a single-storey building that would be a maximum of 24.8m wide, 6.6m deep and 6.1m tall. It would comprise of three sections and would be located to the northeast of the farm house and to the northwest of the existing barns, immediately to the south of the path that runs along the north of the site and that is a public right of way. The existing tall hedge on the eastern side of the access to the site would be removed and replaced with ten parking spaces that would be screened to the north by a landscaped area.

The building would be used for purposes ancillary to the use of the farm, including offices, a meeting room, a store and a workshop. The applicant has achieved successes in wildlife and habitat conservation and the building would be used to accommodate visitors with an interest in the methods that the farm has employed in this respect.

Whilst the proposed building would be of a comparable scale and design and would be used in a similar, ancillary way that which was approved in 2006, the NPPF (2012) and the Council's Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009) have subsequently become material planning considerations and so a new assessment of the proposal is required.

Relevant Policies:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012)

3 Supporting and prosperous rural economy

Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2010)

CS11 Rural Economy and Tourism
DM3 High Quality Development
DM16 Green Infrastructure

Planning History:

MB/06/00931/FULL Agricultural storage building/farm office
Approved: July 2006 (implemented but not completed)

Representations:

Town Council None

Neighbours (a site and
press notice were
displayed) None

Consultee responses:

Council's Archaeologist No Heritage Asset Assessment required

Determining Issues:

The considerations in the determination of this application are:

1. Principle of the development
2. Appearance
3. Neighbours
4. Parking
5. Rights of Ways
6. Archaeology

Considerations:

1. Principle

Para. 28 of the NPPF (2012) states that Local Planning Authorities should support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and

enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well designed new buildings and should promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses.

These objectives are reinforced by the Council's Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009) in policy CS11 (Rural Economy and Tourism) where it states that the Council will seek to support the rural economy by supporting its diversification.

In this case, the proposed building would allow for the farm to diversify to provide training and information for interested parties including local community and school groups on the farm's wildlife and habitat conservation methods. Further, it would provide office space that would improve the functioning of the farm overall and so the proposed building would be acceptable in principle.

The principle of the use of the building for independent commercial activity has not been established as acceptable and so a condition would restrict the use to that ancillary to the commercial use of Water Lane Farm.

2. Appearance

The building would be of a comparable scale and appearance to other ancillary buildings at the site and the use of appropriate materials would ensure that the appearance of the building would conform to the character of the wider site. The differing ridge heights and roof types would create visual interest and break up the bulk of the building. The building would be 88m from Water Lane and so views of it would be very limited. Although near to the public footpath running through the site, the building would not appear oppressive or harmful for users of the public right of way.

The tall hedge on the eastern side of the access would be removed and whilst it does make a positive contribution to the appearance of the site overall, it is showing clear signs of disease and so its removal would not be resisted, subject to acceptable replacement landscaping which would be controlled by condition.

The introduction of parking spaces to the north of the site would result in a modest impact on the appearance of the site, subject to the use of appropriate materials, which would also be conditioned.

3. Neighbours

The building would be far enough away from any neighbouring houses outside of the site to ensure that no harm would be caused to living conditions at them. It would be at least 7.5m away from the farm house and positioned to the northeast of it. That, when taken together with the height of the building would ensure that it would cause no harm to living conditions at that house.

4. Parking

An additional ten parking spaces would be provided to add to the existing informal parking area to the north of the house. The use of the proposed building is likely to be of a relatively low intensity and this parking provision would meet the need of the use. There would be no pressure placed on on-street parking by

the development.

5. Rights of Way

Policy DM16 (Green Infrastructure) of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009) states that the Council will protect and promote green infrastructure, including public rights of way.

Whilst the building would be near to the public right of way (adjoining its southern boundary), it would not encroach upon it and would not prevent its use. As a result, no harm would be caused to local green infrastructure.

6. Archaeology

The site is designated as falling within an Area of Archaeological Interest but the scale of the development would ensure that no harm would be caused to archaeological remains and no Heritage Asset Assessment was required as part of the application.

Recommendation:

That Planning Permission is granted subject to the following conditions:

- 1 The development shall begin not later than three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2 The materials used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development shall match those shown on drawing 08.201.01 unless otherwise agreed beforehand in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the appearance of the building is satisfactory.

- 3 The building shall be used solely for commercial purposes ancillary to the use of Water Lane Farm and shall not be used for any other purpose.

Reason: To prevent potentially inappropriate independent commercial uses at the site.

- 4 **Before the development commences, a landscaping scheme to include any hard surfaces and the approved parking area shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be implemented by the end of the full planting season immediately following the completion of the development (a full planting season means the period from October to March). The trees, shrubs and grass shall subsequently be maintained for a period of five years from the date of planting and any which die or are destroyed during this period shall be replaced during the next planting season and maintained until satisfactorily established.**

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory standard of landscaping.

- 5 The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the details shown on the submitted plans, numbers [08.50.OSmap, 08.201.01].

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt.

Reason for approval:

The development would cause no harm to the appearance of the site, would cause no harm to living conditions at neighbouring houses and would help to support the rural economy. It would be in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) and policies CS11 (Rural Economy and Tourism), DM3 (High Quality Development) and DM16 (Green Infrastructure) of the Central Bedfordshire Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009).

DECISION

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