

**WA/2021/02308** – Erection of cattle finishing unit. at Land South Of Dunsfold Road And East Of High Loxley Road Godalming GU8 4BW

Applicant: Mr Ashley Ward - Farmers Direct Ltd c/o White & Sons  
Parish: Dunsfold CP  
Ward: Chiddingfold and Dunsfold  
Grid Reference: E: 501942  
N: 137277  
Case Officer: Tracy Farthing  
Neighbour Notification Expiry Date: 14/10/2021  
Expiry Date/Extended Expiry Date: 16/11/2021  
Committee Meeting Date: Eastern 12/01/2022

RECOMMENDATION That, subject to conditions, permission be  
**GRANTED**

1. Summary

The application has been brought before the Area Committee at the request of Councillor Deanus, owing to the objection from the Parish Council and the level of concern both in terms of the proposed use and the location of the development, the justification for the proposal being called into question and the site being overlooked by the AONB and falling within an AGLV.

The site falls within the Countryside beyond the Green Belt and AGLV. Permission is sought for the erection of a cattle finishing unit. Reading Agricultural Consultants, have previously concluded that the business is financially sound and viable. The proposed development would enable the development of an agricultural rural business and would be located adjacent to an existing agricultural barn which would result in the site appearing as a farm base in a rural location.

On this basis, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with the Development Plan and, as such, planning permission is recommended for approval.

1. Site Description

- The application site is located on the eastern side of High Loxley Road.
- It relates to a parcel of land connected to a holding referred to by the Applicant as Loxley Park Farm.
- The site features an agricultural barn with hardstanding.
- The surrounding area is rural in character.

## 2. Proposal

Permission is sought for the erection of cattle finishing unit.

The cattle finishing unit would measure 64m in length, 24.4m in depth, 4.4-4.9m in height to top of eaves and 8.1m in height to the ridge. It would cover a total ground area of 1,560.77 m<sup>2</sup> (1,677.84m<sup>2</sup> area including roof overhang).

## 3. Relevant Planning History

<b>Reference</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Decision</b>
WA/2020/1186	Use of land for temporary stationing of a mobile home with associated parking and amenity space for use by an agricultural worker.	REFUSED 12/11/2021
WA/2020/0147	Erection of agricultural storage barn	GRANTED 11/03/2020
AG/2019/0013	General Permitted Development Order 2015 Schedule 2 Part 6 Class A for the erection of a barn for storage of hay and straw	Agricultural Not Permitted Development 30/09/2019

## 4. Relevant Planning Constraints

Countryside beyond Green Belt – outside any defined settlement area  
Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV)  
Ancient Woodland 500m Buffer Zone  
Nearby Listed Buildings – High Loxley Farm and barns (Grade II)

## 5. Relevant Development Plan Policies and Guidance

- o Waverley Borough Local Plan (Part 1): Strategic policies and sites (adopted February 2018): SP1, TD1, NE1, NE3, HA1
- o Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002 (retained policies February 2018): D1, D4, RD10

Other guidance:

- o The National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF)
- o The National Planning Practice Guidance 2014 (NPPG)
- o Council's Parking Guidelines (2013)
- o Surrey Vehicular and Cycle Parking Guidance (2018)
- o Dunsfold Village Design Statement (2001)
- o National Design Guide (2019)

## 6. Consultations and Town/Parish Council Comments

Dunsfold Council	Parish	Objection
County Authority	Highway	No objection subject to conditions

## 7. Representations

29 letters have been received raising objection on the following grounds:

- Unsuitable access road
- Increased traffic movement and size of vehicles
- Impact on the nearby AONB and AGLV
- The site is a field not a farm
- Impact upon nearby wedding venue; noise, odour, traffic
- Animal waste management and pollution
- Concerns regarding proposed use with specific regards to Bovine Tuberculosis (TB)
- Expressing the desire for a 'masterplan' to be submitted over a piecemeal approach for the site.

2 letters have been received expressing support for the following reasons:

- General support for the applicant as a farmer and custodian of the land
- This scheme will protect fragile local food supply chains
- Enhance the local economy
- The proposed design is in keeping with the setting

## 8. Planning Considerations:

### 9. Planning history and differences with previous proposal

It is noted that planning permission has been previously refused under reference WA/2020/1186, for the use of land for temporary stationing of a mobile home with associated parking and amenity space for use by an agricultural worker, on an area of land immediately adjacent to this application site.

The Council considered that this location was inappropriate for the proposed living unit. This application is for an agricultural building, different in scale and use to the mobile home and in a nearby location, not the exact position of the mobile home. The test is whether the current proposal is acceptable in its own right.

## 10. Principle of Development

Paragraph 83 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should enable the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses. Furthermore, retained Policy RD10 of the Local Plan 2002 states, inter alia, that permission would be granted for agricultural related development provided it relates to an existing unit, is reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture and would not significantly detract from the character of the rural landscape.

## 11. Agricultural Justification

An agricultural justification statement is included within the planning statement. In addition to these details included within a consultation response provided by Reading Agricultural Consultants which was produced for a previous planning application at the site (for a temporary mobile home – WA/2020/1186).

### **Existing Unit**

The site is in active use as agricultural land. An agricultural storage building is in situ on the site within the applicant's ownership which was granted permission (reference WA/2020/0147) on the basis that the land was being actively farmed and is used for the grazing of sheep and cattle, and for crops. At the time of an Officer site visit the farm was being actively farmed.

The report produced by Reading Agriculture states "*It is evident from the number of livestock reared and the area of land rented that the applicant is running a full-time holding.*" And "*On the basis the applicant has a financially sound business and has established a permanent base at Loxley Park Farm*"

Officer's therefore consider that the site is part of an existing unit.

### **Reasonably necessary**

Currently the applicant owns Loxley Park Farm (30 ha) and rents various short-term agreements, which all total over 360 ha (900 acres). Many of the short-term lets are on arable farms, which grow a winter forage crop to let to beef or sheep farmers, in between growing their main arable crops. The applicant rears approximately 400 head of beef cattle, purchasing them at around 18 months old and rearing them until finishing weight within a 12- month period. Like the sheep enterprise he has utilised short-term agreements to provide land and fodder crops/grass to keep and feed the beef cattle. However, as some of the grazing land has not been recently available, he has currently reduced cattle numbers to around 100 head. The proposed development intends to increase numbers back to 400 head per annum by building a new indoor beef unit at Loxley Park Farm.

The proposed building is designed for the intended purpose of housing livestock. The design does not include additional built form that would not be necessary for the intended use. Furthermore, Reading Agricultural Consultants in their report conclude

*“The applicant has been running an established livestock business for many years and has recently focused on developing Loxley Park Farm as his own base for his agricultural operations. I am satisfied there is sufficient land available, including his own freehold holding, for this business to be sustained.”* Officers consider that whilst this report was produced with the intention of providing justification for the previous application, it is just as relevant to this application.

The proposal is therefore considered to be reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture.

## 12. Design and impact on the Countryside, AGLV and visual amenity

The intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside is recognised by local and national policy and the character and qualities of the AGLV are protected under Policy RE3 of the Local Plan 2018 (Part 1).

The proposal is for the erection of a building to be used as a cattle finishing unit. The building is large in plan measuring 64m in length and 24.4m in width. The eaves would be relatively low at 4.4-4.9m and the ridge height 8.1m. The height would be similar to that of the existing storage barn which is located to the west of the proposal.

The building has been positioned on a natural low point between the existing storage barn and the woodland to the east and has been orientated so that the shortest elevation would be visible when viewing from the north, Hascombe Hill. The building's external design and appearance is typical of an agricultural building and the internal layout provides for only the provision of facilities to store livestock and associated supplies.

The proposed development is well related to the character of the rural area in that the building is proposed and designed to serve and develop a rural business. With regards to concerns raised relating to the visual impact the proposal would have from the AONB to the north and particularly from Hascombe Hill, it must be noted that all views towards the proposed application site feature Dunsfold Park in the distance. In context, the proposed agricultural building would not appear as an incongruent feature within the landscape, nor would it harm the intrinsic beauty of the AGLV or the setting of the AONB.

As such, the proposal is considered to be visually acceptable in this location and therefore compliant with Policies RD3 and TD1 of the Local Plan Part 1 2018 and retained Policies D1 and D4 of the Local Plan 2002.

## 13. Impact on residential amenity

There are no residential properties in close proximity to the development. No concern is therefore raised.

#### 14. Biodiversity

Having regard to the submitted biodiversity checklist, along with the fact that the proposal would not result in any loss of vegetation, it is considered that no ecological surveys are required.

#### 15. Heritage Considerations

Whilst noting that High Loxley house and barns are Grade II listed and are the nearest buildings to the application site, they would be nearly 200m away from the proposed barn. Officers are satisfied that the proposal would not result in any harm to the listed buildings, their setting or their significance.

#### 16. Impact on Highways

The applicant has submitted transport-related information and has confirmed that staff levels are expected to remain the same, with 2 full time and 2 part time employees. Conditions have been included to encourage sustainable travel to/from the site. The proposal will allow for the production of the farm's own fertiliser and, as such, will reduce the number of overall vehicle trips to/from the site as deliveries of external fertiliser will be reduced.

It is not considered that the proposed development will result in a significant increase in vehicular trips on the surrounding highway network. The Highway Authority considers that the proposal will not have a material impact on highway safety.

#### 17. Response to Parish Council and Third Party comments

Dunsfold Parish Council has objected to the application on the following grounds:

- The siting of the mobile home would have an adverse effect on the landscape particularly the view from Hascombe Hill
- The applicant should provide a full business plan to confirm that, amongst other things, if constructed, the resultant business will be financially viable.
- Transport and highway issues
- The applicant should produce and provide a masterplan rather than taking a piecemeal approach.

Matters of the highway safety, agricultural justification, visual impact, impact on Countryside and AGLV have all been discussed in relevant sections of this report. The application can only be assessed on its own merits.

In response to the other grounds of objection raised within representations, Officers would comment:

- Issues of bovine TB are not planning considerations

- High Billingham, the wedding venue mentioned within representations is located approximately 500m from the application site. This distance is considered to be adequate to ensure that significant impacts on amenity is unlikely.

## 18. Conclusion

The planning balance assessment concludes that the proposal is in accordance with the Development Plan, as such, planning permission is recommended for approval.

### **Recommendation**

That permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:

1. Condition:

The plan numbers to which this permission relates are: Location Plan 1:2500, Block Plan 1:500, PR-GA-100-P, 22654 Proposed Floorplans Rev A and 22654 Proposed Elevations Rev A. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans. No material variation from these plans shall take place unless otherwise first agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

In order that the development hereby permitted shall be fully implemented in complete accordance with the approved plans and to accord with Policies RE1, RE3 and TD1 and of the Local Plan 2018 (Part 1) and retained Policies D1 and D4 of the Local Plan 2002.

2. Condition:

No variation of the type and colour of the external materials to be used in the construction of the development as shown on the approved deposited plan shall be made without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

In the interest of the character and amenity of the area in accordance with Policy RE1, RE3 and TD1 of the Local Plan 2018 (Part 1) and retained Policies D1 and D4 of the Local Plan 2002.

3. Condition:

The building hereby permitted shall be used only for agricultural purposes.

Reason:

In the interest of the character and amenity of the area in accordance with Policy RE1, RE3 and TD1 of the Local Plan 2018 (Part 1) and retained Policies RD10, D1 and D4 of the Local Plan 2002.

4. Condition:

The development hereby approved shall not be first opened for trading unless and until space has been laid out within the site in accordance with a scheme to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority for vehicles to be parked and for vehicles to turn so that they may enter and leave the site in forward gear. Thereafter the parking, loading and unloading, and turning areas shall be retained and maintained for their designated purposes.

Reason:

In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highway users in accordance with Section 9 "Promoting Sustainable Transport" in the National Planning Policy Framework 2018 and in accordance with Policy ST1 of Waverley Borough Council's Local Plan (Part 1) 2018.

5. Condition:

No development shall commence until a Construction Transport Management Plan, to include details of:

- (a) parking for vehicles of site personnel, operatives and visitors
  - (b) loading and unloading of plant and materials
  - (c) storage of plant and materials
  - (d) measures to prevent the deposit of materials on the highway
  - (e) before and after construction condition surveys of the highway and a commitment to fund the repair of any damage caused;
- has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Only the approved details shall be implemented during the construction of the development.

Reason:

In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highway users in accordance with Section 9 "Promoting Sustainable Transport" in the National Planning Policy Framework 2018 and in accordance with Policy ST1 of Waverley Borough Council's Local Plan (Part 1) 2018.

6. Condition:

The development hereby approved shall not be first opened for trading unless and until at least one of the parking bays is provided with a fast-charge Electric Vehicle charging point (current minimum requirements - 7 kw Mode 3 with Type 2 connector - 230v AC 32 Amp single phase dedicated supply) in accordance with a scheme to be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning

Authority and thereafter retained and maintained to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

In order that the development proceed in accordance with Section 9 "Promoting Sustainable Transport" in the National Planning Policy Framework 2018 and in accordance with Policy ST1 and CC2 of Waverley Borough Council's Local Plan (Part 1) 2018.

**Informatives:**

1. The Council confirms that in assessing this planning application it has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive way, in line with the requirements of Paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.
2. "IMPORTANT" This planning permission contains certain conditions precedent that state 'before development commences' or 'prior to commencement of any development' (or similar). As a result these must be discharged prior to ANY development activity taking place on site. Commencement of development without having complied with these conditions will make any development unauthorised and possibly subject to enforcement action such as a Stop Notice. If the conditions have not been subsequently satisfactorily discharged within the time allowed to implement the permission then the development will remain unauthorised.
3. There is a fee for requests to discharge a condition on a planning consent. The fee payable is £116.00 or a reduced rate of £34.00 for household applications. The fee is charged per written request not per condition to be discharged. A Conditions Discharge form is available and can be downloaded from our web site. Please note that the fee is refundable if the Local Planning Authority concerned has failed to discharge the condition by 12 weeks after receipt of the required information.
4. The developer is reminded that it is an offence to allow materials to be carried from the site and deposited on or damage the highway from uncleaned wheels or badly loaded vehicles. The Highway Authority will seek, wherever possible, to recover any expenses incurred in clearing, cleaning or repairing highway surfaces and prosecutes persistent offenders. (Highways Act 1980 Sections 131, 148, 149).

5. It is the responsibility of the developer to ensure that the electricity supply is sufficient to meet future demands and that any power balancing technology is in place if required. Please refer to: <http://www.beama.org.uk/resourceLibrary/beama-guide-to-electric-vehicle-infrastructure.html> for guidance and further information on charging modes and connector types.

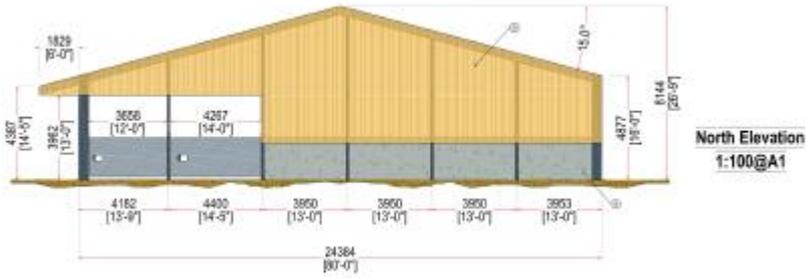
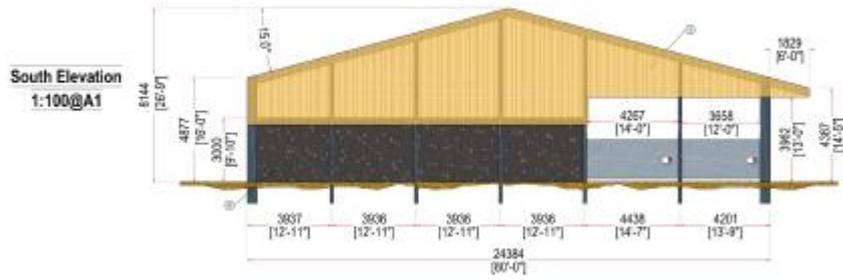
1.Location Plan



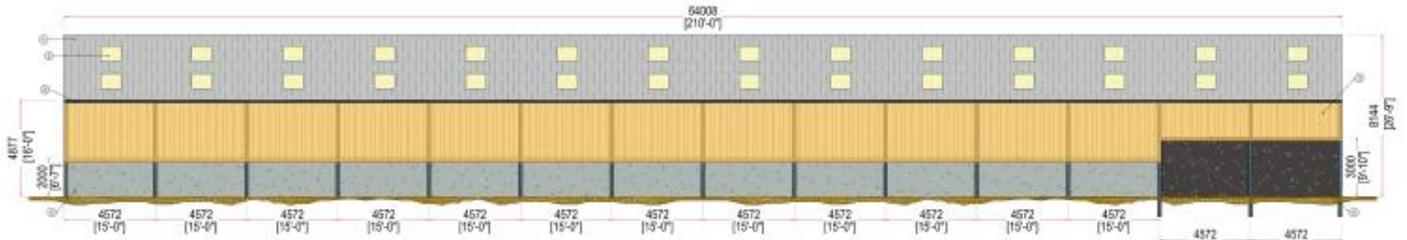
2. Proposed Plans

Block Plan





West Elevation



East Elevation

