

2025/0772

Mr Ben Marsden

Liley Farm, Liley Lane, Ecklands, Sheffield, S36 9NG

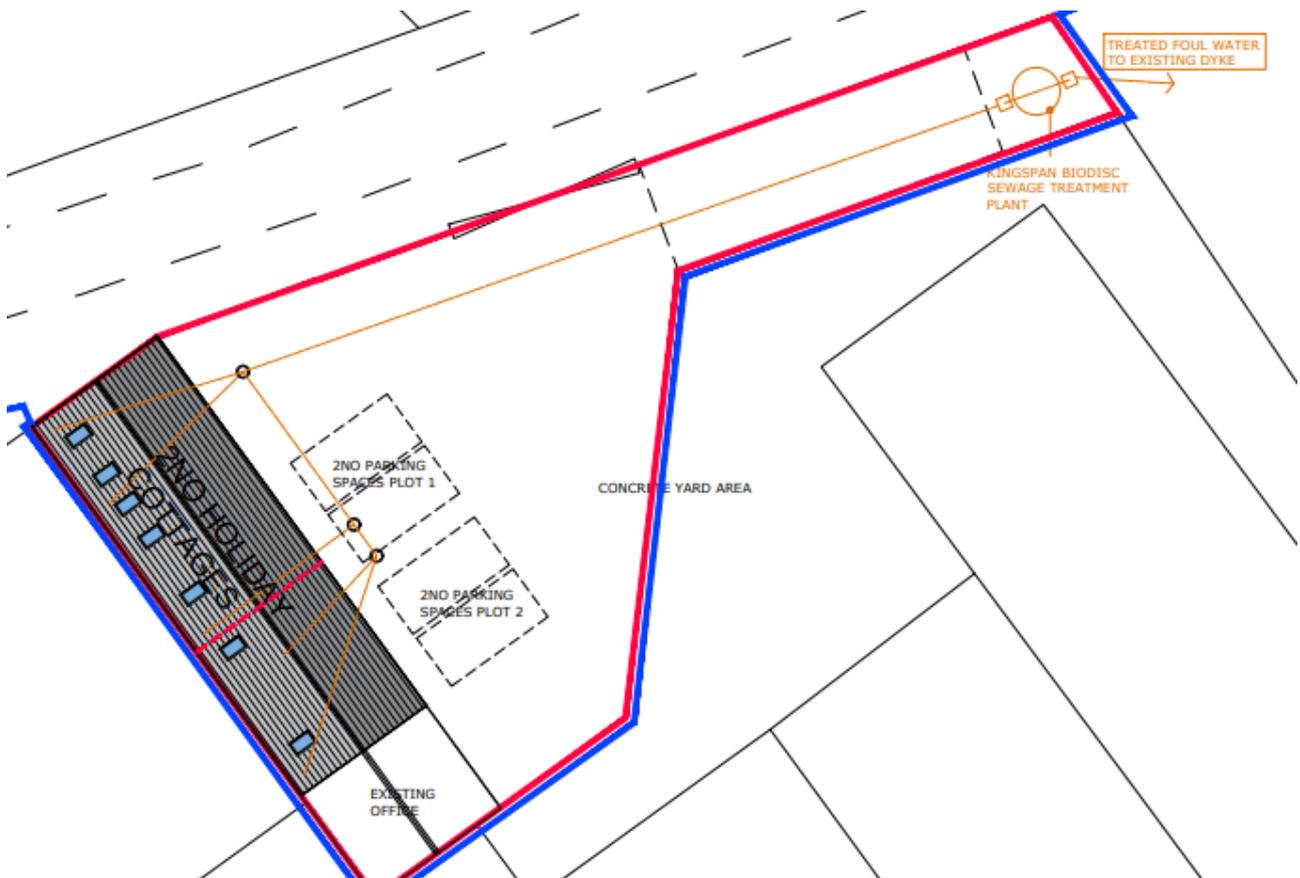
Change of use of the existing barn to form two holiday let units including associated works

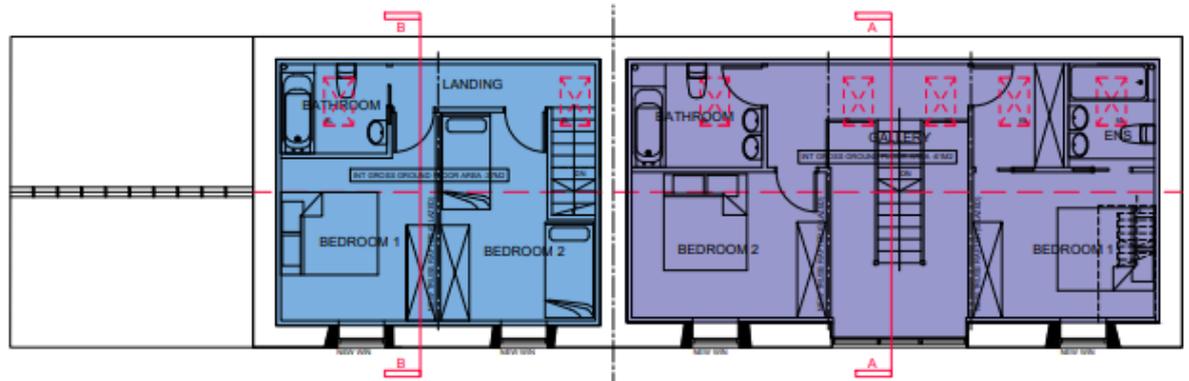
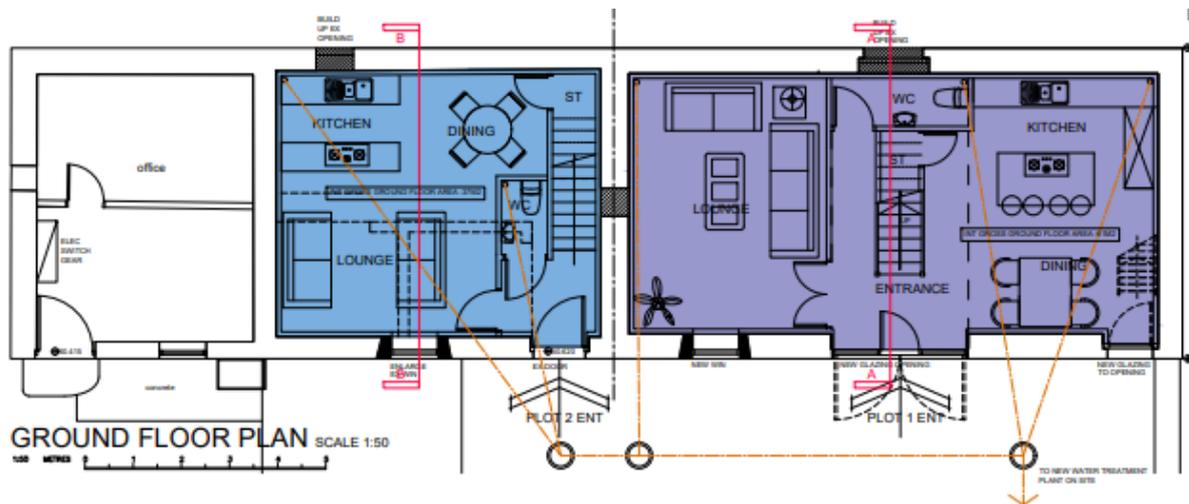
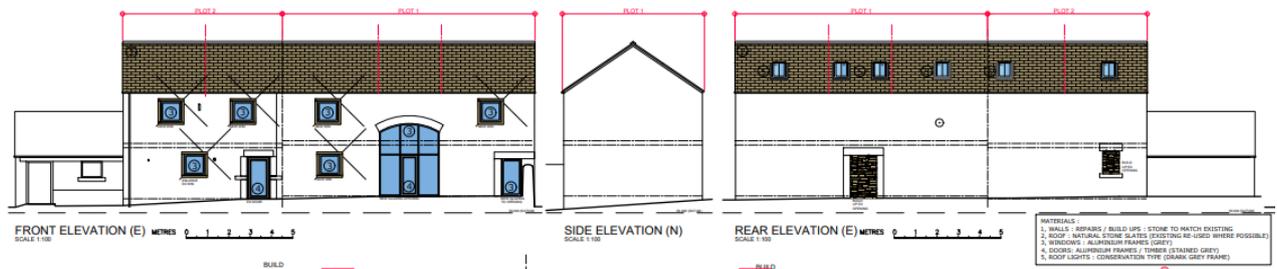
Site Description

The application site is off Liley Lane which comes directly off Manchester Road between Millhouse Green and Langsett. The wider site comprises a large detached dwelling, and a number of agricultural buildings. It appears to be a working farm with farm vehicles and machinery being stored within the site. The site is bound by stone walls and there is a vehicular entrance with gates leading to the barn in question. To the rear of the building is a cow shed.

Proposed Development

The applicant is seeking permission for the change of use of the existing barn into two holiday let units. Below are the plans:





Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision
2024/0435	Prior approval for change of use of agricultural building to offices	Granted
2024/0422	Change of use of agricultural building to water bottling facility (use class B2)	Granted

Relevant Policies

The Development Plan

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires proposals to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan for Barnsley consists of the Barnsley Local Plan (adopted January 2019).

The Local Plan review was approved at the full Council meeting on 24th November 2022. The review determined that the Local Plan remains fit for purpose and is adequately delivering its objectives. This means no updates to the Local Plan, in whole or in part, are to be carried out ahead of a further review. The next review is due to take place in 2027 or earlier if circumstances, require it.

Local Plan Allocation – Green Belt

To the extent that development plan policies are material to an application for planning permission the decision on the application must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise (section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004). In reference to this application, the following policies are relevant:

Policy SD1: Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development – States that proposals for development will be approved where there will be no significant adverse effect on the living conditions and residential amenity of existing and future residents. Development will be expected to be compatible with neighbouring land and will not significantly prejudice the current or future use of neighbouring land. Policy GD1 below will be applied to all development.

Policy GD1: General Development – Development will be approved if there will be no significant adverse effect on the living conditions and residential amenity of existing and future residents. Development will be expected to be compatible with neighbouring land and will not significantly prejudice the current or future use of neighbouring land.

Policy D1: High quality design and place making – Development is expected to be of a high-quality design and will be expected to respect, take advantage of and reinforce the distinctive, local character and other features of Barnsley.

Policy GB1: Protection of Green Belt – The Green Belt will be protected from inappropriate development in accordance with national planning policy.

Policy T4 – New Development and Transport Safety - New development will be expected to be designed and built to provide all transport users within and surrounding the development with safe, secure and convenient access and movement.

GB3: Changes of use in the Green Belt – Changes of use or conversion of buildings will be allowed in the Green Belt provided that:

The existing building is of a form, scale and design that is in keeping with its surroundings;

The existing building is of a permanent and substantial construction and a structural survey demonstrates that the building does not need major or complete reconstruction for the proposed new use;

The proposed new use is in keeping with the local character and the appearance of the building; and the loss of any building from agricultural use will not give rise to the need for a replacement agricultural building, except in cases where the existing building is no longer capable of agricultural use.

Policy E5 – Promoting Tourism and encouraging Cultural Provision – Development will be supported where it promotes the existing tourism offer including the provision of accommodation.

Tourism development in rural areas will be protected and encouraged to support and diversify the local economy.

Policy E6 – Rural Economy – We will encourage the rural economy by allowing development if it is related to tourism or recreation. It will be expected to not have a harmful impact on the countryside or green belt.

Supplementary Planning Documents:

In line with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, Barnsley has adopted twenty eight Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) following the adoption of the Local Plan in January 2019.

The most pertinent SPD's in this case are:

- Biodiversity and Geodiversity SPD
- Parking
- Barn Conversions

The adopted SPDs should be treated as material considerations in decision making and are afforded full weight.

National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies and how these are expected to be applied. The core of this is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Proposals that align with the Local Plan should be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In respect of this application, relevant policies include:

- Section 12: Achieving well designed places
- Section 13: Protecting Green Belt

Consultations

The application has been advertised in accordance with Article 15 of the Town and Country Planning Development Management Procedure (England) Order 2015.

Local Ward Councillors – No comments received.

Highways – Initial concerns were raised with regard to parking provision and other permissions that have previously been approved on the site. These issues have been resolved and Highways DC have no objection subject to conditions.

Biodiversity – No objections subject to conditions.

SYMAS – No objection subject to informative.

Drainage – No objections.

Representations

Neighbour notification letters were sent to surrounding properties. One letter of objection was received raising concerns with regards to construction noise and disturbance.

Assessment

The main issues for consideration are as follows:

- The principle of development
- The impact on visual amenity and character
- The impact on neighbouring residential properties
- The impact on highways safety
- The impact on ecology / biodiversity.

For the purposes of considering the balance in this application the following planning weight is referred to in this report using the following scale unless the NPPF establishes a specific weight:

- Substantial
- Considerable
- Significant
- Moderate
- Modest
- Limited
- Little or no

Principle of Development

The site lies within the Green Belt and forms part of an existing working farm/agricultural unit. Policy GB1 seeks to protect the Green Belt from inappropriate development in accordance with the NPPF.

Paragraph 154 of the NPPF states that development in the green belt is inappropriate unless an exception applies. One of the exceptions listed is the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction, which is most applicable in this case.

Policy GB3 of the Local Plan echoes this and states that we will allow the change of use or conversion of buildings in the Green Belt provided that:

- The existing building is of a form, scale and design that is in keeping with its surroundings;
- The existing building is of a permanent and substantial construction and a structural survey demonstrates that the building does not need major or complete reconstruction for the proposed new use;
- The proposed new use is in keeping with the local character and the appearance of the building; and The loss of any building from agricultural use will not give rise to the need for a replacement agricultural building, except in cases where the existing building is no longer capable of agricultural use

A site survey has been undertaken by a Chartered Building Surveyor which has assessed the structural integrity of the buildings and suitability of conversion. The report concludes that the building is in a reasonable condition for its age and use. There are some minor defects and areas of deterioration however, overall the building is of sound construction and capable of conversion with some repair and maintenance work. As such, the proposal is considered to meet the exception set out in the NPPF and Policy GB3 of the Local Plan.

The existing building is not dissimilar to its surroundings and is therefore in keeping with its surroundings. There are other residential uses and holiday lets in the locality and there are in keeping with local character. The supporting planning statement confirms a replacement agricultural building is not required.

Policy E5 of the Local Plan states that tourism accommodation will be supported and policy E6 reiterates this providing that the countryside and green belt is not harmed.

Overall, the proposed development accords with policies GB3, E5 and E5 of the Local Plan and is therefore acceptable in principle.

Visual Amenity and Character

Policy D1 states that development is expected to be of high quality design and will be expected to respect, take advantage of and reinforce the distinctive, local character and features of Barnsley.

The Barn Conversions SPD states that although individual buildings vary, traditional or historic farm buildings within the Borough tend to be characterised by external stone walls with relatively few window and door openings. Roofs tend to be simple in form, un-hipped and covered with natural stone slates or sometimes natural grey slate. It is important that conversions are designed so that the character of the building is preserved and to ensure that the impact upon the Green Belt, historic significance, and the visual amenities of the area is kept to a minimum.

The SPD advises that new doors and window frames should be timber, with doors designed as vertically boarded, ledged, and braced. It also advises that roof lights may be acceptable where they are of a traditional design and maintain a low profile, and that wall and roofing materials should match the existing building.

In this case, the proposal includes aluminium windows and doors finished in a dark grey colour. While this does not strictly accord with the SPD, the building is not of historic interest, and the surrounding area features a mix of architectural styles and material finishes. As such, the departure from timber is not considered to result in harm to the character of the building or its setting. Furthermore, the chosen dark grey finish is complementary to the existing dark stonework, which will be retained, ensuring a coherent and high-quality appearance.

The proposal involves minor external alterations to the building, primarily through the introduction of additional windows and glazing. These changes are modest in scale and are necessary to enable the proposed development. As such, they will have only a limited effect on the building's overall appearance. The existing form and character of the building will be largely retained, ensuring that any impact on the Green Belt and the wider visual amenity of the area remains minimal.

The details of the rooflights will be conditioned to ensure that the design and style of them are approved prior to installation

The proposal will enhance the overall visual appearance of the building by ensuring it is repaired and restored to a good standard. The material finishes will remain consistent with the existing, thereby preserving the building's character. As such, the scheme accords with Policy D1 of the Local Plan and the Barn Conversion SPD. This compliance carries moderate weight in favour of the proposal.

Residential Amenity

Policy GD1 states that proposals for development will be approved if:

- There will be no significant adverse effect on the living conditions and residential amenity of existing and future residents;

The proposed holiday let units are located away from existing residential properties, ensuring no adverse impact on neighbouring occupiers.

While there is an existing cow shed to the rear, the short-term nature of the holiday lets means any potential noise from agricultural activity would be temporary and unlikely to affect guests and there will be no permanent residents.

As such, the proposal is not considered to cause harm to residential amenity and is in accordance with policy GD1 of the local plan. This weighs moderately in favour of the proposal.

Highway Safety

Policy T4 of the Local Plan states that new development will be expected to be designed and built to provide all transport users within and surrounding the development safe, secure and convenient access and movement.

The site has had a number of previous permissions for the conversion/reuse of this building and adjacent buildings. This permission would effectively replace the existing permission for offices and only one or the other would be capable of being implemented. However, there is another permission for a water bottling facility which remains extant. Highways raised concerns with regards to parking provision should this development come forward, however the original application for this facility did not provide dedicated parking within its red line boundary and therefore cannot be controlled.

This application does include the forecourt within the red line boundary and has four parking spaces proposed, two for each unit. This is in accordance with the Parking SPD and would be sufficient to serve the development. The concrete forecourt is large and should the water bottling facility come forward there would be sufficient space for further parking to be provided.

Overall, Highways DC raised no objection with regard to the proposal and it is in accordance with policy T4 of the Local Plan. This carries moderate weight in favour of the proposal.

Ecology/Biodiversity

Policy BIO1 of the Local Plan seeks to ensure development conserves and enhances the biodiversity and geological features of the borough. Proposals will be expected to have followed the national mitigation hierarchy (avoid, mitigate, compensate) which is used to evaluate the impacts of a development on biodiversity interest.

A bat survey report has been provided to support the application. The report details the findings of the daytime internal and external inspection and two nocturnal bat surveys. The report concludes that the building had moderate potential to support roosting bats, however, none were recorded during the surveys. However, during the surveys a barn owl perch and four disused swallow nests were recorded within the building, therefore suitable mitigation is required to ensure no loss of roosting/nesting habitat.

The bat report also advises that bat safe roof membranes are utilised within the roof of the property to ensure any bats that may roost in the future are not injured and/or killed by becoming trapped within the membrane. This is a positive measure to include within the re-development that is supported by the Council's Ecologist.

Given the proposal solely relates to the change of use of the existing building without any significant operational development, the application is exempt from the mandatory biodiversity net gain requirements.

Overall, there is no objection from an ecological/biodiversity perspective subject to a condition regarding suitable mitigation as discussed above. The proposal is therefore in accordance with policy BIO1 of the Local Plan. This carries moderate weight in favour of the proposal.

Conclusion

Having balanced all material planning considerations, the proposal will not be significantly harmful to residential and visual amenity, nor will it negatively impact upon highway safety or biodiversity. As a consequence, the positive aspects of the proposal outlined above are not outweighed by any

other material planning considerations. The proposal is therefore, on balance, recommended for approval.

Recommendation

Approve with conditions