

Our Ref ST//4885/F
Date 16th August 2023

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Dear Ms Baxter,

RE THE ERECTION OF A REPLACEMENT DWELLING, ASSOCIATED SOLAR ARRAY, ACCESS AND LANDSCAPING AT SUNDOWN FARM, HOWGARE ROAD, MARTIN SP6 3JT.

The applicant is a Farmer with an established farming heritage having managed 700 acres along with her daughters for the past 20 years and, in partnership with her late husband, for many years prior. Sundown Farm has been acquired as an opportunity to establish a new project in Regenerative Farming (the production of food, which at the same time improves the environment). The proposed dwelling is set to serve the rebirth of Sundown Farm as a regenerative, agricultural enterprise, providing a base for the family to take the project forward.

The subject application is supported by the following documents.

- Application form.
- Site location plan
- Block plans and elevations of proposed
- Site plan of existing
- Topographical survey
- Ecology report.
- Drainage report.
- Noise report.
- Landscape visual impact assessment
- Design and access statement.
- CIL form
- Planning statement (this letter)

The site is located at the junction of Howgare Road and the A354 primary route between Weymouth and Salisbury. At this point, the A354 is dualled for approximately 1.5 miles and thus traffic speed and subsequent noise is increased. Access to Howgare Road is derived from the northern carriageway of the A354.

The existing farmstead and dwelling was erected under Planning Permission ref; RFR773 granted by Hampshire County Council on the 4th of May 1950. The dwelling was sited adjacent the A354, which was at that time a relatively lightly trafficked road. After the erection of the dwelling the A354 was dualled (no doubt to accommodate increasing traffic flows). As a result of the dualling, the dwelling now sits a mere 6 m from what is today a busy road. Subsequently the amenity of the dwelling was and is greatly diminished. A Noise Impact Assessment researched by 24 Acoustics is submitted with the application further to the advice of the District Council pre-application advice reference ENQ/22/2021/EH H, dated 25 January 2023, and notes that ambient noise levels at the proposed location are approximately 15dBA lower, and maximum nighttime noise levels are approximately 20 dBA lower.

The current farmhouse (proposed to be demolished) is some 70 years old and over the years there appears to have been little incentive for the previous owners to manage the upkeep of the house or garden, and thus whilst still barely habitable, the building requires considerable renovation works. Works, which would not be viable, given the extent required and the end value of the property once such works have been completed. The building has a limited lifespan. The garden curtilage has not been domestically managed for

many years and as such is now heavily wooded, much akin to a copse. The property must be accessed by an unmade path through this wooded area.

The proposed new farmhouse is sited to take advantage of a natural dip in the topography, sits close to Howgare Road and for some 150 m distant from livestock sheds as a compromise between residential amenity and animal husbandry needs. The elevations have been designed to be a simplistic agricultural form, with timber cladding over a brick plinth, under a plain tiled roof. Traditionally, these barns had limited openings, with the exception of the large apex. The first-floor windows have therefore been limited to slot windows, with larger openings being positioned in the gable ends of the barn. These have been linked so that in elevation they read as a single opening but do in fact serve two rooms within the plan, to help maintain a simplistic and agricultural feel to the elevation. Several rooflights have been indicated to help increase light levels. A Design and Access Statement is attached to the application and provides further details.

Adjacent the existing dwelling are substantive, livestock and storage barns (approximately 550 m²). It is arguable that the buildings could support a class, Q Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order, 2015 prior notification application for residential use were they not lying within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Albeit a little neglected, the buildings are sound and fit for purpose and it is intended that they will be maintained to support the revitalised farm enterprise.

The house and barns are currently accessed 2/3m off of the Howgare Road/A354 junction. It is intended that this access will be replaced by the access described in the application as its location and parameters are not suitable for modern day farm vehicles and equipment.

Pre-application Inquiries were made to the Local Planning Authority in 2022 and again in January 2023. It was agreed that the principle of a replacement dwelling was supported. Key issues were identified as:

- 9% uplift in the additional 30% floorspace advised by Policy DM20 of the Local Plan Part 2. In this respect, the flexibility afforded by para 2.109 of the plan is relied upon given that the proposed is in a working farmhouse located on the farm where the everyday needs of agricultural workers such as washroom/clean down facilities, refreshment and administration areas are also needed, in addition to the everyday requirements of a modern-day family.
- The need to be sensitive to the Dark Sky Reserve recognising policy ENV4 of the Local Plan Part 1. Here the starting point is the existing situation of a farmhouse and agricultural buildings, relatively unfettered by lighting restrictions and the opportunity afforded by the proposal to guide lighting proposals with reference to the advice of the Cranborne Chase AONB Partnership (particularly the Home Lighting Assessment Flow Chart produced by the International Dark Sky Association, and the Bob Mizzn commission for Dark Skies, Lighting types, qualities, and Impact document). Such advice might be provided in the notes of any forthcoming planning permission. Additional mitigation measures are noted in the Design and Access Statement.
- The location of the dwelling in relation to the farm buildings. As previously noted, the location of the dwelling is currently some 150 m from the farm buildings, a distance considered to strike a balance between residential amenity and animal husbandry needs. However, it should also be noted that the siting seeks to take advantage of the natural topography and a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment is provided with the application, as is a Landscape Mitigation plan. It is concluded that the development site has the capacity to accommodate the building without significant landscape or visual effects. In the intended event that the business flourishes, then it is possible that additional farm buildings will be required and the obvious siting for such would be on the lower ground adjoining Howgare Road between the proposed dwelling and the existing barns. In effect the siting of the proposal is planning for the future.
- A noise report is provided with the application and as such the proposal has comparisons with previous approved proposals at Drove End Farm directly opposite (south across the A354 from the existing farmhouse). Here the original dwelling was replaced further to the south and away from the A road in part to improve residential amenity.
- Renewable energy is to be provided with the erection of a domestic scale solar array and ground source heat pump as noted on the attendant plans.
- Prior to the submission of the application members of Martin Parish Council were invited to visit the site and consider earlier iterations of the proposal. Members did not give an opinion on the suitability of the proposal but made helpful suggestions. As such an element of local consultation has been undertaken in accord with government advice.

In conclusion, the application has sought to reflect the advice of officers and justify elements of siting and design. The application is principally in accord with the relevant policies of the local plan and represents an exciting opportunity to revitalise an existing farm in an environmentally sustainable manner.

Yours sincerely,



Shaun C. Travers, MRTPI, BA(Hons)
Partner | Director
For and on behalf of Boon Brown Ltd