

SUPPORTING STATEMENT IN RELATION TO THE CHANGE OF USE OF AN
AGRICULTURAL BUILDING TO A COMMERCIAL UNIT

AT

TEMPLE HALL FARM

WELLSBOROUGH

March 2023

1.0 SITE

Temple Hall Farm consists of a range of modern agricultural farm buildings set within the hamlet of Wellsborough. The original farmhouse is to the southeast of the site and is now occupied, along with the traditional buildings, as an independent school. The modern buildings have until recently been used for the housing of cattle and part of a dairy farm.

The site is generally level and is accessed off the Bosworth Road adjacent although the buildings are set back approximately 60 metres from the Bosworth Road. There is a linear row of houses to the southwest of the site and open countryside to the north.

A previous application 20/00354/FUL was granted in 2020 for the commercial use of the adjacent buildings. A further application for change of use to commercial was granted in 2021.

The surrounding land is in agricultural use and is owned by the applicants.

There are no specific designations affecting the site within the adopted local plan

2.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

It is proposed to convert the end portal frame building to B8 (storage use) with additional cladding to the sides. This does not involve the alteration of the exterior of the buildings. Approval was granted under 20/00354/FUL for the alteration of the access which has been carried out and the building will be the final building converted to commercial use.

Additional car parking was permitted under the previous development and there is ample spaces for this proposal.

No additional external lighting is proposed and a landscaping scheme was approved under the previous application. The building is required for the storage of racking materials by the tenant of unit 1.

3.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph 11 of the NPPF establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It explains that in the context of decision making this means approving proposals that accord with the development plan without delay.

Paragraph 80 of the NPPF states that “Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand, and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.”

Paragraph 83 of the NPPF states that planning should support sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas. It also encourages the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses.

Paragraph 84 of the NPPF states that “Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements and in locations that are not well served by public transport.”

Hinckley and Bosworth Site Allocations and Development management policies DPD (2016)

Policy DM4 of the SADMP seeks to protect the countryside against unsustainable development. One category of development specifically listed as sustainable is “the change of use, re-use or extension of existing buildings which lead to the enhancement of the immediate setting”

Policy DM15 relates to Redundant Rural Buildings

“Proposed development outside the settlement boundary for the re-use and/or adaptation of redundant or disused rural buildings will be supported where:

- A) The applicant demonstrates the building is no longer viable in its current use;
And
- B) The applicant has adequately demonstrated the building is in a structurally sound condition and is capable of conversion without significant rebuild and alteration;
And
- C) Any proposed extension(s) or alterations are proportionate to the size, scale, mass, and footprint of the original building and situated within the original curtilage;
And
- D) The proposed development accords with DM10; Development and design guidance, DM11 Protecting and Enhancing the Historic Environment and DM12; Heritage assets.

Policy DM20

Provision of Employment Sites

“The development of new employment sites for B1,B2 and B8 uses outside of allocated employment areas will be supported where they stand within settlement boundaries or on previously developed land

Proposals which stand outside the settlement boundary and on Greenfield sites will only be found acceptable alternative sites identified sequentially in the following locations:

- a) Within settlement boundaries;
- b) On previously developed land;
- c) Adjacent to existing employment areas;
- d) Adjacent to settlement boundaries.

4.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The application site lies within a rural area outside of any settlement boundary. Policy DM4 of the SADMP is therefore relevant in this instance.

Policy DM4 seeks to protect the intrinsic value, beauty, open character and landscape character of the countryside by safeguarding it against unsustainable development. The policy goes on to set out specific categories of development considered sustainable within the countryside. One such category is *“the change of use, re-use or extension of existing buildings which lead to the enhancement of the immediate setting”*.

Policy DM15 of the SADMP supports the re-use and adaption of redundant rural buildings subject to compliance with four criteria, and subject to the proposals enhancing the immediate setting.

A) Viability of existing use

The application is accompanied by an agricultural appraisal which demonstrates that the buildings are no longer required for the purposes of agriculture. The applicant has undertaken significant investment in new buildings at their central base in Newton Burgoland and at Hoo Hills farm, which has resulted in the buildings at Temple Hall Farm becoming surplus to requirements. The buildings specified at the application site are therefore genuinely redundant.

The proposals therefore satisfy Criterion (a) of Policy DM15.

B) Structurally Capable of Conversion

The building is of modern construction most likely constructed in the 1960's and has been well maintained. No additional works are required other than the cladding of the gable for aesthetic purposes. The proposal therefore satisfy criterion (b) of Policy DM15.

C) Extension & Alterations

The building does not require any alteration or extension for the proposed use. The proposed scheme thereby preserves the agricultural character of the existing buildings and ensures that the scheme responds positively to its rural context. The proposals therefore satisfy Criterion (c) of Policy DM15.

D) Compliance with other policies

The proposals seek to enhance the setting by the provision of landscaping and would not harm the character of the buildings within their surroundings.

The proposals therefore comply with the relevant criteria of Policy DM10 of the SADMP.

The site is remote from heritage assets and as such there are no conflicts with Policies DM11 and DM12 of the SADMP.

The proposals therefore satisfy Criterion (d) of Policy DM15

Enhancement to Setting

The proposed development would bring the buildings back into beneficial use, and would thereby secure their ongoing retention in a tidy condition and a good state of repair. The proposals would thereby bring about an enhancement to the setting of the buildings as required by Policy DM15 of the SADMP.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

The application involves the re-use of redundant agricultural buildings to provide a storage facility in connection with Unit 1. In doing so would deliver economic benefits to which Paragraph 80 of the NPPF prescribes significant weight in the overall planning balance.

The proposals would have minimal impact upon the character or appearance of their rural surroundings, the amenities enjoyed by the occupiers of neighbouring dwellings and the safe and efficient use of the highway network. The proposals therefore satisfy all relevant criteria of Policy DM10 of the SADMP.

The proposals therefore constitute sustainable economic development which accords with Policies DM4 and DM15 of the SADMP, and Paragraphs 80 and 83 of the National Planning Policy Framework. In accordance with the presumption in favour of such development established by Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework it is therefore respectfully requested that the application be approved.