DEVELOPMENT
SERVICES

1 6 APR 2008

RECEIVED

CHANGE OF USE

EXISTING
FACILITIES BUILDING & CAR PARKING
AREA
AT OLD HALL FARM, GROBY,
LEICESTERSHIRE

FROM
FACILITIES BUILDING
WITH ASSOCIATED CAR PARKING
IN CONNECTION WITH
FORMER PICK YOUR OWN ENTERPRISE

TO
FACILITIES BUILDING
WITH ASSOCIATED CAR PARKING
IN CONNECTION WITH
FISHERIES AND FARM
DIVERSIFICATION

SUPPORTING DOCUMENT PREPARED BY

THE GROBY FARM PARTNERSHIP (Applicant)

APRIL 2008

1. Introduction

1.1. This report has been prepared to support the proposed change of use for a Facilities Building with Associated Car Parking previously serving a commercial Pick Your Own (PYO) diversification enterprise to now serve the commercial Coarse Fisheries and Farming diversification enterprise that has replaced the PYO at Old Hall Farm, Groby.

1.2. Groby Farms Limited was incorporated in 1956 and farmed as an agricultural tenant of Old Hall Farm continuously over 50 years until 2006.

1.3. During that period the company developed a successful PYO commercial diversification enterprise and then as the PYO demand decreased, a successful commercial coarse fishery constructing 3 lakes which today is the main stay diversification enterprise of the farm.

1.4. The PYO has now ceased. The current practical proposal is to refurbish and make use of the former PYO Facilities building and provide a smaller associated car parking facility to serve the existing farm diversification enterprise.

2. Background

2.1. In 2006 the freeholders of the farm (the Company's former Landlords) resumed the farmhouse and farmyard including all of the agricultural buildings which were all located to the south of the A50 being detached from the main block when the Groby bypass was created.

2.2. Groby Farm Partners who previously owned Groby Farms Limited now owns and farms the 200 acres of Old Hall Farm commercial farmland having acquired the freehold in 2006.

2.3. Planning permission has since been granted for 2 replacement farm and fishery storage buildings and a livestock building.

2.4. The farm includes the 3 coarse fishing lakes which are operated as a day ticket coarse fishery.

2.5. Planning Permission has been granted for 3 fish rearing ponds to rear on the young fish fry resulting from the excellent fish breeding environment of the main lakes enabling the fishery to have a sustainable fish stocking policy thus minimising the risks of imported diseases.

2.6. The farmland is utilised for arable production on approximately 160 acres and beef livestock production on 35 acres of grassland on the western section of the farm.

3. Reasons For the Change of Use

3.1. The continuance of a successful Fishery at Groby is fundamentally now reliant upon the provision of adequate sustainable on site service facilities for the use of the Fishermen whom commonly fish all day and even all weekend including nights as recognised in PPS7(see below).

3.2. Fishing Clients, many of whom bring family members with them sometimes including young children, to enjoy the peaceful attractive lakeside environment, now routinely expect such facilities. Fisheries that ignore such expectations are or will suffer business drop off.

3.3. Groby Farm Partners wish to invest in such facilities as part of a general refurbishment programme to secure the long term future of the Fishery.

3.4. As part of this programme all the access track ways and lakeside parking areas have recently been resurfaced and traffic calming measures introduced.

3.5. All of the fishing peg platforms are in the process of being replaced.

3.6. Generally improvements are being made to the amenity of the site and responsible public access is encouraged.

4. **<u>This Application:</u> Change of Use of existing Facilities Building with Associated Car Parking to serve the Fisheries and Farm Diversification**

The uses contained within this application are illustrated on the drawings prepared by Plann Architects Limited. The proposals seek to provide the following facilities:

- Male WC
- Female WC
- Disabled WC/Baby Change
- Ticket Sales external window
- Café/club house area
- Kitchen/servery
- General Preparation/Store
- Associated Car Parking
- Bike Racking
- Pedestrian Access
- Outside Seating

5. **<u>The Previously Implemented Planning Permissions:</u>**

- <u>78/0582/4</u> Formation of car park in connection with the use of adjacent fields for the picking of agricultural produce, OS field 8676, Newton Linford Lane, Groby.
- <u>82/0196/4</u> Erection of Sales Office, Store and Toilets, and change of use of agricultural buildings to sale area for ice- cream and cream, Newton Linford Lane, Groby. O.P. no. 8676 and 9262.
- <u>85/0190/4</u> Extensions to sales office. O.P No 9262pt, off Newtown Linford Lane, Groby.
- <u>95/00117</u> Retention of Sales Office, Store and Ice-Cream Sales Building

6. **<u>Business Rates Status</u>**

- <u>Account Ref: 101215228</u> Property Description: Club and Premises

7. Relevant supporting Government Planning Policies

Planning Policy Statement 7

Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

Re-use of buildings in the countryside

"17. The Government's policy is to support the re-use of appropriately located and suitably constructed existing buildings in the countryside where this would meet sustainable development objectives. Re-use for economic development purposes will usually be preferable, but residential conversions may be more appropriate in some locations, and for some types of building. Planning authorities should therefore set out in LDDs their policy criteria for permitting the conversion and re-use of buildings in the countryside for economic, residential and any other purposes, including mixed uses. These criteria should take account of:
– the potential impact on the countryside and landscapes and wildlife;
– specific local economic and social needs and opportunities;
– settlement patterns and accessibility to service centres, markets and housing;
– the suitability of different types of buildings, and of different scales, for re-use;
– the need to preserve, or the desirability of preserving, buildings of historic or architectural importance or interest, or which otherwise contribute to local character.

18. Local planning authorities should be particularly supportive of the re-use of existing buildings that are adjacent or closely related to country towns and villages, for economic or community uses, or to provide housing in accordance with the policies in PPG3, and subject to the policies in paragraph 7 of this PPS in relation to the retention of local services."

The countryside around urban areas

"26. While the policies in PPG2 continue to apply in green belts, local planning authorities should ensure that planning policies in LDDs address the particular land use issues and opportunities to be found in the countryside around all urban areas, recognising its importance to those who live or work there, and also in providing the nearest and most accessible countryside to urban residents. Planning authorities should aim to secure environmental improvements and maximise a range of beneficial uses of this land, whilst reducing potential conflicts between neighbouring land uses. This should include improvement of public access (e.g. through support for country parks and community forests) and facilitating the provision of appropriate sport and recreation facilities."

Farm diversification

"30. Recognising that diversification into non-agricultural activities is vital to the continuing viability of many farm enterprises, local planning authorities should:
(i) set out in their LDDs the criteria to be applied to planning applications for farm diversification projects;
(ii) be supportive of well-conceived farm diversification schemes for business purposes that contribute to sustainable development objectives and help to sustain the agricultural enterprise, and are consistent in their scale with their rural location. This

applies equally to farm diversification schemes around the fringes of urban areas; and (iii) where relevant, give favourable consideration to proposals for diversification in Green Belts where the development preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. (Where farm diversification proposals in the Green Belt would result in inappropriate development in terms of PPG2, any wider benefits of the diversification may contribute to the 'very special circumstances' required by PPG2 for a development to be granted planning permission).

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31. A supportive approach to farm diversification should not result in excessive expansion and encroachment of building development into the countryside. Planning authorities should:
(i) encourage the re-use or replacement of existing buildings where feasible, having regard to paragraphs 17-21; and
(ii) have regard to the amenity of any nearby residents or other rural businesses that may be adversely affected by new types of on-farm development."

Tourist and visitor facilities

"35. The provision of essential facilities for tourist visitors is vital for the development of the tourism industry in rural areas. Local planning authorities should:
(i) plan for and support the provision of general tourist and visitor facilities in appropriate locations where identified needs are not met by existing facilities in rural service centres.Where new or additional facilities are required, these should normally be provided in, or close to, service centres or villages;
(ii) allow appropriate facilities needed to enhance visitors' enjoyment, and/or improve the financial viability, of a particular countryside feature or attraction, providing they will not detract from the attractiveness or importance of the feature, or the surrounding countryside.

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36. Wherever possible, tourist and visitor facilities should be housed in existing or replacement buildings, particularly where they are located outside existing settlements. Facilities requiring new buildings in the countryside may be justified where the required facilities are needed in conjunction with a particular countryside attraction; they meet the criteria in paragraph 35(ii); and there are no suitable existing buildings or developed sites available for re-use."