



Bowcliffe

PLANNING SUPPORT STATEMENT

FULL APPLICATION FOR THE ERECTION
OF AN AGRICULTURAL BUILDING

SWITHEN FARM, SWITHEN HILL,
HAIGH, BARNSELY

HORSFIELD SWITHEN FARM LTD

FEBRUARY 2021

CONTENTS

- 1.0 INTRODUCTION
- 2.0 THE SITE, THE PROPOSAL AND BACKGROUND
- 3.0 PLANNING POLICY
- 4.0 THE ISSUES - THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN & OTHER MATERIAL
CONSIDERATIONS
- 5.0 CONCLUSION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The proposal which forms the subject of this planning application is for the erection of an agricultural building for the purposes of storing grain (which meets the required Grain Assured Standard), at Swithen Farm, Swithen Hill, Haigh. The application is submitted on behalf of the owners and occupiers of the farm, Horsfield Swithen Farm Ltd.
- 1.2 It should be noted that due to the location of the proposed agricultural building, being within 400 metres of the curtilage of a Grade II Listed Building, Swithen House (the farmhouse), it was identified that Planning Permission would be required as the current proposals would not meet the requirements of the General Permitted Development Order in relation to Agricultural Notification procedure.
- 1.3 The application is supported by the following information:
- (i) Full plans and details – Stamford Geomatic;
 - (ii) Planning Support Statement – Bowcliffe;
 - (iii) Heritage Statement – Bowcliffe;
 - (iv) Design and Access Statement – Bowcliffe; and
 - (v) Plans demonstrating applicants agricultural land ownership.
- 1.4 It is considered that this statement, together with the accompanying documents, clearly demonstrate to the Council that the proposal accords with national and local planning policy and, when judged against this and all material considerations, it is clearly the case that planning permission should be granted.
- 1.5 This statement now proceeds to give details of the site, the proposal and background. Relevant Planning Policy and Central Government advice in the form of the National Planning Policy Framework is then outlined. The issues that the proposal raises including impact on the Listed Building, Green Belt and the needs of the farming are then outlined.
- 1.6 It is considered that in the context of the Development Plan and all material considerations that planning permission should be forthcoming. Nevertheless, the applicants remain willing to discuss all aspects of the proposal.

2.0 THE SITE, THE PROPOSAL AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Swithen Farm is located a short distance from the villages of Darton and Haigh. The farmhouse, known as Swithen House, is Grade II Listed and is located along Swithen Hill, with the applicant's landholdings extending 77.08 hectares in the immediate surrounding area (as demonstrated by the supporting plans). The agricultural unit is mixed use with the predominant activity relating to arable production with some involvement in livestock. At present predominately most of the land is set over for arable production, crops produced include wheat, barley, oats, oil seed rape, straw and hay.
- 2.2 There are currently two buildings associated with the agricultural unit, which are located south east of the farmhouse (both granted planning permission circa 20 to 30 years ago). The first building (the western most of the two buildings) is a store for the machinery and farm equipment and a workshop as well as an open part of the barn used currently for the storage of straw and hay. The second building is an open cattle barn (to the east) which has had to be used due to the urgent requirement, on a temporary basis, for the storage of grain.
- 2.3 Therefore, as the current buildings are not suitable for modern grain storage there is a requirement for a building which meets their requirements and modern standards. Indeed, it should be noted that the applicant seeks to meet current "Grain Assured" Standards, the current level of standards, were not in place at the time the buildings were constructed.
- 2.4 It is acknowledged that the site is in proximity to Swithen House (the farmhouse), a Grade II Listed Building and that the setting of the building is a material consideration. The proposed location of the building needs to be carefully considered in balancing the issues of being sufficient distance from the Listed Building, yet located within close proximity to the existing farm buildings as not to raise issues of impact of harm on the Green Belt. The site chosen is located adjacent to (and to the south of) the existing agricultural buildings (which are between it and the Listed Building) and is set at a lower land level than Listed Building and therefore not interrupting views of it. It is considered that there would be no harm to the setting of the Listed Building.
- 2.5 Furthermore, owing to the juxtaposition of buildings adjacent and the lie of the land, the siting of the building will not be conspicuous in the Green Belt.

- 2.6 In terms of the form and scale of the building, this is in keeping with the form and scale of modern agricultural buildings (as well as the adjacent buildings) and will not be out of place in the setting. In terms of the nature of the building, the applicant is happy to discuss the appropriate colours for the building and agree these with the Council before development commences. It is envisaged that the buildings will have a mix of concrete panels and green box profile sheeting on the walls, with the roof to be also green box profile sheeting to suit the rural location.
- 2.7 It should be noted that in terms of the size of the building proposed this would fall comfortably within that considered Permitted Development but as set out its proximity to the Listed Farmhouse, does not allow the applicants to meet the criteria set out by the General Permitted Development Order.
- 2.8 It is considered that the proposal will not be harmful to the setting of the Listed Building (addressed in more detail in the submitted Heritage Statement). It is also considered that the proposal will not be harmful to the Green Belt.

3.0 PLANNING POLICY

- 3.1 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 sets out that in considering planning applications the determination must be in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations dictate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework also advises of a presumption in favour of development which accords with the Development Plan. The importance of the statutory Development Plan in the decision making process necessitates an examination of the relationship between the policies and proposals of the Plan and to Government Guidance.

Central Government Policy Advice

- 3.2 It is considered that the following central government policy advice in the form of the National Planning Policy Framework and retained Circulars are relevant to the consideration of this application.

The National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.3 At Para 8 it states:

“Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has clear overarching objectives which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

- a. An economic objective to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy.*
- b. A social objective to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities... with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health social and cultural wellbeing.*
- c. An environmental objective to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural built and historic environment.”*

- 3.4 Section 6 deals with ‘Building a Strong Competitive Economy’ and with regard to ‘Supporting a Prosperous Rural Economy’ at Para 83 it states:

“Planning policies and decisions should enable:

- a. The sustainable growth and expansion of all types of businesses in rural areas both through conversion of existing buildings and well designed new buildings;*
- b. The development and diversification of agricultural and other land based businesses;*
- c. Sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside;*
- d. The retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.” (Bowcliffe underlining)*

3.5 It is considered that the proposal meets with this requirement.

3.6 Section 13 deals with ‘Protecting Green Belt Land’. At Para 143 it states:

“Inappropriate development is by definition harmful to the green belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.”

3.7 Para 144 goes on to state:

“When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the green belt. Very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the green belt by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm resulting from the proposal is clearly outweighed by other considerations.”

3.8 Para 145 goes on to state that:-

“A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:

- a) buildings for agriculture and forestry;” (Bowcliffe underlining).*

3.9 It is considered that that is the case in this instance that the construction of a new building for agriculture is not inappropriate development.

- 3.10 Section 16 deals with conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Para 184 sets out that:-

“Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value. These assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.”

- 3.11 Paragraph 189 sets out:-

“In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.”

- 3.12 Heritage matters including matters of harm are considered in the supporting Heritage Statement and the Design and Access Statement.

Local Planning Policy

Barnsley Local Plan

- 3.13 The Development Plan for Barnsley MBC consists of the Barnsley Local adopted in January 2019. It should be noted that on the supporting proposals map the site falls wholly within the Green Belt.

- 3.14 The following policies are considered relevant to the proposals:-

Policy GD1 General Development

- 3.15 The policy sets out a range of requirements for proposals to comply with before planning permission is granted by the Council. It is considered that the proposed development would not conflict with the requirements of this policy.

Policy E6 Rural Economy

3.16 The policy relates to the rural economy. The Council set out that they will support a viable rural economy by allowing development in rural areas including:-

- *“Supports the sustainable diversification and development of the rural economy;*
- *Results in the growth of existing businesses...”*

3.17 In addition, it sets out that development in rural areas also is expected to amongst other requirements:-

- *“Not have a harmful impact on the countryside, biodiversity, Green Belt, landscape or local character of the area...”*

3.18 It is considered that the proposals for a new farm building to an existing farm business to assist in their requirements for grain storage meets the broad requirements of this policy and does not result in the harmful impacts set out by the policy.

Policy D1 High Quality Design and Place Making

3.19 The policy requires development to be of high quality design. The policy provides a checklist of requirements (some of which are not relevant to the proposal). It is considered that the proposals which seek to provide an agricultural building which is a common characteristic in the landscape do not conflict with the requirements of the policy.

Policy HE1 The Historic Environment

3.20 The Policy positively encourages development which will help in the management, conservation, understanding and enjoyment of Barnsley's historic environment. The policy (at subsection b) ensures that proposals affecting a designated heritage asset conserve those elements which contribute to its significance. The proposals are not considered to negatively affect the setting of the Listed Building, Swithen House. A Heritage Statement also supports the application.

Policy HE2 Heritage Statements and general application procedures

- 3.21 The policy requires that proposals that are likely to affect known heritage assets will be expected to include a description of the heritage significance of the site and its setting. It sets out that the description will need to include an appropriate but proportionate level of detail that allows an understanding of the significance of the asset but no more detail than necessary to understand the impact of the proposal. The application is supported by a Heritage Statement.

GB1 Protection of Green Belt

- 3.22 The policy sets out the Green Belt is set out on the Policies Map. Green Belt will be protected from inappropriate development in accordance with national planning policy.

4.0 THE ISSUES

The Development Plan

4.1 The Development Plan is the starting point for the consideration of this application, as set out in 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Quite clearly by reference to the Development Plan, this refers applicants to national policy advice, Para 145 of the NPPF clearly supports the construction of new buildings for agriculture. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal falls to be considered against the provisions of the NPPF.

4.2 It now falls for the matter to be considered in the light of all material considerations.

Other Material Considerations

4.3 The following are issues which it is considered are material considerations in respect of the determination of this application.

Impact on the Listed Buildings

4.4 Full details of the proposal in the context of the potential impact on the Listed Building are set out in the accompanying Heritage Statement. It is clearly demonstrated that the proposal can be developed without giving rise to issues of harm.

Impact on the Green Belt

4.5 Clearly, the development of agricultural buildings is not inappropriate development in a Green Belt. Care has been taken to ensure that the location and form of the building is in scale with existing buildings and also is well located in the context of the farmstead and buildings. This development will not result in encroachment into the wider countryside, the siting is well related to existing buildings. The proposal is clearly acceptable in Green Belt terms.

Agricultural Need

4.6 It is acknowledged that there are existing farm buildings on the site but, owing to their nature, they are no longer suitable to support large scale crop storage. Furthermore, the applicants wish to achieve Grain Assured status for their produce and for this a purpose

built modern agricultural building is required. There is therefore a demonstrable agricultural need for the development.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 This application seeks the development of an agricultural grain store at the site to meet a demonstrable farming need and to allow the farmer to meet Grain Assured Standards for his produce.
- 5.2 Under normal circumstances, this application would have been dealt with under the Agricultural Permitted Development Prior Notification process. However, the site is in proximity of the Grade II Listed Farmhouse Swithen House. It is considered that this statement has demonstrated that the proposal conforms with policy (both local and national). The accompanying Heritage Statement also demonstrates that there will be no harm to the Listed Buildings and their settings. It is considered that the careful siting of the building will result in no harm to the Green Belt in visual terms.
- 5.3 The applicants remain willing to discuss all aspects of the proposal with the Council. Should any matters arise or further clarification be required, please do not hesitate to contact me.