

Business

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Change of Use of Existing Agricultural Barn to E Use Class (c, d, e, f and g) (Former B1 Use Class)

**River Barns
Old Portreath Road
Bridge
Redruth
TR16 4QG**

Simmons Developments (Cornwall) Ltd

PLANNING AND DESIGN STATEMENT

December 2021

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document Planning and Design Statement has been prepared by Business Location Services Ltd in and is submitted with a planning application on behalf of Simmons Developments (Cornwall) Ltd in respect of proposed development at River Barns, Old Portreath Road, Bridge, Redruth, TR16 4QG. The planning application is a change of use application for the change of use of existing agricultural barn to E Use Class (c, d, e, f and g) (former B1 Use Class).
- 1.2 In addition the planning application is accompanied by the following plans/drawings and technical reports: -
- Copy of Completed Planning Application Form
 - Copy of Location Plan Scale 1:1250
 - Copy of Block Plan Scale 1:500
 - Copy of Existing Floor Plans/Elevations Scale 1:200
 - Copy of Planning and Design Statement
 - Copy of Flood Risk Assessment
 - Copy of CIL Form 1

2.0 BACKGROUND AND PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 An application was made under Class R Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country GDPO 2015 for the proposed change of use of agricultural barn to flexible use within the B1 Use Class on the 26th May 2020 with the reference PA20/03939 as to whether prior approval was required. Cornwall Council provided a formal response in a letter dated 23rd July 2020 that the proposal constituted permitted development and that the development should be undertaken in accordance with the submitted plans. The development associated with the Class R permitted development was subsequently undertaken in accordance with submitted plans and the building is currently occupied for business use within the E Use Class.
- 2.2 An application was made in respect of a second barn under Class R, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country GDPO 2015 for the proposed change of use of agricultural barn to flexible use within the B1 Use Class on the 20th November 2020 with the reference PA20/10063 as to whether prior approval was required. Cornwall Council in a letter dated 21st December 2020 provided a formal response that the proposal constituted permitted development and that the development should be undertaken in accordance with the submitted plans and flood risk assessment. The development associated with the Class R permitted development was subsequently undertaken in accordance with the submitted plans and the building is currently occupied for business use within the E Use Class.
- 2.3 The building the subject of this application is an agricultural building currently used by the applicant for his own use and is closely related to and integrated with the 2 barns that have been converted and occupied for business use under Class R of the GDPO.

- 2.4 A change of use planning application for the change of use existing agricultural barn to E Use Class was submitted on the 4th October 2021. The application was incorrectly registered as a prior approval Class R Part 3 application which was subsequently considered not to be permitted in a decision letter dated 23rd November 2021.
- 2.5 This application is therefore a resubmission of the original application and not under Class R.

3.0 NEED FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 In terms of the need for employment space there is an overriding economic objective to ensure there is a readily available supply of high quality employment space available to meet the needs of expanding businesses. The need to provide high quality employment space is the cornerstone of economic policy aimed at sustaining and promoting economic growth. The NPPF in paragraph 81 states that planning decisions should help create the conditions in which business can invest, expand and adapt and that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity taking into account local business needs and wider opportunities for development.
- 3.2 Paragraph 84 of the NPPF requires planning decisions to enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas through well designed new buildings.
- 3.3 Policy 5 Business and Tourism of the Cornwall Local Plan seeks to ensure a continued supply of appropriate business space while Policy 2a – Key Targets sets out the target in Cornwall to provide some 704,000 sqm of employment space by 2030. The proposed development will therefore make an important contribution to meeting the targets for B employment space in the Camborne Pool Redruth area.
- 3.4 There is currently an acute shortage of available industrial property in Cornwall and particularly the Camborne Pool Redruth area. The lack of available workspace is self-evident across the range of unit sizes but is particularly critical in the 150-500 sqm range. Not only is there a shortage of industrial units but there is a distinct lack of available serviced industrial land. A further factor arising from the considerable market demand is that with companies seeking workspace there are currently very few new employment space schemes under construction or in the pipeline to meet the market demand.
- 3.5 At present and following Brexit Cornwall has lost its EU funding which has yet to be replaced by the UK Government. Gap funding is therefore required in the form of grant funding to ensure that employment space developments are viable and deliverable. Faced with the spiralling increase in construction costs in 2021 the gap differential between the costs and completed values of employment space developments have significantly widened. In this context

the conversion of agricultural buildings into B1 employment space use can contribute to the short term availability and meet the demand from local SMEs for workspace.

- 3.6 The proposed development will therefore contribute to the Local Plan targets for B employment space provision in the Camborne Pool Redruth area and benefit the local economy.

4.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 The proposed development involves the change of use of an existing agricultural building to the E Use Class (former B1 Use Class) and comprises a GIA of some 490 sqm (approx.). The building lies immediately adjacent to two smaller former agricultural buildings recently converted to employment use under the Class R permitted development rights. The change of use of the existing agricultural building will consolidate the B1 use of the three buildings within a courtyard type development.

- 4.2 The agricultural building has been the subject of extensive refurbishment and upgrading and therefore there are no changes proposed in respect of the external appearance of the building as a result of the change of use. It is considered the application site is well located to the village of Bridge and lies in close proximity to Redruth and therefore has good connectivity to the walking, cycling and public transport network.

5.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 5.1 The application site is not subject to any landscape designations and planning policy constraints although the application site does lie within Flood Zone 3.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (July 2021)

- 5.2 The NPPF provides the Government's policy framework for delivering sustainable development and facilitating economic growth through the planning process.
- 5.3 The following provides a commentary in respect of the policy guidance in the NPPF (2021), which are considered to be material considerations in the determination of this application.
- 5.4 Section 2: Achieving Sustainable Development in paragraphs 7-11 sets out the mechanism for achieving sustainable development together with the presumption in favour of sustainable development in plan and decision making. Paragraph 8 sets out the three overarching objectives of achieving sustainable development i.e. economic, social and environmental.
- 5.5 Section 4: Decision Making states that Local Planning Authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way and that decision makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible (paragraph 38). Paragraph 47

stipulates that planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Paragraph 48 stipulates that Local Planning Authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to their consistency to the relevant policies to the NPPF.

- 5.6 Section 6 of the NPPF in paragraph 81 stipulates that planning decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt and that significant weight be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.
- 5.7 Paragraph 84 stipulates that planning decisions should enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas both through the conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings.
- 5.8 Paragraph 91 of the NPPF requires planning decisions to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places.
- 5.9 Section 9: Promoting sustainable transport provides policy guidance in respect of transport issues relating to plan making and development proposals. Paragraph 111 states that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 5.10 Section 11: Making effective use of land in paragraph 120 requires planning decisions to promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses.
- 5.11 Paragraph 120(c) requires planning decisions to give substantial weight to the value of using brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs.
- 5.12 Paragraph 124 stipulates that planning decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land taking into account the need for different types of housing and other forms of development, local market conditions and the desirability of maintaining areas prevailing character and setting together with the importance of securing well designed and attractive places.
- 5.13 Section 12: Achieving well-designed places in paragraph 126 states that the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve and that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.
- 5.14 Paragraph 130 sets out criteria to ensure that developments are visually attractive and sympathetic to local character and optimise the potential of the site creating safe, inclusive and accessible places.

- 5.15 Section 14: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change in paragraph 152 states that the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. Paragraph 154 states that new developments should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability for climate change and to help reduce greenhouse emissions.
- 5.16 Paragraph 159 requires inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding to be avoided and where development is necessary the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere.
- 5.17 Paragraph 168 stipulates that applications for some minor developments and changes of use should not be subject to sequential or exception tests but should still meet the requirements for site specific flood risk assessment (footnote 55).
- 5.18 Section 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment planning decisions and in paragraph 174 should contribute to enhance the national and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast and enhance biodiversity.
- 5.19 Paragraph 183 requires planning decisions to ensure that a site is suitable for development taking account of ground conditions, land instability and contamination. Paragraph 185 requires planning decisions to ensure that new development is appropriate to its location taking into account the likely effects of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment.

The Development Plan

- 5.20 The Development Plan in Cornwall comprises the Cornwall Local Plan Strategic Policies 2010-2030 (November 2016) and the draft Redruth Neighbourhood Plan.

Cornwall Local Plan Strategic Policies 2010-2030 (CLP)

- 5.21 The policies considered relevant to the appeal application in the Cornwall Local Plan are summarised as follows:-
- 5.22 Policy 1 of the Cornwall Local Plan states that “When considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained within the National Planning Policy Framework”. The Policy states further that “When considering whether a development proposal is sustainable or not, account will be taken of its location, layout, design and use against the three pillars of economic development, social development and environmental protection and improvement”.

- 5.23 Policy 2 of the Cornwall Local Plan requires that new development provide a sustainable approach to accommodating growth, providing a well balanced mix of economic, social and environmental benefits. Policy 2(1) requires development proposals to respect and enhance the quality of space and special character of Cornwall by ensuring development is high quality and demonstrating an understanding of its location. Policy 2a of the Cornwall Local Plan seeks to focus growth on the main towns where they can support regeneration and sustainable development. Policy 2a sets out targets for B employment space of a total of some 704,000 sqm of B employment space in Cornwall to 2030.
- 5.24 Policy 5 of the Cornwall Local Plan seeks to ensure a continued supply of appropriate business space with new employment space being well integrated within towns and villages and well served by public transport.
- 5.25 Policy 12 of the Cornwall Local Plan provides that development proposals will be judged against fundamental design principles of character, layout, movement, adaptability, inclusiveness, resilience and diversity and process.
- 5.26 Policy 13 of the Cornwall Local Plan requires that all new development will be expected to provide sufficient on-site open (or private amenity) space, car parking provision, and space for storage for domestic activities and recreation, as well as collection of waste, recycling and compostables.
- 5.27 Policy 16 of the Cornwall Local Plan seeks to improve the health and wellbeing of Cornwall's residents and workers by alleviating risk to people and the environment from unsafe, unhealthy and polluted environments by avoiding or mitigating harmful impacts.
- 5.28 Policy 21 of the Cornwall Local Plan seeks to ensure the best use of land by using developed land and buildings provided they are not of high environmental value and increase building density where appropriate taking into account the character of the area and access to services to ensure an efficient use of land.
- 5.29 Policy 23 of the Cornwall Local Plan seeks to sustain local distinctiveness and character and where possible to enhance the natural environment and assets. Section 3(d) of the Policy seeks to give priority to protect protected species and habitats.
- 5.30 Policy 26 of the Cornwall Local Plan requires development to be sited and designed with flood resilience and to minimise or reduce the flood risk elsewhere.
- 5.31 Policy 27 of the Cornwall Local Plan requires all new development to provide a safe and suitable access for all people and not cause a significant adverse impact on the local or strategic road network.

Draft Redruth Neighbourhood Plan

5.32 The Redruth Neighbourhood Plan is at the draft stage of preparation and as such its policies are currently considered to carry little or no weight.

6.0 CONCLUSION

6.1 The proposed development involves the change of use of an existing agricultural building to the E Use Class (former B1 Use Class). The building lies immediately adjacent two smaller buildings that have been converted to B1 use under the Class R permitted development rights. The change of use of the existing agricultural building will consolidate the B1 use of the three buildings within a courtyard type development.

6.2 There is currently an acute shortage of available workspace within the area and the proposed development will contribute to meeting the need from local SME's for workspace. The proposed development will contribute to the local plan targets for B employment space provision in the Camborne Pool Redruth area and will benefit the local economy.