

PLANNING & DESIGN STATEMENT

FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE CONVERSION OF AN AGRICULTURAL
BUILDING TO A 4-BED DWELLING

Hill Farm, Markfield Lane, Botcheston

December 2023

c. green
planning
LIMITED

c. green planning LIMITED

Registered Company: 15109289.

Registered Office Address: 18 Marsh Drive, Husbands Bosworth, Lutterworth, England, LE17 6PU.

T: +44 (0)7508 997 101

E: cg.planning@outlook.com

© Copyright C. Green Planning Limited 2023. The contents of this document must not be copied or reproduced in whole or in part without the written consent of C. Green Planning Limited



Project Client:	DG Developments Ltd
------------------------	---------------------

Project Location:	Hill Farm, Markfield Lane, Botcheston, LE9 9FH
--------------------------	---

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Site Appraisal and Context	4
3. Previous Planning History	6
4. Planning Policy Context	7
National Planning Policy Framework (revised September 2023)	7
Local Development Plan	8
Hinckley & Bosworth Site Allocation and Development Management Policies DPD	8
5. Development Proposal	10
6. Transport and Highways Impacts of the Development	11
7. Flooding Risks on the Site	12
8. Conclusions	13

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Planning & Design Statement has been prepared to support a full (detailed) planning application ("The Application") submitted to Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council ("The Council") for the proposed conversion of an existing agricultural building to a single dwelling, including associated building works, at Hill Farm, Markfield Lane, Botcheston ("The Site").
- 1.2. The application is submitted by Planning and Development Consultants, C. Green Planning Limited, on behalf of DG Developments Ltd. ("The Applicant")
- 1.3. This Planning Statement provides an assessment of the site and its characteristics, an appraisal of the surrounding land uses, and outlines the proposed development submitted for consideration. It examines national and local planning policy context relevant to this application, against which the proposal it to be assessed by the Council.
- 1.4. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the adopted development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 1.5. We consider that the following assessment demonstrates that the Application represents sustainable development, in line with the definition outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework (the 'NPPF'). It provides a range of social, economic, and environmental benefits, whilst ensuring that it is policy compliant.
- 1.6. The Site is shown on the Site Location Plan and the Proposed Floor Plans & Elevations, which have been submitted as part of the application. These Plans highlight how the Site would accommodate the proposed development.
- 1.7. We consider that the following assessment demonstrates that the proposals for the Site would fully accord with the relevant provisions of National and Local Planning Policy, and should therefore be approved accordingly.
- 1.8. This Statement should be considered alongside the following supporting documentation:
 - 5092-001C- Location Plan (Corporate Architecture)
 - 5092-002A-Topographical Survey (Corporate Architecture)
 - 5092-003A-Existing Plans and Elevations (Corporate Architecture)
 - 5092-300E-Proposed Site Plan (Corporate Architecture)
 - 5092-301H-Proposed Ground and First Floor Plan (Corporate Architecture)
 - 5092-302D-Proposed Elevations and Roof Plan (Corporate Architecture)
 - 5092-304-Proposed Access Plan (Corporate Architecture)

2. Site Appraisal and Context

- 2.1. The Site comprises a former agricultural property located on Markfield Lane to the east of the village of Botcheston, a settlement within the Hinckley and Bosworth Borough of Leicestershire.
- 2.2. The application site covers an area of approximately 0.11ha within the wider land ownership of 0.59 hectares (1.47 acres) and consists of a series of barns in various states of disrepair, a heavy-duty access track and areas of grassland and rough ground, shown outlined in red in Figure 1 below.



Figure 1: Aerial Photograph [Site outlined in red] (Source: Google Maps)

- 2.3. The Site slopes gently from the north-east to the south-west corner. It is bound to the south by existing residential properties which front onto Markfield Lane, and to the north, east and south by further agricultural land. The Site benefits from clearly defined boundaries, which are marked to the north and east by post and wire fencing, and to the west by mature vegetation and a panelled fence. The Site lies outside the Limits to Development for Botcheston, as defined in the Hinckley & Bosworth Local Plan: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD (Adopted July 2016), and is, therefore, considered to be within the Open Countryside.
- 2.4. Notwithstanding the above, the Site benefits from direct footpath access along Markfield Lane, into the village centre of Botcheston (approximately 0.3 miles to the south-west). Botcheston is identified as a Rural Hamlet in the Hinckley & Bosworth Local Plan: Core strategy, which is reflective of the limited availability of local services and facilities in the village, which include The Greyhound Inn Public House and a Village Hall.
- 2.5. The Site also lies within close proximity to a wide range of services and employment opportunities that are available in nearby higher order settlements such as: Leicester City Centre (approx. 9.6 miles), Desford (approx. 1.9 miles), Ratby (approx. 2.8 miles), Kirby Muxloe (approx. 2.8 miles) and Newbold Verdon (approx. 4.1 miles).

- 2.6. Whilst the Site is situated in a rural location, and, therefore, it is accepted that the majority of trips are likely to be made by the private vehicle, there is access to sustainable modes of transport. The nearest bus stop is positioned to the east of the village centre of Botcheston, at the junction between Markfield Lane and Main Street (approx. 0.3 miles to the south-west of the site entrance). This bus stop is served by the Number 26 service operated by Arriva, which runs between Leicester City Centre and Coalville, and is scheduled to call at the village hourly between 7am and 7pm on weekdays.
- 2.7. The application site is not subject to any statutory designations. Botcheston does not have a designated Conservation Area and, similarly, there are no designated heritage assets situated within the village. The nearest designated feature is the Grade II Listed *War Memorial North of Polebrook House* (Ref: 1385703), which is located approximately 0.5 miles to the north of the Site and is separated by a number of obstructions.
- 2.8. The Site is located within Flood Zone 1 of the Flood Map for Planning and is, therefore, assessed as having a low risk of flooding (less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of river flooding). It is noted that the application site does include a limited area identified as Medium Risk of surface water flooding, as indicated in Figure 2 below. However, it is considered that these areas are relatively isolated, and the proposed development would not increase the risk of surface water flooding above the current land use. Therefore, the Site is not considered to present a significant risk of flooding.



Figure 2: Surface Water Flood Risk [Application Site outlined in Red] (Source: <https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/long-term-flood-risk/map>)

- 2.9. Further details on the Site and the surrounding area are set out within the accompanying documents, as previously stated.

3. Previous Planning History

- 3.1. The wider Site has been the subject of various previous planning applications, including for I for the change of use of the numerous agricultural buildings to dwellinghouses. The most relevant application however was submitted in August 2021 (LPA Ref: 21/01092/P3CQ) and was granted prior approval in November 2021. The application proposal included the change of use of the subject agricultural building to two smaller dwellinghouses (as defined in the GPDO), and associated building operations.
- 3.2. Consequently, it can be summarised that the Site currently benefits from the fallback position of conversion under Part 3 (Changes of Use): Class Q of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), and as such the principle of conversion to a dwellinghouse has already been established.

4. Planning Policy Context

- 4.1. Having studied the national, local and neighbourhood planning policies that affect the site, we have concluded that the following below policies are relevant to the application and have highlighted how the proposed development meets these requirements.

National Planning Policy Framework (revised September 2023)

- 4.2. The National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF] was first published in March 2012, and was subsequently revised; with the latest version adopted in September 2023. It sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how they are expected to be applied. It provides a framework within which local communities and their authorities can produce distinctive local and neighbourhood plans, reflecting the needs and priorities of the locality.
- 4.3. Paragraph 7 of the NPPF states that *'the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development'* and with the key objective summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future to meet their own needs. This is achieved through the three overarching objectives of the planning system: economic well-being, social progress, and environmental protection.
- 4.4. Paragraph 10 confirms a ***'presumption in favour of sustainable development'*** at the heart of the Framework to ensure that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way.
- 4.5. This means, with regard to decision-taking, that LPAs should approve *'development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay'* (paragraph 11c):
- 4.6. We consider that the proposals put forward accord with the aims of the NPPF and constitute sustainable growth. The proposed development site is in an accessible location close to key services and facilities. Therefore, the proposals benefit from the presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 4.7. Paragraph 38 outlines how Local Planning Authorities should approach decision making in a positive and creative way, and places an emphasis on Decision-makers to seek approval of applications for sustainable development where possible.
- 4.8. Section 5 of the Framework ("Delivering a sufficient supply of homes") seeks to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes. Paragraph 60 confirms the objective to significantly boost the supply of homes by bringing forward a *'sufficient amount and variety of land'*, with Paragraph 62 confirming that this should include the size, type, and tenure of housing for different groups in the community.
- 4.9. It is proposed at Paragraph 69 that *'small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, and are often built out relatively quickly'*.

- 4.10. Paragraph 80 outlines the circumstances in which the development of isolated homes in the countryside may be supported. This includes where *'(c) the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting'*.
- 4.11. Paragraph 120 says that decisions should promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained, and available sites could be used more effectively.
- 4.12. The Government attaches great importance to good design, identifying it as a 'key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities' (Paragraph 126).
- 4.13. We consider the proposed development to be of high-quality design, taking into account the adjacent land-uses to ensure a good standard of residential amenity for existing and future occupants.

Local Development Plan

- 4.14. Pursuant to section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Local Planning Authority for Botcheston is Hinckley & Bosworth Council.
- 4.15. The current development plan comprises:
- Hinckley & Bosworth Core Strategy DPD (December 2009)
 - Hinckley & Bosworth Site Allocation and Development Management Policies DPD (July 2016)
- 4.16. The principal housing policies contained within these documents are outlined below.

Hinckley & Bosworth Site Allocation and Development Management Policies DPD

- 4.17. The Hinckley & Bosworth Site Allocation and Development Management Policies DPD was adopted in July 2016 and, along with the Hinckley & Bosworth Core Strategy DPD and a number of saved policies from Local Plan 2001, aims to set out the strategic vision and spatial planning framework for the district.
- 4.18. Policies NE5 of the Local Plan and DM4 of the SADMP document refer to the location of development, seeking to ensure development is located towards sustainable locations and to protect the value and beauty of the countryside by safeguarding it from unsustainable development.
- 4.19. Policy DM10 outlines the provisions and requirements that must be met for developments to be permitted, including (but not limited to) no significant adverse impact on privacy and amenity of nearby residents; character of the surrounding area being enhanced and complemented; and the use and application of respectful building materials.

- 4.20. Development for the reuse and/or adaption of redundant or disused rural buildings outside the settlement boundary will be supported under Policy DM15 where certain criteria are met.
- 4.21. DM15(a) states that the building must no longer be viable in its current use, whilst (b) states that the building must be in a condition capable of conversion without significant rebuild or alteration.
- 4.22. DM15(c) focuses on proposed extension(s) or alternations to redundant rural building, which must be proportionate to the size, scale, mass, and footprint of the original building and situated within the original curtilage. This is in order to respect the form and character of the existing building and to result in the enhancement of the immediate setting.

5. Development Proposal

- 5.1. The application proposes the conversion of an agricultural building to create a single, four-bedroom dwellinghouse at Hill Farm, Markfield Lane, Botcheston (“the Site”).
- 5.2. As previously mentioned, the Site is considered to benefit from the fallback position of conversion under Part 3 (Changes of Use): Class Q of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), and as such the principle of conversion to a dwellinghouse has already been established.
- 5.3. The objective of the development is to deliver a high-quality designed residential dwelling, incorporating suitable modern living standards, having taken careful consideration of the site, the relationship with its locality and its potential impact on its setting.
- 5.4. Paragraph 124 of the Framework identifies that *“good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities”*. This is further emphasised by Paragraph 130 of the Framework which states *“where the design of a development accords with clear expectations in plan policies, design should not be used by the decision-maker as a valid reason to object to development”*.
- 5.5. With regards to the above, the proposed development, prepared by Corporate Architecture, have given appropriate consideration to the guidance set out in the Hinckley & Bosworth Good Design Supplementary Planning Document (Adopted February 2020) in relation to the conversion of agricultural buildings.
- 5.6. In particular, as recommend by the Good Design Guide, the proposals seek to ensure that the building retains its agricultural character, by retaining existing features where possible, and does not become overly domesticated, by avoiding the use of domestic features such as chimneys and dormer windows.
- 5.7. Furthermore, the proposed external appearance of the building seeks to use materials such as timber cladding, where appropriate in view of the existing features, in order to ensure that the proposals complement the quality and character of the historical use of the building.
- 5.8. New openings are proposed new window openings and doors, in order to ensure all habitable rooms within the proposed properties benefit from adequate natural light, as required by the provisions of the Order. This would have additional beneficial effect of maximising the natural sunlight serving the properties and, therefore, reducing the demands on energy resources.
- 5.9. Consequently, we contend that the submitted scheme appropriately reflects the existing character of the agricultural barn which is subject to conversion.

6. Transport and Highways Impacts of the Development

- 6.1. Paragraph 109 of the Framework identifies that *“development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe”*.
- 6.2. In respect of the above, the proposed development site is to be accessed via the existing agricultural access situated on Markfield Lane. The access currently serves the existing farmhouse which fronts onto Markfield Lane, and the agricultural barns situated to the rear of the property, including the barn proposed for conversion as part of the current scheme. Similarly, it should be noted that the access is intended to be used to serve the dwellinghouses that currently benefit from extant planning permission, and, therefore, it is considered that the submitted scheme would not materially increase the use of the existing access.
- 6.3. Furthermore, the submitted plans, prepared by Corporate Architecture, on behalf of the Applicant, identifies that sufficient space exists on-site to provide four off-road car parking spaces to serve the proposed dwelling; this would be in accordance with the Leicestershire Highways Design Guide requirements for a 4-bedroom property. Similarly, sufficient space exists for turning and manoeuvring to enable vehicles to enter and egress the Site in a forward gear. Consequently, it is considered that the proposals would not give rise to an unacceptable impact on highway safety.
- 6.4. Additionally, in view of the relatively small scale of the proposals and, as a result, the minimal number of additional vehicular trips that may be generated by the proposed development, we contend that the scheme would not have a severe residual cumulative impact on the local highway network.

7. Flooding Risks on the Site

- 7.1. Paragraph 155 of the Framework states that *“inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk of flooding”*.
- 7.2. As identified within Section 2 of this Statement, the Site is located within Flood Zone 1 of the Flood Map for Planning and is, therefore, assessed as having low risk of flooding (less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of flooding from rivers or sea).
- 7.3. Furthermore, it is accepted that the application site does include a limited area identified as Medium Risk of Surface Water Flooding, as identified in Figure 2 in Section 2. However, it is considered that the area of risk is relatively isolated and, in view of the topography of the site, and the proposed use, the submitted development scheme would not increase the risk of flooding above the current level.
- 7.4. Consequently, we contend that prior approval should not be necessary as to the flooding risks of the Site.

8. Conclusions

- 8.1. The submitted application at Hill Farm, Markfield Lane, Botcheston seeks detailed planning consent in relation to the proposed conversion of an existing agricultural building to a single dwellinghouse and the associated building operations. The application has been supported by a range of technical studies, confirming that there are no insurmountable constraints to development.
- 8.2. The wider site, located to the east of the village of Botcheston, covers an area of approximately 0.59 hectares (1.47 acres) and comprises a series of agricultural barns in various states of disrepair, a heavy-duty access track and areas of grassland and rough ground. The Site slopes gently from the north-east to south-west corner and is bound to the south by existing residential properties, and to the north, east and west by further agricultural land.
- 8.3. The proposed dwelling will provide a high-quality residential property, in a location that benefits from the fallback position of conversion under Part 3 (Changes of Use): Class Q of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), and as such the principle of conversion to a dwellinghouse has already been established.
- 8.4. The design of the conversion and associated alteration has had strong regard to the requirement to respect and enhance the existing character of the existing agricultural setting and, as such, we believe that the application should be approved without delay.