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Planning Application PL/2023/06122
Class Q Change of use of Agricultural Building to 4 no. Dwellinghouses
Pickers Palmers Farm, Capps Lane, Heywood, Westbury, BA13 4NE

Introduction

This Highway Technical Note has been commissioned to support the above planning application which has been submitted to Wiltshire Council for a change of use of a former agricultural building to 4 modest residential units under Class Q.

The Highway Officer has been consulted and in commenting has said:

I note the proposals seek the change of use of an existing agricultural building, for four, 2-bedroom dwellings. Firstly, the site is located outside of the existing development policy boundary, and I therefore have concerns with regards to the sustainability of the site for residential development due to the likely reliance upon the private car for any residents and visitors. This proposal therefore appears to be contrary to the sustainability policies contained in the Wiltshire Core Strategy (Core Policies 57, 60 and 61) and the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 Section 9, paras 104, 105, 110-112, which aims to reduce the need to travel particularly by private car and encourage the use of sustainable transport alternatives. Notwithstanding this objection, if you feel sufficient policy grounds exist to support the principle of these proposals, I would make the following additional comments:

The proposed site access, whilst existing, is poorly formed, overgrown and with a loose/unmade surface, which would not be suitable to serve residential development without improvement. It is also clear that vegetation restricts visibility at the existing access during high growth seasons and the available visibility is thus difficult to assess. Whilst the extant uses on site would generate a level of traffic, other agricultural buildings remain present on site, thus meaning that such uses can continue in addition to that of the new dwellings. Furthermore, the presence of other buildings also presents the possibility of further residential conversions on the site, further increasing traffic along Capps Lane, which is substandard in terms of width and lacking any pedestrian facilities and street lighting.

As a result, if you are minded to accept the principle of these proposals, I will require additional information in respect to the extant agricultural use of the site, including that of traffic movements, the proposed ongoing uses of the other buildings on the site and a revised/additional plan showing the below access, prior to forming a formal Highway position on these proposals;

- *Maximum available visibility splays based on a setback of 2.4m.*
- *Minimum access width of 5m over the first 10m of the access.*
- *A consolidated surface over the first 5m of the access.*
- *An unallocated visitor car parking spaces provided within the site.*

Whilst it is noted that the Highway Officer has questioned the sustainability of the development, Class Q recognises that the majority of former agricultural buildings are located within the countryside, therefore the sustainability issues is not a material consideration in this instance.

Access and Visibility

The site is served by an existing access onto Capps Lane which is an unclassified rural access road that runs east to west where it joins Trowbridge Road with the A350. It serves very little development, but mainly agricultural uses. Traffic volumes are low as are traffic speeds given the rural nature of the road.

Historically the access served large, slow moving agricultural buildings, although more recently these movements have been concentrated to a further access to the west. This has allowed the current access to become overgrown, although it can be brought back into use without the need of any further consent.

The Highway Officer has said " *the presence of other buildings also presents the possibility of further residential conversions on the site, further increasing traffic along Capps Lane, which is substandard in terms of width and lacking any pedestrian facilities and street lighting."*

Whilst other buildings on the site could be brought forward for alternative uses, this application must be considered on its merits, and as there are no other planning current planning applications, the use of the other buildings must be considered on their existing lawful uses.

Notwithstanding the above, the Highway Officer has requested that a plan be submitted showing the maximum available visibility splays based on a setback of 2.4m, a minimum access width of 5m over the first 10m of the access and a consolidated surface over the first 5m of the access.

Drawing numbered NJC-001 is included as Appendix 1 to this Note which shows the access which can be improved to provide formal radii, with an access road width of 5.0m. The first 5.0m can be surfaced in a non-migratory material, and a suitable condition can be imposed that requires these improvements to be implemented before first occupation of any of the dwellings.

With regards to the available visibility, the drawing shows splays of 2.0m by 40.0m to the west and 2.0m by 46.7m to the east.

Manual for streets 2, in paragraph 10.5.8 says:

"A minimum X distance of 2.0m may be considered in some slow speed situations when flows on the minor arm are low. This also applies in lightly trafficked rural lanes."

As Capps Lane is a lightly trafficked rural lane, it is therefore reasonable to apply a 2.0m X distance in this instance.

Based on the available splays of 40, and 47m respectively, this relates to traffic speeds on Capps Lane of around 29 to 32mph, which is considered to be reasonable.

Nick Culhane August 223

Appendix 1

Access and Visibility

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2.0mx40.0m VISIBILITY SPLAY

2.0mx46.7m VISIBILITY SPLAY

Unit 1 | Unit 2 | Unit 3 | Unit 4

U1
U1
U2
U2
U3
U3
U4
U4

Client

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Project

DEVELOPMENT AT CAPPS LANE, WESTBURY

Drawing Title

ACCESS AND VISIBILITY

Drawing Status

FOR INFORMATION

Date	Scale	Size
AUG 2023	1:150	A1

Drawing No.	Rev
NJC-001	-