
APPLICATION NOS.	P08/W0538 & P08/W0540
APPLICATIONS TYPE	Full
REGISTERED	30.04.08
PARISH	Stanton St John
WARD MEMBER(S)	Ms Anne Purse
APPLICANT	Mr & Mrs J Belcher
SITE	Breach Farm Stanton St John OX33 1HA
PROPOSALS	Erection of livestock building no. 3 and associated yard & Erection of livestock building no. 4 and associated yard
AMENDMENTS	
GRID REFERENCE	458559/208437
OFFICER	Mr B Crooks

1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Because these two separate applications are for identical agricultural buildings which are proposed to be sited adjacent to each other they are reported to committee in a single report. Separate recommendations on each application are made at the end of the report.
- 1.2 The applications are referred to Planning Committee as the officer recommendations differ from the views of the parish council.
- 1.3 The application sites lie within the Green Belt to the south of Stanton St John and to the north of Forest Hill. They are within a 139 hectare mixed arable, sheep and cattle farm. There is a public footpath adjacent to the application sites. An ordnance survey extract of the site is **attached** at Appendix 1.

2.0 **PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 The proposals are to erect 2 agricultural buildings, with associated hard standings. The buildings are each 36.6m long by 15m wide, with floor areas of 549m². They are both 5.2m to ridge and 3.7m to eaves height. The walls of the buildings are 1.8m high pre-cast concrete walling with “Yorkshire” style hit and miss treated softwood vertical boarding above to eaves height. The roofs of the proposed buildings are grey profiled steel sheeting.
- 2.2 The proposals also involve increasing the size of the yard to provide better facilities for the storage of hay and straw. Surface water drainage will be by means of soakaways. No foul drainage arrangements are proposed as the cattle are to be bedded on straw and manure will be spread on the farmland.
- 2.3 Copies of the application plans are **attached** at Appendix 2.

3.0 **CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

- 3.1 The Stanton St John Parish Council considers the applications should be refused because: -
- The proposed development is out of proportion to the size of the holding and the current farming activity.
 - There is insufficient attention paid to the provisions for foul water drainage and the protection of natural water courses.

- More large concrete barns will be an eyesore in an area of great landscape value.
- A significantly large area is designated for the concrete yard.
- The proposed screening with planting may be inadequate to offset the visual harm to the landscape.

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 P06/W1353 – Temporary permission (3 years) for use of land for stationing a mobile home for occupation by agricultural worker.

P06/W1354/AG – Erection of an all purposed agricultural building. Agricultural permitted development. Planning application not required.

P07/W0954 – Permission for livestock buildings comprising two cattle barns, associated yard and isolation boxes.

P08/W0590/RET – Current application for retrospective permission for erection of temporary accommodation.

5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

5.1 South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 policies: -

- G2 Protection and enhancement of the environment
- G4 Development in the countryside and on the edge of settlements
- GB2 New buildings in the green belt
- GB4 Visual amenity
- A1 Agricultural buildings

Government Guidance

PPG2 – Green Belts

PPS7 – Sustainable Development in Rural Areas.

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 The main issues in this case are whether: -

- the proposed developments are acceptable in principle
- the impact on the surrounding landscape and green belt is acceptable
- other issues

Principle

6.2 Agricultural buildings are one of the categories of development that are deemed appropriate in the Green Belt in policy GB2 and PPG2 and an acceptable type of development in the countryside under policy G4. PPS7 recognises the importance of the agricultural sector to the rural economy.

6.3 The applications represent a further phase of livestock building construction as part of a comprehensive scheme to re-establish a working self-contained agricultural holding at Breach Farm.

6.4 The principle of the proposed developments being brought forward was accepted at the time the planning permissions for the mobile home, cattle barns, yard, and isolation boxes were granted under application references P06/W1353 and P07/W0954 in January this year. When it granted these permissions the Planning

Committee was aware that there would be a requirement for additional buildings as the applicant develops the farm; Reading Agricultural Consultants having advised that the farm would probably require a minimum 3,200m² of livestock accommodation if it develops according to plan.

- 6.5 To date approximately 1015m² of livestock buildings, comprising the permitted cattle barns and isolation boxes have either been constructed or are under construction. The agricultural worker's accommodation has also been provided, and the all purpose agricultural building has been erected as agricultural permitted development. If planning permission is granted for the new buildings the applicant will be in a position to provide approximately 2115m² of the holding's minimum requirement for livestock accommodation.
- 6.6 The Planning Committee will wish to consider the Parish Council's comment that the proposed development is out of proportion to the size of the holding and the current farming activity. However, the developments carried out at the farm to date demonstrate a firm intention and ability on the part of the applicant to develop Breach Farm in the way the Planning Committee accepted and expected when it granted planning permission in January. The drainage arrangements for the proposed developments are considered to be acceptable.

Impact

- 6.7 Policy A1 requires that where, as in this case, new agricultural buildings are needed they should not be prominent in the landscape; their design and materials should be in keeping; and they should be located close to existing buildings. Policies G2 and GB4 require that the countryside is protected and that where development occurs in the green belt its impact is minimised.
- 6.8 The siting of the applicant's new yard was subject of landscape analysis which concluded it to be the best of a number of options, it being considered to be less prominent than others, and also because it is the probable site of the historic Breach Farm.
- 6.9 The proposed buildings are to the same general form and design and are located in close proximity to those already permitted within the new levelled yard, which is cut into the hillside and is at a lower level than the surrounding farmland, which reduces their visibility. New landscape planting has been approved surrounding the yard, which will further mitigate the impact of the existing and proposed new buildings.
- 6.10 Officer's advice to the Planning Committee on the Parish Council's concerns that the proposed buildings will be an eyesore, about the amount of concrete yard proposed, and that the proposed screening with planting may be inadequate should be considered in the context of the care that went into the selection of the site for the new farm yard, and the details of the landscape planting that will be carried out to mitigate the visual impact of the permitted and proposed new buildings.

Other issues

- 6.11 In accordance with policy A1 if planning permission is granted for the proposed developments a condition should be applied which requires that if, within ten years of the substantial completion of the building their agricultural use ceases they should be demolished and the land reinstated, unless within three years of agricultural use ceasing planning permission has been granted for an alternative use.
- 6.12 The current retrospective application P08/W0590/RET for the erection of temporary accommodation has been submitted because this does not accord with planning

permission P06/W1353 for stationing the agricultural worker's mobile home at the site. This application cannot be reported to the Planning Committee at this Committee Meeting because its publicity period does not expire until after the agenda for this Committee Meeting is closed.

- 6.13 A further retrospective planning application is anticipated seeking planning permission in respect of a concrete panel enclosure that has been erected adjacent to one of the permitted livestock buildings to provide compounds for feed and bedding storage. The Planning Committee will be advised if this has been received at the Committee Meeting.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 The proposals are in accordance with development plan policy and government guidance on agricultural development in the countryside and the Green Belt, and the principle of the establishment and further expansion of a new farm enterprise that has been accepted and which has commenced at Breach Farm.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1 **That planning permission be granted for application reference no. P08/W0538, subject to the following conditions:**

1. **Commencement – 3 years**
2. **Remove building if agricultural use ceases within 10 years**

- 8.2 **That planning permission be granted for application reference no. P08/W0540, subject to the following conditions:**

1. **Commencement – 3 years**
2. **Remove building if agricultural use ceases with 10 years**

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