

To
The Planning Department
South Holland District Council
Priory Road
Spalding. PE11 2XE

For the attention of
30th February 2024
Our ref : JDA/2024/720
Your ref :

Demolition of Class Q Consented Agricultural Buildings and Erection of Three Dwellings, Associated Hard and Soft Landscaping and Creation of a Re-wilding Area at Witteman Nurseries South Drove, Spalding. Lincs. PE11 3BD

Dear sirs

Please find attached our Full Planning Application for the Demolition of Class Q Consented Agricultural Buildings and Erection of Three Dwellings, Associated Hard and Soft Landscaping and Creation of a Re-wilding Area at Witteman Nurseries South Drove, Spalding.

Class Q Prior Approval consent was granted under H16-0560-23 on the 14th August 2023 (Conversion of existing agricultural building into 3 dwellings). The principle of residential development has been established by virtue of this permission – the 'fallback position'. The current proposal is seeking permission to demolish all of the agricultural buildings on the site and build three new dwellings.

A Full Planning application – H16-0792-23 – was submitted on the 4th of September 2023 and refused on the 12th of February 2024. Application description – "Demolition of Class Q consented agricultural buildings and erection of three dwellings, associated hard and soft landscaping and creation of a re-wilding area".

There were two 'reasons for refusal' as set out below ;

1 The proposal fails to provide a betterment that positively reflects the characteristics of the site or the character and context of the surrounding area and fails in this regard to provide a positive contribution to the appearance of the site compared to the fallback position. The proposal is therefore not considered to be acceptable in principle and conflicts with Policies 1, 2, and 3 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) and fails to accord with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023), namely Paragraphs 84, 135 and 139.

2 Overall, when considering the development on balance, it is considered that in order to achieve compliance with Policy 4, an excessive quantity of flood resilient development is required, which would cause the development to bear an overwhelmingly negative and harmful impact upon the visual character of the proposal and that of its setting and therefore the proposal cannot be considered to satisfactorily comply with Policies 2, 3 or 4 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019).

This application seeks to address the reasons for refusal and, more particularly, the issues set out in the Case Officer's Report. Whilst accepting of the Class Q 'Fallback Position' in principle, Officer's expressed concerns regarding the previous design solution.

On page 7, the Officer states the following ;

"*It stands to reason that, where the alternative new-build proposal offers either an enhancement to the setting, a reduction in density or betterment in overall development, when compared to the fallback, the development could (and perhaps should) be allowed to proceed".*
In light of the above, it is noted that the application site has the benefit of a permission under Class Q (H16-0560-23) for the conversion of the existing agricultural building to form a terrace of 3 singlebedroom dwellings.
The Local Planning Authority does not consider that the proposal put forward is of such notable improvement in respect of its architectural merit or that in respect of associating the site with its agricultural history, that a betterment has been achieved as to deem the proposal acceptable in light of the aforementioned fallback position.
Whilst it is apparent that the existing Class Q permission could be implemented and therefore, dwellings are most likely to be achieved on site, the replacement dwellings hereby proposed are not considered to be acceptable for their context within such a rural, relatively remote and unsustainable location. The proposed dwelling comprises a built form that is of a significantly notable increase in height and of such form that the existing agricultural characteristics of the site would be somewhat impacted, whereas the extant Class Q permission, although not of a significant architectural quality, does provide a clear increment of progression and retains its agricultural context. Moreover, the scheme approved under Class Q is the conversion of a farm building into a set of dwellings, which provides a clear transition over time whilst retaining its agricultural context.
The current proposal is for a large-detached house, of bespoke design with contemporary features, which, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, fails to encapsulate the rural and countryside setting/context to which it would relate.

The Planning Authority are seeking 'betterment' in relation to any proposal to 'upgrade' an extant Class Q permission to a new build development. We have given full and due consideration to the issues raised by Officers and have sought to re-design the proposal that is more respectful and reflective of the existing scale and form of buildings that presently occupy the application site area.
Aside from presenting an entirely new design solution, we have sought to propose the

development of three dwellings of quite modest proportions. The reduction in scale compared to the existing range of buildings on the site is set out below ;

Proposed new building footprint - 442 sq m
Existing building footprint 1314 sq m
Footprint reduction is circa 33%

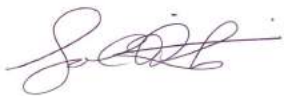
Existing building volume 3958 cubic metres
Proposed building volume 1885 cubic metres
Volume reduction is circa 47%

Of particular note when comparing the latest designs with the existing buildings is the proposed Gambrell roof profile. This roof configuration is the current prevailing 'shape' of the dominant superstructure on the site. Similar to a Mansard roof, a Gambrel structure is a symmetrical two sided roof with two slopes on each side. The upper slope is positioned at a shallower pitch, whilst the lower pitch is steeper. This design provides the advantages of a sloped roof while maximizing headroom inside the building's upper level and shortening what would otherwise be a tall roof. Gambrel roofed agricultural buildings are not uncommon in South Lincs, North Cambs and Norfolk.

The new design embraces the existing architectural DNA and offers a significant reduction in built form – area and volume. We contend that the revised design solution offers demonstrable 'betterment' when compared with the consented Class Q conversion. A new build development also enables a more satisfactory and less constrained layout in terms of residential accommodation along with measurable improvements in the thermal performance of the houses.

Please let me know if you require any further information at this stage.

Yours sincerely



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