

Report To: The Planning Board

Date: 2nd June 2021

**Report By: Interim Service Director
Environment and Economic Recovery**

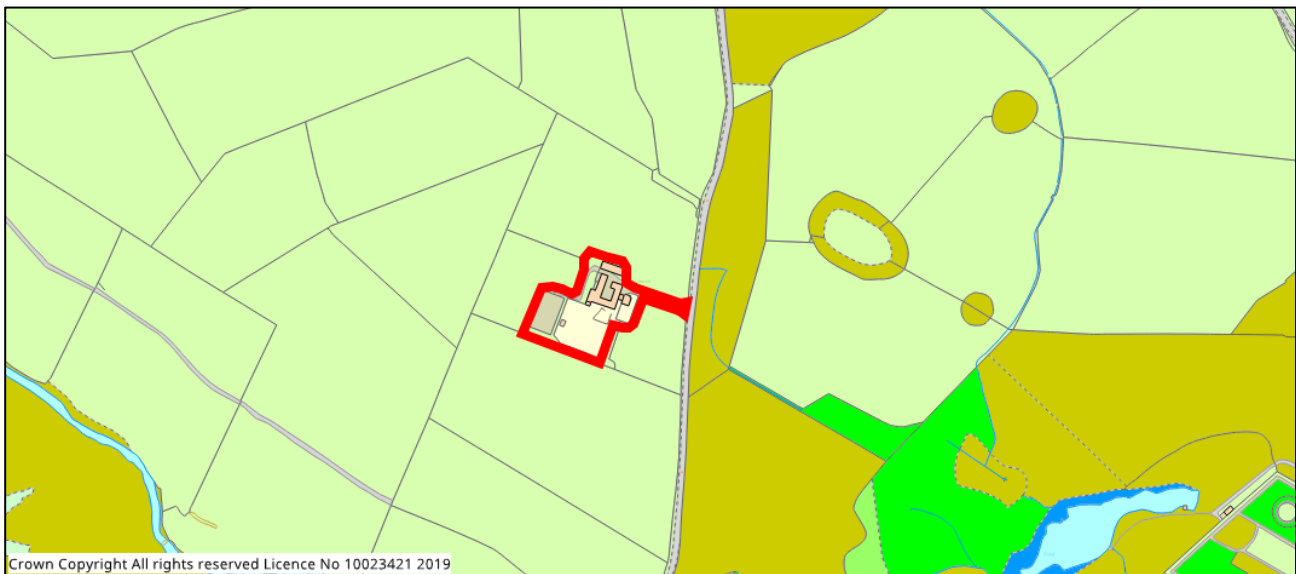
**Report No: 21/0071/IC
Plan 06/21**

**Local Application
Development**

Contact Officer: James McColl

Contact No: 01475 712462

**Subject: External alterations and change of use of former farm outbuildings to forge with associated office and storage accommodation (amendment to planning permissions 18/0140/IC and 20/0275/IC in respect the provision of a replacement building to accommodate the forge) at
Lawpark Farm, Stepends Road, Kilmacolm**



SUMMARY

- The proposal is contrary to the adopted Inverclyde Local Development Plan and the proposed Inverclyde Local Development Plan
- There is one representation, in support of the proposal
- The recommendation is to GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to a condition

Drawings may be viewed at:

<https://planning.inverclyde.gov.uk/Online/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=QPUW2LIMLCR00>

SITE DESCRIPTION

Situated on the western side of Stepends Road, approximately 0.8 of a mile to the south of Kilmacolm, the application site comprises the steading at Lawpark Farm. The steading is formed by a dwellinghouse and a series of outbuildings, one of which is a Dutch barn. The steading is set back from the road by around 75 metres and accessed via an asphalt driveway. Externally the buildings are finished in stone and a slate roof, with the Dutch barn being finished in corrugated sheeting. The site is surrounded by open farmland. The nearest neighbouring residential properties are at Stepends Cottages, approximately 360 metres to the south.

PROPOSAL

In March 2019, the Inverclyde Local Review Body granted planning permission for the use of the Dutch barn as a forge and the use part of an adjacent stone outbuilding to the north-western corner of the steading for associated storage and office accommodation, together with associated external alterations to the buildings. A previously demolished lean-to extension on the west gable of the barn would be reinstated to provide welfare facilities. In January 2021, an amendment to the proposal to provide an alternative office and display area together with a bothy within the existing buildings on the north-eastern side of the steading was granted planning permission.

It is now proposed to remove the existing Dutch barn and erect a replacement building in the same position to accommodate the forge. It will be designed with a mono-pitch roof to a height of around four metres and be finished externally in green metal cladding. A door and two windows will be provided to the south-western elevation facing the rest of the steading and a roller shutter door to the north-west gable. These doors and window frames will be coloured grey as will two flue and ventilation terminals to the roof. The building will have an external footprint of around 140 square metres.

The applicant has submitted a letter in support of the proposal.

ADOPTED 2019 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

Policy 1 - Creating Successful Places

Inverclyde Council requires all development to have regard to the six qualities of successful places. In preparing development proposals, consideration must be given to the factors set out in Figure 3. Where relevant, applications will also be assessed against the Planning Application Advice Notes Supplementary Guidance.

Policy 14 - Green Belt and Countryside

Development in the Green Belt and Countryside will only be permitted if it is appropriately designed, located, and landscaped, and is associated with:

- a) agriculture, horticulture, woodland or forestry;
- b) a tourism or recreational use that requires a countryside location;
- c) infrastructure with a specific locational need;
- d) the appropriate re-use of a redundant stone or brick building, the retention of which is desirable for its historic interest or architectural character, subject to that interest or character being retained; or
- e) intensification (including extensions and outbuildings) of an existing use, which is within the curtilage of the associated use and is of an appropriate scale and form.

Proposals associated with the uses set out in criteria a)-c) must provide justification as to why the development is required at the proposed location.

PROPOSED 2021 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

Policy 1 - Creating Successful Places

Inverclyde Council requires all development to have regard to the six qualities of successful places. In preparing and assessing development proposals, consideration must be given to the factors set out in Figure 2 and demonstrated in a design-led approach. Where relevant, applications will also be assessed against the Planning Application Advice Notes and Design Guidance for New Residential Development Supplementary Guidance. When assessing proposals for the development opportunities identified by this Plan, regard will also be had to the mitigation and enhancement measures set out in the Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report.

Policy 15 - Green Belt and Countryside

Development in the Green Belt and Countryside will only be permitted if it is appropriately designed, located, and landscaped, and is associated with:

- a) agriculture, horticulture, woodland or forestry;
- b) a tourism or recreational use that requires a countryside location;
- c) infrastructure with a specific locational need;
- d) the appropriate re-use of a redundant stone or brick building, the retention of which is desirable for its historic interest or architectural character, subject to that interest or character being retained; or
- e) intensification (including extensions and outbuildings) within the curtilage of an existing use, which is of an appropriate scale and form.

Proposals associated with the uses set out in criteria a)-c) must provide justification as to why the development is required at the proposed location. Proposals in the green belt must not undermine the objectives of the green belt as set out in Scottish Planning Policy and the Clydeplan Strategic Development Plan. Non-conforming uses will only be considered favourably in exceptional or mitigating circumstances.

CONSULTATIONS

None required.

PUBLICITY

The application was advertised in the Greenock Telegraph on 2nd April 2021 as there are no premises on neighbouring land and as the proposal is contrary to the Development Plan.

SITE NOTICES

The nature of the proposal did not require a site notice.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Kilmacolm Civic Trust has intimated its strong support for the proposal and notes the following points:

- The proposal is entirely acceptable.
- The design of the building and internal layout appear very practical.
- The external colouring will blend with the surrounding farmland.
- The farming community will benefit as will potential customers seeking handmade practical and ornamental items, or repairs to them.

ASSESSMENT

The material considerations in determination of this application are the 2019 adopted Inverclyde Local Development Plan, the 2021 proposed Inverclyde Local Development Plan, the visual impact, impact on wider amenity, the planning history of the site, the applicant's supporting letter and the representation received in support of the proposal.

As planning permission has already been granted for the forge and associated ancillary accommodation and as these planning permissions remains extant, the principle of the use at this Green Belt location with reference to Policy 14 of the adopted Local Development Plan and Policy 15 of the proposed Local Development Plan may not be revisited in determining this application. It therefore rests to consider the amendments to the original planning permission with reference to both the above policies together with Policy 1 of the adopted and proposed Plans. In this respect Policy 1 of both Plans requires all development to have regard to the six qualities of successful places. The relevant factors in respect of this development contributing to the qualities of successful places are being "Distinctive" in reflecting local architecture and urban form together with being "Adaptable" and "Resource Efficient" in making use of and adapting existing buildings for a new use. Policy 14 of the adopted Plan and Policy 15 of the proposed Plan advise that development in the Green Belt and Countryside will only be permitted if it is appropriately designed, located, and landscaped, and is associated with one of five criteria. Criterion (e) of both Plans relates to the intensification of an existing use of an appropriate scale and form within the same curtilage. Policy 15 of the proposed Plan additionally permits development in exceptional or mitigating circumstances.



View from Stepends Road

The applicant advises that since the previous granting of planning permission it has become apparent that the structure of the existing Dutch barn is not capable of being converted for the new use due to it being weak and due to the requirements of the Building Regulations. It is therefore now proposed to replace the building with a new structure. The applicant goes on to advise that it is no longer possible to purchase a new building of a Dutch barn style from suppliers and it would require to be a purpose designed building which is not financially feasible. Accordingly, an alternative design is proposed and it is considered that this mono-pitched shed will be in keeping with both the character of the steading and the rural location.

The steading at Lawpark Farm is set back around 75 metres from Stepends Road. I noted during a site visit that whilst the existing Dutch barn is clearly visible from the road, the position and topography does not result in it being a dominant feature within the landscape. It also views as a subsidiary feature to the other buildings within the steading. If the existing planning permission was

implemented, the open side of the barn would be infilled with cement fibre cladding and include a large roller door to the south-western elevation facing towards the rest of the steading. The alternative building now proposed not only has a smaller footprint than the existing building, it is also lower. I therefore consider that a lesser visual impact would result than if the existing planning permission was implemented. A variety of buildings are found within other farm steadings within the wider countryside and I consider the design to be acceptable in this context. Green is also an appropriate colour for the external cladding and the final shade can be controlled by condition. I therefore consider that the building is appropriately designed and located. No additional landscaping is considered necessary. Whilst the proposal does not accord with Policy 14 of the adopted Plan, I am mindful that if the original planning permission had been implemented and the use was now in operation, the current proposal would constitute the intensification of an existing use of an appropriate scale and form within the same curtilage. In this circumstance, this would be acceptable with reference to Policy 14 (criterion (e)) of the adopted Plan. Policy 15 of the proposed Plan takes the same position and additionally permits development in exceptional or mitigating circumstances. I consider that the circumstances surrounding the planning history of the site together with the extant planning permission combine to comprise mitigating circumstances allowing support for the proposal.

Turning to other material considerations, as was the case at the time of the original planning application, parking associated with the forge use of the site can be accommodated within the existing farm steading. The nearest neighbouring residential properties are at Stepends Cottages, approximately 360 metres to the south, and I do not consider there to be any additional potential to impact on residential amenity within the rural area. It was not previously considered that the proposed conversion works to the building, which is a single skinned, open sided, corrugated sheet building, raised any concerns regarding potential impact on European Protected Species or other ecology. Whilst the proposal will now result in the replacement of the building, there is nothing that leads me to conclude differently.

In conclusion, the principle of a forge at this Green Belt location is established by the previous granting of planning permission. If the original planning permission had been implemented and the use in operation, the current proposal would constitute the intensification of an existing use of an appropriate scale and form within the same curtilage. This would be acceptable with reference to (criterion (e)) of both Policy 14 of the adopted Plan and Policy 15 of the proposed Plan. Given these circumstances, a departure from Policy 14 of the adopted Local Development Plan can therefore be justified. I am also satisfied that the revised arrangement is acceptable with reference to Policy 1 of both Plans. Planning permission should therefore be granted subject to the condition set out below.

RECOMMENDATION

That the application be granted subject to the following condition:

1. That prior to use on site, details of the exact colour shade and specification of the external cladding to the building hereby permitted shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. Works shall then proceed as approved unless otherwise first agreed in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reason

1. To ensure the colour and specification are appropriate for the rural location, in the interests of visual amenity.

Stuart W Jamieson
Interim Service Director
Environment and Economic Recovery

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 – Background Papers. For further information please contact James McColl on 01475 712462.