

Item No 06:-

17/04930/FUL

**Priory Court
Poulton
Gloucestershire
GL7 5JB**

Item No 06:-**Erection of a single storey cafe building at Priory Court Poulton Gloucestershire
GL7 5JB**

Full Application 17/04930/FUL	
Applicant:	Priory Court Estates
Agent:	Eric Cole Ltd
Case Officer:	Adrian Walker
Ward Member(s):	Councillor David Fowles
Committee Date:	14th February 2018
RECOMMENDATION:	PERMIT

Main Issues:

- (a) Principle of development
- (b) Design/ Impact on the Natural Environment
- (c) Amenity
- (d) Highway safety and Parking Provision

Reasons for Referral:

Cllr Fowles agrees with the objections raised by the Parish Council.

1. Site Description:

The site in question is part of the established Poulton Court Business Park and is currently an area of car parking. The land is not subject to specific landscape or other national planning designations.

2. Relevant Planning History:

05/00041/FUL: Erection of additional office accommodation. Refused 11.02.2005

00.00789: The change of use and alteration of existing agricultural buildings to B1 (business) use. Permitted 22.06.2000

99.01936: Change of use of existing cattle buildings (redundant) for B1 use. Permitted 16.12.1999

95.01721: Revisions to scheme previously approved under reference CT.0946/F (change of use of redundant buildings to B1 and there-roofing of Barns 5 & 6). Permitted 27.12.1995

94.01944: Change of use of redundant buildings to B1. Re-roof barns 5 and 6 with roofing tiles - Cotswold colour. Permitted 15.12.1994

3. Planning Policies:

NPPF National Planning Policy Framework
LPR24 Employment Uses
LPR25 Vitality & Viability of Settlements
LPR38 Accessibility to & within New Develop
LPR39 Parking Provision

LPR42 Cotswold Design Code
LPR45 Landscaping in New Development

4. Observations of Consultees:

N/A

5. View of Town/Parish Council:

The Parish Council objects to the application on the following grounds:

- Location
- Design
- Visibility
- Light pollution
- Loss of parking
- Disturbance
- Impact on the village shop

6. Other Representations:

No representations have been received as of 23/01/2018.

7. Applicant's Supporting Information:

Design Access and Transport Statement

8. Officer's Assessment:

(a) Principle of development

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that: 'If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.' The starting point for the consideration of this development is therefore the current development plan for the District which is the Cotswold District Local Plan 2001-2011 (existing Local Plan).

The proposal involves the creation of a café for use primarily by occupants of the business park however it will also be available for use by the general public. The café building would be single storey and measure 8.5m x 4.3m and the café floorspace would be 28m sq.

The site is currently used as car parking and in this respect it can be considered previously developed (brownfield) land. Although the car park has not formally been granted planning permission it has been in place for over 10 years and there is permitted through virtue of time. One of the core planning principles in the NPPF is to encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed, provided that it is not of high environmental value. This particular site is considered not to be of high environmental value due the existing use as a car park. The fact that the site is previously developed land weighs in favour of the proposal.

The NPPF and Policy 24 (Employment Uses) of the Local Plan seek to protect existing employment uses and promote economic growth. Emerging Local Plan Policy EC1 promotes development that addresses local needs and ensures the vitality of the rural economy however Policy EC3 requires existing established employment sites to be retained for B Class employment uses unless there is no reasonable prospect of the site being used for employment purposes. The rationale behind the proposed development has been explained in the supporting documentation which demonstrates a lack of available facilities to support the existing Business Park within the local area and promote sustainability.

Policy 32 of the Local Plan seeks to protect community facilities such as village shops. Concerns have been raised by the Parish Council regarding the impact of the proposed café on the village shop. The proposed café will provide a different offering to the village shop. The result of a tenant survey of the business park concluded that 73% of tenants do not make any purchases from the shop as they consider it unsuitable for their needs. It is considered that the proposed café would be a complementary use to the village shop and reduce the number of tenants that have to leave the village to access similar services.

Ultimately, the proposal would contribute towards one of the NPPF's principal aims of sustainable development and boosting the economy by ensuring the success of the Business Park. Having regards to the principles of Policy 24, emerging Policies EC1, EC2 and the NPPF, the proposal to provide a café in within the Business Park is acceptable in principle. However, there are other material considerations that need to be taken into account, which will be looked at in the following sections of this report.

(b) Design/ Impact on the Natural Environment

Section 7 of the NPPF makes it clear that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.

Policy 42 of the existing Local Plan requires that development should be environmentally sustainable and designed in a manner than respects the character, appearance and local distinctiveness of the Cotswold District with regard to style, setting, harmony, street scene, proportion, simplicity, materials and craftsmanship.

Policy 45 of the existing Local Plan requires high standards of appropriate landscaping in all developments and any attractive, existing landscape features, such as trees, hedgerows and other wildlife habitats should be retained and integrated into all landscaping schemes.

Officers consider the proposals to be modest in scale constructed from appropriate materials. The building will be softened by the proposed boundary planting which will help the building blend into the existing setting of the business park. The location of the café, within the existing car park, minimises the impact of the development on the surrounding countryside. It is considered that the proposed café building would not detract from the existing character and appearance of the area. The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with Cotswold District Local Plan Policy 42 and Section 7 of the NPPF.

(c) Amenity

Cotswold District Local Plan Policy 46 (Residential Amenity) states that the design and layout of new development should ensure reasonable privacy and daylight to neighbouring residents. Policy 5 of the Cotswold District Local Plan sets out the policy seeking to ensure development does not result pollution or safety hazards.

Given the application site is surrounded by the existing Business Park and open countryside with the nearest neighbouring dwelling located over 100m to the west, it is not considered that the proposal will lead to any loss of privacy or daylight or likely to cause significant pollution, smell or noise nuisance. A condition will be placed on the permission to restrict the hours of opening from 7am-6pm Monday to Sunday which will prevent any use of the café outside the normal operational hours of the Business Park. As such, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policies 5 and 46 of the Local Plan, and Section 7 of the NPPF and is acceptable in respect of any potential impact on neighbouring living conditions.

(d) Highway safety and Parking Provision

Section 4 of the NPPF advocates sustainable transport, including safe and suitable accesses to all sites for all people. However, it also makes it clear that development should only be prevented or refused on highway safety grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of that development are severe. Local Plan Policy 38 also seeks to ensure sustainable and safe access to new development; whereas Policy 39 seeks to secure vehicle parking that takes account of the proposed use, its scale and location, its existing and potential accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport, and the proximity and capacity of any existing off-street public parking.

The site currently has 154 marked parking spaces and an additional 30 in the overflow car park; this significantly exceeds the maximum parking standards as set out in appendix 9 of the Local Plan for the Business Park.

The application states however that approximately 150 of the marked bays are used on a day to day basis. This leaves 4 marked bays in the main car park and the whole of the overflow car park for visitors.

The proposed café would result in the loss of approximately 5 of the 30 spaces in the overflow car park. The parking standards as set out in appendix 9 of the Local Plan for a café of 28m sq would be 1 which would be easily accommodated in the overflow car park.

The loss of a minimal number of car parking spaces is considered acceptable given the overflow nature of the car park and the amount of spaces remaining for visitors. The proposal supports the sustainability of the site by reducing dependency on the car.

As such, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policies 38 and 39 of the Local Plan, and Section 4 of the NPPF and is acceptable in respect of any potential impact on neighbouring living conditions.

9. Conclusion:

The application is considered to be in accordance with National and Local Policies and it is recommended that planning permission should be granted.

10. Proposed conditions:

The development shall be started by 3 years from the date of this decision notice.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

The development hereby approved shall be implemented in accordance with the following drawing number(s):

Reason: For purposes of clarity and for the avoidance of doubt, in accordance with paragraphs 203 and 206 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

The oak shall not be treated in any way and shall be left to weather and silver naturally and shall be permanently retained as such thereafter.

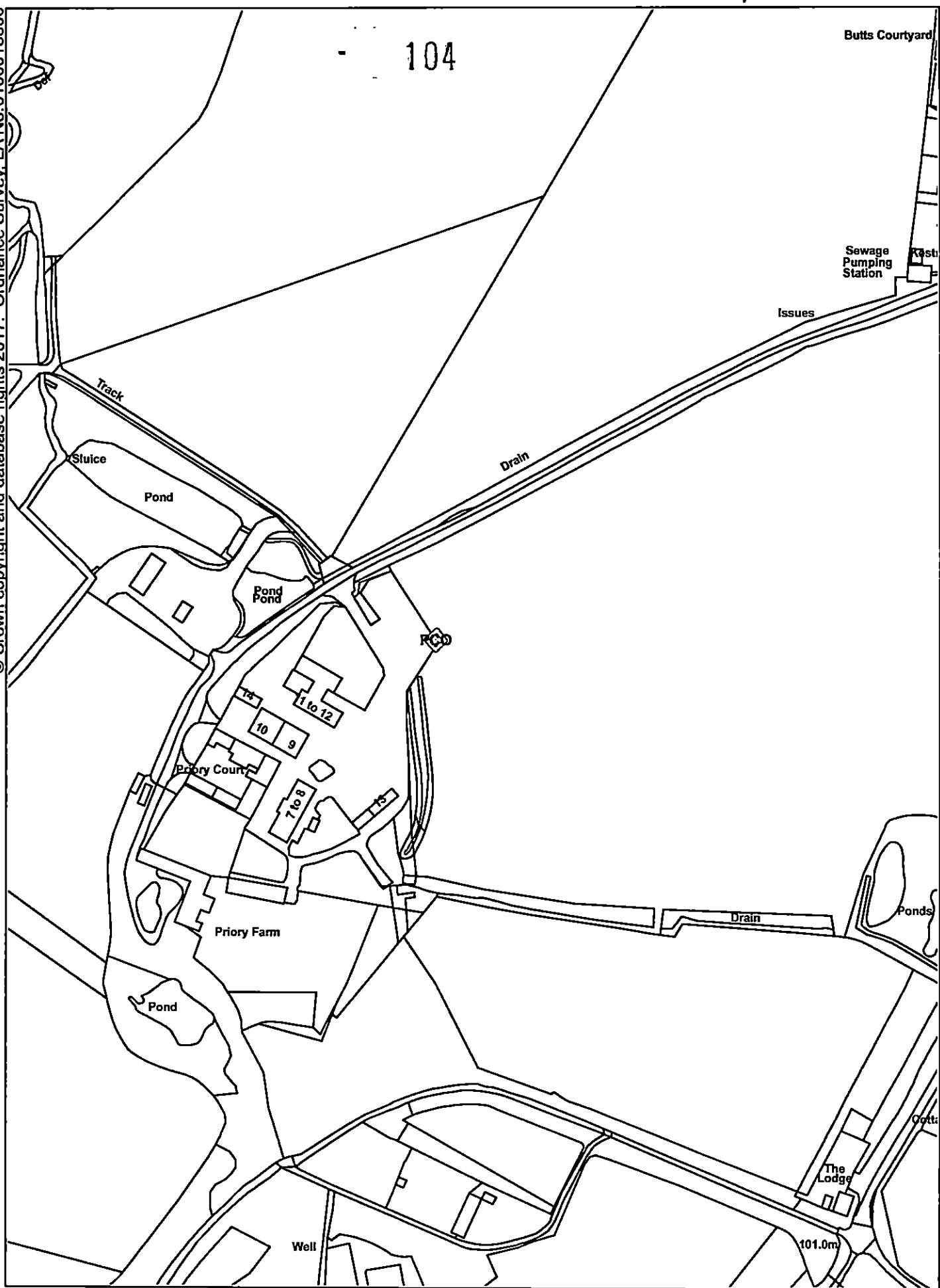
Reason: To ensure the development is completed in a manner sympathetic to the site and its surroundings in accordance with Cotswold District Local Plan.

The use hereby permitted shall not be open to customers outside the following times 7am to 6pm Monday to Sunday.

Reason: To protect the amenity of the locality, especially for people living and/or working nearby, in accordance with Cotswold District Local Plan Policy 5 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

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COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

PRIORY COURT POULTON

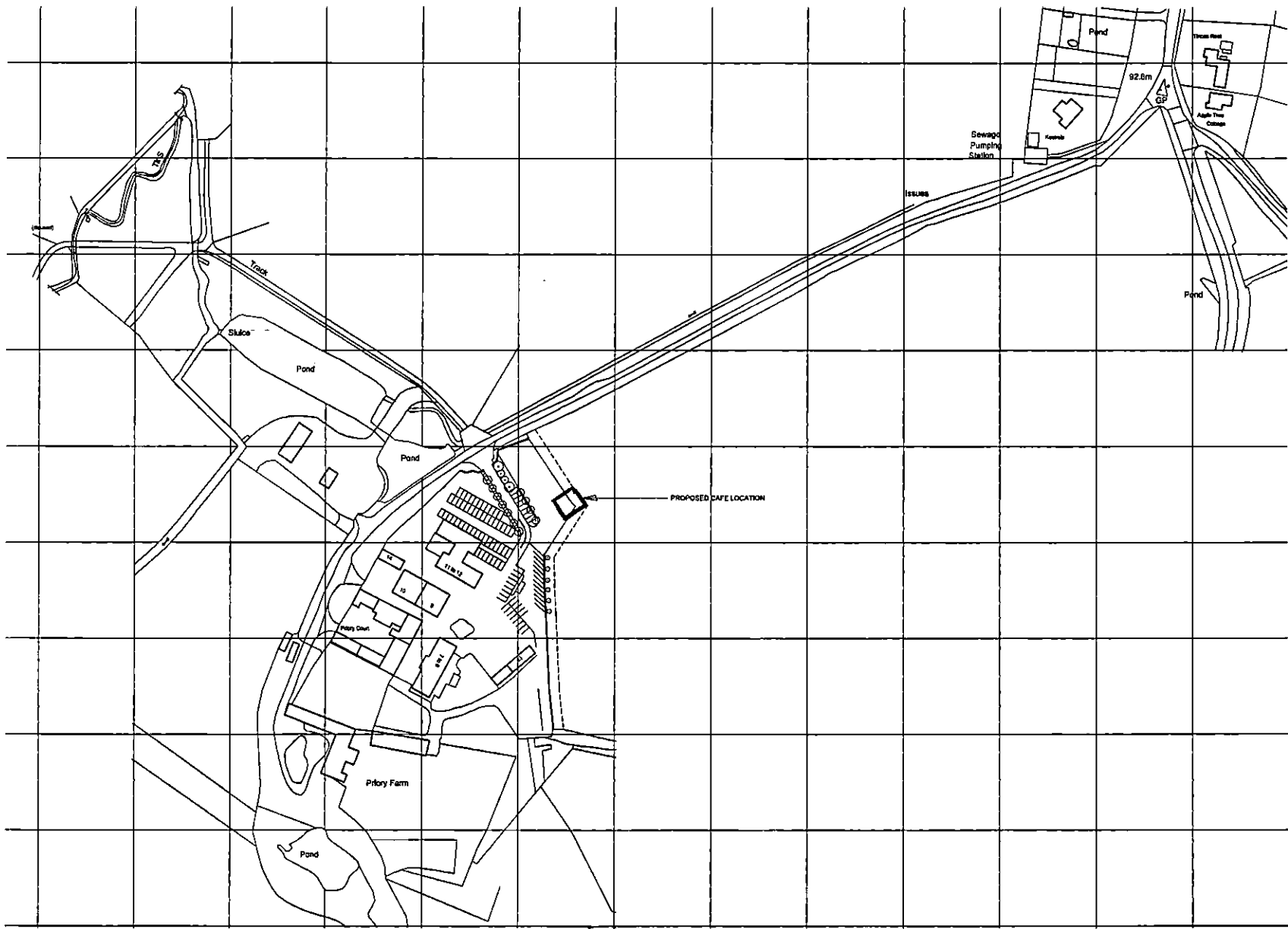
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Department:

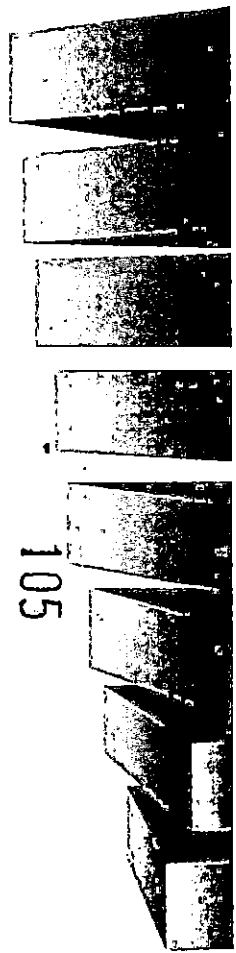
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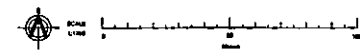
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PROJ. NO.	PRIGRY COURT CAFE		
DWG. TITLE	LOCATION PLAN		
SCALE	1:2500A1	ISSUED BY	Eric Cole
DWG. NO.	17.029.01	REV.	A DATE NOV 07



Priory Court, Poulton

Design, Access & Transport Statement

Proposal:

- Erection of a café building at Priory Court, Poulton.

Site Description:

- The site is part of the established Priory Court Business Park, and currently an area of overflow car parking.

Site Designations:

- The site is not within the Cotswold AONB
- The site is not within the Poulton Conservation Area.
- The site is not within 50 metres of a listed building or scheduled monument.

Specifics:

- There is a demonstrable need for the provision of hot and cold snacks, sandwiches and drinks.
- Currently tenants have to travel outside of the village to access such services.
- The preferred solution is to erect a café adjacent to the extant car park.
- The proposed building is a modern, high quality pre-fabricated structure.
- Over a period of time sufficient data would be gathered to establish precisely what sort of products and services, opening hours and overall capacity is best suited to meet the needs of the tenants.

Form & Materials:

The proposed temporary structure is a modest, single storey, flat roofed building which will have minimal massing and impact. It is clad in natural timber which identifies it as an ancillary structure, suitable for the rural context.

Since submitting the pre-application enquiry the building has been slightly increased in length in order to include toilet facilities for staff and visitors. The overall design remains the same and this has not increased the scale of the proposal.

Use:

The café is to provide snacks and drinks for the tenants of Priory Court and their visitors.

Location & Siting:

The proposed location for the building makes it easily identifiable from both the entrance of the site, and from the adjacent commercial units. It is separated from the commercial units to avoid adjacent tenants being disturbed by the activity that will surround the café.

The building is sited within the existing gravel car park and has been designed to provide views across the site to the west, and across the fields to the east.

The gravel overflow car park is used for visitor parking and so makes an ideal location for the café as it provides a focal point where tenants can meet their visitors for coffee.

Existing Services:

In order to demonstrate that a café is a viable proposition in this location we have assessed the available facilities in surrounding areas.

Your Village Shop:

- “Your Village Shop” is the only shop in Poulton and stocks the following:
 - newspapers and magazines, greetings cards, stationery, snacks, medicines, confectionary, frozen food, soft drinks, household products, ice creams, wines, spirits, fresh fruit and vegetables. Our milk, bread, eggs, jams, marmalades, home-made cakes.
- It is a 15 minute walk from Priory Court.
- It is a 3 minute drive from Priory Court, and parking is limited to roadside or the small area of hardstanding directly outside the shop.
- The shop is open daily from 8:30am until 5:30pm
- The shop does not serve hot food or drinks.

The Falcon Inn:

- “The Falcon Inn” is the only public house in Poulton.
- It has a lunchtime menu priced at £13:00 for 2 courses, or £16 for 3 courses.
- The Inn is a 15 minute walk from Priory Court.
- The inn is a 3 minute drive from Priory Court, and has a dedicated customer car park, but with limited spaces.
- The Inn is closed on Mondays, but open for lunch Tuesday – Saturday 12-3pm.

Down Ampney Village Shop:

- The Down Ampney Village shop is an 8 minute drive from Priory Court.
- Travelling to the shop on foot is an unfeasible 49 minute walk.
- The shop has a wide range of products.
- There is a café serving reasonably priced hot snacks, sandwiches and hot drinks, cakes pastries and ice creams.
- The shop and café is open 8:30 – 12:30pm on Mondays and Fridays, and 8:30 – 4:30pm on Tuesday – Thursday.
- The location offers parking.

Supermarkets:

- The nearest supermarket is the Co-op in Fairford, which is a 10 minute drive.
- The Co-op has no dedicated parking, visitors must park in the marketplace.
- At peak times, such as lunchtime parking on the marketplace is problematic.
- Cirencester offers a full range of services including the largest supermarkets with dedicated car parks, and is a 13 minute drive from Priory Court.

Summary of Surrounding Facilities:

- The only services that can be reached on foot are the village shop and the Falcon Inn.
- Within a typical lunch hour 30 minutes would be spent walking, leaving little time to purchase and consume any food.
- The Falcon is prohibitively expensive, and the shop is only suitable for an occasional snack.
- Therefore there are no feasible lunch options that could be used on a daily basis, within walking distance of Priory Court.
- As a result, tenants tend to travel by car to access services.
- Surrounding services do not open every day of the week. The Down Ampney shop and café closes before lunchtime 2 days a week.
- Therefore to access a suitable range of lunch options tenants are required to leave the site and travel a minimum of 10 minutes by car.

Tenant Survey:

The current tenants on site were sent a questionnaire asking for their comments on the site facilities, and how they use and access local services.

Regarding "The Local Village Shop"

- 27% of tenants visit the local village shop regularly.
- Those who visit the village shop purchase only office supplies, milk, bread and biscuits.
- Those who visit the village shop consider it unsuitable for purchasing lunch.
- 73% of tenants do not make any purchases from the village shop.
- Those who do not make any purchases from the village shop consider it unsuitable for their needs.

Regarding the Falcon:

- The cost of lunch at the inn is prohibitively expensive for regular use.
- The 15 minute walk leaves insufficient time to order and receive hot food.
- The falcon is only suitable for occasional use, and only a viable option if travelling by car.

Accessing services in other towns & villages:

- 53% of tenants regularly travel by car to Cirencester to access hot food and drinks.
- 20% of tenants regularly travel by car to Fairford to access hot food and drinks.
- 4% of tenants regularly travel by car to Down Ampney to access hot food and drinks.
- 23% of tenants do not know where to go for hot food and drinks, and rely on bringing their own food and drinks to site.

Regarding the use of an on-site café:

- 97% of tenants said that they would regularly use an on-site café.

Survey Summary:

- 73% of tenants do not use any services within Poulton.
- 77% of tenants regularly travel out of Poulton by car to access food and drinks.
- 97% of tenants would use an on-site café.

The research indicates that the vast majority of tenants are not only having to leave the site, but also the village in order to access basic services.

Provision of an on-site café serving hot and cold sandwiches, snacks, drinks and small meals would allow 97% of tenants to remain on site throughout their working day, and not have to travel outside of the village.

As all tenants travel to site by car, and 77% of them regularly leave the site at some point during the day, the café would reduce car trips to and from the site by 43%.

Policy Review:**Cotswold District Local Plan Policies:**

Policy 24 – Employment Uses
 Policy 25 – Vitality and Viability of Settlements
 Policy 24 – Employment Uses
 Policy 38 – Accessibility to and within New Development
 Policy 39 – Parking Provision
 Policy 42 – Cotswold District Design Code
 Policy 45 – Landscaping in New Development

The policies above were confirmed to be relevant to this proposal. The feedback from the pre-application enquiry confirms that subject to providing additional information on parking and landscaping, the proposal would be in accordance with these policies.

Emerging Local Plan:

Submission Draft Regulation 19 of the emerging local plan 2011-2031 hasn't yet been adopted and so the policies within it can only be afforded limited weight. However there is clear support for a facility such as this.

The most relevant policy area is economic development, specifically policies EC1, EC2 and EC3 which deal with safeguarding and supporting the growth of existing employment sites.

As Priory court is an existing employment site these policies require that it be safeguarded. The proposal meets a local need and serves to reduce car-borne commuting. By providing this necessary facility the requirement to retain or grow local employment opportunities has been met.

The NPPF:

The pre-application advice received confirms that the proposal is acceptable in principle under the NPPF.

Transport & Parking Considerations:

Number of Business Units	13
Typical Site Occupancy	150 people (variable)
Existing Marked Parking Bays	154
Overflow Parking Capacity	30 (estimated – no marked bays)

- The site has sufficient marked bays for the current occupancy. As there are only 4 marked bays remaining, a small shift in the number of employees in one or more of the businesses on site would see the formal parking reach capacity.
- The overflow car park has not been formalised as it is currently only required for visitors to the site. Under normal conditions the overflow parking area contains 5 or less vehicles.
- We estimate that the space taken up by the proposed café would result in the loss of 5 standard 2.4m wide parking bays, if the area were to be formalised and depending on the selected parking layout.
- Therefore the proposed café would not have a detrimental impact on the current parking provision.
- If the site occupancy or demand for visitor parking were to increase above current levels, the overflow parking would be capable of coping with an additional 20 vehicles before parking became an issue.
- The additional 5 spaces that could be provided by the area occupied by the proposed café is considered negligible in terms of current and future parking needs.

Summary:

The above confirms that sufficient parking would remain to accommodate the users of the business park.

Landscaping:

The café will occupy one corner of an existing car park, overlooking both the business use to the west and the agricultural fields to the east. The character of this area is relatively level with grass verges and ornamental trees which border the site, and mark out key features.

It was considered that any attempt to screen the building with dense planting would only highlight the location of the café as it would be incongruous, result in a loss of natural light to the building and block key views.

Therefore the proposed landscaping shown on the site plan is a continuation of the existing line of trees that border the site. This will soften views of the building from outside the site, whilst retaining views out across the landscape from within it.

In addition, a range of moveable planters will be used to define the area allocated to the café. These currently have no fixed location or specification as the intention is to allow the arrangement to develop organically with the use of the building.

Summary:

1. The policy review and pre-application advice confirms that the proposal is acceptable in principle, subject to further information on parking and landscaping.
2. The parking assessment confirms that after the construction of the café, sufficient parking for the users of the business park would remain.
3. A continuation of the existing landscaping has been proposed to integrate the building into the site, and soften views of the building from the public realm.
4. The need for the cafe has been confirmed by the tenant surveys.
5. The current lack of facilities causes an unnecessary level of car-borne travelling which the proposal will significantly reduce.

After thorough investigation of all the relevant issues and consulting CDC officers on the proposal, it is felt that proposed café at the Priory Court Business Park is a viable and supportable scheme.

Eric Cole LTD.