

6<sup>th</sup> December 2021

BPA Ref: 21.117-03

Planning Department  
Cotswold District Council  
Trinity Road  
Cirencester  
GL7 1PX

**RE: Application for operational development to facilitate the use of a building (Barn E) to a flexible commercial use (Class E) following confirmation prior approval is not required under application 21/04442/OPANOT at Elkstone Studios, Elkstone, Cheltenham, GL53 9PQ**

Dear Planning,

This covering letter accompanies the above planning application submitted via the Planning Portal under reference **PP-10455663**.

The following plans have been submitted alongside the application for consideration:

- Site Location Plan (drg no. 21.17.03.01);
- Existing Block Plan (drg no. 21.17.03.01);
- Existing Floor Plans (drg no. 21.17.03.11);
- Existing North & East Elevations (drg no. 21.17.03.12);
- Existing South & West Elevations (drg no. 21.17.03.13);
- Proposed Site Plan (drg no. 21.17.03.21);
- Proposed Floor Plans (drg no. 21.17.03.22); and
- Proposed Elevations (drg no. 21.17.03.23);

## Background

A prior notification application for the change of use of the application building to a flexible commercial use under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class R of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) was submitted to Cotswold District Council in December 2021 (ref: 21/04442/OPANOT).

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The Class R route does not expressly allow operational works but sets out an expectation that such works can be secured through a full planning application. The key requirement is that the works need to be 'reasonably necessary' to facilitate the permitted change of use.

### The Proposed Works

In this case, the proposed operational works to the building involve the following:

- Recladding of external walls to allow for a half-height stone wall and horizontal timber cladding
- Replacement of existing metal sheeted roof with trapezoidal profiled insulated roof panels.
- New glazing and doors set in colour coated aluminium frames
- An area of hardstanding to accommodate parking spaces and bin storage.
- Partial demolition to facilitate the conversion.

### Planning Assessment

The prior approval application (ref: 21/04442/OPANOT) considered the Class R matters of transport and highways impacts, noise impacts, contamination risks, and flooding risks on the site. As such, this application is not for the change of use, but simply for the proposed operational building works listed above, which are considered reasonably necessary to implement the permitted change of use. Therefore, the relevant considerations of this application are strictly limited to the design of the proposals and its impact on the character and appearance of the area.

Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) seeks to achieve well-designed places. Paragraph 124 states that the creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

At a local level, Policy EN2 of the adopted Cotswold District Local Plan (2011-2031) states that development will be permitted which accords with the Cotswold Design Code. Proposals should be of design quality that respects the character and distinctive appearance of the locality. Local Plan Policy EN5 relates specifically to the Cotswold AONB, and states that in determining

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development proposals within the AONB, or its setting, the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the landscape, its character and special qualities will be given great weight.

The design approach in this instance has been to retain the agricultural character of the building whilst incorporating the use of stone over the existing half-height blockwork, and the provision of horizontal timber cladding to the walls and trapezoidal roof panels, both finished in dark grey. This will result in a substantial visual improvement to the rural character and appearance of the areas, as the current breezeblock and metal roof construction are utilitarian in appearance and not in keeping with the other more traditional buildings on the farmstead. Additionally, the use glazing will provide a slightly contemporary touch whilst reflecting the existing large openings in the front of the building.

Given that the form of the building will not be fundamentally altered and considering the adopted design approach, the resulting building will integrate effectively with its surroundings and will reinforce local distinctiveness. This represents a substantial improvement to its existing character and all works are clearly necessary to allow the change of use to function. The proposals are therefore considered to comply with section 12 of the NPPF, and Policies EN2 and EN5 of the adopted Local Plan.

### Summary

In light of the above, it is considered that the proposed operational development in this instance would be reasonably necessary to facilitate the use of the building to a flexible commercial use. The design of the proposed development, and its impact on the character and appearance of the area, is considered to be acceptable. The proposal is therefore in accordance with the relevant policies, and it is recommended that planning permission is granted in a timely manner.

Yours faithfully,



**Lorelie Davies | MRTPI**  
Associate Director