

Supporting Statement

In support of

A full planning application for an agricultural track

At

Ivy House Farm
Nuneaton
Warwickshire
CV13 6LW

Applicant

Mr T Sinnott

Agent

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Report reference

J008604 Planning Statement

Providing planning solutions for

agriculture | equestrian | rural business | residential



Contents

1.0 Proposed development3

2.0 Drawings and plans submitted3

3.0 Overview of farming business3

4.0 Site overview4

5.0 Use and need4

6.0 Site and scale5

7.0 Commentary upon Planning Policy.....6

8.0 Summary7

1.0 Proposed development

- 1.1 This document comprises a statement in support of a planning application for a hard standing track at the land at Ivy House Farm for agricultural purposes, in order to allow for safer and more effective access around the farm with machinery.
- 1.2 This application is submitted to Hinckley and Bosworth Local Planning Authorities via the Planning Portal reference number: PP-12767563

2.0 Drawings and plans submitted

- 2.1 The following existing and proposed plans are submitted with this application:

J008604 Proposed Block Plan

J008604 Location Plan

J008604 Track Detail

3.0 Overview of farming business

- 3.1 The applicants have been on the farm since the year 2000 and since 2017 the applicants have had entire ownership of the farm. The applicants land holding at Ivy House Farm extends to circa 161 hectares (398 acres). Despite a proportion of the buildings undergoing farm diversification at Ivy House Farm, the landholding and operations remain predominantly agricultural. Current cropping is made up of wheat, barley and winter oilseed rape (WOSR). The farm requires a track to maneuver digestate and organic manure for use across the cropping fields without causing damage to the soil.
- 3.2 The dairy herd was sold in 2021, however, the old lagoon shown on the plans is still of constant essential use for the arable cropping enterprise. The cropping enterprise is now the majority of the agricultural undertakings at Ivy House Farm.
- 3.3 Previous planning applications at Ivy House Farm show the aspects of diversification within the surplus buildings that came subsequent from the sale of the dairy herd. The majority of other records of Ivy House Farm on HBBS's online register relate to a range of agricultural development and engineering operations prior to the sale of the dairy herd.
- 3.4 The applicants seek to add a new agricultural track compliant to Countryside Stewardship standards and of 1070m in length overall. This shows how the applicants intend to invest in infrastructure necessary for their efficient farming enterprises and to optimise efficiency of the arable operations at Ivy House Farm.

4.0 Site overview

- 4.1 The site can be found using the what 3 words reference: replied.quiz.brownish
- 4.2 The site is located approximately 0.5 km to the south east of the village of Congerstone
- 4.3 The predominant land use in the area is characterised as agricultural
- 4.4 The following designations are relevant to the site:
 - SSSI – Ashby Canal, approximately 150m from the track access point
 - Listed Buildings relating to Church of St Mary and War Memorial– approximately 500m from the site

5.0 Use and need

- 5.1 The applicants wish to create a hard standing track that allows movement from the central farm buildings to an old lagoon in the middle of the farm. The track will be utilized by the specialized tankers which transport liquid manure and digestate to and from the lagoon.
- 5.2 A section of the proposed track will allow for the applicants to efficiently move liquid manure and digestate to the fields east of the farm (which requires use of the public highway), without the necessity to take the tankers through the village of Congerstone – a village which contains several listed buildings and designated heritage assets. This part of the track will be 267m in length and can be seen on the submitted plans, travelling north (perpendicular) from the 'main' track across the farm.
- 5.3 Hard standing is the important feature of this development, as it mitigates the deposition of mud onto the highway when the farm vehicles are required to travel to the Eastern part of the farm via Bosworth Road
- 5.4 No new access is required at the point whereupon the hard standing track will meet Bosworth Road as there is already an existing double gate which serves current farm operations.
- 5.5 It is normal practice for farms to 'group' their cropping so that arable fields are together, and grass fields are together. The group cropping allows efficient use of time and machinery when undertaking the same operations in a group of fields. The agricultural track will create safe and sustainable access for machinery.

- 5.6 Crossing the fields in the winter would likely be very difficult; vehicles would likely cause large ruts or get stuck crossing the field. This in turn causes damage to soil by creating ruts and soil compaction, it presents a health and safety risk for the business both in the process of getting stuck and then trying to release the vehicles again. Furthermore, the hard standing will prevent mud being deposited on public highways when the machinery moves from the agricultural landholdings and the fields, onto the road to reach other farmed sites.
- 5.7 Overall the track will extend from the farm buildings to the ~~slurry~~ lagoon, with an additional track to the entrance to the highway, Bosworth Road. This will allow access to all arable land, to reduce soil damage and its associated implications.

6.0 Site and scale

- 6.1 The track would be fully compliant alongside Countryside Stewardship standards.
- 6.2 The submitted plans show that the proposed track would consist of an initial removal of the topsoil to 150mm. This is followed by the addition of a layer of geotextile membrane to the subsoil. 200mm layer of hardcore then goes on top, followed by a 50mm layer of small stone topped by <20mm or less used as a capping layer.
- 6.3 The proposed section of agricultural track that will extend from the farm buildings on the west to the lagoon that lies south-east will be 803m in length. Agricultural access tracks are usually 4-5m wide, however, for the track to remain in keeping with the area the applicants intend to install a track which is approximately 3.5m in width (0.28ha). The location of the track has been chosen to allow the applicants to traverse as short a distance as possible from the agricultural buildings and fields to the lagoon. The part of the track that then travels from this track, then north to Bosworth Road has been chosen as it benefits from existing, safe access. The applicants wish to install hard standing to ensure that mud is not deposited, as the machinery moves from the farm holding onto the public highway. This section of track will extend to 267m in length and will also be 3.5m wide (0.09ha).
- 6.4 Overall, the site area covered by the agricultural track will extend to 0.37ha.
- 6.5 The track is to be located to the south of Bosworth Road as shown on the submitted plans and will allow access to an existing farm track, which does not currently have any hard standing and runs north to south providing access to the farmland. Neither the existing access track nor proposed hard standing track incorporates a footpath or public right of way.

- 6.6 The site does not lie within a flood risk zone and the development will not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. The area that the track will cross is currently of little ecological value and the track will impact only 40cm overall maximum of depth of the current soil. This is significantly less intrusive than the implications of tractor wheel ruts, which would be consequential of the farm holding not having a track, as the requirement for movement of digestate and organic manure from the lagoon across the cropping fields is a necessity farming operation at Ivy House Farm.
- 6.7 The proposed access and track will be to the west of the SSSI, Ashby Canal, but it is submitted that this will not be affected due to the distant proximity of the proposal, and current operations. Comparatively, the track will create betterment to the setting of the than the alternative soil damage that presently occurs.
- 6.8 The track will be constructed by scraping back the top layer of soil and laying a permeable geotextile membrane topped with a layer of hardcore.
- 6.9 The geotextile membrane and open nature of the stone on the surface means that water will be able to drain freely through the surface and there shall be no increase in surface water or surface water run off as a result of the development. This in turn means that the creation of the tracks will have no negative impact on the environment.
- 6.10 The design is reflective of a typical agricultural access and track design for agricultural use and is of an appropriate nature and scale for the use required.
- 6.11 A section of the track is provided in plan ref: J008604 Track Detail

7.0 Commentary upon Planning Policy

- 7.1 The planning policy most relevant to this application is considered to be contained within;
- The National Planning Policy Framework December 2023
 - Hinkley and Bosworth Local Plan 2006 – 2026

National Planning Policy Framework

- 7.2 The National Planning Policy Framework was updated in December 2023 and sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied by Local Planning Authorities (LPAs).
- 7.3 At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. When preparing this planning application, the core considerations of the framework have been taken into account and due consideration given to the siting, design, materials and scale of the proposed development.
- 7.4 Paragraph 88 of the NPPF states that 'planning policies and decisions should enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas..... and the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses.' It is for this reason that approval should be given for the application, as the proposed agricultural development is an important feature in allowing the progression of this agricultural enterprise at the site.

Hinkley and Bosworth Core Strategy Adopted 2009

- 7.5 **Policy 12– Rural Villages** - Policy 12 shows support *for transport improvements in line with* Policy 14 (Rural Areas: Transport) and for developments to be of the highest environmental standards in line with Policy 24 (Sustainable Design and Technology). The proposal will support a local, rural enterprise, as well as benefiting public highways and the improvement of day-to-day environmental impacts of farming operations.
- 7.6 The proposed track will help to improve sustainability and efficiency of the existing business. No other access rights exist that could be utilised for access to the retained land and therefore it is accepted that to function and improve the operation of the business a new modest hard standing track is required.
- 7.7 The Core Strategy identifies 'Issues, Vision and Objectives' under paragraph 3. 3.18 - Rural Diversification suggests that the agricultural sector is undergoing tremendous change and is adapting its practices as a result. It identifies that although agriculture now accounts for only 1.2% of employment, farmland accounts for 88% of the borough's diverse landscape areas and the industry remains a key 'custodian of the land' in shaping the image of the borough, the quality of the landscape, wildlife habitats and the natural environment of the borough. It supports agricultural industry in the borough to maintain successful businesses whilst protecting and enhancing the borough's diverse landscape areas.

8.0 Summary

- 8.1 This application is for a small-scale agricultural development which will have no undue impact on the landscape.
- 8.2 Agricultural development and farms are an integral part of our rural countryside and will create a positive effect on this rural business and the wider rural economy.
- 8.3 The proposal is consistent with both national and local planning policy and therefore approval is sought for this essential agricultural infrastructure.

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