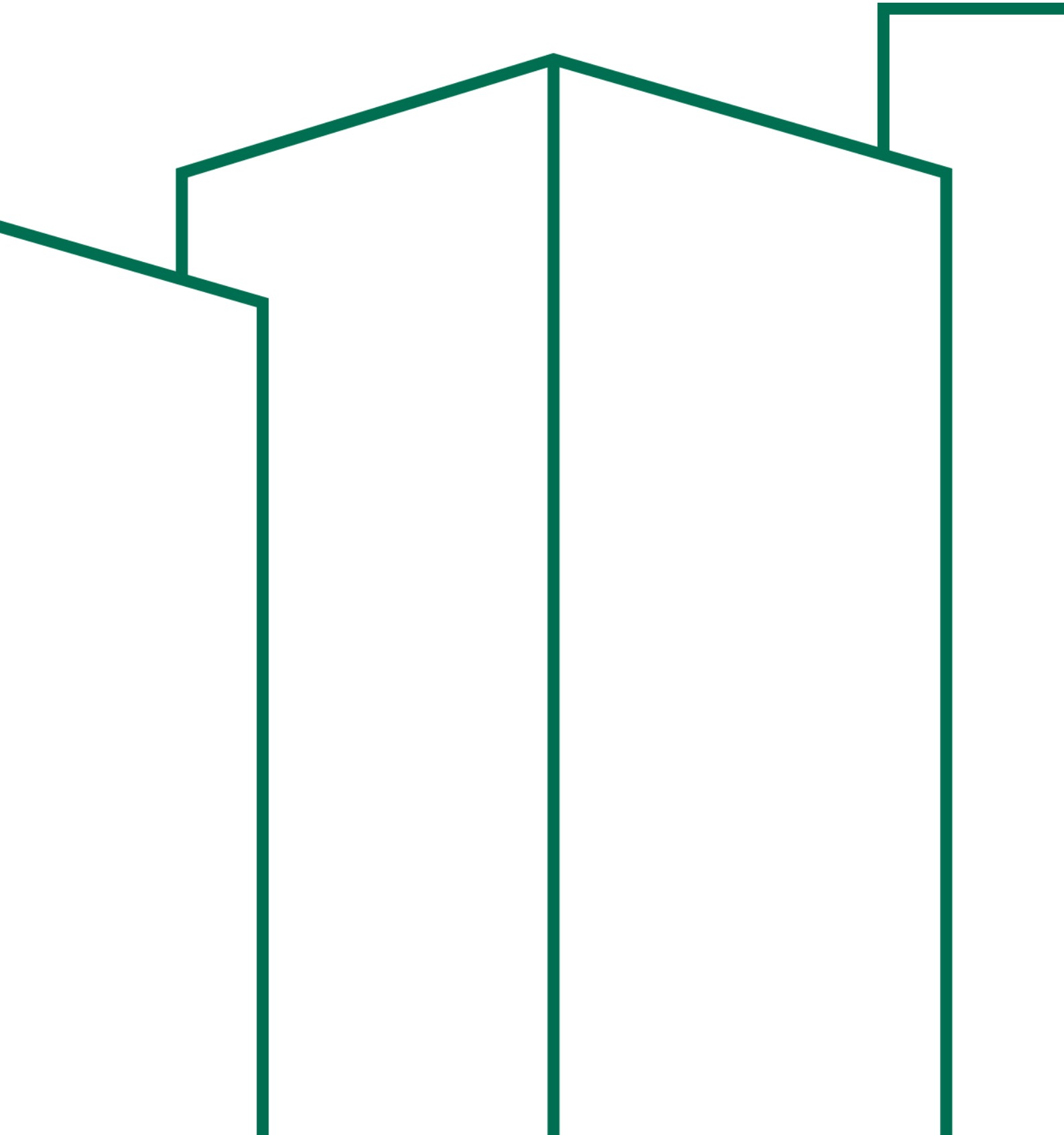


PLANNING DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Mr A Angrave
Markfield Equestrian Centre
Stanton Lane
Stanton under Bardon,
Markfield, LE67 9TT

**Change of Use of an equestrian building to commercial and storage and
distribution use with ancillary offices (Use Class B2 and B8)
and HGV storage within the existing car park**



1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared to accompany an application submitted to Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council on behalf of the applicant for Change of Use of an equestrian building to commercial and storage and distribution use with ancillary offices (Use Class B2 and B8) as well as HGV storage within the existing car park to the front of the site at Markfield Equestrian Centre, Stanton Lane, Stanton under Bardon, Markfield, LE67 9TT.

Site Description and Location

- 1.2 The application site is located within a rural area between Markfield and Bardon Hill. To the north of the site runs the A511, and the M1 to the east. The site is accessed via an existing highway in the form of Stanton Lane. The site is bound by agricultural land immediately to the north, south and east, with mature vegetation being located to the east on the opposing side of the access track and sporadically in the wider landscape. To the south and north of the site are clusters of residential properties (situated some distance from the application site). To the east sits an operational large open cast quarry.
- 1.3 The application site benefits from an existing vehicular access point to the highway as well as a large area of hardstanding that acts as space for vehicles to manoeuvre.
- 1.4 The application site is located within an area designated as Countryside, however there are no other constraints associated with the site as per the adopted Policies Map.

Planning History

- 1.5 There is no recent planning history relating to the application site or adjacent buildings showing on the LPA's website.

Application Proposals

- 1.6 Planning permission is sought for the change of use of an existing equestrian building to B2 and B8 Use Class with associated office use to be used ancillary with the end user of the B2 and B8 uses, as well as the formation of a parking area to the front of the building. The application includes the proposed parking and storage of HGVs within the existing parking areas.
- 1.7 There would be no physical alterations to the building itself, the application is purely to change the lawful use of the building as part of the repurposing of a former equestrian site.

2.0 PLANNING POLICY

Hinckley and Bosworth Core Strategy 2006-2026

2.1 The Hinckley and Bosworth Core Strategy was adopted in the 2009. The Development Plan also consists of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD adopted in July 2016. The following policies of the Development Plan are relevant to the determination of this application: -

- SO1 – Strong and Diverse Economy
- SO3 – Strong and Vibrant Rural Communities
- SO13 – Transportation and Need to Travel
- Policy 7 – Key Rural Centres
- Policy 8 – Key Rural Centres Relating to Leicester
- Policy 14 – Rural Areas: Transport
- Policy 17 – Rural Needs
- DM1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- DM4 – Safeguarding the Countryside and Settlement Separation
- DM10 – Development and Design
- DM18 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- DM20 – Provision of Employment Sites

The National Planning Policy Framework

2.2 Paragraph 2 of the Framework reconfirms the requirement that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

- 2.3 Paragraph 2 of the Framework confirms that the Framework is, "**a material consideration in planning decisions**".
- 2.4 Paragraph 7 states that, "**the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development**". Paragraph 8 explains the planning system has three overarching objectives to achieve sustainable development: economic, social and an environmental objective.
- 2.5 There will be degrees of conflict between policies and planning objectives. However, paragraph 38 sets out that decision takers should approach decision making in a positive and creative way and should "**use the full range of planning tools available....and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.**" It reads on to say that decision takers "**at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.**"
- 2.6 Paragraph 11 requires applications to be considered with a presumption in favour of development, unless material considerations result in significant harm.
- 2.7 Paragraph 123 stresses the importance of making effective use of land for new development, including homes.
- 2.8 Section 12 reads on to state that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character and history, including

the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.

- 2.9 Paragraph 89 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.”**

3.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 The proposed development is considered in relation to the following material planning considerations:-

1. Principle of development
2. Biodiversity
3. Design of the proposed development
4. Residential amenity
5. Highway safety

Material Planning Consideration 1: Principle of development

3.2 The principle of a Change of Use of the building for commercial purposes is considered to accord with the requirements set out within the Local Plan and Section 6 of the Framework.

3.3 The Change of Use of the building and area of hardstanding to the front of the site would comply with Policy DM20 of the Local Plan in that it represents sustainable development and would result in harm to the economic, environmental or social conditions within the Local Plan area. Policies S03 and DM20 support the principle of development with Policy DM20 stating that **“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.”** It is considered that the proposed development fully accords with the requirements set out here and therefore is appropriate in this location.

- 3.4 Policy DM4 allows for development in the countryside subject to meeting certain criteria. It is considered that the proposed development accords with criteria (b) and (c) which state **“The proposal involves the change of use, re-use or extension of existing buildings which lead to the enhancement of the immediate setting;”** and **“It significantly contributes to economic growth, job creation and/or diversification of rural businesses”** respectively.
- 3.5 Whilst the equestrian centre ceased operations in December 2023, a small number of liveries will continue to operate in the southern part of the site. However, it is considered, based on the scale of this continued use, it would sit in harmony with the proposed use and would therefore not result in any conflict or material issues.
- 3.6 The site is not subject to any constraints as per the adopted Policies Map; it does not sit within Green Belt, it is not adjacent to or within the curtilage of a listed building or structure, is not within a designated Flood Zone and is not within an area inhabited by protected species. The application site is solely designated as Countryside as per the adopted Policies Map.
- 3.7 The proposal would provide a use that allows for a prosperous rural economy and allows for the appropriate re-use and redevelopment of a brownfield site. It is considered therefore that the principle of development fully accords with requirements set out within the Local Plan and as such is deemed to be acceptable.

Material Planning Consideration 2: Biodiversity

3.8 The application is accompanied by a Bat and Bird Survey, prepared by a suitably qualified professional and should be read in conjunction with this Planning Statement. The report concludes (page 2):-

- **There is no evidence of bats using the buildings as a place of shelter.**
- **There was evidence of birds nesting in the building**
- **There is a roosting opportunity under the hanging tiles on the rear of Building 1. This will not be affected by the current proposed change of use.**
- **There is a roosting opportunity between the rear of the hanging tiles on the front elevation of Building 6. This will not be affected by the current proposed change of use.**
- **Emergence surveys are required to determine if bats are using these features as a place of shelter if works in the future are proposed to the features on Buildings 1 and 6.**
- **There are birds nesting in Building 5.**
- **The conversion of the building, if approved by the Local Authority must not occur if birds are nesting in the building between the beginning of March and the end of August until the young have fledged.**
- **A method of working must be put in place with contractors to ensure that in the event of bats being found they will not be injured.**

- 3.9 As the application site consists of areas of hardstanding to the front of the site and the building itself and there are no alterations proposed, there is nothing within the application site that scores anything in terms of biodiversity value. As such, the proposed works would be immune from BNG by virtue of the proposed works being de minimis.

Material Planning Consideration 3: Design of the Proposed Development

- 3.10 The proposed development would not result in any alterations to the building whatsoever. The proposed operations would utilise the same access doors and would require no amendments to the footprint of the building and would require no additional door or window openings. As such there would be no impact on the character and appearance of the building as a result of the proposed change of use.
- 3.11 No amendments would be made to the external areas of the site and the proposed HGV parking would be situated in areas previously used for parking of equestrian vehicles already surfaced in hardstanding. As such the proposed would be materially consistent with the existing lawful use.
- 3.12 Details of the building in question can be found on the accompanying plans and elevations drawings and Structural Report.
- 3.13 It is considered therefore that the proposed use of the building and part of the wider site included within this application would be materially consistent with the existing lawful situation and therefore complies with Policy DM10.

Material Planning Consideration 4: Residential Amenity

- 3.14 The building to be converted is situated to the rear of the existing site and is located a significant distance from any residential property not associated with the site. The nearest residential property not associated with operations on site, or the proposed development is some 200m away.
- 3.15 It is also important to stress that the residential properties located closest to the application site sit closer to other existing commercial operations and major road networks.
- 3.16 The proposed change of use would not result in any significant harm to the amenity of neighbouring residential properties in terms of noise. No alterations are to be made to the building and the use of the buildings for B2 and B8 is materially consistent with the existing lawful use and historic use of the site. The current lawful use incorporates large vehicles and articulated lorries being a routine presence with no restrictions on the number of vehicle movements or the timings of such movements, particularly where large equestrian events or meets occur, again which would be a lawful use of the site.
- 3.17 The intended use would represent a betterment or at the very least be materially consistent in terms of how it would operate in terms of residential amenity.
- 3.18 It is also important to consider that any impact associated with noise can be monitored and controlled via several mechanisms if, in the unlikely event, issues arise. The Local Authority would still retain control over the proposed

development should issues arise via the regulatory powers of the Council's Environmental Health team. However, as discussed, the proposed use is unlikely to represent any harm to residential amenity, especially when considered in comparison to the existing lawful use. It is considered therefore that this mechanism of control, whilst existing is unlikely to be necessary.

3.19 Furthermore, Paragraph 55 of the Framework states **“Local planning authorities should consider whether otherwise unacceptable development could be made acceptable through the use of conditions or planning obligations.”** A condition can be included to restrict hours of operation if the LPA deem this necessary.

3.20 The proposed development would not result in a significant loss of light, sense of overbearing or loss of privacy to the properties to the south due to there being no alterations to the buildings.

3.21 Therefore, it is not considered that the proposed development would result in significant harm to the amenity of surrounding properties and accords with the requirements set out within Policy DM10 of the Local Plan.

Material Planning Consideration 5: Highway Safety

3.22 The application is accompanied by a detailed Transport Statement which has concluded that the proposal would be suitable for the location and would generate no harm to pedestrian or highway safety. The Transport Statement has stated (Section 6) that:

- There are no outstanding highway safety issues on the surrounding local highway network or at the existing point of access which the proposed development would be expected to exacerbate.
- The existing traffic flows on Stanton Lane have been established using an Automatic Traffic Count (ATC) which has determined that the two-way flows are relatively low and vehicle speeds are below the national speed limit.
- The existing and proposed access has been in operation for a number of years, and it has been highlighted there are no highway safety concerns within the direct vicinity of the access and the correct visibility for the speed of traffic can be achieved.
- The anticipated trip generation from the proposed development site has been determined and it has been established that the development will not have a detrimental impact on the operation or safety of the local highway network.
- The proposed development is supportive of national planning policy.

3.23 The site can comfortably accommodate the required level of parking provision (based on the internal floor space associated with the proposed use) as set out by Policy DM18 of the Local Plan.

3.24 The site currently operates lawfully as a large equestrian centre where large vehicles can come and go without restriction and utilise the surrounding

highway network. The proposed use would not result in a higher volume of traffic, or an increase in the size of vehicles. It is therefore considered that the proposed use would not differ materially from the existing lawful use.

3.25 The proposed change of use would utilise the existing vehicle access point. The existing access provides adequate visibility splays onto the highway and provides an appropriate entry and exit point onto the highway that would be consistent with the existing lawful use.

3.26 The proposed development would provide adequate space for vehicles to manoeuvre allowing vehicles to enter and leave the highway in forward gear (including HGVs as demonstrated by the accompanying swept path analysis plans). It also ensures continued parking provision and manoeuvring for the adjacent equestrian uses to be retained.

3.27 The proposed development would not result in any harm to pedestrian or highway safety, and due to the scale of the proposed development would not result in a significant increase in the level of traffic on the surrounding highway network. It can be easily concluded from the evidence presented within the accompanying Transport Statement that safe and suitable access can be achieved, and resultant impacts of the development will not be considered as “severe” and as such fully complies with all local and national policy requirements.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 The application site is not located within the Green Belt and there are no other constraints associated with the site as per the adopted Policies Map other than being designated as Countryside. The site is rural in nature with a small number of residential properties located to the north and south, which are some distance away and sit closer to other existing commercial sites. The site is accessed from Stanton Lane to the west.
- 4.2 The principle of the proposed development is considered to be appropriate and accords with Section 6 of the Framework and Policies SO3 and DM20 of the Local Plan. Great weight has been placed on the re-use of buildings within rural areas to facilitate and encourage rural employment and to support rural economies. It is therefore considered that the principle of development is deemed to be acceptable.
- 4.3 The proposed change of use would not result in any harm to the amenity of residential properties, nor would it result in harm to biodiversity, or any protected species as evidenced by the accompanying application documents. The proposed development therefore complies with Policy DM10 of the Local Plan.
- 4.4 The proposed development would not result in any harm to the highway network or highway safety. The nature of the application site ensures that the proposal can meet the required parking standards. The application is accompanied by a Transport Statement that has demonstrated that no harm

will be generated as a result of the change of use to the application site, access point or wider highway network.

- 4.5 In light of the above circumstances, it is considered that the proposed development accords with the Local Plan, and National Planning Policy. It is respectfully submitted that the proposed development should be approved subject to condition and without delay.

ADB/CMF/6445

13 June 2024

PLANNING DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Mr A Angrave
Markfield Equestrian Centre, Stanton Lane
Stanton under Bardon,
Markfield, LE67 9TT

Our Reference: ADB/CMF/6445

Date: 13 June 2024

CT Planning Limited

Three Spires House Station Road
Lichfield Staffordshire WS13 6XH
Tel: 01543 418779
Email: apps@ctplanning.co.uk

