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Mr & Mrs Wainwright  
C/O Cheryl Ward Planning (Mrs Cheryl Ward)  
5 Valley View  
Ampleforth

3 June 2020

Dear Sir/Madam

**APPLICATION NO: 20/00343/PREAPP**

**APPLICANT: Mr & Mrs Wainwright**

**DESCRIPTION: Change of use and conversion of farm buildings to form a mixed use events and venue barn**

**LOCATION: Sproxton Hall Farm Main Street Sproxton Helmsley North Yorkshire YO62 5EF**

Thank you for your request for pre-application advice in connection with the above proposed development. I have now had the opportunity to fully consider the contents and understand that the proposed development is for the change of use and conversion of farm buildings to form a mixed use events and venue barn on land at Sproxton Hall Farm, Main Street, Sproxton.

The proposed development site is a farm situated east of the village of Sproxton. The site is outside village development limits and in the open countryside. The site is within the Howardian Hills AONB and Sproxton Hall is Grade II listed with curtilage listed traditional farm buildings. Access to the site is via an unclassified road (no through road) that leads east from the B1257 through the village to the farm. The road, where it approaches the entrance to the farm, is shared with bridleway number 25.90/2/4. There is a collection of cottages approximately 50 metres to the west of the site.

The proposed development would convert a range of existing, traditional farm buildings, which are no longer required for agricultural purposes, to form an events barn for use as a wedding venue or for conferences etc. The main house would remain in residential use and the adjoining farm buildings to the north would remain in agricultural /domestic use.

There are no indicative elevations provided at this stage and therefore comments shall be limited to the principle of the development and potential heritage, landscape, highways and amenity impacts.

I wish to provide the following advice in the context of relevant national and local planning policy. The relevant policies contained within the Ryedale Plan- Local Plan Strategy (2013) are listed below:

SP1- 'General Location of Development and Settlement Hierarchy';

SP6 - 'Delivery and Distribution of Employment/Industrial Land and Premises';  
SP8 - 'Tourism';  
SP9 – 'The Land-Based and Rural Economy';  
SP12 - 'Heritage';  
SP13 - 'Landscapes';  
SP14 - 'Biodiversity';  
SP16- 'Design';  
SP17 - 'Managing Air Quality, Land and Water Resources';  
SP19 – 'Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development'; and  
SP20 - 'Generic Development Management Issues'.

Please note that the above policy list is not exhaustive and includes extant policies at the time of writing this letter that may be subject to change. From a brief assessment of the development site and the relevant planning policies, it is considered that the key issues pertaining to any future planning application would be:-

- Principle of the Development;
- Design, character and form;
- Impact on the listed buildings;
- Impact upon the AONB;
- Impact on local amenity;
- Impact on highway safety; and
- Protected species.

Planning permission and listed building consent would be required. If an application is submitted for the development I anticipate that I would consult County Highways, the AONB Manager, the County Ecologist, the Tree and Landscape Officer, the Building Conservation Officer, Environmental Health Officer and the Parish Council.

### **Appraisal**

#### **Principle of development**

The site is within the open countryside, however, the principle of the development aligns with policies SP1, SP6 and SP9 as the proposed business represents farm diversification and would contribute to the rural economy and create employment at the site. Policy SP6 supports small scale conversion of existing buildings or provision of new buildings to support appropriate rural economic activity in line with the provisions of SP9. Policy SP9 supports the conversion of existing buildings and provision of new buildings to support appropriate small-scale rural economic activity in line with Policy SP6. It is considered that the development would align with the principle aims of these policies.

#### **Impact on designated heritage assets and the AONB**

Sproxtton Hall is a Grade II listed building with adjacent curtilage listed farm buildings. As such, Ryedale District Council has a statutory duty to have special regard for the preservation of the listed buildings and their settings.

In principle, sensitive and sympathetic restoration and re use of the traditional farm buildings is supported. To accord with Policy SP16 (Design) and reinforce local distinctiveness, the location, siting, form, layout, scale and detailed design of new development should respect the context provided by its surroundings. Attention should be paid to the orientation of buildings, boundaries, spaces between buildings and the density, size and scale of buildings. Any alterations including the treatment of existing openings and insertions should be sensitively designed to retain the agricultural character.

The proposed development should reflect the historic character and appearance of the site in its design and detailing. Any repairs, rebuilding work and alterations should utilise traditional materials sympathetic to the

local vernacular. I request that the forthcoming application is accompanied by a Heritage Statement (including an impact assessment) that assesses the significance of the heritage assets and their settings and the impacts of the proposed development upon them.

The buildings are situated within a rural setting on land that forms part of the nationally designated landscape. Darkness at night is one of the key characteristics of rural areas. Any external lighting should be minimal and design to be inward facing and low level where possible. The plans should include details of external lighting. Furthermore, on-site parking areas to the south of the building should be screened by additional landscape planting where possible so to not detract from the rural character of the surroundings and designated landscape.

#### Impact on amenity

As required by Policy SP20 (Generic Development Management Issues) the development should respect the character of the area without having a material adverse impact on the amenity of present or future occupants, the users or occupants of neighbouring land and buildings or the wider community. The proposed development site is on the edge of the settlement in a rural setting adjacent to agricultural land and woodland. Policy SP20 requires that the proposed development would need to be compatible with the existing ambience of the immediate locality and the surrounding area and with neighbouring land uses and would not prejudice the continued operation of existing neighbouring land uses. Beyond the main house there are residential receptors within 100 metres of the application site.

The development has the potential to have impacts in terms of noise disturbance and light pollution and these matters should be considered in the forthcoming application. The forthcoming application should confirm how the outdoor area to the south of the buildings is to be used and managed. In addition consideration should be given to the impact of traffic travelling through the village late at night and general disturbance from departing visitors/guests. The EHO has provided informal comments and highlighted potential concerns with regard to noise, access and egress from the site and light pollution. The EHO has recommended a noise assessment and a lighting assessment. It is anticipated that any permission would include restrictions on hours of use, amplified music and firework displays.

#### Highways

Policy SP20 advises that *“Access to and movement within the site by vehicles, cycles and pedestrians would not have a detrimental impact on road safety, traffic movement or the safety of pedestrians and cyclists. Information will be required in terms of the positioning and treatment of accesses and circulation routes, including how these relate to surrounding footpaths and roads”*.

The indicative site layout shows that a separate access would be formed to the south of the site to serve the proposed events venue with the existing access on the western side of the site remaining for use for farm traffic and the occupants of the dwelling. The proposed use would result in an increase in vehicular activity to and from the site using the lane shared by residents in the village and the existing farm.

I understand that you have received ‘pre-app’ advice direct from the highways officer. The comments referred to the access being a narrow lane (with few passing places) and potential visibility issues and the need for appropriate mitigation measures.

It is requested that any forthcoming application includes projected figures for vehicle movements, this should cover guests/visitors, staff and any delivery vehicles. The forthcoming application will need to demonstrate that there would be no conflict between guests/visitor vehicles and any larger agricultural vehicles nor any adverse amenity impacts arising from the different uses within the site. With regard to sustainable transport it is noted that the site is in a rural location and the forthcoming application should explain the anticipated modes of transport for users.

#### Protected Species

Policy SP14 aims to conserve and enhance biodiversity through the prevention of loss of habitat or species and the incorporation of beneficial biodiversity features. I advise that checks and preliminary surveys are undertaken for bats and birds by a qualified ecologist prior to any works for the conversion or demolition of existing agricultural outbuildings.

Other matters

I would recommend that the forthcoming application is accompanied by a Phase 1 ground investigation report to assess the potential for contamination arising from the historical use of the buildings.

Conclusion

The proposed change of use and farm diversification aligns with the principle aims of policies SP6 and SP9 through the creation of employment opportunities and has the potential to make a positive contribution to the rural economy whilst enabling the restoration and reuse of traditional, listed buildings. The design and layout should seek to preserve and enhance the listed buildings and their settings and not detract from the nationally designated landscape. In addition any forthcoming application should demonstrate that the use will not give rise to adverse impacts on local amenity or highway safety. At this stage, whilst the development is considered to be acceptable in principle, based on the details currently available and in light of the abovementioned constraints and concerns, I am not able to confirm that the proposed development would receive Officer support.

Please note that this advice is an informal opinion based upon the information you have provided and does not constitute a legal determination under any relevant legislation. This advice is an Officer view provided in good faith but without prejudice to the formal consideration of any future planning application.

If you have any queries regarding any of the above information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

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