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Dear Sir/Madam

Proposed extension to farm building, Fleming's Hall Farm, Bedingfield

I write with reference to the attached application for planning permission for the demolition of an existing farm building and the erection of an extension to an adjacent farm building at Fleming's Hall Farm.

Background

The application site forms part of the existing farm complex at Fleming's Hall Farm, located in an area of generally open countryside around 1.5km to the south-east of the village of Bedingfield. The farm forms part of an established family farming business, Bedingfield Hall Farms Ltd, whose operations consist of arable, livestock and contract farming. The business currently farms around 350 hectares of its own land, as well as farming a further 325 hectares through contract farming agreements. The main farm business operates from three farmyards at Fleming's Hall Farm, Bedingfield House Farm and Bedingfield Hall.

Proposals

It is proposed to demolish a farm building and extend an adjacent farm building by constructing a lean-to addition to the north-eastern elevation of the building. The proposed extension, which would be constructed in matching materials, would be used as a farm workshop, storage and to provide improved staff welfare facilities. The extension would replace an existing farm building, which is used for the same purposes, but due to its size and out-dated facilities is no longer considered fit for purpose. Access to the extension would be gained from the existing farm entrance. Proposals for the residential conversion of a nearby farm building have also been submitted separately.

Assessment

Local planning policies, including Core Strategy Policy CS2, permit agricultural development in countryside locations like this. National policy is also supportive of the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses. The proposed extension is required in connection with the continued operation of the farm and forms part of programme of works to update and rationalise the existing complex at Fleming's Hall Farm. As noted above the existing building is considered to be substandard. The principle of development is considered to be acceptable therefore.

The proposed extension would be constructed in materials to match the existing building and would replace an existing farm building which would be demolished. The extension would be discreetly positioned at the centre of the farm complex and would be largely screened from view

by adjoining buildings other than from Hall Road in the immediate vicinity of the site. The proposal would therefore have little impact on the wider rural setting of the farm. The proposal would thus accord with Local Plan Policies CL13 and CL14, which require account to be taken of the effects of farm development on the local environment, with new buildings being sited within existing farm complexes wherever possible, using materials that are sympathetic to their setting.

The proposed extension would also have a minimal impact on the setting of a Fleming's Hall, a Grade II* listed building, due to the screening effects of intervening buildings and vegetation, together with the separation distance of around 120 metres.

A Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment Appraisal has been undertaken, which found that the building proposed for demolition had negligible potential for bats, with minimal roosting opportunities noted. On this basis no further bat surveys were recommended.

The application site is not within an area identified at risk of flooding.

On this basis, it is considered that the proposal would accord with relevant planning policies and would amount to sustainable development.

I trust this is all in order. Please let me know, if any further information is required.

Yours faithfully



Nick Moys MRTPI

Associate Partner – Architecture & Planning

For and on behalf of Brown & Co – Property & Business Consultants LLP