HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

25/00004/PMBPA

OFFICER REPORT

Case No: **25/00004/PMBPA** **Prior Approval Agricultural to Dwellings**

Proposal: **Conversion of existing agricultural barn to a dwelling.**

Location: **Land Adjacent 21 Mill Road Great Gidding**

Applicant: **Mr B Scotney**

Grid Ref: **512222 283461**

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

The application relates to an agricultural building which lies to the north-east of 21 Mill Road, Great Gidding and the centre of the village. The site is not within a Conservation Area (though the boundary is approx. 97m south-west). There is a Grade II Listed Building (80 Main Street) approx. 181m south-west. There are no protected trees within the site which lies within Flood Zone 1 and has an overall low risk of flooding from other sources as per the most recent Environment Agency Flood Risk Maps and Data.

This application seeks prior approval for change of use of an agricultural building to a 'larger' single storey three/four-bedroom dwelling under Class Q of Part 3 of the GPDO 2015 (as amended).

It should be noted that the application is accompanied by a supplementary information template and the applicant is exercising their right to utilise superseded permitted development rights for agricultural conversions as they stood prior to the 21st of May 2024 amendments to Class Q of the GPDO. The form indicates that this is valid for submissions made to the Local Planning Authority made prior to 21st of May 2025. This is to allow for the conversion of buildings to 'larger' dwellinghouses (defined as a floorspace exceeding 100m² but less than 465m² as per Part Q.3).

During the lifetime of the application revised plans have been received to confirm the extent of the site in accordance with Class Q. This resulted in a reduction of the red line and not an increase. No material changes were made under these revisions. Therefore, on the balance of fairness further public consultation was considered not to be necessary on this occasion.

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

Class Q of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) (pre-21st of May 2024)

The National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

Planning Practice Guidance

For full details visit the government website: https://www.gov.uk

PLANNING HISTORY

0402561FUL - Construction of vehicular access (Permission)
0602993FUL - Erection of stable (Permission)
0802232FUL - Erection of barn/storage shed (Permission)

CONSULTATIONS

HDC Environmental Health - No objections subject to condition.

Cambridgeshire County Council Highways Team - No objections.

REPRESENTATIONS

None received at the time of determination.

SUMMARY OF ISSUES

Q. Development consisting of—

(a) a change of use of a building and any land within its curtilage from a use as an agricultural building to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order; and or

(b) development referred to in paragraph (a) together with building operations reasonably necessary to convert the building referred to in paragraph (a) to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of that Schedule.

Aside from the determination as to the agricultural use of the site (below) Q.1(a) is not relevant and the assessment begins at Q.1(b) relating to larger dwellinghouses (Exceeding 100m² but less than 465m²).

*Q.1 Development is not permitted by Class Q if—

(a) the site was not used solely for an agricultural use as part of an established agricultural unit—

(i) on 20th March 2013, or

(ii) in the case of a building which was in use before that date but was not in use on that date, when it was last in use, or (iii) in the case of a site which was brought into use after 20th March 2013, for a period of at least 10 years before the date development under Class Q begins;

Officer comments - Complies, the supplementary information template confirms that the use of the site was agricultural on the above date and that this will continue until any development approved commences. A site visit also confirms the agricultural character of the site.

Q.1 (b) in the case of— a larger dwellinghouse, within an established agricultural unit—

(aa) the cumulative number of separate larger dwellinghouses developed under Class Q exceeds 3; or

(bb) the cumulative floor space of the existing building or buildings changing use to a larger dwellinghouse or dwellinghouses under Class Q exceeds 465 square metres;

Officer comments - Complies, despite an error in the submitted supplementary information template the agent has provided written confirmation that this is the only dwelling to be considered. This corresponds with the planning history for the site.

(ba) the floor space of any dwellinghouse developed under Class Q having a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order exceeds 465 square metres;

Officer comments - Complies, the plans reflect that the proposed dwelling will not exceed this level of floorspace.

(c) in the case of—

(i) a smaller dwellinghouse, within an established agricultural unit—

(aa) the cumulative number of separate smaller dwellinghouses developed under Class Q exceeds 5; or

(bb) the floor space of any one separate smaller dwellinghouse having a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order exceeds 100 square metres;

Officer comments - Not applicable, this relates to a larger dwellinghouse.

(d) the development under Class Q (together with any previous development under Class Q) within an established agricultural unit would result in either or both of the following—

(i) a larger dwellinghouse or larger dwellinghouses having more than 465 square metres of floor space having a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order;

(ii) the cumulative number of separate dwellinghouses having a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order exceeding 5;

Officer comments - Complies, this will be the only dwellinghouse provided under Class Q and does not exceed 465m²

(e) the site is occupied under an agricultural tenancy, unless the express consent of both the landlord and the tenant has been obtained;

(f) less than 1 year before the date development begins—

(i) an agricultural tenancy over the site has been terminated, and

(ii) the termination was for the purpose of carrying out development under Class Q, unless both the landlord and the tenant have agreed in writing that the site is no longer required for agricultural use;

Officer comments - Complies, the submitted application form details that the site is not occupied under an agricultural tenancy nor has one been terminated to allow for the development.

(g) development under Class A(a) or Class B(a) of Part 6 of this Schedule (agricultural buildings and operations) has been carried out on the established agricultural unit—

(i) since 20th March 2013; or

(ii) where development under Class Q begins after 20th March 2023, during the period which is 10 years before the date development under Class Q begins;

Officer comments - Complies, confirmed in supplementary information template and reflected in planning history.

(h) the development would result in the external dimensions of the building extending beyond the external dimensions of the existing building at any given point;

Officer comments - Complies, no extensions are proposed as part of this development.

(i) the development under Class Q(b) would consist of building operations other than—

(i) the installation or replacement of—

(aa) windows, doors, roofs, or exterior walls, or

(bb) water, drainage, electricity, gas or other services, to the extent reasonably necessary for the building to function as a dwellinghouse; and

(ii) partial demolition to the extent reasonably necessary to carry out building operations allowed by paragraph Q.1(i)(i);

Officer comments - Complies, the submitted plans do not indicate that any additional works (other than those above) are proposed. Whilst not accompanied by a structural survey a site visit has been completed and the agent has also provided photographs of the interior and exterior of the building. These show a building which is in good repair and or substantial construction with a concrete base and so the LPA has no reason to consider that additional extensive works would be required.

(j) the site is on article 2(3) land;

Officer comments - Complies, the site is outside of the Conservation Area.

(k) the site is, or forms part of—

(i) a site of special scientific interest;

(ii) a safety hazard area;

(iii) a military explosives storage area;

Officer comments - Complies, confirmed within supplementary information template and no such restrictions identified within Local Authority Mapping.

(l) the site is, or contains, a scheduled monument; or (m) the building is a listed building.

Officer comments - Complies, no such constraints present.

*Conditions - Q.2

(1) Where the development proposed is development under Class Q(a) together with development under Class Q(b), development is permitted subject to the condition that before beginning the development, the developer must apply to the Local Planning Authority for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required as to—

(a) transport and highways impacts of the development

Officer comment:

The site benefits from existing access from Mill Road and this will be retained. Cambridgeshire County Council's Highways Team have been consulted and raise no objections to the scheme.

It should be acknowledged that Policy LP17 of the Local Plan requires one secure cycle storage space per bedroom for all Class C3 development unless it can be demonstrated that this is not

possible. In cases relating to prior approval, it is not considered necessary to use the full force of the policy in the assessment or condition details such as the scale or appearance of the storage as the constraints of the site sometimes make this unviable. In this case it is considered that there is some scope within the site to accommodate cycle storage relative to the scale of development.

(b) noise impacts of the development

Officer comment: HDC's Environmental Health Team have been consulted and, following a review of the details raise no objections in terms of noise risk. Whilst the building is set at depth within the site (approx. 50m from the closest dwelling - 21 Mill Road) residential use is a characteristic of the area and, given the rural nature of the area (and the expected activities associated with this) it is not considered that there would be an unacceptable impact on the occupiers of the dwelling in relation to noise nor would its provision result in unacceptable noise impacts on the surroundings.

(c) contamination risks on the site

Officer comment: HDC's Environmental Health Team have been consulted and have recommended that a condition is attached to the decision in order to investigate and deal with any contamination issues prior to first occupation. The development is considered to be acceptable in this regard.

(d) flooding risks on the site

Officer comment: The site is located in Flood Zone 1 and has an overall low risk of flooding as per the most recent Environment Agency Flood Risk Maps and Data. Such development is acceptable within Flood Zone 1. The scale of the site does not require the submission of a Flood Risk Assessment and there is no requirement for the Sequential or Exception Tests to be applied as per the NPPF (2024). The development is therefore considered to be acceptable with regard to its approach to flooding.

(e) whether the location or siting of the building makes it otherwise impractical or undesirable for the building to change from agricultural use to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order, and

(f) the design or external appearance of the building

Officer comment: The siting of the building is assessed in the preceding sections of this report. In terms of its appearance, there is no increase in scale and, overall, the unit retains a 'barn style' appearance and the materials/products to be used (as detailed on the submitted plans) should ensure that it is assimilated well it into the locality.

In terms of suitability of siting. As detailed above, there is an established character of residential and agricultural uses co-existing comfortably in the locality. Environmental Health Officers have not raised any concerns in terms of noise, odour, excessive thermal exposure and so on. As such, the LPA has no reason to consider that the site is unsuitable for such development.

(g) the provision of adequate natural light in all habitable rooms of the dwellinghouses,

Officer comment: All the habitable rooms would benefit from at least one window or opening, and it is considered that adequate natural light would be provided into the habitable spaces of the proposed dwelling.

*Conclusion:

It is considered that the proposal complies with Class Q of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). Prior approval is required and approved, subject to conditions.

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CONTACT OFFICER:
Enquiries about this report to **Kevin Simpson**