GHT Earp & Son
Osbaston House Farm
Lount Road
Osbaston
Nuneaton
Warwickshire
CV13 0HR

13th September 2007

DEVELOPMENT
SERVICES

13 SEP 2007

RECEIVED

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council
Council Offices
Argents Mead
Hinckley
Leicestershire
LE10 1BZ

Dear Sirs

Please find attached a planning application to request your kind permission for the permanent site - ing of two residential caravans on the above farm.

We are a medium sized dairy farm of 250 acres; we are a goat dairy farm. I am the fifth generation of Earp's dating back to 1908, to farm the land at Osbaston. For 90 years the farm was a traditional dairy farm with a herd of Friesians cows.

In 2003, the farm was forced to diversify due to the decimation of small milking herds by the supermarkets due to their disgraceful milk price payable to farmers, financially, the farm was unviable. We began milking in May 2004 and became one of a handful of specialist goat farmers in the UK.

We now have approximately 1500 goats on the farm, 150 sheep and 15 cattle; we milk 600 goats daily and will increase the milking herd to 900 by April 2008.

The farm is a seven day a week operation, 365 days a year with the milking operation taking seven hours a day. Additional task to the milking include, littering, feeding and basic animal husbandry.

The farm also grows its own wheat, maize and requires the seasonal work of drilling, planting, fertilising and harvesting.

General, routine farm maintenance is critical to the farm and is required to be incorporated into the seasonal routines, tasks such as repairs, fencing and painting etc.,

As your department is aware, we ventured into a small scale tourist enterprise in June 2007 and have approximately twenty – five guests staying on the farm during the tourist season, April – October, this generates additional aspects of work such as refurbishing tents, cleaning of the tents and shower block, transporting luggage etc.,

For the past year we have experienced severe difficulties with recruiting and retaining labour.

We had employed a local male, Andrew Kemble, who had been employed for us for several years, unfortunately due to ill health grounds; Andrew left the employment of the farm.

Traditionally in farming, you are able to recruit via 'word of mouth' however we tried this and had no interest what so ever.

We therefore advertised in the Hinckley Times, the Coalville Times and a national weekly magazine, Farmers Weekly[1]; we received an exceptionally poor response.

Of the adverts that did generate a response we interviewed all the applicants and subsequently employed, Paul Deacon and Brian Cartwright, both local men.

Paul Deacon remained in our employment for approximately six months and Brian Cartwright remained in our employment for two weeks.

During this period of instability the farm suffered. We contacted several employment agencies who specialise in farm employment and we were advised to consider recruiting European migrant workers.

We were advised that the workers would require private accommodation and that caravans would be suitable. We therefore purchased two caravans and commence seeking suitable applicants.

We now have two farm employees; Tomas and Hubert who work full time on the farm, both Tomas and Hubert have requested that their family and friends are able to stay with them from time to time, thus necessitating individual caravans.

I trust that you will favourably consider this application.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like any additional information.

Yours sincerely

J.R.K Earp

Mr John Earp
G.H.T Earp & Son

[1] We can evidenced these adverts