Our ref: TDK/HFT
Your ref:

3RD December 2024

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Planning Development Control,
Huntingdonshire District Council,
Pathfinder House,
St Mary's Street,
Huntingdon,
PE29 3TN

Dear Sir or Madam,

Applicant- Huntingdon Freemans Trust, 37 High Street Huntingdon, PE29 3AQ
Site Address: Land Between West Side and East Side Common, Godmanchester
Proposal: Prior notification for the replacement of an existing agricultural access bridge under Part 6, Class A: Class A of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015.

On behalf of The Huntingdon Freemans Trust, we submit a Prior Approval application for the proposed replacement of an existing agricultural access bridge under Part 6, Class A of Schedule 2 of the Town and County Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) (hereafter 'the GPDO').

The application comprises this letter and the following documents to be considered as part of the determination of the application:

- Application Forms
- Site Location Plan (24.083.DL0101_P1)
- Site Plan as Proposed (24.083.DK0001_P1)
- Elevations as Proposed (24.083.DK0002_P1)
- Site Plan as Existing (24.083.DX0001_P1)
- Artists Impressions as Proposed (24.083.DK0003_P1)

Site Context

The Site consists of an access bridge crossing Cooks Backwater, forming part of a private road connecting a grazing field referred to as Land Between West Side and East Side Common, Godmanchester and Cow's Lane located circa 1.25km to the south-east of the site. The existing bridge is identified by the 'What3Words' location map below.

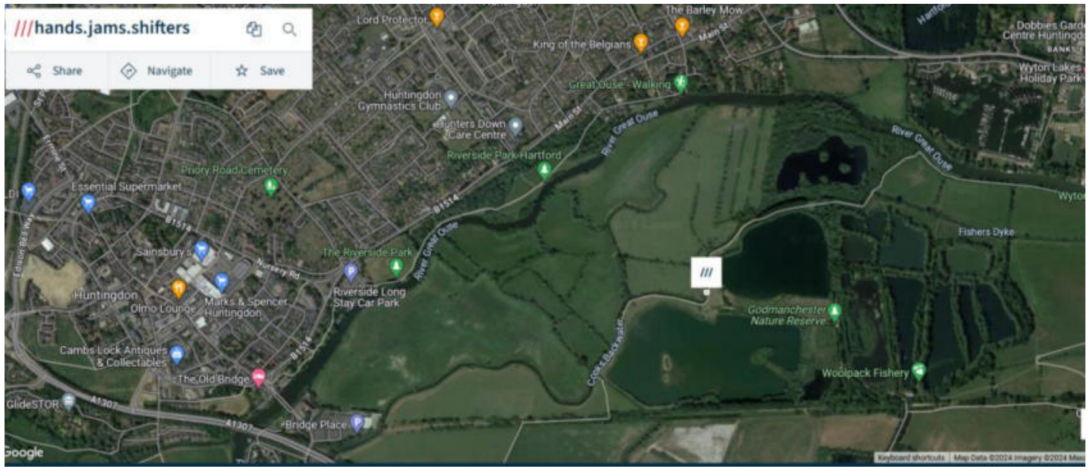


Figure 1: Identification of existing bridge crossing using What3Words

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Land between West Side and East Side Common is located on the northern side of Cooks Backwater and is an agricultural grazing field. This agricultural holding is 21.21ha in area, as edged in red in the map extract below. This land is an island, as it is surrounded by a combination of the River Great Ouse and Cooks Backwater, so the only existing route to the land is via the existing bridge crossing.

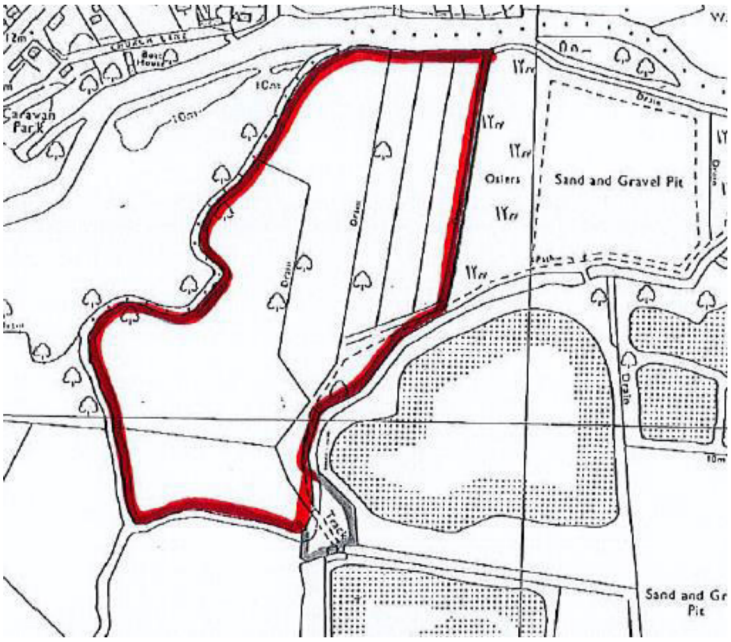


Figure 2: Agricultural Holding Edged in Red

The Huntingdon Freemans Trust have let this land to Mr A.G. Johnson on a Farm Business Tenancy since 2005 for grazing cattle and cutting hay. The Huntingdon Freemans Trust have been using this land for grazing for over 100 years.

The existing bridge is a single-span sleeper bridge positioned on steel beams. The existing bridge is open-sided but shows significant signs of deterioration, as shown in the photographs below. The bridge is used by tractors and 4x4s with livestock trailers and grass-cutting and bailing equipment.





The site is not within a conservation area, and there are no listed buildings in its immediate vicinity. The nearest is the Grade II* listed Church of All Saints, 590 metres to the northwest.

There are no Public Rights of Way (PRoW) over the existing bridge onto land between West Side and East Side Common. However, a PrOW (Godmanchester FP4) runs on the opposite side of Cooks Backwater adjacent to the existing bridge and forms part of the private access track to the bridge.

Planning History

A review of the Council's public access database did not identify any relevant previous planning applications at the Site. The Site has also not been subject to any other Prior Approval applications.

Proposed Development

The existing bridge has been assessed to be unsuitable for agricultural vehicles to travel across Cooks Backwater. It is considered to be a significant health and safety hazard and requires replacement. The existing bridge is the only crossing point between Cow Lane and the grazing field.

The bridge needs to be crossed by large agricultural vehicles during the spring and summer months when the field is used for cattle grazing and grass cutting.

The replacement bridge will be a Bailey with a steel deck and will include lattice truss sides and a mesh barrier. New ramped abutments will be placed on either side of the new bridge deck, consisting of a compacted earth and gravel hoggin finish.

The total area of the bridge and ramps will be 323.88 square metres. The replacement bridge and access ramps will be 30m (length) and 5m (width).

A replacement gate and fencing will be installed to replace the existing ones and will be less than 2m in height so can be erected under permitted development rights.

Legislation

This is an agricultural prior notification application under Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (GDPO 2015) to ascertain whether prior approval is required for the erection of an agricultural bridge as set out below.

Permitted Development

Class A of Part 6 (Agricultural Buildings and Operations) of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 permits development on units of 5 hectares or more.

a) Any works for the erection, extension or alteration of a building; or

b) Any excavation or engineering operations, which are reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture for that unit.

which are reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture within that unit (subject to other criteria and conditions set out within the legislation).

The replacement of the bridge would be carried out on agricultural land on a unit of greater than 5 hectares in size. Furthermore, it is required for large agricultural vehicles to access/egress the Site safely and is therefore reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture within the unit.

A.1 Development is not permitted by Class A if— (a)the development would be carried out on a separate parcel of land forming part of the unit which is less than 1 hectare in area;

The development would be carried out on a separate parcel of land forming part of the agricultural unit as being greater than 1ha.

(b)it would consist of the erection or extension of any agricultural building on an established agricultural unit (as defined in paragraph X of Part 3 of this Schedule) where development under Class Q or S of Part 3 (changes of use) of this Schedule has been carried out within a period of 10 years ending with the date on which development under Class A(a) begins;

It is not applicable as it does not consist of the erection or extension of an agricultural building.

(c)it would consist of, or include, the erection, extension or alteration of a dwelling;

The proposal is not for a dwelling.

(d)it would involve the provision of a building, structure or works not designed for agricultural purposes;

As mentioned above, the agricultural bridge is required for the crossing of cattle for grazing. The development is therefore for agricultural purposes.

(e)the ground area which would be covered by—

(i) any works or structure (other than a fence) for accommodating livestock or any plant or machinery arising from engineering operations; or
(ii)any building erected or extended or altered by virtue of Class A,

would exceed 1,000 square metres, calculated as described in paragraph D.1(2)(a) of this Part[1];

The bridge is not for accommodating livestock or any plant or machinery arising from engineering operations.

(f)the height of any part of any building, structure or works within 3 kilometres of the perimeter of an aerodrome would exceed 3 metres;

RAF Wyton is located 3.07km from the proposed bridge. Nevertheless, the bridge will not exceed 3 metres in height.

(g)the height of any part of any building, structure or works not within 3 kilometres of the perimeter of an aerodrome would exceed 12 metres;

RAF Wyton is located 3.07km from the proposed bridge. Nevertheless, the proposed bridge will not exceed 12 metres in height.

(h)any part of the development would be within 25 metres of a metalled part of a trunk road or classified road;

No part of the development would be within 25 metres of a metalled part of a trunk road or classified road.

(i)it would consist of, or include, the erection or construction of, or the carrying out of any works to, a building, structure or an excavation used or to be used for the accommodation of livestock or for the storage of slurry or sewage sludge where the building, structure or excavation is, or would be, within 400 metres of the curtilage of a protected building;

Not applicable

(j)it would involve excavations or engineering operations on or over article 2(4) land which are connected with fish farming; or

The site is not located on article 2(4) land and the proposal is not for fish farming.

(k)any building for storing fuel for or waste from a biomass boiler or an anaerobic digestion system—

(i)would be used for storing waste not produced by that boiler or system or for storing fuel not produced on land within the unit; or
(ii)is or would be within 400 metres of the curtilage of a protected building.

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[1] *(2) For the purposes of Classes A, B and C— (a)an area "calculated as described in paragraph D.1(2)(a)" comprises the ground area which would be covered by the proposed development, together with the ground area of any building* (other than a dwelling), or any structure, works, plant, machinery, ponds or tanks within the same unit which are being provided or have been provided within the preceding 2 years and any part of which would be within 90 metres of the proposed development;

Not applicable.

Conditions

Section A.2(2) of Part 6 Class A sets out conditions where development would be permitted. Criteria b permits development for the '*formation or alteration of a private way' on the basis that 'the developer must, before beginning the development, apply to the local planning authority for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required as to the siting, design and external appearance of the building, the siting and means of construction of the private way, the siting of the excavation or deposit or the siting and appearance of the tank, as the case may be'.*

The proposed bridge would measure 30 metres in length and 5 metres in width, constructed with steel decking with latex sides. It is considered that the proposed bridge would be typical and appropriate to the rural setting of the site. The site is not within a conservation area and there are no listed buildings in the immediate vicinity of the site. The nearest Public Right of Way runs along the track in which the bridge is located, but will generally be well shielded by existing vegetation. Prior approval for the siting, design and external appearance of the bridge is therefore not considered to be required by the Local Planning Authority.

Summary

In light of the above, we consider that prior approval is not required or should be granted in accordance with Class 2, Schedule 6, Class A of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 as amended.

We would be grateful to receive confirmation at the earliest that the application has been received.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

Tom Kilvert MSc MRTPI
Associate - Planner
For and on behalf of Brown & Co - Property and Business Consultants LLP

[redacted]