



Spring Lane Farm Shop Ltd

Spring Lane Farm
Lambley
Nottingham

Class R Prior Approval Statement
January 2023



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Statement has been prepared in on behalf Spring Lane Farm Ltd in support of a Prior Notification Application for the change of use and conversion of a traditional agricultural building at Spring Lane Farm to flexible commercial, Business and Service Use within Use Class E, namely **Class - E(b)** Sale of food and drink for consumption (mostly) on the premises.

1.2 The following supporting information is also submitted with this Application:

- Transport Statement - Bancroft Consulting
- Site plan, Floor Plans and elevations – Apex Design
- Structural Report – Howard Ward Associates
- Duly completed application form and certificates

1.3 The Application is submitted in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 as amended.

1.4 Schedule 2, Part 3, Class R of the above Order permits the change of use of agricultural buildings to a flexible commercial use, subject to a number of limitations, criteria and conditions specified by the Class.

1.5 This Prior Notification Application proposes that the proposed change of use and conversion of the agricultural buildings at Spring Lane Farm constitutes permitted development in accordance with Schedule 2, Part 3, Class R - Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 as amended.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDING CONTEXT

2.1 Spring Lane Farm is located at the western end of Spring Lane on the north- eastern edge of the Nottingham urban area. The landholding extends to approximately 80 hectares and is a mixed arable and livestock farming enterprise. Most of the home grown/raised produce is sold from the on-site Spring Lane Farm Shop. The Spencer family have farmed from Spring Lane Farm since 1939.

2.2 The building proposed for conversion is currently used as a general produce and storage building albeit largely underutilised due to its limited eaves height which prevents its efficient use by modern tipping trailers. As part of a progressive modernisation and diversification of the Spring Lane Farm and Farm Shop Complex, the Spencers have: -

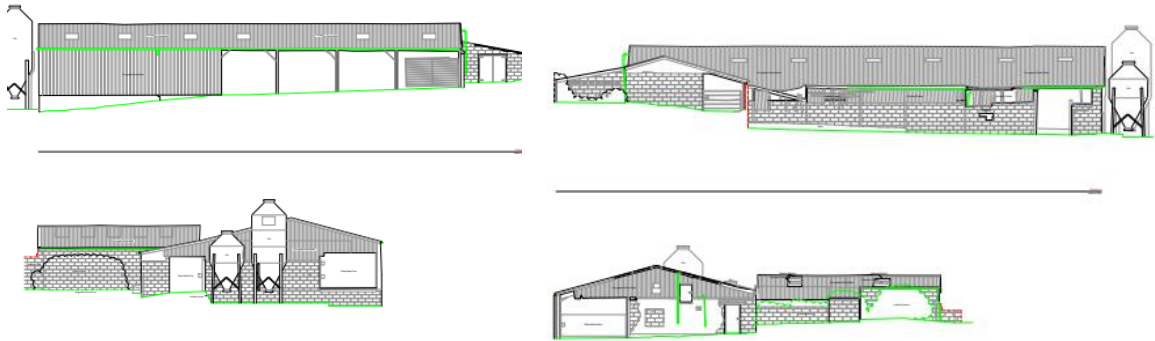
- Demolished a number of agricultural buildings on the site that were no longer fit for purpose.
- Secured agricultural prior approval – reference 2021/1345/PN for the erection of a new 30m x 32.m agricultural storage building to be sited towards the north-western corner of the farm building complex.
- Secured planning permission – reference 2022/0354 – for Improvements to site entrance (and ancillary on-site circulation and car parking arrangements). The site entrance improvement is complete, and the car parking enhancement are to follow, increasing car parking capacity to 62 vehicles.

2.3 The building superstructure proposed for conversion comprises a series of steel portal frames spaced at approximately 4.6m centres and spanning around 13.5m. The building has a concrete floor inspected as somewhat uneven, consistent with agricultural usage, but to be reasonably intact with no significant cracking. The building is partly enclosed on all elevations by brickwork or blockwork as the photographs and survey elevations below indicate.

Figure 1- Agricultural Barn proposed for conversion.



Figure 2- Barn proposed for conversion – current elevations from survey



2.3 The current structure has a floor area of approximately 600m². However, bays on the front (south west) and side (south east) elevations are proposed to be removed. The residual bays proposed for conversion to café use extends to approximately 280m²

Figure 3 – Bays Proposed for demolition



Figure 4 Proposed removal of front(south) and side (east) bays of building



2.4 A structural survey report dated September 2023 prepared by HWA Consulting Engineers submitted in support of this prior approval application, concludes (excepting the expected asbestos roof replacement) that : -

Subject to some minor improvements as noted below, the building is structurally sound and capable of conversion as proposed .

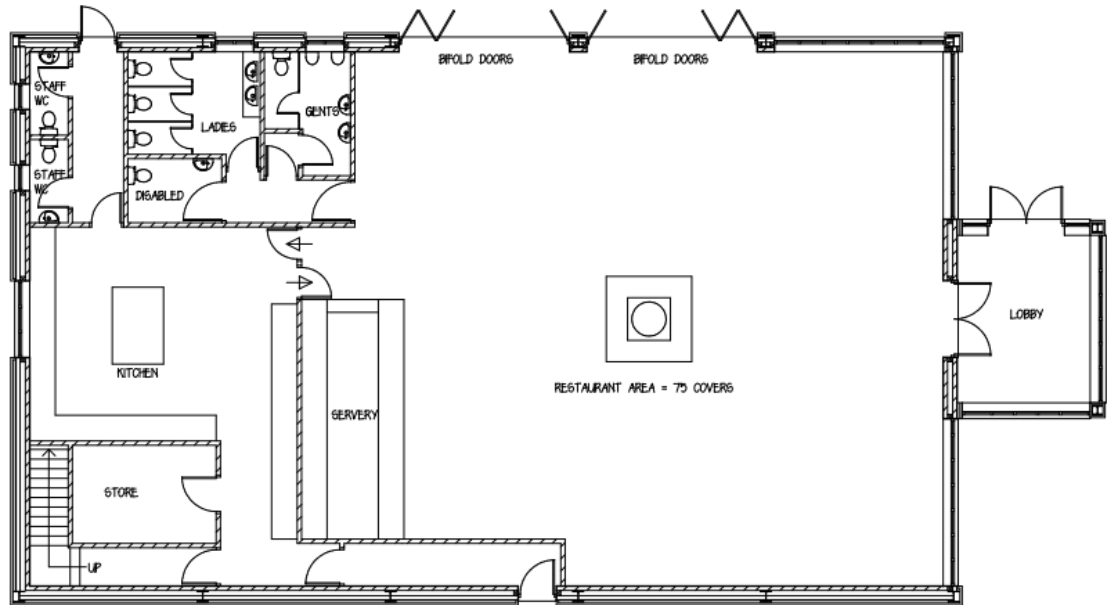
3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 This application seeks Prior Approval under the provisions of Class R for the change of use and conversion of the existing traditional agricultural building to flexible commercial uses within Use Class E(b) at Spring Lane Farm. The proposal is to establish a café and coffee shop selling products mainly sourced from Spring Lane Farm and the Farm Shop.

3.2 The total ground floor area of the proposed coffee shop buildings (following demolition of bays as illustrated above in Figure 3) extends to approximately 280m². A further 100m² (max) of storage is to be created within the eaves of the barn on a mezzanine level above the food preparation and toilet area. The proposed public entrance is on the front south-west elevation facing the car park, where a twin-door lobby area is to be created within the footprint of the demolished front bay of the current structure. The unit can be serviced from staff/private entrances on the south-eastern or north-western elevations.

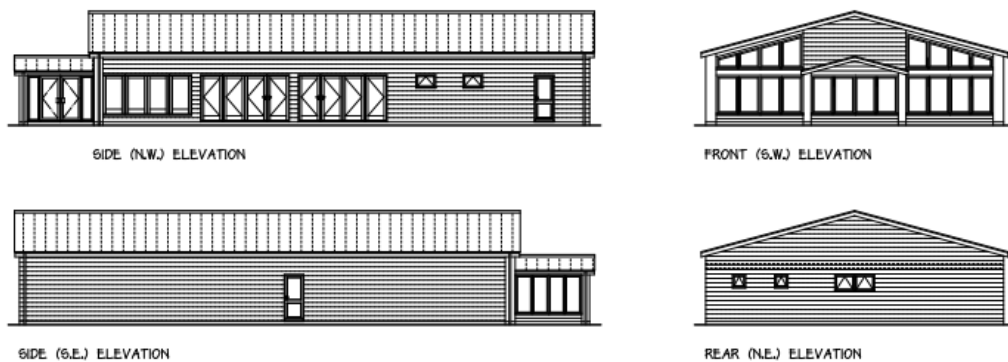
3.3 The building will be re-clad with clay-brown coloured composite cladding, and the asbestos roof will be replaced with dark grey plastic coated steel profile sheeting to maintain the agricultural character and appearance of the barn.

Figure 5 – Coffee Shop - Proposed Floor Plan



Figure

Figure 6 - Coffee shop - Proposed Elevations



3.4 The associated curtilage to the barn is located on the south-eastern side of the barn and is a former silage clamp and current agricultural storage area with a concrete base covering an area of around 290m². The yard area is contained by a 2m high retaining wall on its south-eastern and south-western sides. This area is proposed as a flexible space which can be used as required for servicing the café and staff parking as well general storage. The supporting Transport

Statement considers that the overall peak visitor and staff parking demand for the farm shop and café can be met by the 62 spaces currently consented by permission 2022/0354, and so the yard is not proposed to be marked out with parking bays. However, the space could comfortably accommodate up to 12 staff-only parking spaces if required.

4.0 **ASSESSMENT AGAINST CRITERIA IN CLASS R**

4.1 As previously set out, Schedule 2, Part 3, Class R of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (and Amendment 2018) allows the conversion of agricultural buildings for flexible commercial uses, where the restrictions of the Class are met and adhered to. The uses included within the Class are as follows:

- Class A1 (shops)
- Class A2 (financial and professional services)
- Class A3 (restaurants and cafes)- - now Class E (b)
- Class B1 (business),
- Class B8 (storage or distribution)
- Class C1 (hotels)
- Class D2 (assembly and leisure)

Note: Changes to the Use Class Order which came into effect on the 1st September 2020 have not yet been incorporated in the wording of the GPDO (2015).

4.2 The building has been in active agricultural use for many years. It is currently used for the storage of hay and straw and agricultural machinery. Thus, for the purposes of this change of use, the last/ current lawful use of the building is agriculture with no permitted changes to that use. As such, it is established that the building was in agricultural use on or before the 3rd July 2012 and continues to do so with no intervening alternative use.

4.3 The agricultural unit of which the subject buildings form a part, does not include any other building which has changed use under Class R; the site does not form any protected safety area and does not comprise a listed building or scheduled ancient monument. The proposed conversion accords therefore with the limitations of the Class in this regard and meets the qualifying tests stipulated from R.1 a-e as established by the Class.

4.4 Paragraph R3. of the GPDO sets out several criteria for the consideration of a proposed change of use and the information required of the Developer when submitting a Prior Notification application. The paragraph distinguishes its requirements into two categories, as follows:

*“(a)where the cumulative floor space of the building or buildings which **have** changed use under Class R within an established agricultural unit does not exceed 150 square metres, provide the following information to the local planning authority—*

(i)the date the site will begin to be used for any of the flexible uses;

(ii)the nature of the use or uses; and

(iii)a plan indicating the site and which buildings have changed use;

*(b)where the cumulative floor space of the building or buildings which **have** changed use under Class R within an established agricultural unit exceeds 150 square metres, apply to the local planning authority for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required as to—*

(i)transport and highways impacts of the development;

(ii)noise impacts of the development;

(iii)contamination risks on the site; and

(iv)floodings risks on the site,

and the provisions of paragraph W (prior approval) apply in relation to that application.”

4.5 The cumulative floor space of the building exceeds 150 square metres and so these impacts are considered in the following section-

5.0 ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS FOR PRIOR APPROVAL CONSIDERATION

5.1 Transport and Highways Impacts

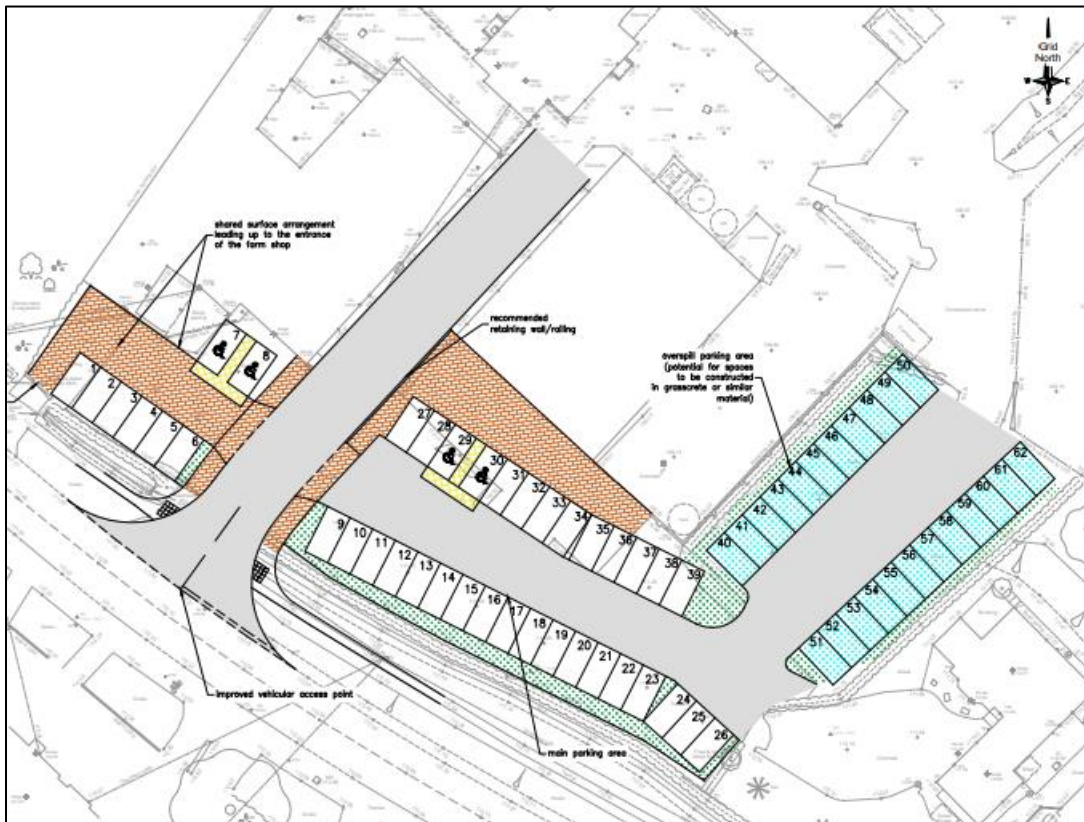
5.1.1 Bancroft Consulting have been engaged to assess the Transport and Highways impacts of the proposals and their assessment is submitted in support of this prior approval application.

5.1.2 Pursuant to the 2022 grant of planning permission for Improvements to site entrance, ancillary on-site circulation and car parking arrangements, the principal objective of this Transport

Statement is to demonstrate how the current level of consented infrastructure, in terms of access and parking layout, will be sufficient to serve the proposed scheme.

- 5.1.3 Bancroft Consulting were in previous contact with Nottinghamshire County Council in July 2021 regarding the potential highway impact of conversion of the agricultural building to deliver 315 sqm of E(b) Class Use at the site (some 35m² more than this current proposal). In their response dated 21 July 2021, the Highway Authority confirmed that the trip generation assumptions for the scheme were broadly acceptable, whilst indicating that the site access needed to be improved and that parking bays needed to show dimensions of 2.4m x 4.8m absolute minimum with 6.0m aisle widths. The site entrance improvements and on-site parking allocation was addressed in the planning permission 2022/0354. The widened site access is complete and operational. The parking bays are to be implemented alongside the conversion works to the barn, the subject of this prior approval application.
- 5.1.4 It was previously established in the previous engagement with NCC that the nature of the proposed development would not generate significant peak hour activity. The reduced scale of café floorspace now being considered means that this position remains true for the latest scheme and, as such, the proposed development should not generate a severe residual cumulative impact within the surrounding highway network, such that further detailed assessment would be required.
- 5.1.5 The proposed development will be served by the 62 car parking spaces approved by planning permission 2022/0354 which are to be shared with the adjacent farm shop. Detailed calculations have shown how this would align with the Highway Authority's adopted parking standards for the proposed use and meet the predicted maximum parking accumulation levels. In addition to the car parking, a minimum of 2 cycle parking spaces should be provided for visitors to the proposed café, including 1 space that is allocated for adapted cycles used by disabled people. As indicated in paragraph 3.4 above however, further staff parking could be made available within the yard area immediately adjoining the café.

Figure 7 – Approved Access and Parking Arrangements – 2022/0354



5.1.6 In summary, the Transport Statement clearly demonstrates how the latest proposals would not result in any significant impact within the surrounding highway network and confirms the previously consented access, parking and servicing arrangements for the proposed development. It is therefore considered that the proposed development would comply with current planning policy and best practice design guidance.

5.2 Noise Impacts

5.2.1 The building proposed for conversion lies within the active farmyard, directly to the east of the farm shop and north of (behind) the public car parking area. The barn is 50 metres from residential properties located on the southern side of Spring Lane. Spring Lane is a busy connector between the B684 Mapperley Plains, extensive residential estates located off Spring Lane, and beyond to Lambley village and other rural outliers.

- 5.2.2 The Spring Lane/ B684 Mapperley Plains mini-roundabout and the frontage stretch along the site boundary is a busy vehicular route particularly at morning and evening peak travel times. Spring Lane Farm and the Farm Shop contribute to the activity levels particularly during the daytime opening of the farm shop. Farm activity can also extend into the evenings and weekends during harvesting periods. There is, therefore, a significant element of existing background activity on the farm and roads adjacent to the farm which have to be considered when considering potential noise impacts of the proposed coffee shop development.
- 5.2.3 The coffee shop will be contained within the converted barn as illustrated on the floor plan and elevations plan - 223:20:1. A twin-door entrance lobby will be incorporated into the front elevation facing Spring Lane which will contain any noise emanating from inside the building. There is the potential for windows and doors to open out onto an external area on the eastern side of the barn forming its immediate curtilage, within the enclosed, concrete-based former silage clamp. This area is however contained by existing minimum 2m high retaining walls on its eastern and southern sides and sits well below raised site levels to the south and east. These enclosures will screen and substantively eliminate any noise transfer generated by patrons of the coffee shop.
- 5.2.4 The coffee shop will operate alongside the farm shop hours as many of the patrons are likely to be visiting the farm shop on linked trips. There are no plans for any amplified music or other noise generating equipment. It is considered therefore that the post-refurbishment use of the buildings will not lead to any perceptible increase in noise and disturbance above existing activity at the site.

5.3 **Contamination Risks**

- 5.3.1 The building proposed for conversion under this prior approval application has stood on the site for over 50 years and used by the Spencer family for agricultural purposes. The building has primarily been used for storage of straw, hay and general storage. The building has not been used for oil or diesel storage as these are located in a secure structure close to the farmhouse.
- 5.3.2 The steel portal framed building has a concrete floor and a fibre cement sheet roofing which is likely to contain asbestos fibres. The steelwork and concrete floor will remain in situ to provide the structural support for the reclad and refurbished barn with remediate localised repair as required, as set out in the supporting Structural Engineers Report. The roof will be removed in

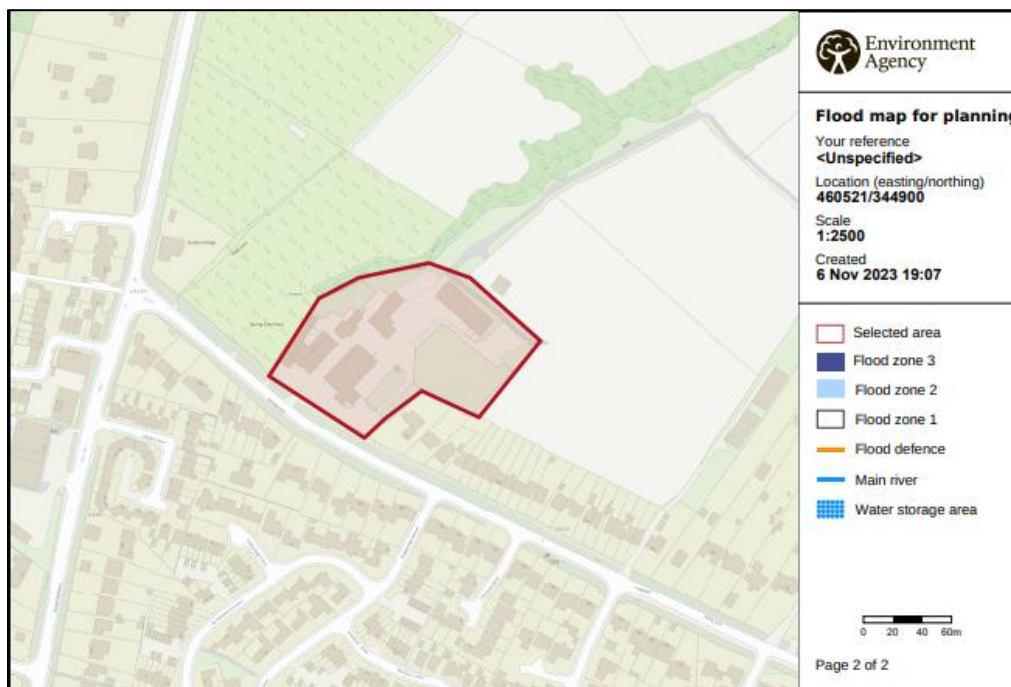
accordance with relevant procedural requirements if the presence of asbestos is identified and replaced with dark grey plastic-coated steel profile sheeting.

5.3.3 With the replacement of the fibre sheet roofing and retention of the concrete floor as a sub base for any new internal flooring, the potential for contamination risks to the development is considered negligible.

5.4 Flooding Risks

5.4.1 The application buildings and site extent lie within Flood Zone 1 as indicated in the EA Flood Mapping Extract below.

Figure 8 – Environment Agency Flood Map Extract



5.4.2 The farm is served by a network of soakaways and private surface water drains which take farmyard run-off to an outfall discharging to the Lambley Dumble to the north of the farmyard. Roof-run off from the proposed development will also connect to these existing drains and so the surface water drainage regime remains unchanged.

5.4.3 The proposal will not generate any additional hardstanding areas and do not pose any displaced flood risk to nearby properties. Land levels falls away to the north-east towards open fields and the Lambley Dumble which crosses the applicant's farmland.

6.0 OTHER IMPACTS

6.1 Protected species

6.1.1 Whilst not a matter for Prior Approval consideration as part of a Class R submission, the applicants will engage appropriately qualified consultants to survey the barn for any potential occupation by bats or barn owls and undertake any mitigation and/ or license application as required by prevailing legislation.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

7.1 The proposed change of use and conversion of the steel framed and concrete/ block clade barn at Spring Lane Farm, for flexible commercial use as a café and coffee shop within Use Class E (b), is in accordance with Schedule 2, Part 3, Class R of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 and therefore constitutes permitted development.

7.2 As covered in the previous Sections, the qualifications of Class R, Paragraph R.3 (1) (b) have been duly addressed in this statement and where appropriate, additional information (Transport Assessment) has been submitted to demonstrate that there are no unacceptable impacts of development that cannot be satisfactorily mitigated or should prevent the Local Planning Authority from confirming that Prior Approval is not required and as such, the proposal constitutes permitted development under Class R.

