

PLANNING STATEMENT

**AMENDMENTS TO APPLICATION
24/01733/PNQ - DEMOLITION OF
REDUNDANT AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS
AND ERECTION OF THREE DWELLINGS
AND ASSOCIATED WORK**

AT

**WOODCOTES,
FEARS GREEN,
SANDON,
BUNTINGFORD,
SG9 0QZ**



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site is located in Sandon, outside of the development boundary and within the countryside. The site is situated amongst agricultural land, with little else in the immediate vicinity, the site is set well back from the highway. The site is a farmyard which consists of 3 vacant former agricultural buildings, formerly used for housing chickens. None of the buildings are located within flood zones 2 and 3. The building primarily subject to this application (and the host building for the earlier Class Q consent) comprise of both a steel and timber frame, blockwork plinth, timber cladding, corrugated sheeting to the roof, with a concrete floor. Apart from some very low key storage of agricultural implements, the buildings are now underutilised.
- 1.2 The other two buildings on site are cartlodge style buildings. Firstly, the building referred to as 'cartlodge' is a timber building which sits on the boundary with the agricultural land. This is in need of some repairs. The second has an open front, comprises a metal clad elevations over a block plinth, sitting on a concrete pad. Apart from some very low key storage of agricultural implements and some occasional hay storage, the building is now underutilized, but part of it, which faces on to the neighbouring dwelling, will be retained for use as garaging for the existing dwelling, as it is currently.
- 1.3 The Class Q building is barely visible from the public highway but is set back some 50 metres from the road. It is positioned behind existing hedging, the other two smaller buildings can be seen but are not prominent features in the landscape. The levels at the site are fairly flat, with a slight incline from the road to the barn.
- 1.4 Historically, the access has been used by farm traffic and therefore the change to residential traffic associated only with three additional residential dwellings will not have an adverse impact (which already have extant consent under Class Q). Notwithstanding this, the highway network is fairly quiet country roads with few traffic movements and traffic movements associated with three additional dwellings can adequately be accommodated on the existing highway network. Adequate visibility can be provided at



the access point, meaning there are no highway safety concerns which should warrant refusal of this application. Furthermore, three dwellings have been approved at the site so this application proposes no additional traffic movements above those already consented.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This application follows an earlier prior approval application at the site (24/01733/PNQ) for the conversion of the agricultural building into three residential dwellings. This permission is extant and will be implemented and completed if this planning application is refused and dismissed on appeal.
- 2.2 The approved Class Q application would see the creation of three no. four bedroom dwellings, over a footprint of 465 square metres (gross internal area). It is now proposed to demolish the existing building and replace it with three new dwellings, providing enhanced accommodation on a lesser footprint to the three existing buildings on site, thus reducing the overall impact upon the countryside. There is little, if any built form in the vicinity of the site, other than the applicants' house, Woodcotes. Therefore, the design approach has taken a modern form, as there is little to replicate in the vicinity. Starting with a blank canvas, other than the modern farm building and the rural locality will allow for an enhanced development rather than trying to convert an old poultry building which was never meant for human habitation.
- 2.3 Two of the proposed dwellings sit on the plot of the existing poultry building. The buildings mirror one another, will be small in size and scale with two bedrooms, office and living accommodation. As previously discussed, they take an agricultural approach to their design. External materials will consist of grey/buff brick, Siberian larch, with the roof a standing seam metal cladding with a matching bronze colour. The larger house has been individually designed to the applicant's specifications. It sits off the position on the original building but on an existing concrete area, which historically contained another poultry building similar to that opposite. The building is does not protrude into he open



countryside, on the contrary it provides for a better development overall, breaking up the proposed built form, rather than having it sit in one lump on the site.

3.0 APPLICATION PROPOSALS

- 3.1 The application proposes the demolition of the existing large agricultural building (which benefits from Class Q Prior approval consent), along with two further agricultural buildings and the erection of three new dwellings. One of these will be for the applicants themselves and has subsequently been designed to a high standard based on their personal preferences. The remaining two dwellings utilise the remaining floor area that was achieved via the Class Q consent, these will likely be sold as plots. The application would see the removal of the existing redundant agricultural buildings on site, replacing it with a more appropriate and aesthetically pleasing, purpose built residential development.
- 3.2 The proposals would see the removal of the poultry building, which has a footprint of 709 square metres (GEA) and also remove the cartlodge building at the front of the site and part of the garage/outbuilding that is shared with the main house. The cartlodge will remove 114.7 square metres and the garage building, which is partially being removed (to retain the garage section for the main house) will see 158.9 square metres removed (with 104 square metres being retained). The proposed three houses will create an area of 569.8 square metres GEA in total, overall a considerable reduction. The resulting floor area of the Class Q permission was 465 square metres and this was achieved from not utilising around 1.2 metres of the building on either side, instead this area was left void. Therefore, there will be a considerable reduction in footprint, albeit that the height increases from 3.5 metres (chicken shed), 2.4 metres (cartlodge) and 6.5 metres (garage) to 5.6 metres at the tallest point of the proposed dwellings (the smaller dwellings have a height of 5.46 metres). All floor area measurements above are Gross External Area (GEA).
- 3.3 In terms of the volume, the most appropriate way of assessing the impact of the proposals against that of the existing, the sizes are set out below:-



Volume Study Existing

Chicken Shed	=	1777.5m ³
The Barn	=	1308.1m ³ (part retained 860.1 ³ to be demolished)
Cartlodge	=	249.9m ³
Total	=	2887.5m ³

Volume Study Proposed

Building 1	=	1222.5m ³
Building 2	=	615.3m ³
Building 3	=	615.3m ³
Total	=	2453.1m ³

- 3.4 The reduction in footprint and volume, coupled with the improved design and appearance and more appropriate location and overall appearance, result in a lessened impact, improved openness of the countryside and overall enhanced development.
- 3.5 In addition, the proposals will see the demolition of two other agricultural buildings at the site, which themselves have some Class Q potential. Their removal, however, will ensure that any visual impact resulting from the new builds will be negligible at worst, with such a considerable reduction in built form at the site.
- 3.6 This is a total reduction of 434.4 cubic metres from the existing agricultural buildings to the proposed new dwellings. It would see the use of high quality materials, including Grey/buff colored brick, Siberian larch, and render and standing seam metal cladding with a matching bronze colour to the roof (and partly to the walls of buildings 2 &3). Windows will be an anodized aluminum and double/triple glazed and doors will be hardwood.



4.0 NATIONAL POLICY

- 4.1 The NPPF sets out Government planning policy and so is therefore a material consideration in determining planning applications, this was most recently updated in December 2024. Also, the NPPF is supplemented by the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), which was published on 6th March 2014.
- 4.2 Development plan policies are material to an application for planning permission and the decision must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise (see section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 4.3 Paragraph 231 and 232 of the NPPF outlines that; the policies in this Framework are material considerations which should be taken into account in dealing with applications from the day of its publication. Plans may also need to be revised to reflect policy changes which this replacement Framework has made. However, existing policies should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted or made prior to the publication of this Framework. Due weight should be given to them, according to their degree of consistency with this Framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given). Where a local planning authority can demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites (with the appropriate buffer as set out in paragraph 78) and where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that the delivery of housing is more than 75% of the housing requirement over the previous three years, policies should not be regarded as out-of-date on the basis that the most up to date local housing need figure (calculated using the standard method set out in planning practice guidance) is greater than the housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, for a period of five years from the date of the plan's adoption.
- 4.4 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF advises, amongst other things, that “plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
For decision-taking this means:



- c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
- d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.”

4.5 Paragraph 84 of the NPPF states that “Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:

- a) there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;
- b) the development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;
- c) the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting;
- d) the development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential dwelling; or
- e) the design is of exceptional quality, in that it:
 - is truly outstanding or innovative, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and
 - would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.”

4.6 The NPPG provides guidance on design and states that:



“Good design should ‘enhance the quality buildings and spaces, by considering amongst other things form and function; efficiency and effectiveness and their impact on well-being.’ and “address the need for different uses sympathetically”.

- 4.7 It goes on to state that *“Good quality design is an integral part of sustainable development. The National Planning Policy Framework recognises that design quality matters and that planning should drive up standards across all forms of development. As a core planning principle, plan-makers and decision takers should always seek to secure high quality design.”*

5.0 LOCAL POLICY

- 5.1 Local Policy comprises the North Herts Local Plan 2011-2031. The most relevant policies are mentioned below, whilst others may be pertinent to the application, they are covered in section 6 of this report.
- 5.2 Policy SP2 sets out the settlement hierarchy for the district. Sandon is stated to be a Category A village, where general development will be allowed within the defined settlement boundaries.
- 5.3 Policy CGB1 is concerned the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt. It states that planning permission will be granted provided that development:-
- ‘a) Is infilling development which does not extend the built core of a Category B village;*
 - b) Meets a proven local need for community facilities, services or affordable housing in an appropriate location;*
 - c) Is strictly necessary for the needs of agriculture or forestry;*
 - d) Relates to an existing rural building;*
 - e) Is a modest proposal for rural economic development or diversification; or*
 - f) Would provide land or facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and cemeteries that respect the generally open nature of the rural area.’*

5.4 The most pertinent policy in the Local Plan in respect of these proposals is CBG4. This states that:-

'a) Planning permission for the re-use, replacement or extension of buildings in the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt will be granted provided that:

b) Any existing building to be converted for re-use does not require major extension or reconstruction;

c) The resultant building(s) do not have a materially greater impact on the openness, purposes or general policy aims of the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt than the original building(s); and

d) Any outbuilding(s) are sited as close as possible to the main building(s) and visually subordinate to them.'

5.5 Policy D2 is also relevant, albeit not strictly directly relevant, being concerned with *inter alia* replacement dwellings. This planning application replaces a planning permission which secured consent for the conversion of an agricultural building into residential, therefore although this host application does not replace a dwelling, it does replace the consent to turn the building into a residential use and is therefore relevant, it states:

Planning permission for replacement dwellings and outbuildings will be granted where:

c) The proposal does not harm the character and appearance of the site; and

d) The location of the proposal does not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the streetscene or area.

5.3 In this instance the policies in connection with barn conversions are not strictly relevant, as although the barn has permission via Class Q to convert to residential, this proposal will see the replacement of the barn with a purpose built pair of dwellings.



6.0 CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 Turning firstly to the appropriateness of the proposed development within the countryside, the re-use of the redundant building has been considered as appropriate development in the countryside (24/01733/PNQ).
- 6.2 This must be recognised as a fallback position in the determination of this proposal which will see the demolition of the existing building and the erection of three dwellings of a smaller footprint in its place. It is a material consideration of considerable weight, as is recognised in the list of appeal decision appended to this statement. However, this is not the applicants preferred option as they wish to building their own purpose built home.
- 6.3 The fallback position of the refurbishment and change of use of the building, although a very viable alternative, is not as cost effective or as simple to undertake as a new build dwelling(s). The obvious benefit of a new building are the enhancements to the design of the dwelling which is no longer restricted to that of the existing building, which was constructed for agricultural purposes and is of no architectural merit. That said, the proposal will maintain an agricultural appearance in order to remain in keeping with its rural surroundings and the recently converted barn to the south. It also provides the applicants with the opportunity to design and construct their own house, they would not want to live in a terrace dwelling which was formerly a poultry shed. The 'clean slate' means that they design from scratch and really secure a legacy house on the site. The remaining two dwellings take their design approach from the applicants proposed dwelling.
- 6.4 The erection of three new dwellings is subsequently favourable for a number of reasons. Firstly, as previously mentioned, the replacement will improve the overall design and appearance of the dwelling and allow the applicant to build their own house. It will also see the use of more appropriate materials and detailing to the dwelling resulting in a more in keeping development compared to converting the poultry shed. The erection of new



build dwellings will also make the built form less intrusive into the countryside and will be on a smaller footprint than the existing agricultural building.

- 6.5 In terms of the impact upon the countryside, for the purposes of this application, the impact will be minimal, as it will see the replacement of buildings rather than any isolated new dwelling. The location of the existing building is sited adjacent existing (albeit new) dwellings, it is not in an 'isolated' location.
- 6.6 The design and appearance of the building is currently poor and this application gives the best opportunity to replace poor design with better design, in accordance with section 12 of the NPPF and will add to the Council's 5 year land supply promptly. The replacements will be in keeping with the surrounding dwellings and enhancing the overall appearance.
- 6.7 The plans submitted show three dwellings in comparison to the existing buildings, including the poultry building that benefits from the Class Q Consent. Two of these buildings are mirrored identical, the other dwelling is designed in conjunction with the applicants request as they plan to build their own house. The two smaller dwellings are identical and have been designed with the perceived impact upon the countryside in mind, resulting in no adverse impacts upon the area when the removal of the existing poultry shed is borne in mind. Although over two floors, the main dwelling is built into the ground in order to reduce the impact. Its height is less than the nearest residential dwelling, which itself is full two storey in height. This proposal will see a complete change in design from the existing poor quality utilitarian farm building to a far more modest and attractively designed dwellings. The total volume of built form at the site will reduce with the demolition of the three existing buildings, improving the openness of the countryside. Overall, this design is considered to be an improvement to that of the conversion scheme previously approved, and therefore in accordance with section 12 of the NPPF.
- 6.8 The character of the locality and surrounding area will also be safeguarded and indeed enhanced by the proposed development. Simple design and traditional choice of materials characterise the building and from beyond the site boundaries it will appear as

a modern rural building, remaining in keeping with the surrounding dwellings adjacent and the proposals will not look incongruous in their context. The size and scale of the new dwellings is considered to be appropriate, in terms of design, than that previously approved Prior Notification approval.

- 6.9 In terms of sustainability, the NPPF is clear that there are three dimensions to sustainable development; economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles: an economic role, a social role and an environmental role. The NPPF goes on to state “these roles should not be undertaken in isolation, because they are mutually dependent. Economic growth can secure higher social and environment standards, and well-designed buildings and places can improve the lives of people and communities. Therefore, to achieve sustainable development, economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system. The planning system should play an active role in guiding development to sustainable solutions.
- 6.10 Importantly in this instance, the applicant has the ability to convert the existing poor quality building into three residential dwellings, and therefore the principle of three additional dwellings in this location has been agreed, this is an extant permission and will be built out in the event that this application is refused and dismissed on appeal. This is a material consideration of considerable weight and if the LPA decided that the site is away from shops and services resulting in the occupants of the new dwellings relying on a private motor vehicle, the fallback position must be borne in mind.
- 6.11 It is our view that the proposal should be regarded as an appropriate form of development in the countryside given the support at paragraph 28 of the NPPF. It is also not an isolated dwelling (See Braintree District Council v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government & 218052.) However, if it is considered to be inappropriate development then there are indeed very special circumstances to justify approval in this instance.



- 6.12 The applicant has the option of converting the buildings into three separate residential dwellings using the permitted development rights. This has been confirmed through the grant of a positive prior approval application in September 2024. If three new dwellings are deemed inappropriate here in planning policy terms, consideration must be given to the fallback position.
- 6.13 The Encyclopedia of Planning Law, paragraph 70.30 of the commentary to Section 70 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 states that *“The planning authority are entitled, and indeed obliged, to have regard to the ‘fallback’ position i.e. what the applicant could do without any fresh planning permission.”*
- 6.14 Planning permission or development rights related to land may be viewed as material considerations which have an important input into decision making. Failure to take account of the ‘fallback position’, which could take place even if the current planning application were to be refused or an appeal dismissed, has been the matter upon which the courts have ruled on several occasions. The weight attributed to the fallback position depends upon the likelihood of any fallback actually being exercised in the event of a refusal.
- 6.15 It is therefore important to consider what alternative options the applicant would have for developing this site should planning permission be refused. This includes the use of permitted development rights. The permitted prior approval application should therefore be considered alongside this planning application if it is considered that the proposal would be inappropriate development.
- 6.16 It is clearly in the applicant’s interest to sell or construct the permitted development scheme if they were unsuccessful in obtaining planning permission for the proposed new dwelling. It is a realistic and viable alternative to the application proposed and they have confirmed that this would be the case should this application be refused. There is no doubt that if the application were to be refused, the fallback option would be

implemented, as opposed to the barn remaining in agricultural use, which has essentially ceased with the sale of the converted barn. Although the prior approval consent is perhaps not quite as financially valuable as a planning permission would be and would not give the applicants the opportunity to build their own home, it is still of a value considerably higher than its use as an old poultry shed.

- 6.17 In considering weight to be attached to the fallback option, an appeal has been appended for a very similar proposal for the conversion of barns which already benefitted from Class Q prior approval. The inspector noted;

Whilst the proposed development would not wholly comply with all of the criteria within Policies S7, H6 and GEN2, I have had regard to the 'fall-back' position resulting from the extant approval. The previous consent would result in both barns being converted with their designs, scales and level of works proposed to be the same as this current appeal proposal. Therefore, whilst applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise, I have given the fall-back position significant weight, given that the resulting development would be the same as what has been approved. As such, the proposed development would not be significantly more harmful than the approved scheme. Furthermore, there is no evidence that the fall-back position could not be implemented and I am confident that should this appeal fail it would be likely that the works would be carried out under the extant consent. (See appendix 1).

- 6.18 The inspector was clear that significant weight should be attributed to the fallback position, as regardless of the outcome of the appeal the development would take place. The circumstances are very similar to those in this case and therefore it would be incorrect for the LPA to come to a different conclusion to the Inspector.

- 6.19 In respect of the case *Mansell v Tonbridge and Malling BC* [2017] EWCA Civ 1314 the Court of Appeal upheld a judgment of the High Court that Permitted Development rights can properly be taken into account as a fallback position where some alternative form of

development is then proposed. As part of the judgement, it was in the Judge's view that it is wholly unrealistic to imagine that were proposals to be turned down by the Council, the owner of the site would not take advantage of the permitted development provided for by Class Q to the fullest extent possible. It was not a precondition to the Council's consideration of the fall back option that the owner had made an application indicating an intention to take advantage of Class Q. There was no requirement that there be a formulated proposal to that effect. The Officer was entitled to have regard to the planning history which was within his knowledge, and the obvious preference of the owners to make the most valuable use it could of the site.

- 6.20 Five further appeal cases are appended to this statement (Appendix 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6 APP/D3830/W/16/3156030, APP/H0520/W/17/317904, APP/Z1510/W/17/3189624 and APP/Y3940/W/18/3200095, APP/W3330/W/20/3248009) where Inspectors accepted dwellings approved via the prior approval route as fallback positions in relation to the suitability of location. Therefore, it is our view that the fallback position should therefore be given significant weight when determining this application.
- 6.21 Importantly, paragraph 29 of appeal decision APP/W3330/W/20/3248009 (appendix 6) states; *"there is a realistic fallback position which would result in the same amount of housing being delivered in the same location, and in these circumstances I afford the conflict with the development plan moderate weight. The appeal proposal would however deliver significant benefits to the appearance of the site compared to that fallback position, and this carries significant weight in favour of the appeal proposal."* Given this clear appeal precedent, the applicant is therefore firmly of the opinion that this proposal should be supported.
- 6.22 There is an existing access into the site from the highway with a hardstanding area which allows for sufficient parking for nine vehicles as part of the earlier Class Q consent. It is not considered that the access is inappropriate for three new dwellings, particularly in



light of the fallback position of three new dwellings, coupled with the permanent loss of agricultural traffic from the site.

- 6.23 The site includes ample amenity space to both the front and rear. The private amenity space to the rear exceeds the 100 square metres but is not excessive to the point of becoming harmful to the countryside.
- 6.24 The new dwellings will not have any increase in impact upon the neighbouring residential amenity, certainly when the fallback position is borne in mind. Furthermore, there are no neighbors affected other than perhaps the applicant's current home, which still sits over 50 metres from the site and the permitted three dwellings. The work will cause negligible impacts, none more than the permitted Prior Approval application.
- 6.25 A further positive resulting from permitting this application would be the provision of a self build dwelling being constructed. The dwelling will be a custom build dwelling, the principle of which is strongly supported by central government, which is capable of being a significant material consideration of great weight, see appeal decision contained at appendix 7. Custom build dwellings create enhanced designs and are much more likely to see the use of local contractors in the construction process. The Government wants to make self build/custom build far more mainstream and double the amount of dwellings constructed in this way in an effort to keep up with other countries where around half are custom/self build.
- 6.26 The Government are supportive of this form of development because;
- It is important to the national economy (its value is estimated at £3+billion per year)
 - It makes an important contribution to housing output, and creates an opportunity to diversify housing supply
 - There is growing public demand for this type of housing (according to a Building Societies Association survey 53% of the population would like a self build home at some stage in their lives)
 - It protects/creates local jobs and strengthens local supply chains in the construction

sector (each self build sustains two construction jobs)

- It offers choice and is often better value for money
- It reflects the Government's Localism ambitions
- It can provide opportunities to achieve a diverse mix of housing in both urban and rural areas.

Source: Planning for Custom Build Housing – A Practice Guide (NaSBA)

- 6.27 The NPPF asks local planning authorities (paragraph 63) to use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan fully meets the assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the area. This includes, inter alia, 'people wishing to commission or build their own homes'.
- 6.28 In addition, guidance from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities published guidance on Self build and custom building 2016, this states that "Self-build or custom build helps to diversify the housing market and increase consumer choice. Self-build and custom housebuilders choose the design and layout of their home, and can be innovative in both its design and construction"
- 6.29 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) has been carried out at the site (Appendix 7) which incorporates a bat inspection report. This shows the site is not situated within nor bounding any statutory or non-statutory designated locations. It is therefore not considered reasonably likely that the proposal would have any adverse impact upon statutory or non-statutory designated locations. The buildings are considered to offer at the most a negligible level of bat roosting potential. Further surveys are therefore neither necessary nor appropriate in respect of the buildings.
- 6.30 It is not considered that the proposal would have any adverse impact upon great crested newt, bats or reptile species. The PEA concludes that further bat surveys and reptile surveys are required, but no other surveys are necessary. No active or inactive badger



setts were found, with no evidence of badger activity identified. No surveys have been advised. General appropriate precautionary measures for the construction phases have been advised in the PEA.

- 6.31 The bat and reptile survey did not reveal any bat emergence from either building and only a very low level of bat activity was recorded around the site generally. It is therefore considered highly unlikely that the redevelopment of the application site would have a significant adverse effect on the local bat population.
- 6.32 Biodiversity Net Gain Calculations have been provided, these can be found at appendix 8 of this report. This shows that a +11.11% BNG in Habitat Units and a +40.22% BNG in Hedgerow Units is proposed. The increase of over 10% BNG is also a material consideration of weight when considering this proposal against the earlier Class Q consent.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 It is not considered that the proposal represents inappropriate development within the countryside. The re-use of the rural building for residential purposes has been previously approved, a material consideration of considerable weight (as demonstrated by the appended appeal decisions). Subsequently, there will be no demonstrable harm resulting from its replacement with three detached dwellings on a smaller footprint from the existing barns on site. The design and visual improvements will enhance the area as well as remaining in keeping with it. The proposals subsequently replace poor design with better design in accordance with the NPPF. The proposals are considered to be a sustainable form of development in accordance with the three dimensions contained within the NPPF. In addition, there will be minimal impact upon neighbouring amenity and no impact upon protected species.



7.2 Accordingly, in light of all of the above material considerations, which firmly weigh in favour of the proposal, and in accordance with both national and local planning policy, the Local Planning Authority is hereby respectfully requested to grant this application.