POT HOUSE HAMLET

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15th October 2012

Department of Planning Services
Barnsley M.B.C.
Barnsley, S75 4JU

Dear Mr Smith

Pot House Hamlet, Silkstone, Barnsley, S75 4JU
Planning Application – Restoration and conversion of derelict stone barn and old potting shed

Location
Pot House Hamlet is situated at the Eastern edge of Silkstone Village, below All Saints Church, approximately 3.5 miles west of Barnsley Town Centre and 2 miles west of Junction 37 of the M1.

Background
Centuries ago Pot House Hamlet was a hive of local industry with craftsmen serving the community's needs. The site is now home number of small retail businesses and to an Ancient Schedule Monument (No. 1381627) once housing a 17th century glassworks and an 18th century pottery. In the past century under the stewardship of the Horsfield Family and trustees of Pot House Hamlet, the Hamlet has been painstakingly restored and developed to become one of the areas high quality destinations to visit. This application forms a part of the original overall vision of the regeneration of Pot House Hamlet with the concept and designs warmed to by the council at its commencement of discussions in the 1990's. The Pot House Hamlet regeneration concept has been on going for the past 20 years and now has the final piece of the jigsaw to complete, the derelict barn and adjoining old potting shed. These buildings have reached the point of deterioration that is proving unsafe unless restored and preserved to the high standard that has previously been achieved in the development, conversions and conservation of the award winning buildings at the Hamlets retail site.

Over the past 3 years possibilities that would be feasible for the restoration and conversion along with the original ideas put forward throughout the 90's and 00's have been discussed with the planning department, this including several site visits within recent years. Within the past 20 years the trustees have had time to look in detail at the project as a whole and have worked with the planning department on suggestions for design and of how the site can be formed to its best potential.

Proposal

The proposal is to repair and convert the dilapidated stone barn and adjoining old potting shed at the eastern edge of the site into retail, office accommodation and workshop space. The conversion would include a small new build double storey extension to the rearmost of the plot that is not already on the current footplate. This extension would attach seamlessly to the old potting shed in a sympathetic matching fashion to the barn using the same local iron band stone and making best use of the sites topography. The main proportion of the build will match the original footplate of the 'old potting shed' that has been in place for the past 40 years with only a small proportion of new build on a non-existing footplate. The new build in place of the 'old potting shed' will be situated behind the existing barn and be at the same height and form, not over dominating the existing structure. The floor plate and floor area of the new build extension workshop space offers far less than half of the original floor plate and floor area already in existence on the plot.

Planning

The Re-use and Adaption would aim to meet the UDP's green space policy. The development would not have an excessively greater material impact than the present use on the openness of the greenbelt and the purpose of included land in it.
Pot House Hamlet has been the subject of a number of past planning permissions in respect of retail, restaurant, agricultural buildings and access/parking provision. The site is well known to the Planning Authority and is recognised locally as being of importance to existing tourist provision within the Borough.
For new build development to be acceptable in the Green Belt, exceptional circumstances should be demonstrated. Pot House Hamlet is exceptional. It is a selection of existing rural businesses on a historic site that also provides a tourist facility and generates substantial local employment.

The UDP for Barnsley's strategy section A1 says its policy aims are to meet the job needs of Barnsley residents and the industrial and commercial requirements of new and expanding businesses, through the provision of:
1) a sufficient, overall supply of employment land and
2) a wide range, in terms of size, type and location, of employment sites, factories, workshops, offices and other employment generating premises.
A7 states strategic aim is to encourage growth and diversification of the rural economy including the provision of appropriate tourism, leisure and recreation related activities.
The UDP's Policy ED5 Section says the council will in appropriate cases provide start-up units and small factory units in suitable locations and support and encourage provision of industrial and commercial sites and premises by the private sector.
Policy ED9 encourages the conversion of existing buildings for employment uses.

Policy ED13 mentions development leading to diversification of rural economy will be permitted subject to policies.
Policy GS13 states that areas designated with landscape value, development will only be permitted if the nature, form and design of the development is sympathetic to the area and the overall character and appearance of the area is conserved and wherever possible enhanced.
Policy BE6 seeks to achieve good design standards for development, taking into account the quality, design and facing materials.

Assessment

The design of the proposal reflects the style, proportions, materials and features of the area. The siting would be consistent with the pattern of development at Pot House Hamlet. It would relate well to the neighbouring garden nursery, The RICS Yorkshire commercial property of the year 2008 award winner ' The Old Glass Works', 'The Potting Shed Cafe', winner of the Gold Millennium Design Award for Barnsley and the most recent development on site 'The New Barn' with planning permission for cycle hire, sales and outdoor clothing and equipment sales. The site is not overlooked by other windows, buildings or developments. The drainage and services can be linked into the mains services that are already in existence on the sites location. The Proposal would also provide the opportunity to enhance the site as a whole making good the buildings that have become an eyesore due to their decaying and derelict condition.

Pot House Hamlet has a mix of local small business retail occupiers. The proposal would make effective use of the land to provide further additional locations for small business to operate, thus promoting small business enterprise in the Barnsley district and driving the economy forwards in these times of economic hardship. Pot House Hamlet does not yet have any office space available for itself to run the site from. The incorporation of office space into the proposal would make this project a healthy use taking into consideration the available space and surrounding environment. The old potting shed is currently used as a workshop for Pot House Hamlet and potting up area for the Nursery and this space is still required once restoration is complete. The incorporation of workshops would also allow graduates to practice and produce their own arts and skills in an environment open to the public. The workshop area would also adapt to educational visits and society lectures for the wider community. The vision for the workshops is to offer a location flexible to small occupiers needs where rural crafts can be perused under the gaze of the public and hopefully sell the crafts created.

The planning officers over the years have indicated in pre-application discussions acceptance of the principle and concept of the on-going development at Pot House Hamlet. They have thankfully contributed to the concepts sizing, design detail and form.

Access

The existing access from the highway would be utilised to service a small amount of car parking to the rear of the development servicing the upper floor office accommodation. Offices do not conform to the general opening hours of the retail sector and therefore require their own small parking facility. This parking area will maintain the existing

conifer screening, be of a permeable construction and landscaped in order to make a minimal impact on location and immediate environment.
Visitor access to the ground floor retail accommodation and workshops will be serviced by the existing Garden Nursery entrance and car park. Access via the Garden Nursery already conforms and aids those with disabilities and children. This same standard of accessibility at Pot House hamlet will be incorporated into the development.

Materials and appearance
The building will be constructed and restored using only the finest quality materials, locally sourced as not to impact on its appearance and in keeping with the surrounding environment. Restoration of the existing barn will be at the same standard as the award winning restoration of the 'Old Mill' at Pot House Hamlet to conserve its longstanding history. The same unique local iron band stone will be used for the new build section to offer a seamless interaction between the two structures making them as one with minimal detraction from the quality appearance. The restoration and design of this proposal is sympathetic to the immediate environment and historic buildings at Pot House Hamlet.

Conclusion
This proposal represents an appropriate form of development to the site and setting, consistent with development plan policy, creating a unique visitor attraction whilst at the same time securing existing and providing additional local employment. Pot House Hamlet Trust is faced with derelict and run down buildings that could be used for a much greater purpose to service the area. They have illustrated with the award-winning site that they can offer a high quality of development that benefits the borough.

If you have any further questions about the application please feel free to contact me.

Yours Sincerely

[redacted]

Tom H.E. Horsfield