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Head of Planning Services
South Holland District Council
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PE11 2XE

Dear Sir,

Planning Application for erection of stable block and use of land for grazing of horses

Site at Bluebell House, Dog Drove North, Holbeach Drove, Spalding, PE12 0RZ

This letter is submitted to accompany the above planning application on behalf of my client Mr R Langley-Stevens MBE.

My client has had discussions with Mr Grant of the Planning Department previously and the application follows on from those.

Aside from this covering letter, which also comprises a Design and Access Statement, the planning application includes the following information:-

- Application Forms and Certificate of Ownership
- SP-8245-C: Proposed Location and Block Plan (1:500/1:1250)
- LP-8245-C: Existing Location Plan
- LE-8245-D: Stable Block Layout and Elevations (1:50 & 1:100)
- Application Fee

Proposal

The application proposal is for a timber traditional stable block with low ridge line and low pitched roof measuring some 71.6sq.m including the area under the overhang.

The proposed access is to the west of the site and off Dog Drove North on an area some 25m to the north of the house. An access to the south of this point has been used as an access by the farmer for many years.

It is proposed that the perimeter of the site, aside from the southern, will be bounded by post and rail fence as shown on the photo below. A gate will be proposed at the point of the existing access, also as shown below. The dimensions are attached in Appendix A.



Should there be a requirement for waste management disposal the Applicant would use the services of Keith Hall Of 9 Dog Drove North, Holbeach Drove, Spalding, PE12 0SA Environment Agency waste disposal registration Number CBDU186207.

The proposed holding area prior to disposal is likely to be positioned inside the western boundary perimeter for ease of extraction.

Description

The site comprises an agricultural field to the north of Bluebell House (The Applicant's residence). The southern and eastern boundaries are defined by drains and the northern boundary is open as the proposed site in effect involves using part of the existing field. The western boundary is defined by the road.

The land is not and will not be used in any commercial way for equestrian purposes but allied to the existing principal residential accommodation for the housing of the applicants' horses.

The Applicant has lived at Bluebell House for 9 years and has been trying to gain control of any adjacent land for the opportunity to bring horses near to them. The opportunity to do this has only recently become realistic, hence the application.

The Applicant and his wife are Army veterans and they are very keen to rehome an older Army horse on the site. The reason is two-fold, they firstly wish to help 'one of their own' by rehoming a horse which has come to the end of its use in the Army and secondly, tragically, the Applicant's wife lost her brother in Army action abroad and to help her through, the family as a whole are keen for the project to act as a form of therapy moving forward as it is reported that progress has been made in healing veteran soldiers in the UK and abroad with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

By this, you can see that the reason behind the application is not for a large enterprise but more akin to a very small scale equestrian use which is primarily sought to give something back and aid the healing process.

Planning Policy

The Development Plan for the area currently comprises of the adopted South Holland District Council Local Plan (2006). The Council is producing a new Local Plan jointly with Boston Borough Council and Lincolnshire County Council but for the purposes of development control, this is not yet adopted.

The majority of policies within the adopted Local Plan are not relevant to this small-scale proposal. Policy LT8 which was concerned specifically with equestrian development was deleted in July 2009 and as such is no longer valid. As such, and given the general silence on equestrian development in the Local Plan, it must be the case that proposals must comply with the NPPF to gauge their appropriateness in planning terms.

In this case, the proposed stable proposes two boxes with the remainder of the structure being made up of ancillary uses such wash down and hay/feed room and store. It is small scale in terms of its scale and quasi-domestic operation.

The general form and quality ensures that it does not affect appear overbearing and given its close proximity from the Bluebell House, it will not be seen or be prominent from public viewpoints. It is also the case that the building has been located as proposed so it is seen in the context of the dwelling and the farm to the south to appear as one main area of buildings.

The design is such that it is low key and functional in form and appearance for the Applicant's needs.

It is clear that the proposed development complies with Chapter 3 of the NPPF and in particular bullet-point three which supports leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside.

Policy Summary

In summary, it is deemed that the scale of the building proposed is not excessive and would not be visually intrusive in the landscape. The proposed materials of timber boarding would ensure that the building would not appear incongruous in the rural landscape.

The proposed development is purposefully sited near to the principal dwelling to make use of the land for horses. Its location on site away from the road also provides a good deal of security to the stables.

The use of the proposed development is for private use only allied to the principal dwelling so will not generate any more traffic than existing and the use will not generate an over use of bridleways.

It must be considered the fact that there is a need for elderly working horses to find new homes and the application site is ideal for this. The personal healing reasons are also stated which again, given the small-scale proposal must be seen in light of the scheme overall.

Design and Access Statement

Given the minor nature of the proposal, and the fact that the main policy issues have been discussed above, this element of the Statement is kept short and to the point.

Amount

The scheme proposes a stable block with ancillary elements as laid out on the plans comprising a total of 71.6sq.m.

Layout

The proposal is shown so to make best use of the area in terms of function for the stable to make use of the land associated for horses. Whilst it is located close to the principal dwelling, it is within view for security and wellbeing reasons.

Scale

The proposed stable has a total floor area of some 71.6sq.m with a ridge height of 3.7m and eaves height of 2.4m. The stable is clearly ancillary in form to the principal dwelling and as a result it not overbearing in any way.

Landscaping

The site is open in character given its location but is would be easily assimilated given its small scale and location against a backdrop of larger buildings to the south.

Appearance

The stable building has been designed appropriately for use as stable accommodation and no other uses and will be constructed of timber boarding. The roof pitch for the building will be low giving the lowest possible profile. It is clear that the proposal in general is suitable for the area given its rural appearance.

Access

Currently tractors and trailers just cut across the verge anywhere along the frontage to get on and off the field. As the proposal is very small scale, the use of the same access will occur but this will only be used occasionally for delivery of hay and extraction of manure on a trailer.

The site benefits from close proximity to a network of public bridle paths and does not give rise to any parking, access, or highway safety matters.

Conclusion

In this case, the Local Plan is silent on the development and therefore guidance in the NPPF must be taken into account on its acceptability.

The proposed development will not be uncommon in a rural area (there are other small scale equestrian facilities locally) and the appearance and location will not lead to issues in terms of visual intrusion or adverse impact locally.

I trust you have all you need to determine the application however if you require further assistance then please feel free to call me on the numbers above.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Colson', written in a cursive style.

Richard Colson BA (Hons) BTP MRTPI
Director

Appendix A

The stock fencing specifications for this submission are as follows:

- 3 Post and rail fencing, comprising 87 x 38mm horizontal rails, posts 1.80 metres long x 125 x 75mm set at 1.80 metre centres. All timber to be pressure treated sawn softwood. This would be supplied and fitted with posts driven in.
- 1 pair of 3-metre-wide standard timber double leaf field gates, hung to and including 2no 175 x 175mm timber gate posts, galvanised hinges, 2no drop bolts and flip over latch. This would be supplied and fitted.

The ground within the boundaries is clear and level, with good digging access to all post holes - the land being no heavier than loam or clay.