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Our Ref : TWR/C7

Date : 2 January 2026

For the attention of Joe Fleetwood

Dear Sirs

**APPLICATION FOR PRIOR APPROVAL FOR THE ERECTION OF A GENERAL
PURPOSE AGRICULTURAL BUILDING AT ELMS FARM, ATHERSTONE ROAD,
APPLEBY MAGNA**

In response to your recent request for additional information on the above project, I am pleased to provide the following details.

Elms Farm currently comprises 250 acres of arable land and the original farmhouse. The farm was formerly a livestock unit under a previous ownership, but the former buildings became unsuitable for modern farming practices and were converted to industrial and commercial uses under the name of 'Elms Business Park'.

Vehicles and Machinery

My clients who are arable farmers growing cereal crops partly for their digestate (energy producing) system at Austrey House Farm and partly for sale, bought the farm (house and land) together with the business park in 2009 to operate as separate enterprises. The farmhouse is occupied by a member of the company's staff (a farm worker), but the farm itself currently has no agricultural buildings from which to operate, and is run from the company's main holding. All the farm traffic (much of which is slow moving tractors and large and wide farm machinery) has of necessity, to travel to the site along the A444 trunk road. This causes delay and inconvenience to other road users and often requires an escort vehicle because of size.

The Elms Farm fields take longer to seed and crop partly as a result of their relative remoteness from the rest of the company's holdings and partly due to changing weather

patterns. This all involves moving heavy machinery etc. to and from the land via the nearby A444. Furthermore, if left unattended in the open at the farm, the extremely expensive machinery is liable to be stolen as has happened on occasions.

Seeds and Produce

All seeds, chemicals and sprays for use at Elms Farm are currently delivered by suppliers to one of the company's other farms which has indoor storage facilities, and usually the main holding. Chemicals and fertilizers have a statutory requirement to be stored securely prior to use, and seeds must be kept dry prior to planting. These are therefore currently delivered in turn to Elms Farm via the A444 when required. An on-site storage facility would reduce the need for these vehicle movements.

When harvested, produce such as wheat has to be transported immediately to the company's other farms to prevent spoilage. A requirement of on-farm assurance dictates that all produce sold must comply with current storage and handling regulations post-harvest. A new building would allow produce to be stored in quantity prior to movement for sale at more convenient times of the day, eg. when local traffic is relatively light, therefore reducing potential congestion and dangers on the A444.

Wider Issues

The company's other farm holdings cover a wide area and are often many miles from Elms Farm itself. They do not realistically have the necessary surplus capacity to service Elms in terms of storage, vehicles or machinery as well as dealing with the inconvenience of moving chemicals and fertilizers, but they have to do so in the best way possible at the present time. It is not an efficient way of managing a set of substantial farming operations for all the reasons outlined.

Overview

Therefore, the proposed new building would:-

1. Reduce the need for movement of vehicles, machinery, seeds, chemicals and fertilizers to Elms Farm from the company's other units, thereby increasing efficiency and reducing traffic movements on the A444.
2. Provide security on site for vehicles and machinery and prevent theft and damage.
3. Provide a clean, dry and secure storage facility for harvested crops as required by the on-farm assurance scheme.
4. Provide a statutorily required storage facility for chemicals and fertilizers prior to use.

I that this information is helpful in your consideration of the application.

Yours faithfully

Thomas W Redfern