

Application No: 12/3570N
Location: High Ash, CAPPERS LANE, SPURSTOW, CW6 9RP
Proposal: Erection of two agricultural buildings
Applicant: High Ash Farm Ltd
Expiry Date: 11-Jan-2013

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

Approve subject to conditions

MAIN ISSUES

- Principle of Development
- Character, Appearance and Landscape
- Residential Amenity
- Highway Safety
- Public Rights of Way

1. REASON FOR REFERRAL

This application is to be determined by the Southern Committee as it is a major development of over 1000sqm.

1. PREVIOUS MEETING

At the Southern Planning Committee of 6th February 2013, Members resolved to defer this application for further information on the use of the proposed building and to clarify if it is essential.

Use

The applicant has provided a further statement in response. The applicant has stated that the proposed agricultural buildings are required to shelter livestock. The lack of such accommodation is likely to create major difficulties during the forthcoming lambing season. Whilst the application that Members are considering is for stock sheds i.e. primarily for housing livestock, the buildings will also be used to store hay, harvested crops, animal feed, farm machinery and other implements for the operation of the farm.

Essential

At present, the current farmstead does not benefit from any enclosed shelter for the livestock. The current business is in its infancy and significant investment has already been made with further investment proposed in order to grow the farm and make it a viable rural enterprise.

Paragraph 28 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that:

Local Planning Authorities 'should support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development by:

- supporting the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;
- promoting the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses,

Members should also note that planning permission has been granted previously for a new agricultural machinery shed as part of outline planning approval 09/3722N. This proposal would substitute the previously approved machinery shed. Thus, a proportion of the floor-space has already been permitted and this application only seeks to provide an additional building to accommodate livestock.

It is considered that this proposal is required in order for the farm to operate properly and grow and therefore is essential in terms of the requirements of local plan policy NE.2 as well as the advice within the NPPF and therefore the original recommendation of approval still stands.

This update report therefore deals with the additional information / proposals and supplements the original report below.

2. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

The application site forms a farm complex located within the Open Countryside to the west of Nantwich and is accessed via Cappers Lane. The site comprises a mixture of traditional brick and more modern agricultural buildings and a large three storey farm house. This application specifically relates to an area directly to the north of the farmstead where there are existing farm buildings. The site is accessed via recently formed new access from Cappers Lane. A public right of way crosses the site.

3. DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

This application seeks full planning permission for the erection of 2 agricultural buildings at High Ash Farm, Cappers Lane, Spurstow.

4. RELEVANT HISTORY

12/1322N - CHEESE MAKING RELOCATION – Refused 05-Jul-2012

12/0131N – Planning permission refused for Replacement Dwellinghouse Including Demolition of Existing Dwellinghouse on 16th February 2012.

11/0055N – Planning permission refused for Application for the Erection of a Temporary Cabin Accommodation on 17th March 2011.

10/1333N – Planning permission refused for The Erection of Temporary Cabin Accommodation on 16th July 2010.

09/3724N – Outline Planning Permission approved for New Agricultural Machinery Shed, New Slurry Holding Tank n 22nd March 2010.

09/3722N – Planning permission approved for Alteration and Extension to Existing Farmhouse, Delineation of Residential Curtilage and Conversion of Existing Farm Buildings to Cheese Making Room with Covered Link to Cheese Finishing, Packaging and Storage Room on 12th February 2010.

09/2823N – GDO Application determined that details not required for a new access on 2nd October 2009.

P94/0469 – GDO Application determined that details not required for agricultural shed on 29th June 1994.

5. POLICIES

Local Plan Policy

NE.2 (Open Countryside)

NE.5 (Nature Conservation and Habitats)

NE.9 (Protected Species)

NE.14 (Agricultural Buildings Requiring Planning Permission)

BE.1 (Amenity)

BE.2 (Design Standards)

BE.3 (Parking and Access)

RT.9 (Footpaths and Bridleways)

Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

6. CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)

Environmental Health – No objection

Strategic Highways Manager – No comments received

Public Right of Way – No objection

United Utilities – No objection

VIEWS OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

No objection, however, the Parish Council feel that the roofs of the buildings should be coloured green to blend in with the surrounding countryside.

7. OTHER REPRESENTATIONS

None

8. APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Planning, Design and Access Statement
Protected Species Survey

9. OFFICER APPRAISAL

Principle of development

The principle of agricultural buildings that are essential to the agricultural practice is acceptable in the open countryside and accords with Policy NE.2 (Open Countryside). There is general policy support for agricultural development within the open countryside and paragraph 28 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that local planning authorities should:

'promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses'.

The Local Plan outlines the need to strike a balance between development which will sustain the rural economy and the need to protect the countryside for its own sake. It is also necessary to recognise the changing needs of agriculture.

These policies aim to protect the openness of the countryside and safeguard it from inappropriate forms of development and ensure that the design of the new buildings is sympathetic to the existing agricultural character of the site, surrounding landscape and the wider area by virtue of being appropriate in form and scale and utilising sympathetic building materials. They also seek to ensure that neighbouring amenity and highway safety are not adversely affected.

Character, Appearance and Landscape

The buildings are to be sited to the north of the farmstead adjacent to an existing farm building. The nearest of the proposed buildings will replace one that was approved under outline planning permission ref; 09/3721N. The second building will be positioned alongside with a gap in between to create a narrow yard area to allow access to the rear of the farmstead.

The topography of the land on which these buildings would be sited slopes away in a northerly direction and the buildings will sit lower than the existing complex and higher ground which also rises to the east. The levels will be altered slightly, by a small amount of cut and fill but this will not be significant.

It is considered that these buildings will be well screened by the topography of the land when viewed from the east and will be screened to the south by the existing farmstead. From the north, the building would be viewed against the backdrop of the existing buildings and their orientation (i.e. orientated east – to west) will mean that their prominence from the west will be minimised. However, given the scale of buildings proposed it is recommended that a scheme of landscaping be conditioned to further reduce the impact on the development, which will be in accordance with Local Plan Policy.

The appearance detail submitted is for a mixture of low level concrete panelling, concrete boarding and box profile metal sheeting for the elevations, and natural grey coloured cement fibre roofing. These are considered to be appropriate materials in this setting.

Residential Amenity

There are no residential properties in close proximity to the site that would be adversely affected by the proposed development, except for that associated with the existing farmstead. There have been no objections raised from Environmental Health.

Highway Safety

The site is accessed from a new access off Cappers Lane. It is not considered that the proposed development would give rise to any significant adverse impact on highway safety. Buildings are sited to allow safe internal movement within the farm complex.

Public Rights of Way

The development would be visible from Brindley Footpath's 5 and 11, and Spurstow Footpath 13 which will pass the buildings at close proximity. Agricultural buildings are not uncommon structures within such settings and it is therefore considered that the development would not have a significantly detrimental impact to the visual amenity of the area as viewed from these footpaths. Public Rights of Way have no objection.

11. CONCLUSIONS AND REASON(S) FOR THE DECISION

The proposed development is for agricultural purposes and required for the expansion of agricultural operations on the site. The buildings are appropriately sited given the proximity of existing structures, the topography of the land and natural screening, and they would not have a significantly detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the Open Countryside. The proposed development would not result in a loss of amenity to neighbouring properties or highway safety issues. It is therefore considered that the proposed development would be in compliance with the relevant policies of the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

APPROVE subject to the following conditions

1 Standard Time Limit (3 Years)

2 Accordance with plans including levels

- 3 Landscaping scheme to be submitted**
- 4 Landscaping scheme to be implemented**
- 5 Materials as per application**

