DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

DET/2016/0057	**BUILDING B**	**CONVERSION OF BARN TO**
Valid 06/10/2016	**KERRY HILL FARM**	**FORM A DWELLING**
	EAVES LANE	
	BUCKNALL	**(CHANGE OF USE)**

MAIN ISSUES

- Class Q eligibility criteria
- Condition Q.2 (a) transport and highways impacts
- Condition Q.2 (c) contamination risks on site
- Condition Q.2 (e) whether the location or siting of the building makes it otherwise impractical or undesirable for the building to change from agricultural use to residential
- Condition Q.2 (f) design and external appearance
- Section W (9) (a) assessments of impacts or risks

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

Kerry Hill Farm was until early in 2016 a large fully operational dairy farm with extensive buildings, yards and storage areas clustered to the north of the farm house which faces on to Eaves Lane. The location is rural but there is Meadow View Farm across the road to the south; there are two unconnected residential properties adjacent to the west; and Eaves Lane is typified generally by intermittent small farmsteads and individual residential properties. The property is about 2km along Eaves Lane from the built-up areas of Abbey Hulton and Bucknall to the west.

The building (labelled B) is single storey narrow and linear in layout built of brick and tile. Its original purpose is not clear and, although appearing a single cohesive building, it is apparent on closer examination that it has been periodically altered with various additions and changes to openings. It is clear internally that the building has served as an integral part of the farm operation as a shippon / store. A Dutch Barn and other more recent steel framed livestock housing abuts the building on its east elevation.

Early OS maps show that there were buildings at Kerry Hill Farm by 1887 but not the present day farm house and not the building subject of this Class Q application. A building likely to be the present day farm house had appeared by 1901. The further brick and tile structures seem likely to have appeared in the later 1920s or 1930s with sheet clad sheds and extensions most likely dating from the last 40 years.

A public footpath right of way passes north in front of the westerly elevation through the farm yard from Eaves Lane.

PROPOSAL

The building proposed for conversion is one of two submitted simultaneously under separate Class Q notices. The total floor area for conversion is measured from

drawing ER16/6 (1:100) to be 105m2. The proposal utilizes only the existing built 'envelope' as required under Class Q and relies principally on existing or former openings to create a suitable range of windows and doors. Additional light is appropriately achieved by discrete use of a series of slit windows modelled in the form of breather holes which, although not present in this building, are as commonly found.

An area of domestic curtilage is shown to run parallel to the rear (easterly) elevation of the building. To comply with class Q this must not exceed the ground plan area occupied by the building to be converted. The area can therefore more than meet the minimum standards, based on the Space About Dwellings SPD, and in the submitted details the minimum 65m2 is achieved. Access is indicated using the existing developed yard area to the front (west) with parking space for two vehicles again using existing developed yard space to the north end.

The plans show the Dutch Barn and other more recent steel framed livestock housing which abut the building on its east elevation to be demolished and this needs to be made a requirement by condition along with landscaping in order to ensure satisfactory surroundings.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Core Strategy Development Plan Document (Adopted 2014)
S01 Spatial Objectives
SS1 Development Principles
SS1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
DC1 Design Considerations
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework
Paragraph(s) * 1to 17
Section(s)* 7 – requiring good design

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

DET/2016/0005 – prior notification of proposed conversion of two agricultural buildings to residential – refused
PAD/2016/0030 – advice sought re Class Q conversion of two agricultural buildings to residential

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity
Site Notice expiry date: 4th November 2016
Neighbour consultation period ends: 28th October 2016
Press Advert: N/A (*Add date if applicable)

Public Comments
None

Town / Parish Comments
None

Environmental Health
The site seems large for a DET, as it appears that it will require significant demolition / landscaping. It is not clear what is happening with the rest of the site such as slurry pit or silage area or if any of the site is to remain in part agricultural / dairy use or not. The slurry pit is currently only 20-30 meters from one of the proposed units and could provide a significant odour source, and a working farm could have significant noise concerns. Based on the level of information, Environmental Health would recommend refusal of this application due to a lack of information demonstrating that the site is suitable for residential use with respect to noise, odour/ flies and contamination.

Staffordshire County Council Highways
No objection subject to conditions.

Ecology
A full proper protected species survey assessment has been submitted. Evidence of nesting swallows. No definitive evidence of bats. Conditions recommended due to possibility of more transient use of the building by bats. No requirement for bat licence.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development
In principle if the proposal is found acceptable when assessed against the criteria of Class Q, in particular those set out in condition Q2(1), the development can be permitted. Conditions reasonably related to the subject matter of the determining criteria can be added.

It is important to note that Class Q is limited to a maximum of three dwelling houses being created and the cumulative floor space of the existing building or buildings changing use must not exceed 450m^2. Similarly the cumulative floor space of the dwelling houses created by the Class Q change of use must not exceed 450m^2. These limits are adhered to by the two applications currently under consideration – the one here and the one for two dwelling houses (reference DET/2016/0058). Scaled from the submitted drawing the floorspace existing and changing use under this application is 105m2 and under DET2106/0058 the figure is 344m2 giving in total the figure of 449m2.

Design
In line with the Design SPD relating to rural conversions the proposal uses existing or former openings. The south gable end most prominent to the public road would remain essentially as existing. The rear (east) elevation at right angels to the road

and seen in the approach from the east would be revealed by the demolitions of adjacent sheds. It would have a pleasingly low key presence with a balanced disposition of small windows. The curtilage would be seen in the east view and a condition as to boundary treatment would be appropriate. The west elevation alongside the public footpath is arguably a more compromised design but again is low key and accords with the basic principle of utilising only existing or former openings. Over-domestication is rightly avoided.

Amenity
Appropriate space is provided. The angles and distances to other properties – the existing farm house and the other proposed Class Q conversions – raise no amenity conflicts.

The Council's Environmental Health advice rightly identifies risk of conflicts such as odours stemming from nearby farm operations. However there is understood to be a significant scaling back of the farming operation and with conditions to require adjacent demolitions and landscape after- treatment as shown on the proposals prior to first occupation the amenities can be satisfactorily safeguarded.

Highway Safety
Drawing ER616/7 shows suitable access utilising the existing route and parking for two vehicles with appropriate space to manoeuvre and therefore highways requirements are found to be met.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE
The proposal is considered compliant in terms of the Permitted Development requirement and should be subject to prior approval in respect of:
- transport and highways
- contamination risks
- location and siting
- design and external appearance and
- risks (protected species in this case)

The Government's National Planning Practice Guidance makes clear at paragraphs 108 and 109 that sustainability in terms of geographic location is not a consideration under the terms of Class Q. Relationship with immediate surroundings is however relevant.

The siting, considered in terms of the relationship to the existing neighbouring farm house and the separate proposed Class Q conversions (if these were to be approved) raise no adverse concerns in respect of amenity. The current relationship to the more recent built-on agricultural sheds and livestock housing do however present an unacceptable relationship as identified by the Environmental Health response. However, subject to a suitable scheme of dismantling and subsequent landscaping it is considered that these concerns can be adequately addressed.

Clarification received in response to the initial Highways concerns about access and parking are likely to have been suitably resolved by the details in drawing DRG/616/7 but these will need to have been completed prior to first occupation.

The rural location and farm environment accentuate the potential risks of adverse impacts for protected species. Based on the survey results submitted it will provide sufficient safeguard in this case to attach conditions and / informatives.

On balance the proposed design and external appearance is considered appropriate subject to conditioning any repairing bricks and tiles to match existing and subject to details of windows and doors at 1:20 scale, to be strongly recessed in the openings and subject to use of painted timber frames; treatment of demolition scarring.

Finally, conditions as to boundary treatments and drainage should also be included.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : approve

Case Officer: Arne Swithenbank
Recommendation Date: 13/12/2016

X

Signed by: Jane Colley

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council