

Colin Haigh, Head of Planning
Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council
14th January 2016
Dear Sir

APPLICATION REF: 6/2015/2515/PN3
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING
(GENERAL PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT) (ENGLAND) ORDER 2015

I understand you have received Prior Notification of development at Nyn Manor dated 22nd December 2015 and my objections to the Council giving Prior Approval are as follows:-

The area of land comprised in this site is within the designated Metropolitan Green Belt, a Landscape Conservation Area and of archaeological significance. It is within Northaw Common Parkland Area 53. It is an area of outstanding natural beauty and the importance of this character landscape cannot be over emphasised. Furthermore the Council placed an Article 4 Direction on this land in 2005 when Mr. Newland erected fences, not for agricultural purposes, to enclose plots of land and offered them for sale.

The proposal to erect a structure over 30 feet high on undulating land and positioned on the highest point of the northern boundary and probably the highest point near the western boundary of the site means that not only will it be harmful and objectionable to the visual amenity of the immediate surrounding area but it will also have a detrimental impact from further afield. PPG7 Para. E27 states 'Sites on skylines should be avoided if possible'. It is also positioned in close proximity to the established residential development along The Ridgeway.

Under PPG7 E16, the Council should consider whether this is a genuine and reasonable development. Under PPG7 E24, the Council may concern themselves with the siting, design and external appearance of a proposed new agricultural building. This building is a bespoke design by an architect who usually designs residential properties and barn conversions. The roof pitch is around 35 degrees whereas the pitch for a portal frame building is usually 8-15 degrees; a 35 degree pitch would not be unusual for a tiled roof on a house.

The GROUND FLOOR plan shows non-standard bay widths of 7.3 metres, these are usually 6 metres in barns. The large ventilators on the sides are not necessary where a barn is used for storage. Hay must be dry before it is stored otherwise it becomes combustible. Is there a genuine and sustainable need for this size and design?

PPG7 E4 under Class A states 'development ... not designed for agricultural purposes is not permitted. The Courts have held that this condition relates to the physical appearance and layout of a building, not its function'.

No measurements are given in respect of the new track leading to the proposed structure of 458 sq. metres nor the hardstanding except that 'Levels adjusted to allow access'. I would suggest that the height of the development will be above 9.8 metres and that the figure in Box 5 of the application should be re-assessed with regard to Para. 2(2) of the 2015 Order when building on an undulating site.

I am concerned that the parcel of land where the barn is to be located is given as 1 or more hectares whereas the parcel of land should be at least 5 hectares under Class A.

PPG E30 E31 and E32 should be considered with regard to the red tile insulated roof and walls covered with black cladding, no details given, which will stand out in prominent isolation and not blend into its surroundings.

Under National Planning Policy Framework, Para.187 states that Local planning authorities should look for solutions rather than problems. A site visit should be made to Nyn Manor to discuss the possibility of utilising existing, redundant or under utilised farm buildings to accommodate this new storage facility and if the need is found to be genuine and sustainable 'New buildings should normally form part of a group rather than stand in isolation and relate to existing buildings in size and colour' PPG7 Para. E27. Purely from a security aspect, expensive farm machinery would be safer and any fire risk diminished if this barn were sited nearer to the main house, where services such as electricity, water and drainage are readily available instead of being situated half a mile away in a remote position presently without such services.

*Given that farming activity at this location has seriously declined over the last 50 years, careful consideration should be given by the Council as to whether the erection of this barn is **reasonably necessary** for the purposes of agriculture within this unit and not a spurious attempt to slip under the radar as a permitted development.*

I consider that the Application form was incomplete when lodged on 22nd December and that your letter dated 30th December written to local residents was misleading in that the height of the building was shown to be 5.1 metres whereas it is likely to be double that figure.

P. Knight
4BG

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