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Nic Thomas
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Dear Mr Thomas

Application for full planning permission for the erection of a replacement infill extension to the 'supercar barn' at Kingston Farm, Holt Road, Bradford on Avon, Wiltshire, BA15 1TS

Introduction

Please find enclosed an application for full planning permission for the erection of an infill extension to the rear of the 'supercar barn' at Kingston Farm. Unfortunately, the previous project manager for the site had instructed contractors to commence works on the premise that the proposal was replacing a pre-existing barn structure, identified in red on the 2018 aerial image below, and therefore didn't require permission, which is not the case.



Therefore, the proposal that is before the Council seeks to provide enhanced ancillary facilities to the Five Zeros business, by providing a new commercial kitchen, associated storage, and to enable car valeting to take place under cover. It is a flat roof structure that is lower than the barn that it replaces and appears as a logical link between the supercar barn and another currently unused barn to the south.



The Site and its Surroundings

The application site is situated to the south of Holt Road and forms part of the Kingston Farm complex, a former dairy unit mainly comprising relatively modern steel portal frame buildings; and which has planning permission for a range of commercial uses. It is located within the West Wiltshire Green Belt.

As described within the introduction, the proposed infill extension replaces an earlier structure, such that it has been erected within the same footprint, and on an existing area of concrete hardstanding, and was therefore of no biodiversity value.

The planning history of Kingston Farm is quite extensive, however of particular pertinence to the case in hand (and the supercar barn itself) is as follows:

19/08523/FUL: Change of Use of Part of an Agricultural Building to B8 Use - Approved.

20/10397/FUL: Change of use from flexible uses permitted via Class R to B8 Use - Approved.

PL/2022/02254: (Retrospective) Proposed Change of Use of 113m² of barn from B8 use to Class E flexible commercial use and associated operational development including, installation of windows, doors, a mezzanine floor and internal stairs - Approved.

In addition, the following relate to what is colloquially known as the 'straw barn' and this permission will enable the construction of an infill extension between it and the supercar barn. PL/2023/11083: Proposal

to convert and extend an existing agricultural barn, changing use to class B8 and class E, with associated internal and external alterations – Approved.

The latter planning permission followed the grant of PL/2023/02786: Conversion of 285sqm of an existing agricultural building to a flexible commercial use (B8 use) - Prior approval granted.

The Proposal

As highlighted above, the proposal seeks to provide enhanced ancillary facilities to the Five Zeros business, by providing a new commercial kitchen, associated storage, and to enable car valeting to take place under cover.

The scheme replaces earlier barn structures that were present until recently between the supercar barn and an unused barn to the south, the total floor area of the new build is the same as before (502 sq.m.), and therefore there is no net increase in floor area proposed, with the previous concrete hardstanding also being utilised.

The new infill extension is a flat roof structure that is lower than the barn that it replaces and appears as a logical link between the two larger buildings. It has a height of 2.9 metres, with the total length being 36.6 metres, and a span of 14.8 metres.

External finishing materials match the existing barns, being of an olive green profiled steel cladding, with a proprietary flat roofing system and steel fascias, steel roller shutter doors and aluminium fenestration.

Planning Policy Context and Assessment

Principle and Green Belt considerations

Kingston Farm falls within the West Wiltshire Green Belt, and pursuant to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and in paragraph (para.) 142 states that *“The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.”*

Para. 143 stipulates that the Green Belt serves five purposes: a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas; b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another; c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment; d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

The application site is detached from the nearest town of Bradford on Avon, such that the proposed development does not give rise to urban sprawl, nonetheless the concept of ‘openness’ must still be considered.

The NPPF in para. 153 states that *“When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. ‘Very special circumstances’ will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the*

proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.”

NPPF para. 154 highlights that development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless one of a number of exceptions apply, *inter alia*:

“c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;

d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces; and

g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land....., whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.”

The proposal ultimately relates to the replacement of a building, although it is not in the same use as the site is no longer in agricultural use. Nonetheless, having regard to the planning history, a significant portion of the former farmyard is now in commercial use of an automotive nature. Therefore whilst the link extension in question is to proposed to be put to a different use, it would be in character with its immediate surroundings. It would constitute an enlargement of the facilities provided within the supercar barn, albeit being smaller than the previous structure/s due to its lower height; consequently it would be materially smaller than the building it replaces.

Even if the Council, disagreed with the above sentiment, and considers that the scheme doesn't comply with criterion d) of NPPF para. 154, pursuant to its criterion c), the infill extension/alteration does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

Furthermore, considering criterion g) of NPPF para. 154, the proposal can also be described as 'limited infilling' which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

In the Officer report (OR) for the determination of planning application PL/2023/11083 that proposal was assessed against Core Policy (CP) 1 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) (adopted 2015). It was highlighted that the site was beyond the limits of development for Bradford on Avon and is therefore considered to be a development in the open countryside, to which the applicant wholly agrees. The OR went on to state that policy CP1 advises that development outside of defined settlement boundaries will generally be strictly controlled, however it is accepted that certain types of development in the countryside are acceptable; and that whilst the site is outside of a settlement boundary, it is relatively close to the boundary for Bradford on Avon.

Indeed, as set out within the supporting text to WCS policy CP7 (Spatial Strategy: Bradford on Avon Community Area) paragraphs 5.32 and 5.33 state that the town currently offers a low range and number of employment opportunities and has a high level of out-commuting; and although it is not identified as a strategic location for employment, the high levels of out-commuting indicate that development for business and employment uses should be encouraged to meet local needs.

Furthermore, the OR for PL/2023/11083 stated that as that building and existing premises already existed, support for additional employment opportunities and the re-use of existing buildings can be found in policies CP2, CP34 and CP48 of the WCS. It went on to say that policies in the NPPF support a prosperous rural economy and highlighted that paragraph 88 emphasises that planning policies and

decisions should enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed, new buildings. Support is also given to sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside within the same paragraph.

In addition to reiterating the NPPF's policy in respect of the Green Belt, the Bradford on Avon Neighbourhood Plan 2013-2026 (NP) made October 2017 stipulates in its Policy DP1 (Regeneration and Infill Development) that the reuse or redevelopment of previously developed sites and the development of infill sites will be supported.

In objective 3 the NP states that *"the diversification of rural businesses including the use of redundant rural buildings for alternative employment uses"* should be encouraged. Furthermore, Policy E1 of the NP states that *"sustainable business and employment development within or adjacent to Bradford on Avon will be supported"*.

The Council has previously found that the existing supercar barn has been successful in using a redundant agricultural barn to build a rural enterprise which is generating local jobs and bringing tourism to the area, to the benefit of the local economy.

Therefore, it is considered that the proposal is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt and is deemed to be acceptable as a matter of principle.

Character and Appearance

Policy CP51 of the WCS requires development to protect, conserve and where possible enhance landscape character and negative impacts must be mitigated where possible through sensitive design and landscape measures. CP57 states that development is expected to create a strong sense of place through drawing on the local context and being complimentary to the locality and must, amongst other things, relate positively to its landscape setting.

The proposed replacement infill building is simple in its design and by virtue of its low stature appears as a subordinate addition to the supercar barn which nestles between it and the barn to its south. Its cladding and fenestration match those of the host building and overall has a lesser visual impact than the barn structure that it has replaced, preserving the character of the wider site as a former working farmyard and the countryside setting.

Therefore, it is considered that all of the proposal is of a suitable scale and design and will not be visually prominent or harmful to the surrounding area, compliant with the above policies.

Other matters

The application site is on a now established commercial site, well away from the nearest holiday properties at Beeches Farmhouse. Bearing in mind that the proposal seeks a modest extension to the existing facilities found within the supercar barn, and seeks to move existing valeting services under cover, it is considered that there would be no harm to the amenity of any residential neighbours from noise or other impacts.

It is anticipated that there will be no greater vehicular movements as a result of the proposal, and consequently it is considered that bearing in mind that previous applications demonstrated that the existing access operates safely, there will be no demonstrable harm caused to the free-flow of traffic along the public highway. The NPPF states in para. 116 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 and therefore the scheme complies with this.

It is trusted that the Council will grant planning permission, however should the appointed Case Officer require any further information please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Yours sincerely,

Chris

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cc. The Supercar Barns Limited