

APPLICATION FOR PRIOR NOTIFICATION – PART 3 CLASS Q CASE OFFICER REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2026/04137
APPLICATION TYPE:	Prior approval Part 3 Class Q: Agricultural buildings to dwellinghouses
SITE ADDRESS:	Lovett Farm, Swindon Road, Little Somerford, SN15 5BP
DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:	Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) – Part 3, Class Q, conversion of existing building to create 3No new dwellings
RECOMMENDATION:	That Prior Approval is required and GRANTED

Date of Site Visits: 13.11.2025 and 12.07.2026

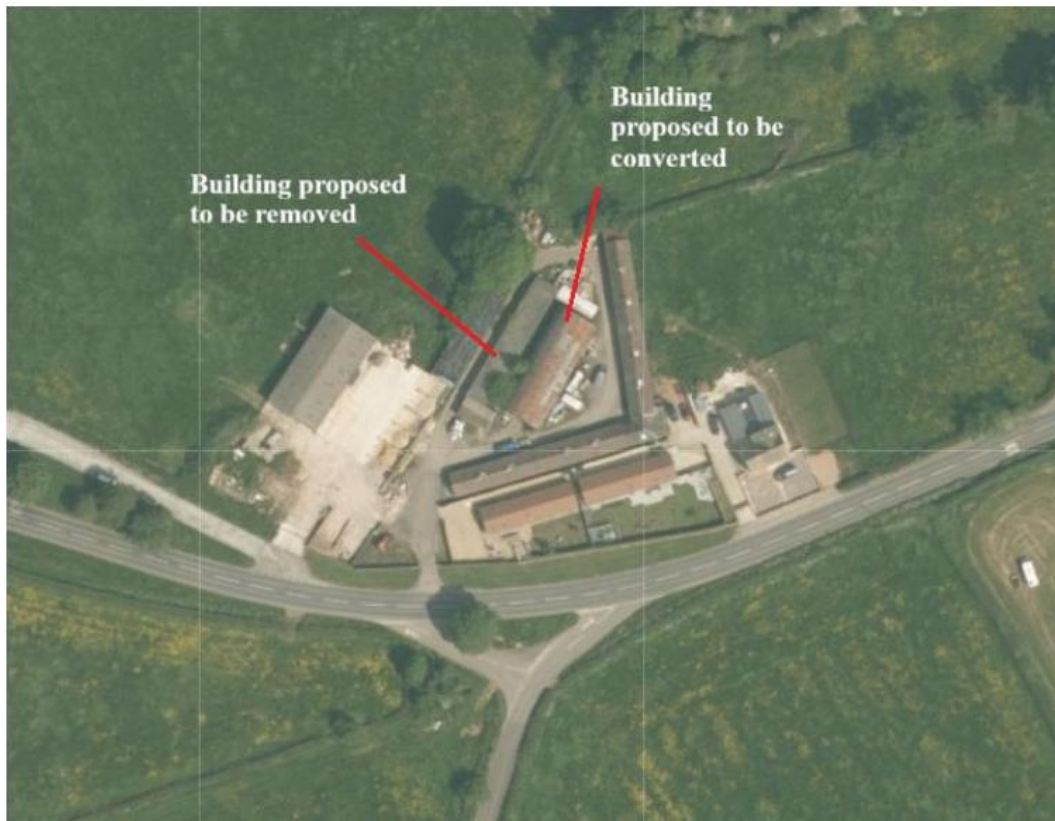
PROPOSAL

The application seeks prior approval under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) for the change of use of an existing agricultural building to form 3 no. dwellinghouses (Use Class C3), together with associated operational development.

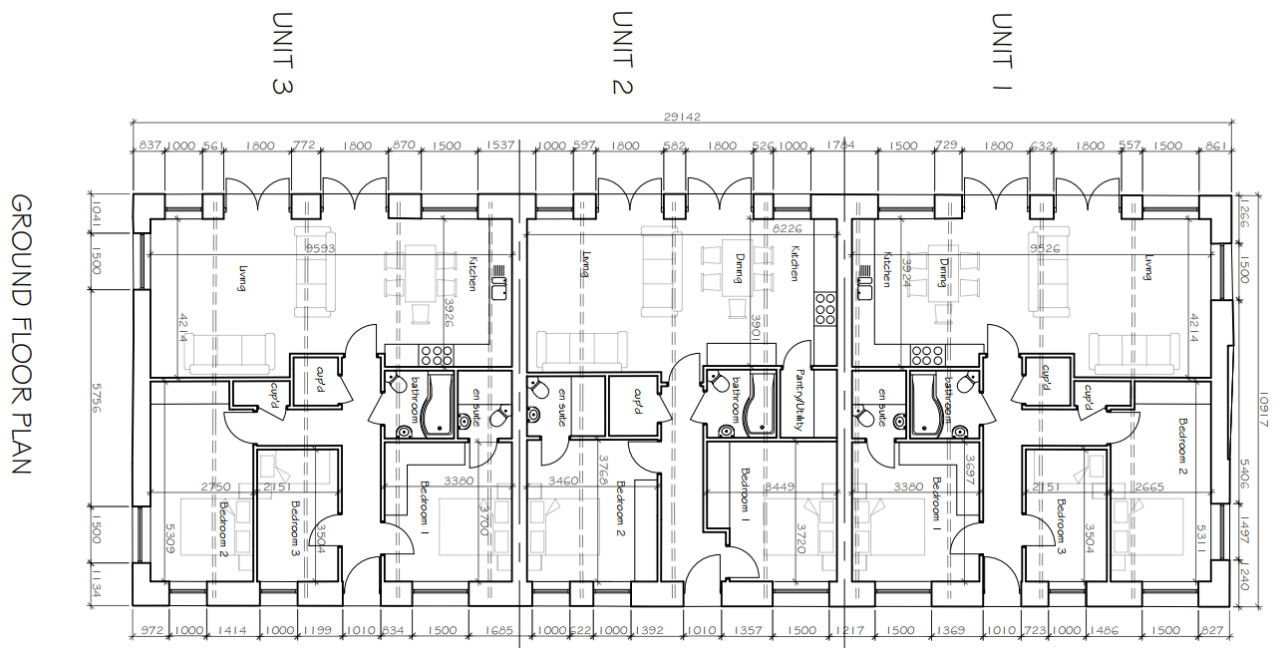
Below: Extract of submitted proposed block plan



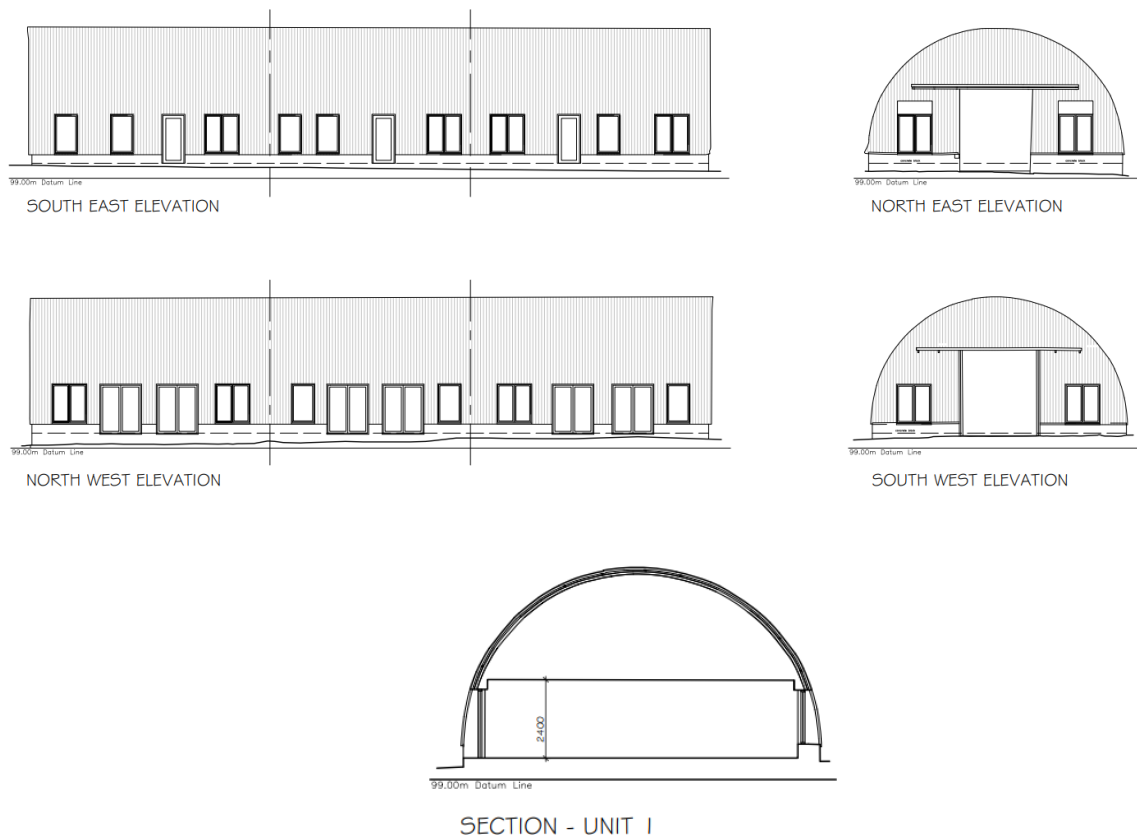
The building in question to be converted is an arched storage building, understood to have been erected on the farm in the 1960s. The building's location is shown on the aerial photograph extract below, effectively enclosed by the 'L' shaped former chicken house range. The building to the west would be removed.



The submitted details indicate that the development would retain the existing metal cladding to the walls and roof - the exterior would be repainted whilst internally the building would be insulated with a closed cell foam. The proposal includes the insertion of new openings, and the installation of services necessary to facilitate the residential use. Internal works are also proposed to create habitable accommodation, as shown on the extract of the submitted floor plans, below: -



Below: Submitted proposed elevations and section:

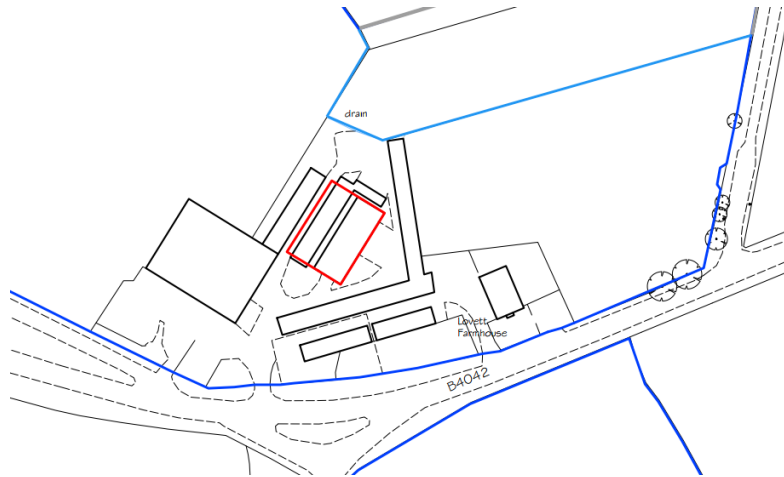


SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

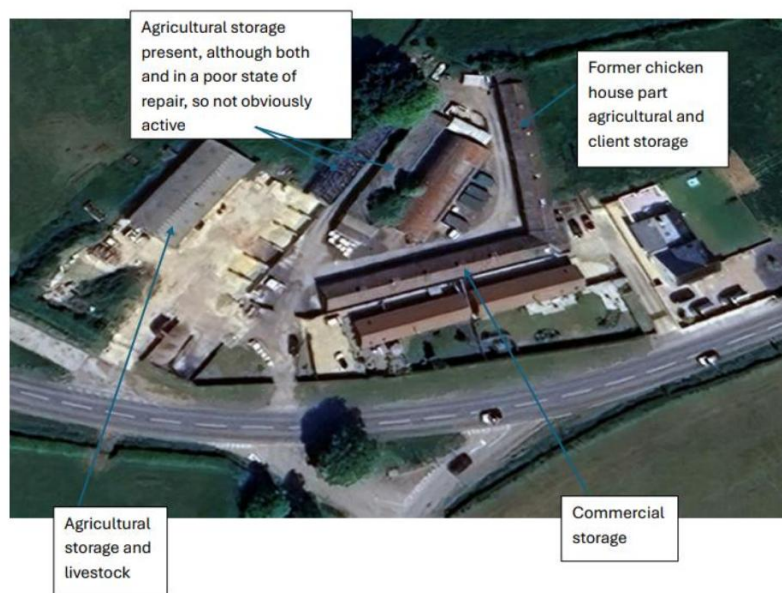
The site forms part of a wider farmstead at Lovett Farm, comprising some agricultural buildings and land, together with a number of buildings that have, over time, been subject to diversification and alternative uses. These include lawful B1, B2 and B8 uses within parts of the yard, as well as existing residential accommodation within the holding. As such, the site is best characterised as a mixed-use rural yard within an established agricultural unit, rather than a purely agricultural setting. The google street view below shows the existing site access from the B4042:



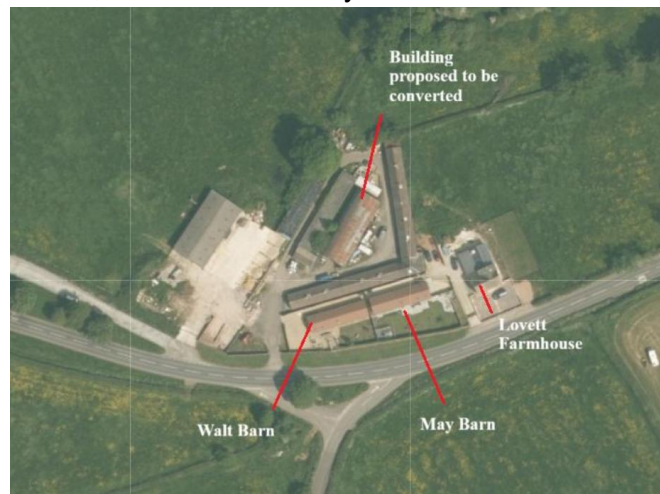
Below: Extract of the submitted location plan



During the life of the previous application on this site, the applicant submitted the following image to illustrate the use of other buildings within the site:



The surrounding area is rural in character, predominantly comprising agricultural land and sporadic farmstead development. The buildings subject to this application are located within a yard setting, with a mix of structures and associated hardstanding. Further to the uses identified on the submitted aerial photograph above, it should be noted that there are buildings in C3 use within the site – specifically Lovett Farmhouse, Walt Barn and May Barn:



The building to be converted appears to be of relatively simple construction, with concrete floors, sheet metal cladding and roofing. The site contains areas of hardstanding and informal storage.

Below: south east elevation of building to be converted:



Below: south west elevation of building to be converted:



The site is not subject to any statutory landscape, ecological or heritage designations. There are no listed buildings in the vicinity. The site is in Flood Zone 1, with no particular risk of flooding from surface water. With regard to groundwater emergence the SFRA advises that there is a risk of flooding to subsurface assets, but surface manifestation of groundwater is unlikely. No public rights of way cross or run alongside the site.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION, POLICY AND GUIDANCE

This application is assessed under Article 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), which grants planning permission for certain types of development described in Schedule 2 of the Order. The grant of permission is subject to the limitations, conditions, and provisions set out within the relevant Classes of permitted development.

Under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), certain changes of use and associated operations may be permitted subject to prior approval from the Local Planning Authority.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

History on the wider site is as follows:

N/88/00026/FUL Change of Use of Poultry Houses to Light Industrial – Refused.

N/93/00479/FUL - Erection of Covered Yard Approve with Conditions

N/97/02820/FUL - Change of Use of Dwelling to Dwelling with Bed and Breakfast Accommodation and Extensions to Roof – Relates to Lovett Farmhouse

N/04/00117/CLE - Certificate of Lawfulness for Use of Former Farm Buildings for B1, B2 and B8 uses approved – this referred to buildings in the yard but did not include the building now proposed to be converted to C3.

04/00118/COU Conversion of Former Agricultural Building To 5 Self-Contained Holiday Units approved - relates to “May Barn” and “Walt Barn”

N/09/00418/S73 - Renewal of Consent: Conversion of Former Agricultural Building to 5 Self Contained Holiday Units Ref: 04/00118/COU - relates to “May Barn” and “Walt Barn”

16/03376/PNCOU - Prior Approval of Proposed Change of Use of Agricultural Building to a Dwelling House (C3) and for Associated Operational Development. APPROVED - relates to “May Barn”

17/09865/FUL Use of building as self-contained residential annex associated with Lovett Farmhouse – approved – relates to “May Barn”

19/01545/FUL Construction of Farm Building – approved – this relates to the large agricultural building to the west of the application site.

Regarding this particular building -

PL/2025/08682 Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) Part 3, Class Q for Conversion of Existing Building to Create 3No. New Dwellings – Prior Approval Refused 24 June 2026 for the following reason:

“The proposed development, by reason of the extent of building operations required, including the removal and replacement of the external cladding and roof sheeting forming the essential envelope of the building, would go beyond what could reasonably be described as a conversion and would instead amount to a rebuild.

The Local Planning Authority is therefore not satisfied that the proposal falls within the scope of permitted development under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), having regard to the principles established in Hibbitt v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government [2016]. Planning permission is therefore required for the proposed development.”

CONSULTATIONS

Lea, Garsdon & Cleverton Parish Council: No objection in principle:

"The Parish Council had no objection in principle to the previous planning application PL/2025/08682 for this development. We did however have two comments on that application as follows:

a) Concerns about the integrity and strength of the existing structural steel frame of the building to be feasibly converted as was proposed to provide two storey living accommodation.

b) We questioned whether the siting of new dwellings where they are surrounded by what are presumably a mixture of defunct and live farming buildings and operations, was a reasonable location for new homes."

Wiltshire Council Highways Officer: No objection on highway safety grounds:

"I refer to the above application dated 02/07/2026 seeking permission for the conversion of an existing building to create 3No new dwellings.

The site is located outside of the settlement policy boundary, raising concerns with regards to the sustainability of the site for residential development due to the likely reliance upon the private car for any occupants and their visitors/lack of pedestrian facilities/safe cycling provision The proposal is therefore, contrary to Core Policies 60 and 61 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and Section 9, of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024, which aim to reduce the need to travel particularly by private car and encourage the use of sustainable transport alternative in order to promote a sustainable pattern of development. However, I shall be guided by you on this sustainability issue and wish to advise with regard to highways in the instance that you would be minded to permit dwellings in this location.

The site is located with existing access onto the B4042, a classified section of public highway subject to a speed limit of 50mph. There are no proposals to alter the public highway through the proposed development.

The proposals include 3 dwellings, two of which would be 3-bedroom units and one 2-bedroom unit. It would appear from the plans submitted that vehicle parking is proposed close to the dwellings in the order of 3 spaces per dwelling, which is acceptable and considered a provision above the minimum parking requirements of 2 spaces per 2/3 bed dwelling.

The proposals would not be deemed an intensification of the access over the existing use and would reduce the number of larger vehicle movements attracted by the site through the conversion. Therefore, other than the sustainability issue highlighted above, it is considered that no objection be raised with regard to highways."

Wiltshire Council Public Protection Officer: Noise – holding objection. Contaminated Land, no objection subject to conditions:

"NOISE

I have reviewed the submitted Noise Assessment (Ref. PAL-NIA-25147-1-v1) for the proposed conversion of the agricultural building at Lovett Farm. The assessment demonstrates that BS8233 internal noise targets can be achieved through the use of

glazing and background ventilation mitigation measures and predicts external amenity noise levels of approximately 51 dB LAeq.

However, the assessment also concludes that with windows open, night-time bedroom noise levels would be approximately 35 dB LAeq and 58 dB LAFmax, exceeding the relevant internal noise criteria. The report therefore relies on windows remaining closed during sleeping hours to achieve acceptable internal conditions.

Wiltshire Council's Noise and Planning Guidance requires developments affected by transport noise to seek achievement of internal noise standards with windows open wherever reasonably practicable and to demonstrate that the mitigation hierarchy has been fully considered before reliance is placed on closed windows.

Accordingly, we require the following additional information:

- A clear demonstration of how the Wiltshire mitigation hierarchy has been applied and why reliance on closed windows is necessary.*
- Assessment of whether any habitable rooms or bedrooms can achieve the required internal noise standards with windows open or partially open.*
- Confirmation of whether a quieter façade is available and which habitable rooms benefit from it.*
- Details of alternative acoustic ventilation or design measures considered to reduce reliance on closed windows.*
- Confirmation of the number and location of rooms requiring windows to remain closed to achieve acceptable internal noise levels.*
- Confirmation that surrounding agricultural, commercial or operational noise sources have been assessed and would not adversely affect future occupants.*

RECOMMENDATION

Therefore, Environmental Health cannot support the assessment in its current form and recommends that the above information is submitted to demonstrate compliance with Wiltshire Council's Noise and Planning Guidance. Pending receipt and review of satisfactory information, Environmental health maintains a holding objection on noise grounds.

CONTAMINATED LAND

Environmental Health has reviewed the submitted Contaminated Land Report. While the Phase 1 Preliminary Risk Assessment is broadly acceptable, the report identifies an overall low to moderate contamination risk associated with the site's agricultural and commercial history, including evidence of waste burning activities, localised oil contamination, vehicle repair activities and potential asbestos-containing materials. The site is proposed for a more sensitive residential end use with private gardens.

The consultant concludes that a targeted intrusive ground investigation is required to assess the nature and extent of any contamination and determine whether remediation is necessary. An asbestos refurbishment/demolition survey is also recommended prior to any demolition or conversion works. Environmental Health therefore recommends the contaminated land and asbestos conditions as proposed. The conditions are necessary and proportionate to ensure the site is suitable for its intended residential use:

1. No development shall commence until an assessment of the risks posed by any contamination, carried out in accordance with British Standard BS 10175: Investigation of potentially contaminated sites - Code of Practice and the Environment Agency, Land Contamination Risk Management (LCRM) (or equivalent British Standard and Model Procedures if replaced), has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. If any contamination is found, no development shall take place until:

i. a report specifying the measures to be taken, including the timescale, to remediate the site to render it suitable for the development hereby approved has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority;

ii. the site has been remediated in accordance with the approved measures and timescale; and iii. a verification report has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. If, during the course of development, any contamination is found which has not been previously identified, work shall be suspended until:

i. additional measures for the remediation of the site have been carried out in accordance with details that shall first have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority; and

ii. a verification report for all the remediation works has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

2. An appropriate asbestos refurbishment/demolition survey should be undertaken before any demolition or conversion works commence.”

REPRESENTATIONS

The application was publicised by two site notices displayed near the site. No representations have been received.

ASSESSMENT

This application seeks prior approval under Class Q, which sets out the provisions, limitations and conditions for the permitted development right to change the use of “buildings on agricultural units and former agricultural buildings to dwellinghouses” as follows:

Q. Development consisting of—

(a) a change of use of—

(i) a building that is part of an established agricultural unit and any land within that building's curtilage, or

(ii) a former agricultural building that was (but is no longer) part of an established agricultural unit and any land within that building's curtilage,

to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of Schedule 1 to the Use Classes Order,

(b) development referred to in sub-paragraph (a) together with the extension of the building referred to in sub-paragraph (a), or

(c) development referred to in sub-paragraph (a) together with building operations reasonably necessary to convert the building referred to in sub-paragraph (a) to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of that Schedule or to extend that building.

For the purposes of the PD right, the building's curtilage is defined by para. Q.3 as being:

(a) the piece of land, whether enclosed or unenclosed, immediately beside or around the agricultural building, closely associated with and serving the purposes of the agricultural building, or

(b) an area of land immediately beside or around the agricultural building no larger than the land area occupied by the agricultural building,

whichever is the lesser;

Does the Proposal Qualify as Permitted Development?

Development under Class Q is subject to a number of conditions and limitations. Development is not permitted by this class if any of the specified restrictions apply. These are set out at Appendix 1. Subject to compliance with these criteria and any limitations or conditions specified within the Order, the proposed development may be considered permitted development.

In addition to the limitations set out in Paragraph Q.1 of the GPDO, case law has established that certain proposals may exceed the scope of a "change of use" and instead constitute the construction of a new dwelling. In such instances, the development would fall outside the permitted development rights granted under Class Q. Therefore, it is necessary to assess whether the proposed works amount to a genuine "conversion" of the existing agricultural building, or whether they effectively result in a "replacement building." The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides helpful clarification on this point, emphasising that the structural integrity and extent of building operations must be considered when determining whether a proposal qualifies as a conversion under Class Q. More specifically the PPG¹ provides the following guidance in this regard:

"The right allows either the change of use (a), or the change of use together with reasonably necessary building operations (b). Building works are allowed under the right permitting agricultural buildings to change to residential use..."

However, the right assumes that the agricultural building is capable of functioning as a dwelling. The right permits building operations which are reasonably necessary to convert the building, which may include those which would affect the external appearance of the building and would otherwise require planning permission. This includes the installation or replacement of windows, doors, roofs, exterior walls, water, drainage, electricity, gas or other services to the extent reasonably necessary for the building to function as a dwelling house; and partial demolition to the extent reasonably necessary to carry out these building operations. It is not the intention of the permitted development right to allow rebuilding work which would go beyond what is reasonably necessary for the conversion of the building to

¹ Planning Practice Guidance - Paragraph: 105 Reference ID: 13-105-20180615 (revision date 15/06/2018).

residential use. Therefore it is only where the existing building is already suitable for conversion to residential use that the building would be considered to have the permitted development right...

Internal works are not generally development. For the building to function as a dwelling it may be appropriate to undertake internal structural works, including to allow for a floor, the insertion of a mezzanine or upper floors within the overall residential floor space permitted, or internal walls, which are not prohibited by Class Q.”

The previous application was refused on the basis that the extent of works required, including the removal and replacement of the external envelope (i.e. cladding to the roof and walls), would amount to a rebuild rather than a conversion.

The current application is supported by revised structural information which clarifies that the existing corrugated metal cladding and roof covering are capable of being retained as part of the conversion. The proposal would therefore retain the existing structural frame and external shell, together with internal alterations, insulation and associated building operations necessary to facilitate residential use.

Having regard to the revised structural report and the extent of the existing structure proposed to be retained, the Local Planning Authority is satisfied that the proposal falls on the side of conversion rather than reconstruction. The works proposed are limited to those reasonably necessary to enable the building to function as a dwellinghouse and fall within the scope of building operations permitted by Class Q. The proposal therefore does not exceed the limitations set out in paragraph Q.1 and is considered to constitute permitted development under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q of the GPDO.

This conclusion is reached on the basis of the submitted plans and supporting information, which indicate that the existing steel frame, metal cladding and roof covering are to be retained as part of the conversion. The proposal has therefore been assessed as the conversion of an existing agricultural building, rather than its reconstruction or replacement.

The conclusion that the proposal falls within the scope of Class Q is dependent upon the retention of the existing building as described within the submitted plans and supporting documentation. Any materially different scheme involving substantial demolition, reconstruction or replacement of the building would fall to be considered on its own merits and may require planning permission.

Is Prior Approval Required?

Where a proposal complies with all the provisions limitations set out under Class Q of Schedule 2, Part 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), the developer must apply to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) for a determination as to whether prior approval is required for the specified impacts and, if so, whether it should be granted.

In respect of this proposal, the following considerations must be assessed as part of the prior approval process as set out by Q.2.

Where the development proposed is development under Class Q(a) together with development under Class Q(c), development is permitted subject to the condition that before beginning the development, the developer must apply to the local planning authority for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required as to—

- (a) transport and highways impacts of the development,*
- (b) noise impacts of the development,*
- (c) contamination risks on the site,*
- (d) flooding risks on the site,*
- (e) whether the location or siting of the building makes it otherwise impractical or undesirable for the building to change from agricultural use to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of Schedule 1 to the Use Classes Order,*
- (f) the design or external appearance of the building, and*
- (g) the provision of adequate natural light in all habitable rooms of the dwellinghouses,*

and the provisions of paragraph W (prior approval) of this Part apply in relation to that application.

Paragraph W sets out a number of requirements for both the developer (in terms of the application submission) and the LPA (relating to consultations and advertisement of the application). Paragraph W(10) states that:

The local planning authority must, when determining an application—

(a) take into account any representations made to them as a result of any consultation under sub-paragraphs (5) or (6) and any notice given under sub-paragraph (8);

(b) have regard to the National Planning Policy..., so far as relevant to the subject matter of the prior approval, as if the application were a planning application; and

(c) in relation to the contamination risks on the site—

(i) determine whether, as a result of the proposed change of use, taking into account any proposed mitigation, the site will be contaminated land as described in Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, and in doing so have regard to the Contaminated Land Statutory Guidance issued by the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in April 2012, and

(ii) if they determine that the site will be contaminated land, refuse to give prior approval

Paragraph W(13) allows LPAs to grant prior approval unconditionally or subject to conditions reasonably related to the subject matter of the prior approval.

Extent of Assessment Under Class Q

Whilst paragraph W requires the Local Planning Authority to have regard to the National Planning Policy Framework, the authority's assessment remains limited to those matters specified within Class Q and paragraph W of the GPDO. Matters falling outside the scope of the prior approval process cannot be taken into account when determining the application.

Accordingly, issues such as the principle of residential development, the sustainability of the location, housing need, compliance with the development plan, planning balance considerations, and other matters falling outside the specified prior approval considerations are not relevant to the determination of the application except where they directly relate to one of the prescribed prior approval matters.

Transport and highways impacts of the development

Policy Context

Policies TR3-TR8 of the National Planning Policy Framework seek to ensure that development provides safe and suitable access for all users and does not result in unacceptable impacts on highway safety. National policy also confirms that development should only be refused on transport grounds where there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or where the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

In terms of locational sustainability, the Local Planning Authority (LPA) is not able to assess whether the site's location in open countryside is sustainable in relation to access to services, employment, or facilities. This is not a consideration under the relevant prior approval provisions. Accordingly, the key matter for assessment is the impact of the proposal on highway safety, particularly in relation to the site access and the surrounding local highway network.

Assessment

The Highway Authority has raised no objection to the proposal in terms of highway safety, noting that the existing access arrangements are adequate to serve the development and that the proposal would not result in a material intensification of use when compared to the existing agricultural use. Adequate parking provision is also indicated within the site.

Concerns have been raised regarding the sustainability of the site in locational terms, particularly in relation to reliance on the private car and limited access to services. However, such matters do not fall within the scope of the prior approval matters, which are limited to transport and highway safety impacts.

On this basis, the Local Planning Authority is satisfied that the proposal would not give rise to unacceptable impacts on highway safety.

Conclusion

Prior approval in relation to traffic matters is not required.

Noise impacts

Policy Context

Policy P3 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires development to be appropriate for its location, taking account of the likely effects of pollution on health, living conditions and the

natural environment. In relation to noise, the policy seeks to ensure that development provides healthy living conditions for future occupants, avoids unacceptable adverse effects on health and quality of life, and incorporates mitigation where necessary.

In the context of this proposal, the key consideration is whether the development would result in, or be exposed to, unacceptable levels of noise, and whether any such impacts can be appropriately mitigated to ensure a suitable living environment.

Assessment

The Council's Public Protection Officer has reviewed the submitted Noise Assessment and requested further information regarding the application of the Council's mitigation hierarchy, the reliance on closed windows to achieve internal noise standards, and the assessment of surrounding agricultural and commercial noise sources.

These comments are noted. However, the submitted Noise Assessment concludes that internal noise standards can be achieved through glazing and ventilation mitigation measures and that external amenity areas would experience acceptable noise levels. The assessment identifies road traffic noise from the B4042 as the dominant source of noise affecting the site.

Having regard to the submitted technical evidence, the Local Planning Authority remains satisfied that acceptable living conditions can be achieved for future occupiers subject to the implementation of the mitigation measures identified within the submitted Noise Assessment. Whilst the Council's Public Protection Officer has requested further information in respect of the application of the Council's mitigation hierarchy and the assessment of surrounding commercial and agricultural noise sources, it is noted that the same Noise Assessment was submitted and considered under the previous application. At that time, the Local Planning Authority undertook a detailed assessment of the prior approval matters, including noise impacts, and concluded that the identified impacts could be adequately mitigated through the measures set out within the assessment. In the absence of any material change to the proposal or the noise environment, and having regard to the presence of existing residential properties within the immediate vicinity, the Local Planning Authority is satisfied that the proposal would provide an acceptable standard of residential amenity for future occupiers.

Conclusion

Prior approval in relation to noise matters is required and is granted subject to the recommended condition(s).

Contamination risks

Policy Context

Policy P2 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires sites proposed for development to be suitable for their intended use, taking account of ground conditions, including any risks arising from land instability or contamination, and the extent to which such risks can be mitigated. Following remediation, land should not be capable of being determined as contaminated land

under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. The policy also requires adequate site assessment information, prepared by a competent person, to be available to inform the assessment of these matters.

In the context of this proposal, the Local Planning Authority must be satisfied that the site is not affected by contamination or land stability issues that would make it unsuitable for residential occupation, and that any necessary investigations or mitigation measures have been appropriately considered.

Assessment

A Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Desk Study and Preliminary Risk Assessment has been submitted in support of the application. The report identifies a number of potential sources of contamination associated with the agricultural and commercial history of the site, including localised oil contamination, vehicle repair activities, waste burning and the potential presence of asbestos-containing materials.

The submitted assessment concludes that the overall contamination risk is low to moderate. However, given the proposed residential end use, including private garden areas, the report recommends a targeted intrusive ground investigation to establish the nature and extent of any contamination and determine whether remediation measures are required. The report also recommends that an asbestos refurbishment/demolition survey is undertaken prior to any conversion works.

The Council's Public Protection Officer has reviewed the submitted information and is satisfied that the identified risks can be appropriately managed through the imposition of planning conditions requiring further site investigation, any necessary remediation, verification of those works and an asbestos survey prior to development commencing.

Having regard to the submitted assessment and consultation response, it is considered that contamination risks can be adequately addressed and would not prevent the proposed development from proceeding.

Conclusion

Prior approval in relation to contamination matters is required and is granted subject to the recommended conditions.

Flooding risks

Policy Context

Policies F4-F8 of the National Planning Policy Framework seek to ensure that flood risk is appropriately managed and that development is safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere. Whilst the sequential approach is a matter addressed through national policy, the specific prior approval consideration under Class Q relates to flood risk on the site and whether appropriate mitigation measures are necessary.

Assessment

The application site lies within Flood Zone 1, which is defined as land having a low probability of flooding. The submitted site information confirms that there is no identified risk of fluvial flooding affecting the site.

In addition, the Council's SFRA indicates there is no particular risk of flooding from surface water. With regard to groundwater emergence the SFRA advises that there is a risk of flooding to subsurface assets, but surface manifestation of groundwater is unlikely.

The Local Planning Authority is therefore satisfied that the site is not subject to flooding constraints that would render the development unsafe or increase flood risk elsewhere.

Conclusion

Prior approval in relation to flood risk matters is not required.

Location (impractical or undesirable)

Policy Context

The PPG advises that LPAs should apply a reasonable approach to the assessment of the location being "impractical or undesirable"². It goes on to advise 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. That an agricultural building is in a location where the local planning authority would not normally grant planning permission for a new dwelling is not a sufficient reason for refusing prior approval.

Applications should only be refused if there may be circumstances where adverse impacts cannot be mitigated. Examples given by the PPG, when looking at location, include an agricultural building on the top of a hill with no road access, power source or other services being impractical and the location of a building (whose use would change) may be undesirable if it is adjacent to other uses such as intensive poultry farming buildings, silage storage or buildings with dangerous machines or chemicals.

Assessment

Concerns have been raised regarding potential odour and environmental impacts associated with surrounding agricultural and commercial activities by the parish council and Council Public Protection officers.

² Planning Practice Guidance - Paragraph: 109 Reference ID: 13-109-20150305, Revision date: 05/03/2015.

However, there is no evidence to indicate the presence of intensive livestock operations or other activities that would give rise to sustained or unacceptable living conditions. Whilst the site forms part of a mixed-use rural yard, such conditions are not uncommon within farmstead environments and do not, in themselves, render residential occupation impractical or undesirable.

The application building is located within an established group of buildings and benefits from an existing vehicular access onto the public highway. The site is also closely associated with existing residential uses within the wider holding, including Lovett Farmhouse and previously converted buildings at Walt Barn and May Barn. The presence of these dwellings demonstrates that residential occupation has already been successfully established within this part of the farmstead.

Furthermore, there is no evidence that the site lacks access to services or infrastructure, nor that there are any physical constraints that would prevent the building functioning as a dwellinghouse. The circumstances are therefore materially different from the examples identified within the Planning Practice Guidance of locations that may be considered impractical or undesirable. On this basis, the Local Planning Authority is satisfied that the location of the building would not render the proposed residential use impractical or undesirable.

Conclusion

Prior approval in relation to location matters is not required.

Design or external appearance of the building

Policy Context

Policy DP3 of the National Planning Policy Framework recognises the importance of high-quality design and well-designed places. Development should contribute positively to local character and context, respond appropriately to its surroundings, and achieve a high standard of design over its lifetime.

In the context of Class Q development, the assessment is limited to the design and external appearance of the converted building and associated building operations. The principle of residential use is established through the GPDO where the development complies with the requirements of Class Q.

The National Design Guide remains a material consideration when assessing the design and external appearance of the development. In considering this prior approval application, the Local Planning Authority has had regard to national design guidance insofar as it is relevant to the design and external appearance of the converted building and its relationship with the surrounding area.

Assessment

The proposal involves the conversion of an existing agricultural building, with alterations including the insertion of new openings and associated works necessary to facilitate residential use.

The scale, form and simple agricultural character of the building would be retained. The proposed openings are modest in number and size and are arranged in a manner that responds to the existing structure. The development does not involve any extension to the building, nor would it result in significant alterations to its overall appearance.

The submitted drawings indicate that the building would retain its simple utilitarian appearance, reflecting its agricultural origins. Whilst new windows and doors are proposed, these are limited to those reasonably necessary to facilitate the residential use and would not result in an excessive degree of domestication.

The proposal is therefore considered to represent a suitably restrained conversion that would continue to read as a former agricultural building within its rural setting. Accordingly, the Local Planning Authority is satisfied that the design and external appearance of the building would be acceptable.

Conclusion

Prior approval in relation to design matters is required and is granted.

Provision of Natural Light

Policy Context

Policy P3 of the NPPF seeks to ensure that development provides a high standard of amenity and healthy living conditions for future occupiers.

The prior approval matter to be assessed under para. Q.2(1)(g) relates to the provision of natural light into habitable rooms of the proposed dwelling.

For the purposes of the Part 3 (change of use) PD rights, para. X of the GPDO defines “habitable rooms” as:

“...any rooms used or intended to be used for sleeping or living which are not solely used for cooking purposes, but does not include bath or toilet facilities, service rooms, corridors, laundry rooms, hallways or utility rooms.”

Assessment

The submitted plans show that all habitable rooms would be served by appropriately positioned windows providing direct natural light.

The amended single-storey layout avoids reliance on rooflights and provides a conventional arrangement of openings, resulting in good quality accommodation.

The Local Planning Authority is satisfied that adequate natural light would be provided to all habitable rooms

Conclusion

Prior approval in relation to natural light matters is required and is granted.

CONCLUSION

The proposal falls within the scope of Class Q permitted development.

Prior approval is not required in respect of transport and highways impacts, flooding risks, or the location/siting of the building.

Prior approval is required in respect of noise impacts, contamination risks, design and external appearance, and the provision of adequate natural light. Subject to the conditions set out below, these matters are considered acceptable.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Prior Approval is NOT required in relation to transport and highways impacts, flood risk or location/siting matters.

And

That prior approval IS required in relation to noise impacts and contamination risks, design/external appearance and natural light matters and is GRANTED subject to the below conditions.

1. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the recommendations and mitigation measures set out in the submitted Noise Assessment (PAL-NIA-25147-1-v1). The approved mitigation measures shall be installed prior to first occupation of the dwellings and retained thereafter.

REASON: To ensure that future occupants are protected from unacceptable noise impacts and to secure an acceptable standard of residential amenity.

2. No conversion works shall take place until an assessment of the risks posed by any contamination has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. If contamination is identified, a remediation strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the approved remediation measures shall be implemented prior to first occupation of the dwellinghouses.

REASON: To ensure that the site is suitable for its intended residential use and to safeguard the health of future occupants.

3. Prior to the commencement of any conversion works, an appropriate asbestos refurbishment/demolition survey shall be undertaken and any recommendations implemented in accordance with the findings of that survey.

REASON: To ensure the safe identification and management of any asbestos-containing materials during the conversion of the building and to safeguard human health.

INFORMATIVE

For the avoidance of doubt, this determination has been made having regard to the following plans and documents:

- Application Form received 02 July 2026
- Covering Letter LPC884-WCN-01072026 received 02 July 2026
- Structural Report ref 25-009_C2 received 02 July 2026
- Land Contamination Assessment received 02 July 2026
- Noise Assessment received 02 July 2026
- Location Plan LPC 884 EX 301 Rev A received 02 July 2026
- Existing Site Plan LPC 884 EX 302 received 02 July 2026
- Existing Floor Plan LPC 884 EX 303 received 02 July 2026
- Existing Elevations LPC 884 EX 304 received 02 July 2026
- Proposed Site Plan LPC 884 PR 301 received 02 July 2026
- Proposed Floor Plan LPC 884 PR 302 A received 02 July 2026
- Proposed Elevations LPC 884 PR 303 B received 02 July 2026

APPENDIX 1 – PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT CHECKLIST CLASS Q

Class Q – agricultural buildings to dwellinghouses

		Yes / No
Q.	Permitted Development Note: <i>If the answer is "Yes" to any, proceed to assessment under Q.1. If the answer is "No" to all, the proposal does not qualify as permitted development under this class.</i>	
(a)	Does the development consist of change of use of: (i) a building and any land within its curtilage from use as an agricultural building, or (ii) a former agricultural building that was (but is no longer) part of an established agricultural unit and any land within that building's curtilage? to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses)?	YES
(b)	Does it include development referred to in sub-paragraph (a) together with the extension of the building referred to in sub-paragraph (a), or	NO
(c)	Does it include development referred to in sub-paragraph (a) together with building operations reasonably necessary to convert the building referred to in sub-paragraph (a) to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of that Schedule or to extend that building?	YES
Q.1	Development is not permitted by Class Q if - Note: <i>If the answer to any of the questions below is "Yes", the proposed development would not constitute permitted development under this class</i>	
(a)	Was the site not part of the established agricultural unit: (i) on 24th July 2023, or (ii) where the site became part of the established agricultural unit after 24th July 2023, for a period of at least 10 years before the date development under Class Q begins?	NO
(b)	Is the site no longer part of an established agricultural unit and either: (i) Was not part of one on 24 July 2023, (ii) Has not been part of one for at least 10 years before development begins, or (iii) Has been used for any non-agricultural purpose since leaving the unit?	NO
(c)	Does any proposed dwelling exceed 150 square metres in floor space?	NO

(d)(i)	Would the total number of dwellings on the agricultural unit (including previous Class Q developments) exceed 10?	NO
(d)(ii)	Would the total cumulative floor space of all dwellings on the unit exceed 1,000 square metres?	NO
(e)	Is the site occupied under an agricultural tenancy without written consent from both landlord and tenant?	NO
(f)	Was an agricultural tenancy terminated less than 1 year before development begins for the purpose of Class Q development, without written agreement that the site is no longer needed for agriculture?	NO
(g)	Has development under Class A(a) or B(a) of Part 6 (agricultural buildings/operations) occurred on the unit within the last 10 years?	NO
(h)	Would the development extend the building beyond its existing external dimensions, except for: (i) Extensions allowed under Q.1(i), or (ii) Protrusions up to 0.2m allowed under Q.1(j)(i)?	NO
(i)	Would the proposed extension: (i) Have more than one storey? (ii) Be sited anywhere other than the rear? (iii) Extend more than 4m beyond the rear wall? (iv) Have eaves higher than the existing building? (v) Be taller than the highest part of the roof or 4m above ground? (vi) Extend beyond a side or principal elevation? (vii) Be sited on land not covered by a hard surface installed before 24 July 2023 or not in place for at least 10 years?	N/A
(j)	Would the building operations include anything other than: (i) Installation/replacement of windows, doors, roofs, exterior walls, or services, or (ii) Partial demolition reasonably necessary for those operations?	NO
(k)	Is the site located on article 2(3) land (e.g., National Parks, AONBs, conservation areas)?	NO
(l)	Is the site or any part of it: (i) A Site of Special Scientific Interest? (ii) A safety hazard area? (iii) A military explosives storage area?	NO
(m)	Is the site or any part of it a scheduled monument?	NO
(n)	Is the building a listed building?	NO

(o)	Would the converted building (excluding extensions) fail to meet the nationally described space standard?	NO
(p)	Does the building lack suitable existing access to a public highway?	NO