

I visited site on 29th April – please see the attached photo of the Barn and context of the pigs.

Planning Practice Guidance sets out that *"when considering whether it is appropriate for the change of use to take place in a particular location, a local planning authority should start from the premise that the permitted development right grants planning permission, subject to the prior approval requirements"*. It also states that "undesirable" in this context reflects that it would be *"harmful or objectionable"*. It states that this could be undesirable if it is adjacent to uses such as intensive poultry farming buildings, silage storage or buildings with dangerous machines or chemicals. The proposal is not adjacent to *intensive* farming buildings or uses and is around 300m from the nearest farm buildings.

We recognise that pig farming can sometimes give rise to odour impacts, however, this farm unit is relatively small scale with around 450 sows, which is not considered to be intensive, and the fields are operated with an outdoor pig system. No additional environmental permits are required for its operation due to its small scale so, as with every rural property and Class Q barn conversion, there is nothing (in planning or regulatory terms) stopping the adjacent field being used for pigs in this way, or in that case any agricultural activity. We understand the concern if the subject Class Q barn was adjacent to the pig buildings, but this is not the case.

In terms of operation, the outdoor rotation system places sows in certain fields for approximately 2 years at a time (this can be seen when reviewing Google Earth imagery). The sows currently occupy a field located ~300m away from the proposed barn conversion. These fields include temporary, open-sided huts but no permanent livestock housing. This means that there is no accumulation of slurry in confined spaces and the pigs take shelter in well-ventilated structures. This type of odour source disperses very differently and at much lower concentrations than housed units. In addition, any potential odour or noise impact would be temporary and seasonal. I would understand the Public Protection Officer's comments if the subject barn was in close proximity to agricultural buildings that house the livestock, however that is not the case here. The barn is merely adjacent to a field that could be, and is, used for a range of agricultural activities (arable and livestock - as usual rotation).

At the time of my visit (and previous visits) I have never noticed any odour, fly nuisance or noise, due to the distance of the pigs and the farm buildings from the subject barn.

Furthermore, having farmed the unit for 38 years, the applicant has not had any complaints from anyone relating to odour or any other perceived nuisance. This includes immediate neighbours to the west of the farm along Chitterne Road, where the adjacent fields have been used by the pigs (Woodway Cottage and South Pennings, Chitterne Road). Similarly, the applicant lives at the farm and, if there were any problems due to nuisance, they would not live there.

Any future resident(s) of the proposed dwelling will be aware of the adjacent farm if they undertake a normal level of due diligence for buying a house (e.g. visits to the property and surrounding area). It is reasonable to only expect or anticipate complaints if this had been an issue raised in the past by other neighbouring properties. The proposed conversion would not create a new or unique impact given that the same conditions already affect neighbouring residents without causing issue, as with every rural property.

As noted above, there is a rotation system which means that the field adjacent to the barn will not be used for pigs for at least 4 years. In parallel, it is material to note that the long term future of pig farming, at this scale and in this way, is questionable. There is no succession plan to continue the business as it is and the use is therefore likely to cease in the not-too-distant future, hence the applicant seeking to diversify and seek for a Class Q change of use.

In summary, the small scale outdoor pig enterprise does not render this conversion "*undesirable*" within the meaning of the Class Q location test for the following reasons:

- The farm is not classified as an intensive installation and operates an outdoor rotation system without permanent livestock housing. This produces substantially lower / no odour impacts compared to a housed unit.
- The rotation means pigs are currently some 300 metres from the barn and will only periodically be adjacent to the proposed dwelling, temporarily and in the open air (as is the case for any rural property).
- Existing residential properties at Woodway Cottage and South Pennings on Chitterne Road already experience the same adjacency without any recorded complaint, demonstrating that residential occupation in close proximity to the farm is established and accepted in practice.

- The business is likely to cease within the coming years, further limiting any perceived impact on future occupiers.

Taken together, these factors clearly demonstrate that the proposed conversion is not rendered impractical or undesirable by reason of the neighbouring agricultural use of the fields, and no detailed odour assessment is considered necessary or proportionate.

