

From: Alex Jelley
Sent: 10 November 2025 15:43
To: Planning Folder New
Subject: FW: 25/00713/FUL - Ivy House Farm, Bilstone Road, Congerstone - Change of Use of land for the siting of self storage containers

Sent: 10 November 2025 14:24

To: Alex Jelley <Alex.Jelley@hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: 25/00713/FUL - Sinnott J1008878 EOT & New PO vy House Farm, Bilstone Road, Congerstone - Change of Use of land for the siting of self storage containers

Hi Alex,

I hope you're well.

Further to my email last week, I would be grateful for clarification regarding your concerns on the size of the development- but in the meantime, I provide information relating to farm diversification below.

The agricultural industry in the UK is widely known for its turbulence. It is a unique market where the producers have no say over the sale price of their produce and as a result many crucial food producers have struggled historically to make a profit. Government intervention has been long established; the Common Agricultural Policy was introduced to financially support farmers in 1962 with the aims of increasing agricultural productivity, ensuring a fair standard of living for farmers, and guaranteeing the availability of supplies. The provisions of this have evolved significantly, with increasing focus on environmental protection and sustainability. In its latest iteration UK farmers are to lose direct support imminently. While Government support is still available through environmental schemes, this has pushed farms particularly over the last five years to really review how they operate and what other enterprises they can introduce to support the farm rather than having to rely on intervention support.

In conjunction with this, the agricultural industry has suffered from changes due to Brexit, including impacts on labour availability and equality of farming standards, and has felt the effects from volatility in input prices due to events like the Ukraine war. The entire industry is at a shifting point, and the Government has been actively encouraging farmers to diversify wherever they can.

The most recent Farm Business Survey 2023/24 carried out by Defra, identified that farm income was lower for almost all farm types than the year before, with cereal farms suffering from a loss of income of 73% compared to the previous year. 71% of farm businesses have diversified activity, with 50% of farms in England letting out buildings for non-agricultural use.

The Sinnott family have been no strangers to the need to modernise their farming business in order to not just survive, but thrive. Having taking the decision to cease dairy farming a few years ago, their farming activity has continued to evolve. They now farm over 450 acres of arable land, and no longer have any livestock. The use of the traditional farmyard has changed substantially and they have successfully embarked on a restructure of how their buildings and yard space is used. Having considered their strengths and weaknesses, they have established that the farm lends itself well to utilising farm space for industrial use and storage; they are not far from built up areas (including larger areas of new build housing locally) and have great road access.

The existing storage container facility on the farm is sited adjacent to the yard. Since establishment it has grown in popularity and been hugely successful – they are currently at 100% occupancy, turning away new enquiries for storage space weekly, and operating a waiting list for those prepared to wait (although most people needing storage are usually looking for something to immediate need so not everyone is willing to wait). The facility that is already in operation is well set-up; with good access, secure fencing, a secure access system, security cameras, good quality of

insulated containers, and is generally well kept and tidy – all of this has let to it gaining a reputation as a high quality, professional facility with 5* google reviews.

Expansion is a natural progression. There is a field corner directly to the south of the existing storage facility; as the aerial photo from 2023 below shows, the corner has become less useful for arable production as it's more efficient for large machinery to operate in straight lines rather than into corners. The field area although not redundant is therefore underutilised and can be significantly more productive for the business than traditional farming would be. The expansion of the storage facility will not take away from any of the agricultural activity nor reduce farm productivity but will allow the applicants to capitalise on an identified need. The facility extends to 2,940sqm. This represents just 0.14% of the farmed land.

Overall this proposal is a natural fit for the farm. It takes out minimal farmed land, utilises existing access and infrastructure in place and is designed to meet existing and real need. The number of containers represents efficient layout within the available space to optimise income from this area, while the planting for the eastern boundary (much in place already although not shown on the photo below, and some submitted with the proposals – see plans submitted with the application) demonstrate a natural edge to the site which not only provides screening and biodiversity improvements but also puts a boundary in place to prevent overspill of this area in years to come. The scheme is sized to make the best use of the area, and the proposal will have limited impact on the wider landscape.

I hope the above helps to give some clarity to the scheme and how it has developed; please do let me know if you still have any outstanding concerns.



Kind regards
Sally



Sally Moore
BSc (Hons) PgD MRICS FAAV
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From: Sally Moore <sally@theruralplanningco.co.uk>
Sent: 06 November 2025 17:22
To: Alex Jelley <Alex.Jelley@hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: 25/00713/FUL - Sinnott J1008878 EOT & New PO vy House Farm, Bilstone Road, Congerstone - Change of Use of land for the siting of self storage containers

Hi Alex,

Thank you for your email, and apologies for the delay coming back to you on this as I have been out of the office.

I will liaise with the applicant and come back to you in relation to the farm diversification need next week, but I would be grateful for some more clarity on exactly what your concerns relate to? i.e. – is it the number of containers, size of the area, or visual impact of the site that you consider too large? Can you clarify if there is a ‘small scale’ requirement for farm diversification schemes within the district?

In relation to policy DM4, with consideration of any detriment to the environment aside, I would have assumed that the need for ‘significant’ contribution to farm diversification under DM4(c) would imply that larger types of development would be considered more favourably.

I’d be grateful for your feedback.

Kind regards
Sally



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From: Alex Jelley <Alex.Jelley@hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk>

Sent: 24 October 2025 08:51

To: Sally Moore <sally@theruralplanningco.co.uk>

Cc:

Subject: RE: 25/00713/FUL - Sinnott J1008878 EOT & New PO vy House Farm, Bilstone Road, Congerstone - Change of Use of land for the siting of self storage containers

Good morning,

Thank you for confirming the extension of time. I have since been looking over the application this week. I have noted that the Ecology Team were not consulted on this application and so I have arranged for them to be consulted (this will be for the required 21 days).

I am also uncomfortable with the size of this proposal within open countryside. Whilst I see the history for this site approved this type of development back in 2020, this was for a much smaller number of units than what is being proposed in this case and there is next to no justification for this submitted as part of the application details. I think in the first instance I would like some further information to demonstrate how this proposal would conform with the requirements of Policy DM4 and the need for further farm diversification in this case.

This site also lies to the south of a conservation area and so I will also be liaising with the Conservation Officer. This is a large proposal for the siting of nearly 100 self storage units in open countryside. I think further information is therefore required prior to making a decision.

Regards

Alex Jelley BA MSC MRTPI
Development Services
Planning Consultant
Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

Email: alex.jelley@hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk
Phone: 07900924128

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From: Sally Moore <sally@theruralplanningco.co.uk>

Sent: 23 October 2025 22:40

To: Alex Jelley <Alex.Jelley@hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk>

Cc:

Subject: RE: 25/00713/FUL - Sinnott J1008878 EOT & New PO vy House Farm, Bilstone Road, Congerstone - Change of Use of land for the siting of self storage containers

Good evening Alex,

Thank you for your email and for updating us of the situation. I am glad to see that the application can hopefully progress, as you know it has been in for some time.
We will agree to the extension of time but would be grateful if you could provide some feedback on the application as soon as possible, and of course if you are able to issue a decision ahead of the agreed extension that would be very much appreciated.

Kind regards
Sally



Sally Moore
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From:
Sent: 22 October 2025 13:44
To: Sally Moore <sally@theruralplanningco.co.uk>
Cc:
Subject: FW: 25/00713/FUL - Sinnott J1008878 EOT & New PO vy House Farm, Bilstone Road, Congerstone - Change of Use of land for the siting of self storage containers

From: Alex Jelley <Alex.Jelley@hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk>
Sent: 22 October 2025 13:41
To:
Subject: 25/00713/FUL - Ivy House Farm, Bilstone Road, Congerstone - Change of Use of land for the siting of self storage containers

FAO Sally Moore,

Good afternoon,

I just wanted to email and advise you that I have very recently been reallocated this application by another officer and I am now the case officer. Apologies for the delay, I can see that this application is now over time.

Firstly, I wanted to let you know that it is on my radar as a priority application and I will seek to deal with this as soon as possible. In the meantime, can we please agree to an extension of time? I will be looking over the application details this week and hopefully will seek to get a determination asap. Is it possible you could agree to a 4 week extension in order for me to deal with this application please/get the report written/checked by management etc?

Kind Regards

Alex Jelley BA MSC MRTPI

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