

Name of Applicant Type of Certificate	Proposal	Map/Plan Policy	Plan Ref. Expiry Date
MR. M. TURAN 'A'	Erection of agricultural storage building for machinery and fodder (retrospective) - Belcote Farm, Mearse Lane, Belbroughton	GB	B/2007/0691 10.10.2007

RECOMMENDATION:

- (a) that permission be **REFUSED**; and
- (b) that Members authorise appropriate action to secure the removal of the unauthorised structure and delegate authority to the Head of Planning and Environment Services in consultation with the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services to select the most appropriate course of action.

Consultations

Belbroughton PC	Consulted on 13.07.2007. Comment received on 08.08.2007
WCC(HP)	Consulted on 13.07.2007. No response to date.
ENG	Consulted on 13.07.2007. Comment received on 09.08.2007
Agricultural Advisor	Consulted on 13.07.2007. Objection received on 31.07.2007, concluding that the building is not reasonably required for the purposes of agriculture.
Publicity	Site notice posted on 31.08.2007 (expires on 21.09.2007).

The site and its surroundings

The site is located off a separate access point to Belcote Farm which runs in a semi circle shape from Mearse Lane to the retrospective building. This access point is edged on both sides with a large kerb and does not form part of this application. In addition it would appear that this hard-standing track is also unauthorised with no current planning permission.

The retrospective building appears as an industrial unit and is located in a highly prominent position and is clearly visible from Mearse Lane.

Proposal

The building in question is retrospective and measures 25.4 metres x 37 metres, with a height of 8.7 metres and a pair of roller shutter doors each measuring five metres in width.

Relevant Policies

WMSS	QE1, QE2, QE3
WCSP	SD.2, D.38, D.39, CTC.1
BDLP	DS2, DS13, C4, C30A
Others	PPS1, PPG2, PPS7, SPG5

Relevant Planning History (3 most recent only)

- B/2006/0332 Erection of an agricultural storage - general purpose building. Details not required: 24.04.2007
- B/2006/0148 Erection of an agricultural storage - general purpose building. Details not required: 24.04.2007. Further details required: 17.03.2006
- B/2005/0964 Change of access field for agricultural purposes. Granted 25.11.2005

Notes

The main issues to consider with this application is whether the proposal would represent appropriate development in the Green Belt and if not whether special circumstances exist that would outweigh the harm caused.

Reasons for the Proposal

According to the submitted planning statement, the Agent concerned states that the building would be required for the purpose of storing grain, machinery and straw due to insurance and security purposes and there are no other facilities within fifty acre holding.

Policies on New Agricultural Buildings

Policy C30a of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan states that proposals for new agricultural buildings which are subject to planning controls will be considered favourably where the need for the building is established to the satisfaction of the District Council and complies with the following criteria:

- (a) the proposal must be in accordance with the provisions of policies C4 and C5 of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan (relating to impact on the surrounding landscape and landscape features);
- (b) the scale and design of the building should be appropriate to its intended use;
- (c) the proposal should form part of a group of buildings where practicable;
- (d) appropriate materials and dark matt colours should be employed wherever practicable.

Criteria (a) of policy C30a therefore suggests that, where possible, the proposal should form a group of buildings and refers to policy C4 of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan that resists developments that would have a materially detrimental effect on the landscape. SPG5 and PPS7 provide further guidance on the issue of siting and states that normally new buildings should form part of a group rather than stand in isolation and clearly this building would be in an isolated position.

Green Belt Issues

Guidance in PPG2 "Green Belt" and policies within the Bromsgrove District Local Plan and the Worcestershire County Structure Plan state that the erection of new agricultural buildings is classified as appropriate development in the Green Belt provided there is a clear agricultural need. Policy DS2 of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan sets out the instances where development is considered appropriate in the Green Belt as stemming

from the advice given in PPG2. Criteria (a) of this Policy regards development for purposes of agriculture.

The Council's Agricultural Advisor produced a report on this application and based on the information provided and from on-site observations, it was concluded that the building was excessive for the current agricultural activities taking place on the holding and that the agricultural needs of the holding could be met by the provision of a much smaller building. Therefore substantial weight should be attached to these comments.

Given the site does not contain other buildings in the immediate vicinity, the applicant is unable to cluster the new structure with other buildings and would be located in a highly prominent position which would be visible from Mearse Lane. This would unduly harm the openness and visual appearance of the Green Belt whilst further eroding the countryside which should be avoided.

However it is acknowledge that a building of a certain size would not require planning permission for the purposes of agriculture and I make specific reference to a previous application B/2006/0332 which was for a much smaller agricultural building measuring 18 x 25 metres, with a height of 8 metres. The current proposal would be significantly larger measuring 25.4 metres x 37 metres, with a height of 8.7 metres and it is this increase in size which is going to harm the Green Belt as indicated above. Therefore given the aforementioned, it is recommend that permission be refused.

Conclusions

Based on the information provided, the proposed building is considered to be excessive for the proposed activities on site and a smaller building would meet the current needs of the holding. Therefore by virtue of size, scale and position, the proposed building would represent an inappropriate form of development in the Green Belt. No very special circumstances exist or have been put forward to outweigh the harm that would be caused to the Green Belt and the purposes of including land within it and as such it is recommended that permission be refused.

RECOMMENDATION:

- (a) that permission be **REFUSED**

The proposed building is not reasonably required for the purposes of agriculture and at the current time the agricultural needs of the holding could be met by a much smaller building. Therefore by virtue of size, scale and position away from other agricultural buildings, the proposal would project as a dominant and obtrusive feature which would unduly harm the openness and visual amenities of the Green Belt, leading to further unnecessary erosion of the countryside. No very special circumstance have been submitted to the Local Planning Authority to outweigh the harm caused to the Green Belt and by virtue, would be contrary to policies QE1, QE2, QE3 of the West Midlands Spatial Strategy, policies SD.2, D.38, D.39, CTC.1 of the Worcestershire County Structure Plan, policies DS2, DS13, C4, C30A of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan, PPG2 - Green Belts, PPS7 Planning and the Countryside and SPG5 Agricultural Buildings and Design.

- (b) that Members authorise appropriate action to secure the removal of the unauthorised structure and delegate authority to the Head of Planning and Environment Services in consultation with the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services to select the most appropriate course of action.