

PROFESSIONAL DEPARTMENTS *News*

SPRING 2020

PLANNING • RURAL • PROFESSIONAL



New £6.9million business centre supports growth in Market Harborough

► With building work now complete, Andrew Granger & Co Ltd is very happy to be working on behalf of Harborough District Council to manage the lettings at the new Harborough Grow-on Centre.

The commercial grow on space, based at the Compass Point Business Park, follows the success of the Innovation Centre which Harborough District Council developed and opened in 2011, to provide office space for new businesses.

Having been built to BREEAM Excellent standards, the environmentally friendly features combine with quality facilities to provide ideal modern workspaces.

The 19,000 sq. ft. building offers a range of office suites from 500-2,100 sq. ft. with flexibility to meet varying business demands.



Kevin Skipworth, Chartered Surveyor for Andrew Granger & Co Ltd, said: "It's a great start to the new year now that the Harborough Grow-on Centre is finished and welcoming new tenants.

"We are delighted to be acting as the agent for the offices, working alongside Harborough District Council at this superb new facility.

"It's a perfect opportunity for established, growing businesses that are looking for more space in brand new surroundings, that have been built to high environmental standards."

Tenants at Harborough Grow-on Centre can also benefit from the business support offered to companies by Harborough District Council, and employees of companies based at the centre can enjoy discounts at the nearby Harborough Leisure Centre.

The project was funded by Harborough District Council with support from the European Regional Development Fund and the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership.

For further information regarding letting an office within the Harborough Grow-on Centre please contact Andrew Granger & Co Ltd commercial department on **0116 242 9933**. The brochure is available online at tiny.cc/5k2wjz.

WELCOME

► We are delighted to bring you the latest news from our professional departments who handle our commercial, planning and development, rural, survey and valuation and professional services.

The newsletter enables us to give you an insight into the projects we have worked on recently and the range of services that we can assist you with.

With kind regards,
Andrew Robinson, Rupert Harrison and Stephen Mair
Directors of Professional Departments at Andrew Granger & Co.

If you need any further information, please don't hesitate to get in touch on:

Commercial – 0116 242 9933

Planning - 01858 439090

Professional – 0116 242 9933

Rural – 01509 243720



Planning and development case study

► A residential development site with planning consent secured by our Planning & Development team for 175 dwellings within the Green Belt, on the edge of Ruddington in Nottinghamshire, has recently been sold in a multi-million-pound deal to a national housebuilder.

In 2016, the Planning & Development team prepared and submitted an outline planning application to Rushcliffe Borough Council. Experts in technical matters including highways, drainage, ecology, landscape and visual impact, noise and archaeology were engaged by the team to assist in preparing the application.

The application was refused by Rushcliffe Borough Council in April 2017 for three reasons relating to planning policy, highways impact and noise impact.

On behalf of the client, the Planning & Development team submitted and co-ordinated a Planning Appeal against the Council's decision with a 4-day Public Inquiry held in April 2018. Prior to the Public Inquiry, the team successfully worked with Planning Officers to appropriately overcome the Council's noise impact reason for refusal.

In determining the appeal, the Planning Inspector irrefutably supported the case put forward by the team in respect of the very special circumstances that would justify the development within the Green Belt, and that the proposal would not result in severe cumulative impacts on the local highway network. The Inspector concluded:

'In conclusion, there would clearly be harm to the Green Belt by inappropriateness, loss of openness and some incursion into the countryside to the south of the village. But such harm would be minimal in terms of the five purposes of the Green Belt set out in the NPPF and the criteria in Core Strategy Policy 4. The harm would be less than that created by the development of the Council's preferred sites, which in themselves attest to the need to develop Green Belt sites on the edge of Ruddington. There is no other harm that would arise from the proposed development, given my conclusion that it would not result in severe residual cumulative impacts on the local highway network.'



An illustrative layout of the proposed development

For these reasons, not only would the scheme accord with the development plan as a whole, but the balance of material considerations also weighs in its favour. Consequently, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed subject to conditions.'

Following the Appeal Decision, the Planning & Development team successfully achieved planning permission for an alternative site access, which was assessed to provide a higher potential site value for the landowner client.

The site was marketed at the end of 2018 as a development opportunity with the benefit of planning permission. A Sales Information Pack

was sent directly to developers with tender offers invited for the site. We received multiple offers from a range of national housebuilders, which were reviewed with the client and we then subsequently held interviews with a selected group of bidders. Following these interviews, we reviewed the best bids with the client, who selected their preferred purchaser.

The team then co-ordinated expert solicitors to draw up the appropriate legal agreements and worked with the national housebuilder to address the conditions of their offer, including reviewing any suggested deductions from the land value. The sale of the site was formally completed in February 2020.

► Prior to the Public Inquiry, the team successfully worked with Planning Officers to appropriately overcome the Council's noise impact reason for refusal.

If you need any help or guidance regarding a planning or development project please get in touch with us on 01858 439090 or alternatively you can find more information here <https://www.andrewgranger.co.uk/pages/planning-and-development2>

How the Agriculture and Environment Bills will affect British agriculture and the environment

► Whatever your views on Brexit, 2020 is shaping up to be a year of monumental change for British agriculture and the environment as EU rules are replaced with domestic legislation.

In mid-January the Government brought the Agriculture Bill back to Parliament and, at the time of writing, the Bill has passed its second reading and is heading for the committee stage.

The Agriculture Bill makes clear the Government's shift in focus to more "green" policies alongside improved productivity.

The main elements are: -

- Seven-year transition period during which Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) direct payments are phased out
- A new system of payments for public goods
- Improved transparency in the food chain

BPS payments will begin to reduce in 2021 with 2027 being the final year of payment under the scheme.

There is the likelihood that payments could be delinked from land occupation sometime after 2022 meaning that farmers can change their operations or even retire and still receive the remaining payment.

The Agriculture Bill will give the Government powers to "provide financial assistance" for a range of environmental purposes. These include managing land/water in a way that protects or improves the environment.

Protecting and improving soil is also a new addition to the list.

These powers are likely to be used to deliver the new Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMS).

The Bill also contains proposed changes to Agricultural Holdings Act tenancies including



removing the current bar on retirement succession applications to the Tribunal where the tenant is younger than 65 and changes to the Commercial Unit and Suitability tests for succession applications.

Hard on the heels of the Agriculture Bill, the Environment Bill was brought back to Parliament on 30th January.

With high level aims linked to climate change the Environment Bill will have an impact on farming and on wider land management through the creation of a new governance framework for the environment.

As these two Bills progress through Parliament there should be further detail on the impacts and effects.

It is essential that all farming businesses reflect on how these changes will impact on them and consider what changes they will need to make.

If you would like advice on how these Bills may affect you, please get in touch with the rural team on **01509 243720**.

Realising value vs Increasing income

► When a long-standing Agricultural Holdings Act (AHA) tenant gave notice to surrender his tenancy on a farm in Harborough in 2019, Andrew Granger & Co's client, the landlord, had two options - A) realise the value of the holding and sell the farm or B) re-let the farm on modern day tenancies and increase the income gained.

Andrew Robinson, Director of the Professional team at Andrew Granger & Co, advised the latter. The plan was clear - to divide the farm into separate tenancies and achieve stronger market value rents.

We began by running a tender process for the agricultural land, a total of 260 acres. Within a few weeks, we had successfully re-let the land to two local and reputable farmers on Farm Business Tenancies (FBT).

At the same time, we let the orchard, a small amount of grazing land and the farmhouse on separate lets. The total re-let equated to more than doubling the previous rental income across five new tenants.

Even then there was still a bonus for our client, the landlord. We advised them to retain the

farmyard which included several traditional red brick barns, suitable for Class Q conversion.

The client is now in a position where they can increase the value of their holding by completing the barn conversions themselves or alternatively, they could sell the collection of barns for which the property market has a strong demand for.

The overall outcome was that within three months the rental income was doubled and more secure as there were five tenants rather than one, and there was a retained farmyard with excellent residential conversion potential for the future.

If you would like the help or advice of our Professional team, please get in touch on **0116 242 9933**.



Comment by **Rupert Harrison**, Head of Rural and Director at Andrew Granger & Co.

Have you considered Countryside Stewardship on your farm?

► Countryside stewardship pays farmers and landowners incentives for improving and maintaining environmental goods around the farm. This includes, but is not limited to; margins, hedgerow management, cover crops, taking small areas out of management, low input grassland etc. A lot of the options are easy to slot into existing farm systems or may already be in place now.

There are different types of agreements:

MID-TIER

- Mid-Tier offers a range of land options which can be selected alongside capital items.
- Farms within high priority water quality areas are able to apply for water capital items to improve water quality such as resurfacing of gateways, roofing, livestock troughs, livestock and machinery hardcore tracks etc.

WILDLIFE OFFERS

- This package is a simplified version of mid-tier and can be applied for online. There are a range of offers to choose from (arable, lowland grazing, mixed farming and upland), each of which only have a select few land options to choose from. There are no capital items included with these applications.



With Basic Payment Scheme payments reducing from 2021, a countryside stewardship agreement may help to replace some of this income. The agreements are five years long and any capital items within the agreement must be carried out in the first two years. Agreements applied for this year will commence on 1st January 2021. With our clients having successful applications in 2019 we are happy to assist you with Countryside Stewardship applications in 2020. Get in touch with our rural department for more information.

Countryside Stewardship is open to applicants from February 11th with the deadline for applications being 31st July 2020. The rural team can be contacted on **01509 243720**.

Farmland for sale

More land available – please see our website or call the Rural Department on **01509 243720**.



► LAND AT HALLATON, LEICESTERSHIRE

282 acres **GUIDE PRICE: £2,500,000**



► LAND AT COLD OVERTON ROAD, LANGHAM

57.92 acres **GUIDE PRICE: £490,000**



► LAND AT NORTH ROAD, NORTH MUSKHAM

103.66 acres **GUIDE PRICE: £875,000**

► Leicester Office

0116 242 9933

► Loughborough Office

01509 243720

► Market Harborough Office

01858 439090



Disclaimer: Whilst we have taken every care in compiling the content of this newsletter some errors and omissions may occur. Andrew Granger & Co. reserves the right to amend any information should it be deemed necessary.

