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**Report of the Chief Planning Officer**

***PLANS PANEL WEST***

**Date: 25/5/11**

**Subject: APPLICATION 11/00414/FU – CHANGE OF USE OF STORAGE BARN TO OFFICES/TOILETS AND EXTENSIONS TO ABATTOIR. LOW GREEN FARM 40 LEEDS ROAD RAWDON LEEDS LS19 6NU**

**APPLICANT  
MR J PENNY**

**DATE VALID  
8 MARCH 2011**

**TARGET DATE  
7 JUNE 2011**

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**Electoral Wards Affected:**

**HORSFORTH**

☐ Y

Ward Members consulted  
(referred to in report)

**Specific Implications For:**

Equality and Diversity

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Community Cohesion

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Narrowing the Gap

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

**GRANT PERMISSION subject to the following conditions**

1. Standard time limit 3 years
2. Development to be in accordance with approved plans
3. Sample materials
4. Submission of Landscape scheme
5. Implementation of landscape scheme
6. Details of surfacing and drainage of areas to be used for parking of vehicles
7. Cycle and motorcycle parking to be provided
8. Restriction on hours of delivery (0700 hours to 1800 hours Monday to Friday only with no such operations taking place on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays)
9. Scheme for noise insulation of plant and machinery
10. Details of extract ventilation system to be submitted
11. Phase 1 desk study to be submitted
12. Dealing with unexpected contamination
13. Validation report

**Reasons for approval:** The development is not of a type normally considered appropriate in the Green Belt but it is considered that the limited effect on the openness of the Green Belt and economic considerations outweigh the limited harm caused by this inappropriate development.

On balance, therefore, it is considered that there are very special circumstances to justify this development in the Green Belt.

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION:**

1.1 The application is being reported to Panel at the request of Councillor Cleasby.

## **2.0 PROPOSAL:**

2.1 The proposal is an application for full planning permission for extensions to the west and south of the existing abattoir and the conversion of a barn on the northern frontage of the site to include offices, toilets and changing rooms. The abattoir is located on the south side of the Leeds Road between Horsforth and Rawdon, within Low Green Conservation Area, the Green Belt and a special landscape area.

2.2 The proposal is an enlargement of a development approved in February 2010 under reference 09/05472/FU and includes an additional element – the conversion. The earlier consent gave permission for a retrospective extension with a floor area of approximately 200 m<sup>2</sup> (a chiller room) and a new development to the south of this extension with a total floor area of approximately 625m<sup>2</sup> to include a dispatch area and a carcass chiller building.

2.3 The current proposals retain these elements, extended slightly to the west, and also include an extension for a chiller room to the south of the existing building of 225m<sup>2</sup> and an extension to the north, incorporating an office and further chiller room of about 420m<sup>2</sup>, giving a total new floor area nearly 1400m<sup>2</sup>. The application forms indicate the new floor area is 1600m<sup>2</sup> but this appears to include the floor area of the retrospectively approved building.

2.4 External roofs and walls will be clad with plastisol coated profile steel cladding. In the case of the existing building for which retrospective permission was given the cladding used is a dark green colour. This differs from the older buildings on the site which are primarily grey artificial stone, concrete block and grey cement cladding. The proposed extensions will appear primarily as single storey, however because of the difference in levels across the site there will be a basement level below the carcass chiller building with access from the south and from the existing building. The proposal includes additional planting beyond the southern boundary of the existing yard and additional car parking giving a total of 37 spaces,

## **3.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:**

3.1 The site is located on the west side of Leeds Road south west of Rawdon and overlooking the Aire valley to the south and west. Despite its Green Belt status, the site has developed over time as an abattoir with the whole site covered with buildings, and concrete or gravel hardstanding. The main building occupies the centre and eastern part of the site. There are a number of ancillary buildings to the north, and between these and the Leeds Road are parking areas. In the north west corner of the site is a house, probably of Victorian origin, which has been subsequently converted to offices with planning permission. Formerly this property had a walled garden to the south but this has been greatly reduced in size in order

to accommodate the 200m<sup>2</sup> chiller extension and additional car parking. The proposed extension to the north of the previously unauthorised building will be on this existing parking area.

- 3.2 Immediately to the north west is an area of three storey buildings which were originally in residential and industrial use but now also include offices. Immediately west the land is in residential use with properties fronting Low Green and Cliffe Lane to the west and with extensive gardens running to the western boundary of the application site. The nearest property, to the south west, is 20 metres from the south west corner of the site but the property and its garden are screened from the abattoir grounds by a tall coniferous hedgerow.
- 3.3 On the opposite side of Leeds Road the entire frontage is residential and there are two further dwellings on the same side of Leeds Road to the east. Land to the south and south east is in agricultural use.
- 3.4 Because the land on the south side of Leeds Road slopes quite steeply towards the Aire Valley, the buildings within the site other than those on the frontage are not prominent from Leeds Road. From the east there are views of the eastern edge of the site but it has the appearance of a group of farm buildings. From the south the area is visible from Rodley Lane, but the abattoir is seen against existing development and the additional extensions will not be prominent. The site cannot be seen from the west because of existing buildings and vegetation.

#### **4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:**

- 4.1 09/02987/FU: Part 2 storey part single storey extension to abattoir. Withdrawn 05.10.09.
- 4.2 09/005472/FU: Part two storey, part single storey extension for carcass chiller, storage and dispatch building and retrospective application for single storey chiller room. 23.02.10 This is the application for extensions to the abattoir referred to in the description of the proposal and the difference between this and the current application are relevant to the consideration of this application.

#### **5.0 HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS:**

- 5.1 There was a limited pre-application discussion between the applicant's agent and the Area Planning Manager prior to submission of this application. It was noted that the extension to the abattoir had previously been supported in principle by the grant of application 09/005472/FU, and that the main issue relating to the consideration of this application would therefore be the details of the proposal and the changes to the previous approved scheme.

#### **6.0 PUBLIC/LOCAL RESPONSE:**

- 6.1 The application was advertised by a site notice posted on 18 March 2011 (Conservation Area/Departure), an advertisement in the Wharfe Valley Times dated 7 April 2011 and notification letters were sent to 19 local residents.
- 6.2 Councillors Cleasby and Townsley have indicated that they object to the application for the reasons put forward by the objectors and because they consider the site is operated as a commercial abattoir and is not an agricultural site.

- 6.3 There have been seven representations objecting to the proposal. One is essentially a complaint about the cattle shed located to the south of the abattoir. A further representation indicates that after complaints in October 2010 there has not been a particular problem of odour but that there is a need to continue to impose strict rules on the matter.
- 6.4 The remaining representations specifically objecting to this application put forward the following points:
- The applicant has a history of ignoring planning regulations
  - Part of the previous consent was retrospective
  - The proposal represents creeping urbanisation in Green Belt/Conservation Area.
  - Application will result in increases in delivery and collection despite the comments of the applicant that increase in motor traffic will be minimal. Increased hardstanding and parking
  - No comparison of existing and proposed traffic movements or details of public transport use.
  - Existing use already contributes to hold ups and congestion especially at rush hour.
  - Landscaping proposals vague and lacking commitment.
  - Proposed materials not reassuring
  - Development not appropriate in the rural area.
  - Will add to intrusive buildings and will be unscreened to walkers for west and south lack of landscaping.
  - The case for very special circumstances has not been made
  - The effect on property values
  - Problem of noise and smell from premises, including late night noise

## **7.0 CONSULTATIONS RESPONSES:**

### **7.1 Statutory Consultations:**

Coal Authority: No objection subject to conditions

### **7.2 Non Statutory Consultations:**

Mains Drainage: No objection

SDU Landscape: No objection subject to use of native trees for the planting area to the south.

Highways: No objection subject to conditions relating to provision of cycle and motorcycle parking arrangements and surfacing of all vehicle parking areas.

Environmental Protection: No objection subject to condition relating to the details of the extract ventilation system.

Contaminated Land: No objection subject to conditions.

## **8.0 PLANNING POLICIES:**

### **8.1 Government Policies**

PPG2: Green Belts

PPG15: Planning and the historic environment

PPS 4: Planning for sustainable economic growth

Policies of the Leeds Unitary Development Plan (Review 2006)

GP5: Development proposals should resolve detailed planning considerations.

N19: New buildings and extensions in Conservation Areas.

N33: Development in the Green Belt.

N37: Development in Special Landscape Areas.

T2: Development proposals should ensure that no new transport and highway problems are created or existing ones exacerbated.

T24: Parking provision to reflect guidelines.

T7A: Provision of cycle parking.

T 7B: Provision of motorcycle parking.

Supplementary Planning Document:

LCC Street Design Guide SPD

## **9.0 MAIN ISSUES**

- **Principle of Development**
- **Impact on Visual Amenity**
- **Impact on Residential Amenity**
- **Highway Issues**
- **Other considerations**

## **10.0 APPRAISAL**

- 10.1 The site of the abattoir is located in the Green Belt, Special Landscape Area and a Conservation Area.
- 10.2 Within the Green Belt permission will only be granted, other than in very special circumstances, for a defined list of developments. The current proposal does not fall within the list of developments considered appropriate for a Green Belt Location and therefore, it is incumbent of the applicant to demonstrate that there are very special circumstances.
- 10.3 The proposal will not increase the number of employees at the premises or the number of employee vehicle movements. The applicant has argued that the development is necessary, however, to improve efficiency, to allow the existing business to grow in order to maintain the level of employment on the site and to supply local businesses and considers that the proposal accords with DEFRA's Rural Development Programme for England.

- 10.4 It is relevant that PPS4 - Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth - specifically states that in considering commercial proposals that are contrary to the development plan local planning authorities should weigh market and other economic information alongside environmental and social information and take full account of any longer term benefits, as well as the costs, of development, such as job creation or improved productivity including any wider benefits to national, regional or local economies. In a recent Ministerial Statement the Minister for Decentralisation has indicated that in fostering economic growth the planning system has a key role to play by ensuring that sustainable development is able to proceed as easily as possible. He stated that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure that they give appropriate weight to the need to support economic recovery, that applications that secure sustainable growth are treated favourably (consistent with policy in PPS4), and that they can give clear reasons for their decisions.
- 10.5 In light of the above it is considered that in assessing these very special circumstances, the impact of the development on the openness of the Green Belt needs to be considered and weighed against the economic benefits of the proposal.
- 10.6 For reasons that will be explained in the relation to the visual impact of the proposal, it is considered that the effect on openness is very limited and the economic benefits of the development outweigh the harm caused by inappropriate development. Similarly the visual impact of the development on the Special Landscape Area and Conservation are mitigated by its location, and the development will not result in harm to the character and appearance of the Special Landscape Area or the Conservation Area.
- 10.7 Looking at all these issues, and taking account of the advice in the consultation response from Local Plans it is considered that on balance the specific nature, location and circumstances of this proposal make it acceptable in principle.

#### Impact on Visual Amenity

- 10.8 The proposed extensions will form part of an existing large group of quasi industrial buildings which have developed over a long period. The proposed visual impact of the proposals must be assessed in the context of the existing development on the site.
- 10.0 The proposed buildings are located to the west of the existing buildings, and behind frontage buildings. The proposed conversion of the building will result in no alterations to the exterior of the building. As a result the proposed buildings will only be visible from public viewpoints in long distance views from the south, from where they will be seen against the existing buildings and the development on the opposite side of Leeds Road from the site. They will not be seen from the east at all because they will be screened by existing buildings and only in part and from very limited locations from the road frontage. They will be seen from residential garden land and commercial buildings to the west. However, this will be against or in place of existing buildings (which will be further screened by the new development) and largely screened by the existing hedgerow. It is considered that with appropriate use of materials the appearance of the site from the west can be enhanced and the proposal also offers the opportunity for additional site landscaping by means of a condition of the consent.
- 10.10 In view of the above it is considered that the development will not be detrimental to visual amenities.

#### Residential Amenity

- 10.11 Residents have raised a number of issues relating to residential amenity, in particular relating to noise, odours and traffic. Traffic issues are considered below. In relation to noise, the effect can be mitigated to some extent by the imposition of conditions relating to hours of operation of 07.00 to 18.00 hrs (the Transport Statement indicates that the business runs a single shift system, 07.30 to 17.00 hours) and insulation of plant and

machinery, as recommended by Environmental Protection, but control of both noise and odours are subject to other legislation. In 2010 there were three complaints about odour issues in the whole year.

- 10.12 It is not considered that the proposal will result in any material change to the operation of the abattoir and consequently the impact of the present use on residential amenity will not change. The existing area for loading/unloading remains in the same location and no comments have been received in relation to this aspect of the development other than the concerns about traffic moving on the road and within the site. However the movement of vehicles is an existing impact of the abattoir and will not materially change.

#### Highway Issues

- 10.13 The application forms indicate that the proposal will not alter the number of employees at the premises and Highways do not consider that the development will have implications for road safety. This is an established business and there is currently no control over the number of deliveries and dispatches. There have been no reported increase in traffic movements as a result of the recent construction of the chiller building. The Transport Statement identifies a limited potential for an increase in delivery vehicles to the site of 4 trips per day by HGV. A condition to control the hours of traffic movements will prevent disturbance in the early morning and evening. It is considered that the proposal is, therefore, acceptable in highway terms.

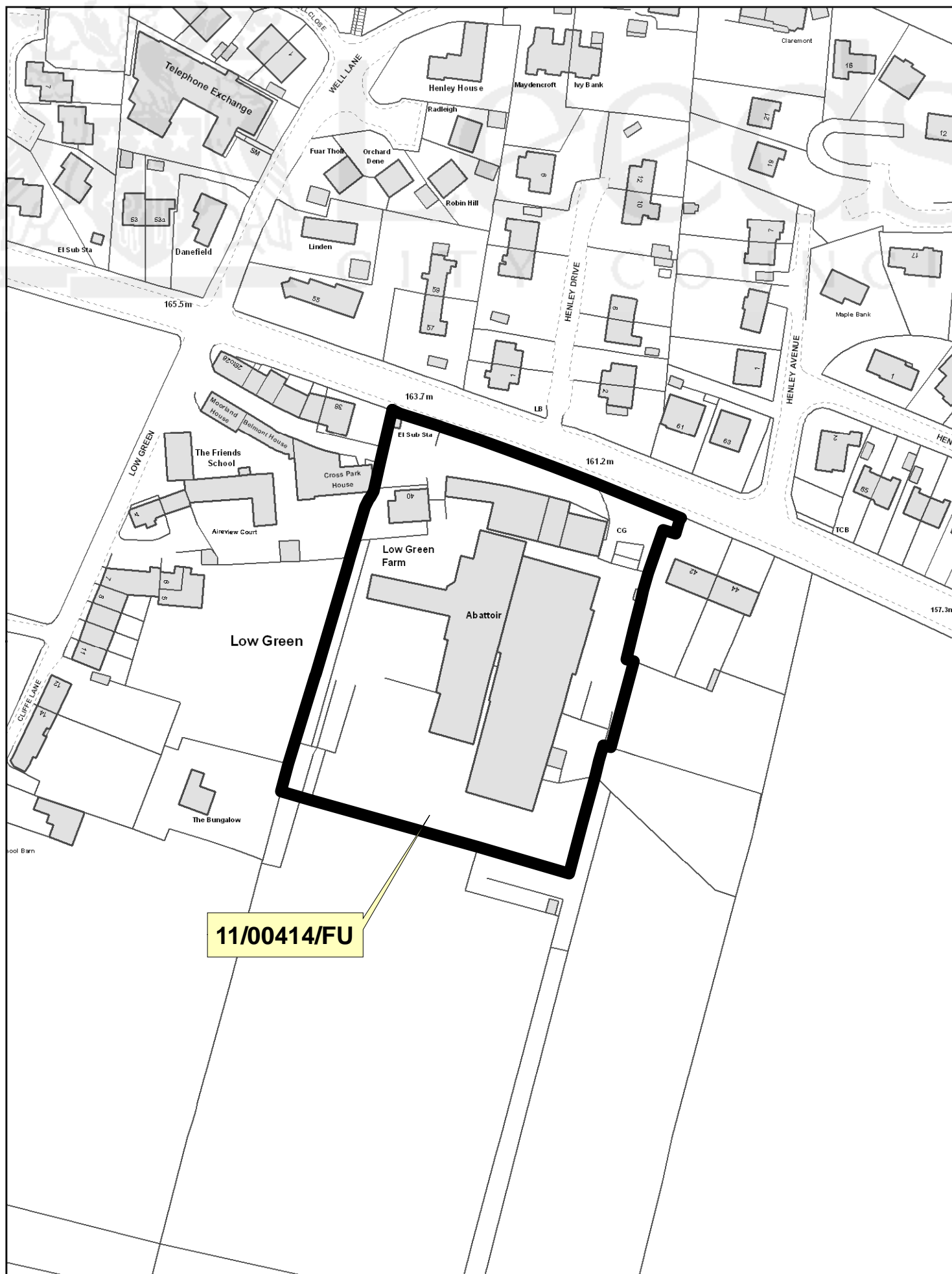
#### Other issues

- 10.14 Residents have raised issues relating to animal welfare and the lighting of fires on the site that are the subject of separate regulatory controls. Environmental Protection are well aware of the potential environmental issues on the site and monitor it regularly, including responding to specific concerns of local residents.
- 10.15 Other concerns, requesting that the development be closely monitored, relate to unauthorised development on the site in addition to the retrospective element of the present proposal of which the City Council is aware and is addressing.
- 10.16 The development is considered acceptable for the reasons set out above and in view of this it is recommended that permission is granted subject to appropriate conditions.

## **11.0 CONCLUSION**

- 11.1 The development is considered acceptable for the reasons set out above and in view of this it is recommended that permission is granted subject to appropriate conditions.

Background papers: Application file 11/00414



# WEST PLANS PANEL