

27/13/0015

MR M PEACE

**ERECTION OF AN AGRICULTURAL STORAGE BUILDING AT KNAPP FARM,  
HILLFARRANCE**

Location: KNAPP FARM, HILLFARRANCE ROAD, HILLFARRANCE,  
TAUNTON, TA4 1AN

Grid Reference: 319436.124617

Full Planning Permission

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**RECOMMENDATION AND REASON(S)**

Recommended Decision: Conditional Approval

**RECOMMENDED CONDITION(S) (if applicable)**

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within three years of the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with the provisions of Section 91 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51(1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

(A4) Location Plan

(A4) Block Plan (as amended by plan received 15.10.2013)

(A4) Roof Plan

(A4) South West & South East Elevations

(A4) North West & North East Elevations

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. Prior to their installation, samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out and thereafter retained as such, in accordance with the approved details as above, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed development does not harm the character and appearance of the area or the setting of the listed building.

4. (i) Prior to its implementation, a landscaping scheme, which shall include details of the species, siting and numbers to be planted, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- (ii) The scheme shall be completely carried out within the first available planting season from the date of commencement of the development, or as otherwise extended with the agreement in writing of the Local Planning Authority.
- (iii) For a period of five years after the completion of each landscaping scheme, the trees and shrubs shall be protected and maintained in a healthy weed free condition and any trees or shrubs that cease to grow shall be replaced by trees or shrubs of similar size and species, or the appropriate trees or shrubs as may be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed development does not harm the character and appearance of the area or harm the setting of the listed building.

Notes to Applicant

## **PROPOSAL**

This application seeks full planning permission for the erection of an agricultural building. The building would be in a 30x30m, 9m wide 'L' shape around an existing yard area. The elevations (north and east) facing the yard would each be 21m in length and open fronted. The rear elevations to the field would be solid clad in box profile green cladding. It would be 3.98m in height to the eaves and 4.7m to the ridge, with a grey fibre cement roof.

## **SITE DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY**

The site is part of an agricultural field to the west of Knapp Farm, a grade II listed building. The field is bordered by a roadside hedge on its northern side but is largely open to the south and west. The ground falls gently to the south towards the railway line. To the east of the site is a modern agricultural building, which adjoins a small stone barn. There is a walled garden to the southeast of these buildings and beyond them is the main farmhouse which has undergone extensive renovation over the last few years.

The planning history relates to listed building consents for the renovation of the farmhouse, new accesses and the recent service of an enforcement notice against an unauthorised caravan on the far side of the site from the proposed building.

## **CONSULTATION AND REPRESENTATION RESPONSES**

## Consultees

*SCC - TRANSPORT DEVELOPMENT GROUP* – No observations to make.

*OAKE PARISH COUNCIL* – OBJECT for the following reasons:

- Due to the large size, the building will have a visual impact on neighbours.
- The application is for a large building for agricultural use but it does not include any other information regarding the use of other building on the farm and the Parish Council question the need for an additional agricultural storage building.
- The planning application should be considered in the relation to other building already on the farm and the current use of these buildings.
- Further information should be provided to quantify the need for this building.

*LANDSCAPE* – Generally the new building relates well to the existing buildings but is open to the south and west. I recommend that the building is moved at least 3m from the northern hedgerow boundary to avoid damaging the hedge during construction work and give room to allow the hedgerow to be maintained at a minimum height of 3m. There should also be landscape mitigation such as earth mounding and hedgerow and tree planting on the southern and western boundaries.

*HERITAGE* - This is a very large building which would undoubtedly have a visible presence along the road. The proposed building would be approximately 40m to the south west of the farmhouse and would only be seen in juxtaposition with the listed elements when viewed from private land. While accepting this would be a modern addition, it would be significantly larger than the main listed building.

There are therefore issues to be addressed, specifically:

- the new building would dominate the farm complex;
- its size would disrupt the hierarchical relationship between the existing farm buildings;
- it is outside of where, historically, a farm building would be expected.

The cumulative effect is that it would harm the significance of the listed farm building. This harm could be outweighed were there demonstrable public benefit or sound justification as to why this building has to be this size - I cannot see evidence of this in the submitted material. As an alternative, splitting the building into two separate elements would reduce its impact and render it more acceptable.

## Representations

3 letters of SUPPORT making the following comments:

- Everything at Knapp Farm has been carried out to a high standard and the

proposed building will be no different.

- There are not many animals on site because the applicant has been concentrating on restoring the dwelling.
- The horse on site is on line to the applicant. The applicant is not running a livery yard.

2 letters of COMMENT raising the following issues:

- The neighbour's horse is only grazed on the land to keep the applicant's own horse company.
- The owner does things to a high standard and will have properly researched the best layout for a farm yard.
- There will be significant screening between the building and the neighbour to the north if the neighbour's proposal for boarding kennels goes ahead. [Officer's comment: there is currently no planning permission for this].
- The comments in support appear to contradict claims from the applicant's agent – the keeping of horses requires planning permission if food is brought onto the land. The presence of horses contradicts the agricultural statement and those tending the horses create additional traffic.
- It is wrong to claim that an 18 acre farm requires the same machinery as 1000 acres or more.

## **PLANNING POLICIES**

DM1 - TD CORE STRATEGY - GENERAL REQUIREMENTS,  
DM2 - TD CORE STRATEGY - DEV,  
CP8 - CP 8 ENVIRONMENT,

## **LOCAL FINANCE CONSIDERATIONS**

None.

## **DETERMINING ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS**

The principle of agricultural development in the open countryside is acceptable. The main issues in the consideration of this application are the impact on visual amenity and landscape character, the setting of the listed building, and the impact on neighbouring property. The Highway Authority do not wish to comment on the proposal indicating that it is acceptable in highway safety terms.

The site is separated from the adjoining public highway by a mature hedgerow and would be largely screened from this direction as a consequence. From the east, it would be sited behind the existing buildings. The Landscape Lead initially raised some concerns about the exposed west and southern aspects, which include views towards the site from passing trains and possibly further afield. In response, the agent has agreed to carry out some additional landscaping in the form of a new bank, hedge and trees. Final details can be required by condition. With the additional landscaping in place, it is considered that the building would be read in the

context of the existing buildings in the area and would assimilate acceptably into the landscape.

Knapp Farm is grade II listed. Section 72 of the Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the Local Planning Authority to ensure that the listed building, its setting and any features of historic or architectural interest are not harmed when considering whether or not to grant planning permission. The conservation officer initially raised concern about the impact that the building would have on the setting of the listed building. He considered that the scale of the building was disproportionately large compared to the other buildings and main farmhouse. He acknowledged the harm could be outweighed if there was sufficient justification of agricultural need for the building.

The applicant and agent have subsequently provided more information about the intended use for the building. There is very little stock at the site – it is no more than a smallholding – but the applicant does have two tractors, a mowing machine, hay turner, baler, trailers, harrows, fertilizer spreader, hedge maintenance equipment, fencing materials and other sundry equipment that he uses on site. Hay, fertilizers, feeding stuffs and produce also needs to be used. It is the applicant's intention that, following retirement, he will move to Knapp Farm to run the smallholding on a slightly enlarged basis, at which time the existing modern building will return to its original use for housing livestock and the machinery currently stored in that building will have to be moved. In light of this, and given the general acceptability of agricultural development in the open countryside, it is considered that the agricultural need has been justified. With the additional landscaping now proposed, and due to the siting of the building on the opposite side of the existing modern agricultural building, it is considered that the proposal would not dominate the listed building to such a degree that would harm its setting. The conservation officer has verbally confirmed that he agrees with this.

The closest neighbour is to the north at Higher Knapp Farm. Higher Knapp Farm is on a higher level and has views from the dwelling across the site, albeit obstructed by other buildings on the neighbour's side. The dwelling is between 45 and 55m from the proposed building and given the intervening buildings and hedgerow, it is not considered that the building would be overbearing on the neighbour.

The additional landscaping agreed by the applicant and required by condition, would allow the building to assimilate acceptably into the landscape and would not dominate the farm complex. Therefore, the setting of the listed building would be preserved. There would not be any adverse impact on the amenities of neighbouring dwellings. With regard to these matters, the proposals are considered to be acceptable and it is recommended that planning permission is granted.

**In preparing this report the Planning Officer has considered fully the implications and requirements of the Human Rights Act 1998.**

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