

Application Number: 21/10786 Full Planning Permission

Site: REDBROOK FARM, BARN OFFICES, RINGWOOD ROAD,
FORDINGBRIDGE SP6 2ET

Development: Use of redundant agricultural barn as office; associated car
parking, new access and landscaping

Applicant: Mr and Mrs Lewis

Agent: Pell-Stevens Architects

Target Date: 01/09/2021

Case Officer: Jim Bennett

1 SUMMARY OF THE MAIN ISSUES

The key issues are:

1. The Principle of Development
2. Design, site layout and impact on local character and appearance of area and landscape
3. Highway safety, access and parking
4. Residential amenity
5. Ecology on Site Biodiversity and protected species
6. Flood Risk and Drainage
7. Employment Use of the Site and Promotion of the Rural Economy

This application is to be considered by Committee as the recommendation is contrary to the PAR4 objection of Fordingbridge Town Council.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

This former farm complex is located within the countryside outside the New Forest, and contains a dwelling to the front (known as Redbrook Farm), a single and two-storey brick outbuilding, and barns and stables to the rear of the dwelling. To the north of the existing access track is a large barn (the application building). The surrounding area contains terrace dwellings to the south (known as 1-7 Redbrook Cottages), a detached dwelling to the rear (known as Redbrook Farm Cottage), and open fields elsewhere in a rural setting. Planning permission has been granted in the past for the re-use of some of the more substantial single and two storey brick buildings for offices (Class B1) for occupation by a company known as PDQ Airspares Limited. PDQ Airspares Limited have occupied these buildings for a number of years and are involved in the sourcing and despatch of air spares on a global scale.

3 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The current planning application relates to the detached barn located in a field adjacent to the existing access track leading to the converted buildings and residential dwelling. It proposes to convert the agricultural barn to an office use to be occupied by PDQ Airspares, who operate an existing business from the adjoining site, which will be retained for PDQ's use. An application for the same was approved in November 2018 under ref. 18/10864.

Offices would be provided largely at ground floor level, with two smaller rooms provided at first floor level. The applicant confirms the proposal would be a scheme of conversion. The converted building is required to provide additional accommodation for staff, including kitchen, courtyard and changing facilities, in addition to accommodation requirements for the business need. A new access is proposed from Ringwood Road (A338), with the existing access stopped-up. Car parking spaces for 22 vehicles would be provided to the north and west of the building for staff and visitors. Tree and hedgerow planting is proposed within the field to the north of the development, with a view to extending the existing copse.

The existing building is prominent when viewed across relatively open land from the A338. It is slightly larger than other buildings in the vicinity including the converted farm buildings. It has a large footprint and is clad with corrugated iron sheeting. Parts of the lower parts have blockwork. The existing building would be refurbished with new aluminium cladding and glazing to make it fit for purpose.

4 PLANNING HISTORY

Proposal	Decision Date	Decision Description
20/11403 Use of existing redundant agricultural barn to four dwellings with associated car parking, new access and landscaping		Pending
20/11075 Use barn as 4 dwellings (Prior Approval)	12/11/2020	Prior Approval refused
18/10864 Use as office (Use Class B1); bin/cycle store; associated parking; new access; landscaping	28/11/2018	Granted Subject to Conditions

5 PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

Local Plan 2016-2036 Part 1: Planning Strategy

Policy STR1: Achieving Sustainable Development
 Policy STR6: Sustainable economic growth
 Policy ENV3: Design quality and local distinctiveness
 Policy ENV4: Landscape character and quality
 Policy IMPL2: Development standards
 Policy CCC1: Safe and healthy communities

Local Plan Part 2: Sites and Development Management 2014

DM2: Nature conservation, biodiversity and geodiversity
 DM22: Employment development in the countryside

Core Strategy

CS21: Rural economy

Supplementary Planning Guidance And Documents

SPD - Parking Standards

Relevant Advice

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

Chapter 11: Making effective use of land

Chapter 12 - Achieving well designed places

Chapter 14 - Managing Climate Change and flooding

Constraints

Plan Area

Avon Catchment Area

Flood Zone 2 and 3

FP39 - Fordingbridge

Countryside

6 PARISH / TOWN COUNCIL COMMENTS

Fordingbridge Town Council - Recommend REFUSAL under PAR4, as the application does not comply with Class Q and Class R conditions for development of agricultural buildings, the application is not for a conversion but a new build and there are concerns over the removal of the Right of Way.

7 COUNCILLOR COMMENTS

No comments received

8 CONSULTEE COMMENTS

Comments have been received from the following consultees:

Environment Agency - No objection, subject to a condition to ensure the development is implemented in accordance with the submitted Flood Risk Assessment and informatives.

Natural England - Having reviewed this application, it is not clear how surface water will be managed. Given the site proximity to the European Sites, we advise that consideration is given to how surface water is managed so that impacts to these designated sites are avoided or mitigated. The planning statement refers to the implementation of SuDS and a permeable car park to manage surface water from the car park. In addition to flood risk considerations, we advise that your authority should be satisfied that such measures are also suitable to protect the water quality of the designated sites. We recommend that best practice SuDS should be designed and installed in accordance with the requirements in the CIRIA SuDS Manual (C753). Please note that the pollution hazard indices in the CIRIA SuDS Manual (C753) relate to protected waters. With regards to drinking water supply Step 3 under Section 26.7.1 of the SuDS manual outlines that the requirement for extra treatment should be considered in relation to discharge to environmentally protected sites. It states that an additional treatment component (i.e. over and above that required for standard discharges), or other equivalent protection, is required that provides environmental protection in the event of an unexpected pollution event or poor system performance. Subject to your authority being satisfied with the proposed surface water management system, Natural England has no other concerns with this proposal. It is our advice that any specific measures to mitigate impacts to European designated sites may require consideration within

a Habitat Regulations Assessment. Where applicable, it is advised details are provided with regards to the long-term (in perpetuity) maintenance/replacement and funding of SuDS, and which authority will have responsibility for this, for incorporation into your authority's assessment.

Ecologist - Having reviewed the Ecology Report which has been produced by a suitably qualified Ecologist. Given the findings of the original report, it is not necessary to undertake another survey. However, it is requested that the mitigation and enhancement measures detailed in the report are secured by condition.

HCC Countryside Services - Following receipt of amended plans, the objection is withdrawn, subject to a highway agreement being secured for the installation of the bollards on Fordingbridge Footpath 39.

HCC Highways - Satisfied with the additional speed survey that has been undertaken, and as a result the slight changes to the visibility splays. In regards to the footway short length of footway connecting to the bus stop linking to the access road to the east through the hedgerow would be acceptable in this instance. The above works and change to access can be secured via a S278 agreement. The Highway Authority would therefore have no objection to the above application.

9 REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

The following is a summary of the representations received.

- Ringwood & Fordingbridge Footpath Society & Ramblers object to the proposal to install a grass verge and gate across the access and support the comment made by HCC Countryside.
- The proposal is not a conversion as there is nothing within the current structure of the existing barn that lends itself to that without major structural works being carried out.
- It is disputed whether the building has been in agricultural use since 2007 and therefore does not meet the tests applied by Classes Q and R.
- I have no intention of relinquishing my entitlement regarding my right of way over the existing drive.

For: 0

Against: 2

10 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development

The conversion of agricultural buildings to a flexible commercial use (including B1 offices) is permitted development if it passes the tests applied by Class R of the General Permitted Development Order. The basis of Class R is the applicant's fall-back position, but a Class R application would fail as certain elements of the scheme, such as the new access road cannot be undertaken under the tests applied by Class R. An application for the same form of development was approved in November 2018 under ref. 18/10864. The principle of the form of development proposed could therefore be acceptable, subject to the material considerations set out below.

Design, site layout and impact on local character and appearance of area and landscape

Policies ENV3 and ENV4 require consideration of the character impacts of the development proposed and seek to ensure that all new development is appropriate and sympathetic to its setting and landscape. Specifically, it needs to be considered whether the design, materials, layout, vehicular access, parking and turning arrangements proposed would preserve or enhance the quality of the area including allowances for meaningful landscaping.

The existing building is basically a metal clad shed and would remain so, albeit with new aluminium cladding and fenestrated elevations. It is not a small building, but it is not out of scale with the buildings around it (which include the original farmhouse to the west, the adjacent cottage to the east and the barn already converted into offices opposite). It has the appearance of a modern agricultural building within a farmstead. The existing structure is not an attractive building, but nor is it imposing or obtrusive and it does not look out of place here. The only significant changes in the appearance of the building would be in respect of the cladding used and insertion of windows/doors to make it fit for use as an office. The scale of the converted building would be the same as existing and would be consistent with the buildings around it.

There would be alterations to the environment around the building, through the introduction of formalised access, car parking and circulation arrangements and landscaping. The submitted Landscape Plan provides an understanding of the landscape context of this development proposal and a scheme that reflects more closely the underlying landscape character. The scheme incorporates new native hedges as the main structure, arranged along boundaries that more closely reflect the traditional field pattern, whilst offering a more ornamental but valuable and varied planting structure close to and around the building, gardens and car parking that will provide a suitable and pleasant environment. Delivery of the landscaping proposals will be ensured by condition.

Overall and subject to conditions, the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the area and local landscape, in accordance with Policies ENV3 and ENV4 of the NFDC Local Plan Part 1 2016-2036 and Paragraph 192 of the NPPF.

Highway safety, access and parking

The applicant seeks to utilise an existing building for B1a (office) use and to relocate an existing access and close up the existing. The parking standards require a total quantum of 21.3 car parking spaces and 4.3 cycle spaces, which have been provided in full. The layout of the car park is also in accordance with the required standards. The existing access has below standard visibility due to its location on the inside of a bend. The relocation of the access further north allows egress onto a straighter section of Ringwood Road. Speed data has been presented to justify the visibility distances and is deemed acceptable. Swept path analysis has been undertaken for a refuse vehicle accessing site, which demonstrates that a car can access/egress the site at the same time as a refuse vehicle undertaking the opposite movement with out the need to stop on the highway. Consequently no objections are raised by the Highway Authority, subject to provision of a footpath link to the existing bus stop on Salisbury Road, conditions and informatives. The applicant has been requested to provide an amended plan showing the bus stop link.

Policy IMPL2 relates to development standards and places a requirement on new developments to make provision to enable the convenient installation of charging points for electric vehicles, details of which are secured by condition.

Residential amenity

Policy ENV3 seeks to ensure that all new development is appropriate and sympathetic to its setting and should not cause adverse impacts upon residential amenity. There are some dwellings in and around the vicinity of the existing and proposed commercial buildings, the impact of the proposal on which needs to be considered.

Access to the converted building would be via a new point of access from Salisbury Road, rather than the existing point of access adjoining Redbrook Farm. Traffic to the new building would not pass Redbrook Farm, being diverted into the new car park to the north. The new building is likely to form the focal point of PDQ's activities, with less reliance upon the existing building. The applicant also confirms that the warehouse facility for PDQ Airspares is at the Fairgate Centre, Burgate and that all deliveries and HGV traffic go from that address, although it will be the case that occasional HGV movements are necessary for delivery of office supplies and refuse collection. Consequently the impact of the development in terms of increased traffic noise and disturbance would not have a significant adverse impact upon residential amenity and the slight extension of hours sought from 07:00 to 19:00 is considered to be acceptable. For the avoidance of doubt the hours of operation shall be restricted to those applied for.

No windows within the new development would directly overlook existing premises. While a window would be introduced on the southern elevation of the building to the west, this would not directly overlook Redbrook Farm, would be at ground floor level and bearing in mind it would be adjacent to an existing public right of way, it is not accepted that any loss of privacy would be introduced here.

Consequently, the development proposed would have very limited implications for adjoining amenity and complies with the amenity related provisions of Policy ENV3.

Ecology on Site Biodiversity and protected species

With regard to the ecological impacts of the development proposed, an ecology report was submitted with the formal planning application to ensure any potentially harmful impacts of the development on ecological interests are addressed. The Council's Ecologist raises no objections to the proposal, subject to the development being implemented in accordance with the recommendations of the submitted ecology report.

Flood Risk and Drainage

Parts of the site, although not the building's footprint are within Flood Zones 2 and 3. The Environment Agency raise no objections subject to a condition to ensure the development is implemented in accordance with the submitted Flood Risk Assessment.

Natural England raise queries over how surface water will be managed, given the site proximity to the European Sites. They advise that consideration is given to how surface water is managed so that impacts to these designated sites are

avoided or mitigated. It is recommended that best practice SuDS should be designed and installed in accordance with the requirements in the CIRIA SuDS Manual (C753) and Step 3 under Section 26.7.1 of the SuDS Manual outlines. A condition is proposed to ensure the development is implemented in accordance with SuDS good practice, to address these matters.

Employment Use of the Site and Promotion of the Rural Economy

The Council's saved and adopted local planning Policies CS21 and DM22 favour the re-use of permanent rural buildings for employment, to enable developments that help sustain the rural economy but not harm the countryside. The proposal would generate local employment and associated supply chains would make a contribution toward the local economy. It is important that existing and successful businesses in the New Forest are given the opportunity to expand and grow their workforce.

While a location better related to existing settlements would be preferable, there is a locational requirement for the development on this site, due to its proximity to PDQ's existing operation. The existing business premises will be retained for use by the business and the proposal will create employment for the people of Fordingbridge and local area.

Overall the proposal is consistent with Policies CS21 and DM22 which seek to promote the re-use of existing permanent rural buildings for employment purposes and to promote economic development.

Other Matters

With regard to other issues raised by notified parties; the proposal is supported by a structural report which concludes that the conversion can be undertaken, while retaining the internal framework of the existing building, which will be ensured by condition.

Class R of the General Permitted Development Order 2015 allows the change of use of agricultural buildings to a flexible commercial use (including Class B1a now Class E (g) (i)) under the prior approval procedure, without a requirement for planning permission. There is some dispute as to whether the building has been used for agricultural purposes for the requisite period of time, a notified party suggesting it has been used for storage use. Even in that instance Class I of the General Permitted Development Order 2015 allows the change of use of industrial and general business conversions (including B8 storage) to a Class B1 (office) use (now Class E (g)(i)) under the prior approval procedure. The general steer from Central Government is now supportive of the re-use of existing buildings for alternative uses without a requirement for planning permission. Nevertheless, this is a planning application, and the applicant's fall-back position is the same whether the building was last used for agricultural purposes or storage. Notwithstanding the fall-back position, the site benefits from an extant planning permission for conversion of the building to office use under ref. 18/10864, so the principle of the form of development proposed is established.

Following submission of amended plans the County Rights of Way Section have removed their objection to the proposed alterations to FP39, subject to details of bollards being agreed by highway agreement. While a private/legal matter, the applicant has confirmed that existing residents will have a right to use the new point of access, which will be a safer point of access/egress.

11 CONCLUSION

The proposal is consistent with adopted policies which seek to enhance opportunities for rural employment/business development, where it is limited to ensure the development remains of a scale and character appropriate to its rural setting. Furthermore, the proposal does not raise any issues in respect of residential amenity, flood risk or highway safety. Accordingly it is recommended for approval, subject to conditions.

12 RECOMMENDATION

Grant Subject to Conditions

Proposed Conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

drawing number 00-01 Rev B - Location Plan - Existing
drawing number 00-02 Rev B - Location Plan - Existing
drawing number 00-04 - External Photo Sheet
drawing number 00-05 - Internal Photo Sheet
drawing number 01-00 Rev A - Block Plan - Existing
drawing number 01-01 Rev A - Site Plan - Existing
drawing number 01-02 Rev A - Ground Floor Layout - Existing
drawing number 01-03 Rev A - Roof Plan - Existing
drawing number 01-04 Rev A - South and North Elevations - Existing
drawing number 01-05 Rev A - West and East Elevations - Existing
drawing number 01-06 Rev A - Section Plan - Existing
drawing number 03-00 Rev D - Block Plan - Proposed
drawing number 03-02 Rev C - Ground Floor Layout - Proposed
drawing number 03-03 Rev B - First Floor Layout - Proposed
drawing number 03-04 Rev B - Section Plan - Proposed
drawing number 03-05 Rev C - South Elevation - Proposed
drawing number 03-06 Rev A - West and East Elevations - Proposed
drawing number 03-07 Rev A - North Elevation - Proposed
drawing number 03-08 - Bin and Bike Store - Proposed
drawing number LANDP001 - Landscape Plan
Vehicle Tracking Plan - 017/3983/004,
Design and Access Statement (June 2018),
Planning Statement (June 2018),
Transport Statement (June 2018)
Transport Survey Assessment by RGP dated 15/09/2021
Ecology Report by KP Ecology (April 2018)
Letter from KP Ecology (September 2018)
Conversion and Structural Strategy by Pell-Stevens (July 2021)
Landscape Assessment (September 2018).

Reason: To ensure satisfactory provision of the development.

3. Before development commences, samples or exact details of the facing and roofing materials to be used shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall only be implemented in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure an acceptable appearance of the building in accordance with Policy ENV3 of the Local Plan Part 1 for the New Forest District outside the National Park.

4. Before first occupation of the development hereby approved, a surface water sustainable drainage system (SuDS) shall be designed and installed to accommodate the run-off from all impermeable surfaces including roofs and hard surfaces associated with the approved development such that no additional or increased rate of flow of surface water will drain to any water body or adjacent land and that there is capacity in the installed drainage system to contain below ground level the run-off from a 1 in 100 year rainfall event plus 30% on stored volumes as an allowance for climate change as set out in the Technical Guidance on Flood Risk to the National Planning Policy Framework. Infiltration rates for soakaways are to be based on percolation tests in accordance with BRE 365, CIRIA SuDS manual C753 and Step 3 under Section 26.7.1 of the SuDS Manual in relation to drinking water supply or a similar approved method. In the event that a SuDS compliant design is not reasonably practical, then the design of the drainage system shall follow the hierarchy of preference for different types of surface water drainage system as set out at paragraph 3(3) of Approved Document H of the Building Regulations. The drainage system shall be designed to remain safe and accessible for the lifetime of the development, taking into account future amenity and maintenance requirements.

Reason: In order to ensure that the drainage arrangements are appropriate and in accordance with the New Forest District Council and New Forest National Park Authority Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for Local Development Frameworks.

5. Before use of the development is commenced the existing vehicular access from the site to Ringwood Road shall be permanently stopped up and effectively closed with the footway provided or verge reinstated, in accordance with details which have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy ENV3 of the Local Plan Part 1 for the New Forest District outside the National Park.

6. Before use of the development is commenced provision for parking shall have been made within the site in accordance with the approved plans and shall be retained thereafter.

Reason: To ensure adequate on-site car parking provision for the approved development in accordance with Policy ENV3 of the Local Plan Part 1 for the New Forest District outside the National Park.

7. All external works (hard and soft landscape), including reinstatement of the verge and positioning of bollards shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Landscape Plan no. LANDP001 within one year of commencement of development and maintained thereafter as built and subject to changes or additions (including signage) only if and as agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the achievement and long term retention of an appropriate quality of development and to comply with Policies ENV3 and ENV4 of the Local Plan Part 1 for the New Forest District outside the National Park.

8. The works hereby approved shall be undertaken in strict accordance with the ecological measures of mitigation and compensation as outlined in the Ecology Report by KP Ecology (April 2018) and Letter from KP Ecology (September 2018), unless otherwise first agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard protected species in accordance with Policy DM2 of the Local Plan for the New Forest District outside the National Park (Part 2 : Sites and Development Management).

9. The development hereby approved shall not operate other than between the hours of 07:00 and 19:00 hours Monday – Saturday, and not at all on Sundays. Deliveries and collections to and from the site, including any refuse collections shall not be permitted other than between the hours of 07:00 and 19:00 Monday – Saturday, and not at all on Sundays unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of nearby residential properties in accordance with Policy ENV3 of the Local Plan Part 1 for the New Forest District outside the National Park.

10. Prior to the installation of any external lighting on site, a Lighting Scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall:

- Set out details of all proposed construction and operational external lighting;
- Include timings of lighting operation;
- Include a lighting plan showing locations and specifications of all proposed lighting;
- Demonstrate that light spill into adjacent habitats has been minimised and avoided

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of nearby residential properties in accordance with Policy ENV3 of the Local Plan Part 1 for the New Forest District outside the National Park and to safeguard protected species in accordance with Policy DM2 of the Local Plan for the New Forest District outside the National Park (Part 2 : Sites and Development Management).

11. Prior to the installation of any external plant , machinery or equipment, details of the scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include a noise impact assessment to consider noise from the proposed external equipment in accordance with BS4142:2014.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of nearby residential properties in accordance with Policy ENV3 of the Local Plan Part 1 for the New Forest District outside the National Park.

12. During any demolition and construction processes, no site machinery or plant shall be operated, no process shall be carried out and no demolition or construction related deliveries received or dispatched from the site between the hours of 08:00 – 18:00 Monday – Friday, 08:00 – 13:00 Saturday and at no time on Sundays or Bank Holidays unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of nearby residential properties in accordance with Policy ENV3 of the Local Plan Part 1 for the New Forest District outside the National Park.

13. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted flood risk assessment and the following mitigation measures it details:

- The office buildings will be located in flood zone 1 with only car parking in flood zone 2 and 3
- There will be no ground raising in flood zone 2 or 3 for the car parking
- There will be no car parking within 8m of the top of the banks of the river

These mitigation measures shall be fully implemented prior to occupation and subsequently in accordance with the scheme's timing/phasing arrangements. The measures detailed above shall be retained and maintained thereafter throughout the lifetime of the development.

Reason: In line with the Planning Practice Guidance of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) for Flood Risk and Coastal Change to reduce the risk of flooding to the proposed development and future occupants.

14. Prior to first occupation, provision should be made for the convenient installation of charging points for electric vehicles on the site. Details to be first submitted and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority and then thereafter provided and retained for that purpose unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority

Reason: To ensure suitable provision is made and in accordance with Policy IMPL2 of the Local Plan Part 1 2016-2036 Planning Strategy

15. The development hereby approved shall be implemented as a scheme of conversion, retaining the internal structure of the existing barn in its entirety, in accordance with Section 4.0 of the Conversion and Structural Strategy by Pell-Stevens (July 2021) unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure an acceptable appearance of the building in accordance with Policy ENV3 of the Local Plan Part 1 for the New Forest District outside the National Park.

16. Prior to first occupation of the development hereby approved, the pedestrian link between the site and the bus stop on the eastern side of the road shall be constructed and made available for use at all times, in accordance with the approved plan.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy ENV3 (iv) of the Local Plan Part 1

Further Information:

Jim Bennett

Telephone: 023 8028 5443



New Forest DISTRICT COUNCIL

Tel: 023 8028 5000
www.newforest.gov.uk

Claire Upton-Brown
Executive Head of Planning,
Regeneration and Economy
New Forest District Council
Appletree Court
Lyndhurst
SO43 7PA

PLANNING COMMITTEE

10 November 2021

Redbrook Farm
Barn Offices, Ringwood Road
Fordingbridge
21/10786

Scale 1800

N.B. If printing this plan from
the internet, it will not be to
scale.

