

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

DET/2018/0016
Valid 24/05/2018

**EXISTING COW SHED AND
IMPLEMENT STORE
BIDDULPH PARK ROAD
RUSHTON SPENCER**

**NOTIFICATION FOR PRIOR
APPROVAL FOR A
PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE
OF AGRICULTURAL BUILDING
TO 1 DWELLING HOUSE**

**(NOTIFICATION - CHANGE OF
USE PRIOR APPROVAL)**

MAIN ISSUES

- Whether or not the proposal can be determined under a “Class Q” Prior Notification application and if so:
 - - The transport and highways impacts of the development
 - - The noise impacts of the development
 - - The contamination risks on the site
 - - flooding risks on the site
 - - Whether the location or siting of the building makes it otherwise impractical or undesirable for the building to change from agricultural use to a residential use
- - The design or external appearance of the building

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The site comprises a fairly large modern L-shaped agricultural storage building with max lengths of 27.0 metres and widths of 9.0 metres and a max height of 5.0 metres. The lower half of the building is finished with blockwork and the upper half with dark green metal sheeting. There is also a low-pitch metal sheeted roof. There are large openings with silver metal doors. The south wing of the building is a cow shed. The west wing looks to have been used to store farm vehicles/machinery and hay. It lies in open countryside a few miles to the north-east of Biddulph and is accessed via a long farm track off Biddulph Park Road to the west. The surrounding land is open. There are no other nearby buildings and the site appears isolated.

PROPOSAL

The application is a “Notification of Prior Approval” application for the conversion of most of the building into a single-storey 5-bedroom dwelling. The west wing of the “L” would be used as a double garage for the dwelling and at the end, an implement store which is shown as being outside of the red line application site (and presumably would remain to be used for farm storage purposes). Part of the yard area would be used for car parking. There is a strip of grass along the south edge of the building which would be used as a garden for the dwelling.

The works to convert the building would comprise the complete filling of the large vehicular openings with glazing and the insertion of several “full length” aluminium windows (particularly on the south and west elevations), new glazing in existing rooflights, insertion of garage doors into the vehicular openings on the east elevation and the covering of the exposed concrete lower half of the walls with sandstone blockwork. The upper half metal sheeting and roof materials would remain.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

National Planning Policy Framework

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

07/01405: Prior approval under Part 6 for the building subject of this new application.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 18.7.18
Neighbour consultation period ends: 18.7.18
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

None.

Town / Parish Comments

No objection.

Staffordshire County Council Highways

No objection subject to condition.

Severn Trent Water

No objection.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Changes to the GPDO in 2015 introduced into ‘Part 3 – Changes of Use’ a ‘Class Q’ development which allows the conversion of agricultural buildings into dwellings without the need to apply for full planning permission providing the criteria listed under Class Q are met. However, a “Notification of Prior Approval” application needs to be submitted instead and the Council must determine this against the material planning considerations listed above. This particular proposal can be achieved under a Class Q Prior Approval application as it meets the criteria listed under Class Q (for applying for a Prior Approval determination rather than full permission). The building

was built under a "Prior Approval" (under Part 6 of the GPDO relating to agricultural development) before March 2013, in compliance with the Class Q criteria. When inspecting the building on site I found it was clearly used previously for agricultural purposes (including for the storage of hay and farm implements/equipment) and no evidence of a non-agricultural re-use since.

With regard to highways and traffic impacts, the creation of an additional dwelling in this area would not lead to significant traffic problems in the area. The current access onto Biddulph Park Road is safe and can accommodate any increase in traffic associated with the proposal safely. There would be sufficient parking space on the existing yard which would be adapted for car parking and there is room for turning.

With regard to noise, there are no other dwellings close to the site and therefore it is unlikely residential amenity would be harmed by way of noise nuisance, especially in relation to noise created by the agricultural use of the area.

With regard to contamination, there may have been potential for some ground contamination from previous agricultural workings but this would not be significant especially as the development has only been in place for 11 or 12 years.

There are no flooding risks that would result from the proposal. The site is outside of Flood Zones 2 and 3.

There does not appear to be anything related to the location or the siting of the building that would make a residential conversion impractical or undesirable. Although the site is in an unsustainable location, there are not expected to be significant vehicle movements associated with the dwelling. The conversion would not affect protected species as the modern design and large openings are unsuitable for bats.

The conversion would not lead to any other harms including harm to the future occupiers of the proposed converted dwelling as the use of the surrounding land is mainly agricultural and there are no significantly noisy or other polluting uses and a garden area would be provided for the enjoyment of the occupants.

However, with regard to appearance and design, the building is a conventional modern agricultural building with a purely functional design for the purposes of sheltering cattle and storing agricultural equipment and vehicles. It does not have any architectural merit and although modern farm storage buildings are found elsewhere in the countryside, they do not necessarily compliment the character and appearance of their surroundings and are provided purely due to the agricultural needs of their localities. There are also many older more traditional farm buildings in the countryside which have a form and materials which harmonise and add to the character and appearance of the countryside and which can be converted to dwellings without significant modification. The building proposed for this particular conversion has concrete and metal sheet finishes and large openings for vehicles or groups of cows and requires substantial alterations for it to function as a dwellinghouse, comprising several new 'full length' windows in the large expanses of solid wall in order to let in light. These also have a modern domestic appearance

which is also out of keeping with the immediate rural surroundings. Furthermore, the cladding of the concrete walls with sandstone would not significantly improve the appearance of the building which would still maintain the shape and form of a modern storage building but with alterations which make it appear overall as neither a dwellinghouse or farm storage building. The building is also highly visible in the landscape which is very open and where there is no tree screening. The west and south elevations where much of the changes would be made, is particularly visible from the nearest road. I do not consider the building has an acceptable design and appearance for a dwellinghouse in a prominent position either with or without the alterations.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

To conclude, the proposal can be applied for via the Class Q Prior Approval process. However, the design and appearance of the proposed development is not acceptable and therefore Prior Approval should be refused for the proposal.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : REFUSE

Case Officer: Chris Johnston

Recommendation Date: 18.7.18

X *B.J. Haywood*

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council