

3.0 Pre-App Advice

3.0 Pre-Application Advice

3.1 Summary of Pre-application Advice Submission



Key Feedback

Pre-application advice was sought from Canterbury City Council in September 2022 for a proposal that incorporated five holiday lets and a creative work space.

The proposed holiday let use was considered acceptable in principle, with further work required to understand how proposals would work to preserve the character of the existing buildings.

Office use on the site was not explicitly refused, however, it was noted that this use is less likely to be supported. On the contrary, uses ancillary to holiday lets would be more likely to be supported.

Heritage, highways, ecology & stodmarsh were all generally highlighted as areas for further consideration.

Response

Only holiday let and related ancillary uses are now proposed.

Proposals have been developed to a greater level of detail with professional guidance from structural engineers, highways & ecology consultants.

All buildings, particularly those surrounding the Grade II Listed farmhouse have been approached with sensitivity for their existing structure, materials and agricultural character.

Sketch Perspective (Pre-application Submission)



3.0 Pre-Application Advice

3.2 Pre-Application Advice Recieved from CCC 02.06.2022

Date: 15 September 2022
 Direct dial: 01227 862178
 Our Ref: PRE/22/00223
 E-mail: planning@canterbury.gov.uk
 Website: www.canterbury.gov.uk/planning



Charlie Whittington
 Taylorhare Architects
 The Cowshed
 Finchley Farm
 Overland Lane
 Ash
 CT3 2LE

Dear Sir/Madam

Thank you for your request for pre-application proposing the conversion and reconfiguration of existing agricultural farmstead into holiday lets and work space. Having considered the plans I have the following comments to make:

Principle

Holiday let accommodation

1. The Local Plan supports rural tourism within the district, subject to the requirements set out within policy TV8 being met. The pre-application seeks advice on the conversion and reconfiguration of existing agricultural farmstead into holiday lets and work space as identified in the submitted masterplan within Chapter 3 of the submitted documentation.
2. The Local Plan acknowledges that tourism is becoming increasingly important for the vitality of the rural economy and that tourism in rural areas can bring significant economic, social and environmental benefits. Specifically, policy TV8 of the Local Plan is supportive of rural tourism proposals, including the conversion of existing buildings to provide tourist accommodation, and the Council generally takes a positive approach to this type of development, in recognition of the wider economic benefits it brings to the rural and local economy.
3. From the information provided, it appears that the buildings are for a conversion of the existing building with no further extensions to provide the intended use. Full elevational drawings have not been provided, and it may be that a structural survey may need to be provided to ensure the existing buildings can be converted - any

alterations should not exceed a conversion of the existing building in order to comply with Local Plan policy.

4. You mentioned on site the possibility of a spa/ancillary area for the holiday lets. This would need to be ancillary, of a modest scale and not for a standalone use to be acceptable in this location. A brewery is also included on the sketch proposal but was not discussed at the time of the meeting. It is unclear if you are proposing this, but if so, this type of use would typically be steered towards the allocated employment sites in the district, so would be unlikely to be acceptable in principle.
5. During the pre-application meeting, we discussed the possibility of other uses that could potentially be used on the site. If the intended use is for residential, the requirements of Policy HD5 would need to be complied with. With regards to the creative workshop proposed, it is unclear what you intend for this area and as such it is not possible to conclude whether or not it would be acceptable in this countryside location. Rural employment is supported but typically only if its function is related to the rural area. More detailed information may be required for its intended use to provide more detailed advice.
6. In view of the above, it is considered that the principle of conversion to facilitate holiday let development in this location could be acceptable subject to the considerations below.

Character and appearance

7. The Local Plan requires development to have sufficient regard for the context and setting of the application site and preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area.
8. Bramling Court Farm is located along Bramling Road in Bramling, which is not defined as a settlement within SP4 of the Local Plan and as such is considered to be located within open countryside. The pre-application seeks advice for the conversion and reconfiguration of existing agricultural farmstead into holiday lets and work space.
9. Bramling Court Farmhouse is a Grade II Listed building. On the site, there are a group of buildings which are set within a relatively open, agricultural landscape of fields and they are enclosed within a courtyard close to Bramling Court Farmhouse. Given their close proximity to the Farmhouse this group of buildings and the rural surroundings forms the setting of the listed building and make an important contribution to its significance.

3.2 Design Responses

Agreed.

A structural survey has been commissioned with the findings enclosed within a report by Consibee Structural Engineers, submitted as part of this application. Conversions have been limited to the existing footprint of the buildings, with any adjustments to massing highlighted within the massing section of this document.

As noted, a proposed spa and site laundry are proposed, as detailed within the section 'building conversion proposals'. A brewery is not proposed as part of this application.

Holiday let and associated uses are the only uses proposed.

The existing character and appearance of the conservation area is currently hampered by the condition of the existing historic buildings and presence of some more modern agricultural additions. As part of the proposals, this application seeks the removal of these out of character buildings, and the reconditioning of the pre-war buildings in a way which not only preserves the character, but enhances it.

The proposals relate to holiday lets and work space, providing a rural economic gain, without any additional footprint to an existing farmstead.

The group of buildings surrounding the Grade II Listed Bramling Court Farmhouse have been given special consideration, with specific thought given to their original utilitarian elevations, materials and composition. Design responses are outlined within the section 'building conversion proposals'.

3.0 Pre-Application Advice

3.2 Pre-Application Advice Recieved from CCC 02.06.2022

10. The agricultural buildings are not themselves listed and the accompanying heritage assessment confirms that the buildings are of varying age and significance. However, the buildings do retain their appearance as utilitarian structures common within farms but most of them are now not in use or are used for non-agricultural purposes such as storage.
11. It is considered that conversion of the buildings as proposed would not be unacceptable in principle. The buildings have an overtly agricultural and utilitarian appearance typical of agricultural structures of the type commonly seen in such a landscape. Whilst the buildings are somewhat dilapidated and as such detract from the setting of the listed farmhouse, the sympathetic conversion and reuse of the building could potentially be achieved and the proposals would bring the farm buildings back into use. The conversion would enhance the appearance of the site and the setting of the listed farmhouse subject to design and materials to retain utilitarian feel and avoid appearing domestic in nature.
12. The proposal seeks to remove two buildings (grain store and grain drier structure), the removal of the structures on site would lead to some visual improvements due to the dilapidated nature of the structures and as such this is not objected to. The reintroduction of the roundels to the oast/cartshed would add some interest to the group. Any application submissions should minimise new openings to the building and consider use of materials in keeping with the character of farm buildings in order to retain their character and appearance of the farmstead. The buildings marked as no. 1, 6 and 10 seem to pre-date 1948 as such are considered as curtilage listed buildings. Unless otherwise justified, application for listed building consent will be required.
13. If an application is to be forthcoming, a heritage statement should be provided alongside an application.

Living Conditions

14. Generally, development must avoid resulting in unacceptable overshadowing or loss of light or outlook to the neighbouring properties. It will also need to be designed such that the privacy of occupiers of neighbouring properties is not unacceptably impacted by, for example, being overlooked by future occupiers of the new development.
15. Given the proposal is for the change of use of existing buildings, it is considered unlikely that there would be any unacceptable harm to neighbouring properties. No elevational drawings have been provided, however given the separation distances, it is unlikely that

there would be an unacceptable overbearing, overshadowing, loss of outlook or sense of enclosing impact upon neighbouring properties.

Parking and Highway safety

16. Vehicle parking, design quality, safe movement within and around a proposed development are also planning considerations.
17. Car parking areas have been demonstrated on the plans but this does not indicate individual spaces and a full set of floor plans have not been provided Parking in accordance with the C3 requirements set out within Appendix 4 of the Local Plan would need to be provided as part of any future submission. A transport note and/or statement should be provided with a future application to demonstrate how the proposal will be accommodated from a highways perspective. It may be helpful to engage with KCC Highways in a pre app at this stage, as they will be consulted if an application were to be submitted.

Ecology

18. To ensure that any planning determination is adequately informed in respect of all potential ecological impacts, a Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) report must be sought prior to determination of any planning application. The submission must provide appropriate and achievable mitigation measures for any identified ecological impacts. The proposal must also demonstrate that the development is achieving a net-gain in biodiversity. One of the principles of the National Planning Policy Framework is that "opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged". We advise that information should be submitted with any planning application detailing what ecological enhancements will be incorporated into the proposed development site.

Stodmarsh

Natural England Advice

19. The Stodmarsh Nature Reserve is protected under European Law and is managed by Natural England. In a formal advice note, Natural England has identified that the water quality in the lakes here has deteriorated and this is linked to the discharge of wastewater from new homes into the wastewater treatment works within the Stour Valley river catchment area. Natural England's advice note can be found here:

3.2 Design Responses

- Utilitarianism is a key characteristic of farmstead design, visible in the appearance of the existing farm buildings, and built upon with the proposed conversions - deliberately not appearing overly residential in character. A trait carried forward into the informal landscaping.
- Agreed.
- It is agreed that the removal of the grain store and grain drier would lead to visual improvements on the site. Similarly, it is agreed that the reintroduction of the proposed roundels to the oast / cart shed would add some interest to the group, as shown within this document. Minimising new openings is something that has been considered at a fundamental level, with existing openings and the re-use of bricked up openings largely defining floor plans. New openings onto courtyard spaces have been formed in addition, allowing modern living standards without outwardly impacting the external appearance. These measures collectively limit changes to the openings / character of the existing farmstead.
- A heritage statement has been submitted alongside this document.
- Please see the massing section of this document - which demonstrates very limited additional mass on the site, and therefore an insignificant impact on overshadowing. Given the removal of the grain buildings, overshadowing is an issue that will improve overall.
- Agreed.
- Please see sections 3.3 & 3.4 which relate to access, parking & refuse. These pages are supplemented by work undertaken by Campbell Reith in support of this application.
- An EclA has been undertaken by David Archer Associates in support of this application.