

3/15/0252/FUL – Erection of agricultural grainstore and machinery store at Great Hormead Hall, Hall Lane, Great Hormead for Mr J Wyld

Date of Receipt: 09.02.2015

Type: Full – Major

Parish: HORMEAD

Ward: BRAUGHING

RECOMMENDATION:

That planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

1. Three Year Time Limit (1T12)
2. Approved plans (2E103)
3. Materials of construction (2E11)
4. Landscape design proposals (4P12)(a, b, c, e, l, j, k, l)
5. Landscape works implementation (4P13)
6. Lighting details (2E27)

Summary of Reasons for Decision

East Herts Council has considered the applicant's proposal in a positive and proactive manner with regard to the policies of the Development Plan (Minerals Local Plan, Waste Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD 2012 and the 'saved' policies of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007); the National Planning Policy Framework and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2012 (as amended). The balance of the considerations having regard to those policies is that permission should be granted.

Directives:

1. The applicant is encouraged to consider the use of a range of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) for the proposed development such as rain harvesting water butts, retention/detention ponds, swales and other flood risk reduction measures. The Councils engineer can be contacted on 01992 531516 for further information in this respect.
2. Other Legislation (01OL1)

_____ (025215FP.MP)

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The application site is shown on the attached OS extract. It is located to the north of the village of Great Hormead and is accessed via from the village via Hall Lane. There is also a separate access to the north of the site which is used by farm traffic and links to Andersons Lane; the other part of the farm at Bury Farm, and beyond to the west of the village.
- 1.2 To the immediate south of the application site is a large agricultural building which, at the time of Officers site visit, was being used for the storage of agricultural machinery and other storage associated with the agricultural use. Further to the south west are a number of other agricultural buildings and the residential dwellings of Hormead Hall and the Old Dairy which are occupied by the applicant and family members. There are open agricultural fields to the north of application site.
- 1.3 The applicant sets out that their estate has 350 hectares of agricultural land in the Parish and the crops grown are predominantly wheat and oil seed rape. The farm is currently operated from two locations in the village. The administration, machinery and hay storage elements are based at the application site at Great Hormead Hall, with crop storage being located generally at Bury Farm to the south west of the application site.
- 1.4 There are two grain stores at Bury Farm – one smaller store is located immediately adjacent to the B1038 to the west of the village and is known as Bury Farm Barn. It has a storage capacity of 500 tonnes. The other store is located to the north of a range of historical buildings associated with Bury Farm and is known as The Bampton Barn, it has a capacity to store 1500 tones. These two barns are indicated on the attached OS extract.
- 1.5 The applicant sets out that the Bury Farm Barn is no longer fit for modern day agricultural practices and is in close proximity to a pedestrian footway which raises pedestrian safety issues for them. The Bampton Barn has recently been granted planning permission to be demolished as part of the wider development and change of use of the historical barns to dwellings as granted planning permission and listed building consent under LPA reference 3/14/1112/FP and 3/14/1113/LB.
- 1.6 The proposed barn would replace both of the existing barns and will provide storage for 1900 tonnes of crops, with drying facilities. This will provide flexibility in provision of storage for the farming operation.
- 1.7 The foot print of the main building would measure approximately 30.4m

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by 27.4m in footprint with a large asymmetric gable roof having a maximum height of approximately 11.2 metres. In addition it would incorporate lower lean to structures on the southern and eastern elevations, giving a total floorspace of approximately 1244 sq.m. The building would be west facing, and the proposal includes the provision of a large concrete apron to the western side of the building to provide turning space for farm vehicles.

- 1.8 The proposed building is of typical proportions and design for an agricultural building and would be finished externally in grey roof sheeting and olive green metal cladding.

2.0 Site History

- 2.1 There is no relevant planning history to the site.

3.0 Consultation Responses

- 3.1 The Highways Agency raises no objection.
- 3.2 Hertfordshire County Highways does not wish to restrict the grant of planning permission. The Highways Officer comments that a suitable level of parking is provided and space for vehicle turning. The Officer notes the applicants view that there will be increased vehicular movements, but the Highway Authority does not envisage that this will have a severe impact and does not raise an objection, provided the grain store was only used in relation to the owner's farm land.
- 3.3 The Landscape Officer recommends that planning permission be granted. The proposed agricultural building, located within an agricultural landscape will assimilate well with the nearby agricultural buildings, despite its size.

The Officer comments that the barn will not be visible from long views from the north due to the local topography. Where it may be visible from longer views to the south, it will be seen as an addition to an existing cluster of agricultural buildings.

- 3.4 The Council's Engineers comment that the site is within flood zone 1 and the development will reduce the amount of permeable area. The development does not appear to represent a sustainable form of construction as the disposal of surface water via sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) such as green roofs and rain water harvesting are not proposed. They consider that it could be argued therefore that the proposal is in conflict with policy ENV21 of the Local Plan and the

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SFRA (Strategic Flood Risk Assessment).

4.0 Parish Council Representations

4.1 Hormead Parish Council do not object to the planning application.

5.0 Other Representations

5.1 The application has been advertised by way of press notice, site notice and neighbour notification.

5.2 No letters of representation have been received.

5.0 Policy

6.1 The relevant 'saved' Local Plan policies in this application include the following:

GBC2	The Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt
GBC3	Appropriate Development in the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt
GBC7	Agricultural Development
ENV1	Design and Environmental Quality
ENV2	Landscaping
ENV10	Planting New Trees
ENV25	Noise sensitive Development
TR20	Development Generating Traffic on Rural Roads

6.2 In addition, the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) and NPPG (National Planning Policy Guidance) are material considerations in the determination of this application.

7.0 Considerations

7.1 The main planning considerations in this case relate to the principle of development; impact on the character and appearance of the rural setting; highway safety and access issues, and neighbour amenity impact.

Principle of development

7.2 The site is located within the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt wherein policy GBC3a) allows for the erection of development for agriculture. The principle of the proposed development is therefore acceptable.

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- 7.3 That is supported by national planning policy and, in addition, paragraph 28 of the NPPF sets out that planning policy should support economic growth to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable development through the provision of well-designed new buildings.
- 7.4 In accordance with those policy considerations, there is no objection in principle to the provision of an agricultural building in this location, subject to the building having an acceptable visual impact and having regard to all other relevant planning considerations.

Character and appearance

- 7.5 Policy GBC7 of the Local Plan sets out the criteria to be considered in relation to proposed agricultural development in the District. This sets out that agricultural development should be located within or adjacent to an existing group of buildings. A landscape scheme should be submitted with the application and the building should be of a design which is appropriate for its use and sympathetic to its surroundings in terms of scale, materials, colour and architectural detail.
- 7.6 The building would be located immediately adjacent to an existing group of agricultural buildings and its siting is therefore considered to be appropriate in policy terms. Officers acknowledge that it would be a significant building in terms of its size, scale and height. However, modern farming practises do often require buildings of a significant size and the design of this building reflects the needs of the business and its use of modern farming equipment. Furthermore, the building would be well consolidated with other similarly designed buildings nearby and would not, in Officers view appear visually intrusive within the surrounding area. The plans also indicate a re-grading of the land immediately to the north of the agricultural building and there is therefore an opportunity to implement some soft landscape treatment to that northern boundary.
- 7.7 Having regard to the comments from the Landscape Officer and, given the proportions and siting of existing agricultural buildings on the site, Officers do not consider that the proposed agricultural building will result in significant harm to the open rural character of the site or surroundings in accordance with policy GBC7 of the Local Plan. Conditions are recommended to ensure that suitable soft landscaping is carried out.

Highways matters

- 7.8 Turning to traffic movements associated with the proposed development; the proposed development will replace the existing grain stores and the proposed building is commensurate in volume terms with the existing stores. However, as noted by the Highways Officer, the increased size of the storage capacity will increase traffic movements. However, the applicant has confirmed that such traffic movements will be via the existing farm tracks which lead from the north of the application site and link back to the western edge of the village, via Andersons Lane and the farm track which currently serves the access to the Bury Farm Barn and the Bampton Barn. Given that the development will make use of this existing farm track it is considered that there will be no significant impact on neighbour amenity, in terms of noise and disturbance associated with farm traffic, such that would warrant the refusal of planning permission. Officers do not consider it necessary to condition the use of the building for the farms use only, as this proposed route is acceptable for the additional agricultural traffic that could result from the development and any other use of the building would, of course, be subject to separate planning control in any event.

Neighbour amenity

- 7.9 The proposed agricultural building is located some distance from residential dwellings within Great Hornead which are not associated with the farming operations. Having regard to that consideration and, taking into account the existing agricultural operations and buildings on the site as existing, Officers do not consider that the proposed development will result in material harm to neighbour amenity.

Other matters

- 7.10 Officers note the representations regarding the use of sustainable drainage measures. However, the design of the building does not lend itself to the use of green roofs which, in any event, are usually not cost effective for agricultural development. The use of other measures such as rainwater harvesting are encouraged – and a directive is included to advise the applicant on this, but it is not considered that a refusal of permission on those grounds would be justifiable in this case.

8.0 Conclusion

- 8.1 The proposal represents an appropriate form of development in the Rural Area and will provide an economic form of development which is encouraged in the NPPF. Although the size and scale of the

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development is significant, Officers are satisfied that it will not result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area and its visual impact can be mitigated by appropriate landscaping. Officers are also satisfied that there would be no loss of amenity to neighbouring residential properties from noise, disturbance and dust, and the associated traffic movements will not be detrimental to highway safety or amenity.

- 8.2 Officers therefore recommend that planning permission be granted, subject to conditions.