

Urban Design Comments

F/23/94713 – Cockpit Farm Barn, Knowle Lane

From: Urban & Landscape Design Team to Development Management

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Date: 10 March 2023

Proposal: Construction of 6.no dwellings, including landscaping, parking and associated works following demolition and site preparation.

Summary:

- The site is located outside the urban edge within the countryside and a settlement gap
 - The existing building has no architectural merit therefore there is an opportunity to enhance the character and appearance of the area.
 - Well-achieved balance between built form, parking and landscape
 - Electric Vehicle Charging Points need to be included on the Site Plan
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These comments are made in relation to the plans and supporting information dated 15th February 2023 and should be read in conjunction with comments from the Landscape, Tree and Ecology Officers and Highways Specialist.

1. Site Context

The site lies within open countryside in a settlement gap, directly to the north of Horton Heath and to the west of Knowle Lane. It is already developed, and a prior approval has been granted under Class Q for the change of use from agricultural building to residential. A PRow runs alongside the northern boundary.

The following comments are therefore made on the assumption that issues relating to development within the countryside and settlement gap can be overcome.

2. Siting & External Layout

The existing character on this side of the road consists of a linear development set in long plots with generous rear and front gardens, with dwellings set well back from the road.

The proposal appears to follow the same pattern of the existing building and it is more in style with the existing footprint.

Furthermore, the quantum of development proposed for the site seems to be appropriate and providing sizable linked and detached dwellings with sufficient, private, and useable amenity space for future occupants.

Therefore, the proposed layout is considered to be acceptable, balanced and in keeping with the scale and character of the existing building.

When compared with the prior approval application, although there is a slightly increase on the number of dwellings, it is felt that the proposal addresses the site in a better way. Whilst retaining the agricultural feeling, it provides better living conditions for future occupants.

3. Height, Form, Scale & Mass

There are no objections *in principle* to this aspect of the scheme.

The proposal is for a one storey building with accommodation on the roof. The built form proposed respects the existing single storey appearance without adding too much bulk to the building.

4. External Appearance & Materials

There are no objections *in principle* to this aspect of the scheme;

There is no issue with the architectural style proposed, indeed a more contemporary approach is welcomed and seem to be appropriate to the context whilst retaining the existing agricultural feeling.

In terms of materials, it is suggested a vertical stained dark timber cladding to the walls and standing seam metal roof. This approach is supported.

5. Sustainability

There appears to be no reference within any of the supporting information with regards to what sustainability measures are to be incorporated into the development.

To support the Council's commitment to mitigate climate change:

- Significantly reduce vehicular dominance and prioritise pedestrian and cycle provision and links to public transport
- Provide minimum parking provision
- Consider creating provision for shared car club vehicles to reduce the number of parking spaces required
- Provide charging points for electric vehicles, Ebikes and other forms of micro-mobility in locations that support the streetscene and do not hinder pedestrian movement
- Installation of photovoltaics and solar tiles
- Introduce *Passivhaus* and *Lifetime Homes* approaches to building design and construction
- Include additional trees and soft landscape within streetscenes to reduce hard surfaces, slow surface water run-off, provide shade and create habitats / corridors for biodiversity
- Orient buildings to maximise solar gain and provide natural surveillance of surrounding streets and spaces to encourage active travel and sociability
- Ensure habitable rooms enjoy dual aspect to maximise solar gain, improve ventilation and maximise overlooking of surrounding streets and space