

Full Application

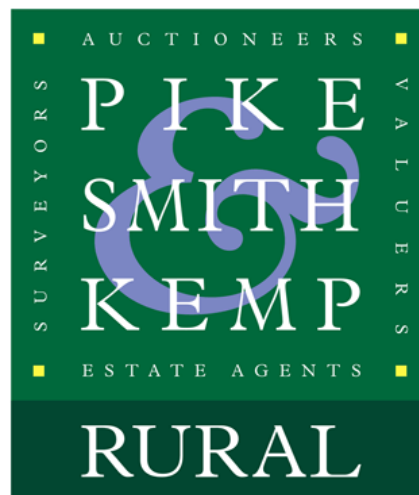
Planning Statement

Replacement of existing entrance gate and replacement with new entrance off
Holwell Road
at
West Lane Farm
Pirton
Hertfordshire
SG5 3QP

Prepared By

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Of



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement is submitted to support an application for removal of the existing entrance gate off Holwell Road and replacement with a new bell mouth entrance off Holwell Road in order to provide access into West Lane Farm.
- 1.4 The statement has been prepared by Pike Smith & Kemp Rural who have experience and knowledge of many types of Rural Enterprises. Pike Smith & Kemp Rural are specialist Rural Consultants who advise clients on a number of day-to-day issues relating to planning and land ownership. Specifically, this appraisal is written by Tom McArdle who holds a Bachelor of Science Honours Degree in Rural Land Management from the Royal Agricultural College, is a Professional Member of the Rural Faculty of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors and a professional member of the National Association of Estate Agents.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 West Lane Farm extends to 108.72 acres of arable land used for the growing of cereal crops.
- 2.2 The existing entrance into West Lane Farm requires all traffic associated with the agricultural operation to enter into the village in order to access the farm and its land.

3.0 Proposal

- 3.1 The proposal seeks consent for removal of the existing entrance gate and replacement with a new bell mouth entrance located on the eastern side of the farm to allow agricultural vehicles to enter onto the farm land without the need to enter into the village.
- 3.2 We attach a Location/site Plan showing the extent of the farm and a Detailed Site Plan showing the design of the proposed entrance.

4.0 Planning Policy

- 4.1 The property is located within the jurisdiction of North Hertfordshire District Council of which Planning Policy is set out in the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 was adopted on Tuesday 8 November 2022 which designates the whole farm including the application site as Rural Area beyond the Green Belt wherein the following Policies are a consideration:

Policy SP5: Countryside and Green Belt

We support the principles of the Green Belt and recognise the intrinsic value of the countryside. Green Belt and Rural Areas Beyond the Green Belt are shown on the Policies Map. We:

a) Have conducted a comprehensive review of the Green Belt. Land has been removed from the Green Belt to:

- i. enable strategic development at the locations referred to in Policies SP8 and SP3;*
- ii. enable local development around a number of the District's towns and villages; and*
- iii. define boundaries for villages referred to in Policy SP2 which fall within the Green Belt but were previously 'washed over' by this designation;*

b) Have provided new Green Belt to cover, in general terms, the area bounded by the Metropolitan Green Belt to the east, the Luton Green Belt to the west and the A505 Offley bypass to the north;

c) Will only permit development proposals in the Green Belt where they would not result in inappropriate development or where very special circumstances have been demonstrated; and

d) Will operate a general policy of restraint in Rural Areas beyond the Green Belt through the application of our detailed policies.

Policy CGB1: Rural Areas beyond the Green Belt.

In the Rural Areas beyond the Green Belt, as shown on the Policies Map, planning permission will be granted provided that the 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.

5.00 TRANSPORT & HIGHWAYS

- 5.1 Currently, the principal entrance into the southern block of West Land Farm is via the entrance off the village road of West Lane of which comprises, on the south side, residential ribbon development wherein there are commonly domestic cars parked in the carriageway as shown in the Google Maps images below.

West Lane – Facing west from the entrance into West Lane Farm



West Lane – Facing east from the entrance into West Lane Farm



5.2 The location of the new entrance is along Holwell Road located approximately 250 north east of the village of Pirton. There is an existing field gate in this location of which it is proposed that this is removed subject to the proposed new entrance being permitted.

5.3 The site of the proposed entrance has been carefully considered by way of it being located on a long straight part of Holwell Road all of which is not subject to undulations and hence offers extensive visibility splays to both the north and south in addition to the roadway not being hindered by parked cars.

5.4 Holwell Road is subject to National Speed Limit (60mph).

5.5 Having regard to the Manual for Streets the following is applicable:

An X distance of 2.4m has been adopted as shown and annotated on the attached plans.

The Y distances are calculated using the following formulae for Standard Stopping Distance (SSD); where v = speed (m/s), t = driver perception (1.5 seconds) minus reaction time (4.41 m/s²) (seconds) and d = deceleration (m/s²)

$$SSD = vt + v^2/2d$$

Hence assuming 60mph (26.83 m/s) maximum speed the following calculation applies:

$$SSD = (26.83 \text{ m/s} \times 1.5) + 26.83^2 / 2 \times 4.41 = 121.79\text{m visibility required.}$$

5.6 The attached plan shows visibility measurements from the entrance to the north of 204m and from the entrance to the south of 235m, being well in excess of the required 121m.

5.7 It should be noted that the 30mph speed restriction for Pirton commences/ends approximately 70m to the south of the new entrance. Hence car speeds will be mitigated at the point of the new entrance due to vehicles either accelerating away from the speed restriction or braking prior to entering the speed restriction.

5.8 The proposed entrance will remove the majority of agricultural traffic from having to travel along West Lane in order to access the farm and hence there will be a positive impact upon the neighbouring residents in terms of alleviating traffic and thereby traffic noise.

6.0 FLOODING

- 6.1 The site is designated by the Environment Agency Flood Maps as being located in Flood Zone 1 (lowest probability of flooding) and hence there are no flooding risks on site.

7.0 DESIGN

- 7.1 The design layout is shown and annotated on the attached site plan detail.
- 7.2 It will consist of a permeable concrete bell mouth entranceway with double galvanised gates set back 20m from the highway to allow vehicles to pull entirely off the highway to open the gates.
- 7.3 Either side of the entranceway will be timber post and rail fencing along with a modified grass verge and 133.5 linear metres of new native species rich hedgerow planting which will be planted in double staggered rows and will comprise nectar and berry rich species comprising:
- 50% Hawthorn plus 10% each of 5 additional species selected by us from the following - Blackthorn, Dog Rose, Crab Apple, Elder, Purging Buckthorn, Guelder Rose, Spindle, Dogwood
- 7.4 There have been no material changes to the proposal nor to the design therefore the proposal is acceptable in terms of its external appearance.

8.0 ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY

- 8.1 The application site area comprises an existing gateway, managed modified grass (moderate) verge and actively managed arable land and thereby there are no ecology matters that preclude the proposal.
- 8.2 The application site is not located within a Priority Habitat.
- 8.3 We attach a BNG Metric along with proposed and existing BNG plans which concludes that an 11.78% increase in habitat units is achieved along with an increase in hedgerow units of 0.8937 (of which a percentage increase cannot be calculated because no existing hedgerow exists – as such more than the required 10% increase is achieved).

9.0 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The proposal provides an upgrade of the existing access into West Lane Farm which is necessary for the needs of agriculture whilst resulting in a reduction in farm traffic passing over and along the residential parts of West Lane (opposite the existing principal entrance into West Lane Farm) thereby resulting in an improvement to residential amenity and improvement to highway safety as well as a more than policy compliant increase to biodiversity.