

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Alex Howard.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
24/01283/FP	Erection of detached stables and replace existing storage shed.	Holborn Farm Bungalow Dane End Therfield Royston Hertfordshire SG8 9RH

Submitted Plan Nos

Location Plan CM01 CM02 CM03 CM04 CM05 CM06 CM07

CGB1	Rural Areas beyond the Green Belt.
CGB4	Exist buildings in the RA Beyond GB
D1	Sustainable design
D3	Protecting living conditions
HE1	Designated heritage assets
NE4	Biodiversity and geological sites
SECN12	Achieving well-designed places
SECN16	Conserve + enhance historic environment

2.0 **Site History**

2.1 None relevant.

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **Therfield Parish Council** – None received.

3.2 **Conservators of Therfield Heath And Greens** – None received.

3.3 **Site Notice and Neighbour Consultation** – None received.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

- 4.1.1 The application site is a residential property and associated land located on the east side of Dane End, Therfield. The property has an immediate residential curtilage and within the wider site has several buildings including barns, agricultural structures, sheds, and stables. Holborn Farm Farmhouse and its associated barn, which are immediately adjacent to the site, are Grade II listed buildings. The site is designated as within the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt.

4.2 **Proposal**

- 4.2.1 The application seeks planning permission for the erection of a detached stables and to replace an existing storage shed.
- 4.2.2 The existing shed building has a footprint of approximately 195 sqm and there is another 65 sqm of foundations to the south where an older building once stood. The shed is very old and as such is in a poor state of repair. The shed is proposed to be kept at the same size as existing but moved 4.0m south, such that it is sited on the footprint of the older building which will subsequently move it away from the neighbouring barn at Holborn Farm House to the north.
- 4.2.3 The detached stable building is to be erected on the site of a recently demolished outbuilding which had fallen into disrepair. There is a hardstanding base that has been retained in this position and the stable is proposed atop this, comprising a shallow pitched building of typical equine appearance that would be approx. 100sqm in footprint including a front canopy with 4 stable blocks and a storeroom.

4.3.1 **Key Issues**

- 4.3.1 The key issues in this case are:

- ☐ Principle of Development
- ☐ Layout and Design
- ☐ Impact on Heritage Assets
- ☐ Impact on Neighbours
- ☐ Biodiversity Net Gain
- ☐ Access

Principle of Development

- 4.3.2 The site lies within the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt, which is covered under Policy CGB1 of the Local Plan. This states:

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.*

4.3.2 Furthermore, Policy CGB4 of the Local Plan covers existing building in the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt. This states:

- “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”.*

4.3.4 The application is split into two parts which are dealt with under each of the aforementioned policies. Firstly, the proposed detached stable building could have been considered under the provisions of Policy CGB4 if the previous building on site had not already been demolished. As such, it is necessary to consider it in the context of Policy CGB1. The proposed stable building would be single-storey with a shallow dual-pitched roof, would visually and spatially relate to the other existing buildings on the site which include barns/agricultural buildings, and would support the applicants keeping of four horses on the site and adjoining fields. It is acknowledged that equine uses and/or buildings are not explicitly stated to be acceptable development in the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt within Policy CGB1. However, equine uses by their nature are commonplace in rural areas such as this, which supports the principle of development in this instance. Overall, the proposed stable building would be an acceptable element of this proposal in the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt.

4.3.5 Secondly, the proposed storage shed would replace an existing building, so it is necessary to consider it under Policy CGB4. The proposed replacement shed would be the same width, depth, and height as the existing structure and retain its general form and appearance but be moved approx. 4.0m south so as to be separated from the neighbouring barn building to incorporate the existing footprint/hardstanding area from a historic building. The replacement building would also be made of modern, higher quality materials than the existing building which has fallen into disrepair. As such, part c) of Policy CGB4 is relevant and in this instance, seeing as the proposed building will be of matching scale and character to the existing building, it is considered that this element of the proposal will not have a materially greater impact on the openness, purposes or general policy aims of the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt. Moving the building 4.0m to the south will not result in a material impact on openness, as where built form is shifted across this will open a gap between the building and the neighbours which will be a trade-off.

4.3.6 Therefore, the proposed development is an acceptable form of development in the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt and would comply with Policies CGB1 and CGB4 of the Local Plan.

Layout and Design

- 4.3.7 Policy D1 of the Local Plan states that planning permission will be granted provided that development responds positively to the site's local context in addition to other criteria. These considerations are echoed in Section 12 of the NPPF.
- 4.3.8 The proposed storage shed has been designed to resemble a typical agricultural building. It is to be finished in green vertical cladding on a steel plinth, green profiled roofing with 6NO rooflights and have large sliding timber doors on the front elevation. The proposed stable building would comprise a shallow lean-to roof, be finished with timber weatherboarding on a brick plinth, slate roof tiles and an oak frame. The building would have the form, scale, and appearance of a stable structure.
- 4.3.9 It is considered that the proposed development is acceptable in design terms. Both buildings would reflect the form and character of their respective purpose, whether it be agricultural or equine, which are considered to be in keeping with the rural character of the site and wider locality. This can be said to respond positively to the site's local context. Due to the significant ground level change between the highway and the site, the buildings will not be wholly visible from the lane in any case.
- 4.3.10 As such, the proposed development is considered acceptable in design, in accordance with Policy D1 of the Local Plan and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Impact on Heritage Assets

- 4.3.11 Holborn Farm Farmhouse and its associated barn, which are immediately adjacent to the site, are Grade II listed buildings. Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that where considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building, or its setting, special regard shall be had to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural interest which it possesses. These considerations are echoed in Policy HE1 of the Local Plan and Section 16 of the NPPF.
- 4.3.12 It is considered that the main Farmhouse at Holborn Farm is sufficiently set back from the replacement shed and stable building that it will not be impacted in any case by the proposal. The building itself, and indeed its setting, will remain unaffected by the development proposed herein as they will not be visually related to one another. The barn building associated with this listed farmhouse, however, is closer to the boundary with the site and at present, is attached to the existing storage shed building by an un-listed link extension. To that end, the proposed replacement building which seeks to erect the same size and form of building but move it 4.0m away from this building, is such that this will result in less of an impact to the listed barn building and its setting compared to the existing arrangement. The stable building, whilst closer to the listed barn building than the listed farmhouse, would remain still be a sufficient distance away so as to not result in any material harm to the building or its setting. Overall, it is considered that the development will not result in any level of harm to the special

character or setting of the relevant designated heritage assets, in accordance with Policy HE1 of the Local Plan and Section 16 of the NPPF.

Impact on Neighbours

- 4.3.13 Policy D3 of the Local Plan states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals which do not cause unacceptable harm to living conditions.
- 4.3.14 Owing to the isolated nature of the site, the scale of development proposed for each building and their respective positions relative to the nearest neighbouring properties, it is considered that the proposal would not result in any harm upon the amenities and reasonable living conditions of neighbouring dwellings. This is in line with Policy D3 of the Local Plan.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 4.3.15 This is a form of development which is exempt from BNG Legislation, defined under article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 due to it falling under the scope of the 'de minimis' exemption as the development does not impact a priority habitat and impacts less than 25 square metres (e.g. 5m by 5m) of onsite habitat, or 5 metres of linear habitats such as hedgerows.

- 4.3.16 In respect of Bats and other species, the Councils in-house Ecologist was informally consulted on this application and provided the following response:

"Building B would have been more conducive to bats though unlikely and demolished anyway. Building A is the wrong construction, more like the one with the tiled roof and weatherboarding that's adjacent to the proposed location. To be doubly sure you could add this informative.

The applicant is advised that during works it is the legal responsibility of the contractor to check for bats. If bats are found during the course of any work to buildings or trees where not previously anticipated, then works should immediately stop and Natural England notified for appropriate advice.

- 4.3.17 As such, the recommended informative will be included in any decision to cover the potential impact on bats. Furthermore, to demonstrate the required measurable net gains in biodiversity in accordance with Policy NE4 of the Local Plan, given that the site is rural and could have some bats and birds in the local area, it is considered reasonable to enforce a condition that both buildings provide 1 bat and 1 bird box per building. Lastly, a condition will be enforced that no external lighting will be permitted on these two buildings without prior written approval from the LPA.

Access

- 4.3.18 The site is served by an existing access onto Dane End which is not proposed to be reconfigured. This is considered acceptable.

4.4 **Conclusion**

- 4.4.1 Overall, the proposed development is considered acceptable in planning terms. The scheme is considered in accordance with Policies CGB1, CGB4, HE1, NE4, D1 and D3 of the Local Plan and Section 12 and 16 of the NPPF.

4.5 **Alternative Options**

- 4.5.1 None.

4.6 **Pre-Commencement Conditions**

- 4.6.1 N/A.

5.0 **Recommendation**

- 5.1 That planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out wholly in accordance with the details specified in the application and supporting approved documents and plans listed above.

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with details which form the basis of this grant of permission.

3. The buildings hereby permitted shall only be finished in the external materials as stated on drawing number CM05 and CM07 and thereafter shall be retained as such, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the LPA.

Reason: To ensure that the development is in-keeping with the site context and to protect the visual amenities of the locality and to comply with Policies D1 and D2 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 to 2031.

4. Prior to first occupation, each of the buildings hereby permitted shall incorporate 1 integrated bird and 1 integrated bat box which shall be retained in perpetuity.

Reason: To enhance biodiversity in accordance with the NPPF and the North Hertfordshire Local Plan Policy NE4

5. There shall be no external lighting unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: In the interests of the appearance of the locality within the countryside.

Proactive Statement:

Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. Discussion with the applicant to seek an acceptable solution was not necessary in this instance. The Council has therefore acted proactively in line with the requirements of the Framework (paragraph 38) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Informative/s:

The applicant is advised that during works it is the legal responsibility of the contractor to check for bats. If bats are found during the course of any work to buildings or trees where not previously anticipated, then works should immediately stop and Natural England notified for appropriate advice.

Signed  Anne McDonald	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Determining Officer Date: 30 July 2024	