Proposed Barn

Cold Comfort Farm, Rouge's Lane, Barwell, Leicestershire







Corporate Architecture Ltd, Chartered Architects 35 Leicester Road, Blaby, Leicester, LE8 4GR
TEL: 0116 278 9257 FAX: 0116 278 9259 EMAIL: office@corporatearchitecture.co.uk WEB: www.corporatearchitecture.co.uk

Contents

Photo Document	**P1-5**
Design and Access Statement	**P6-13**

Photo Document

CORPORATE ARCHITECTURE Ltd

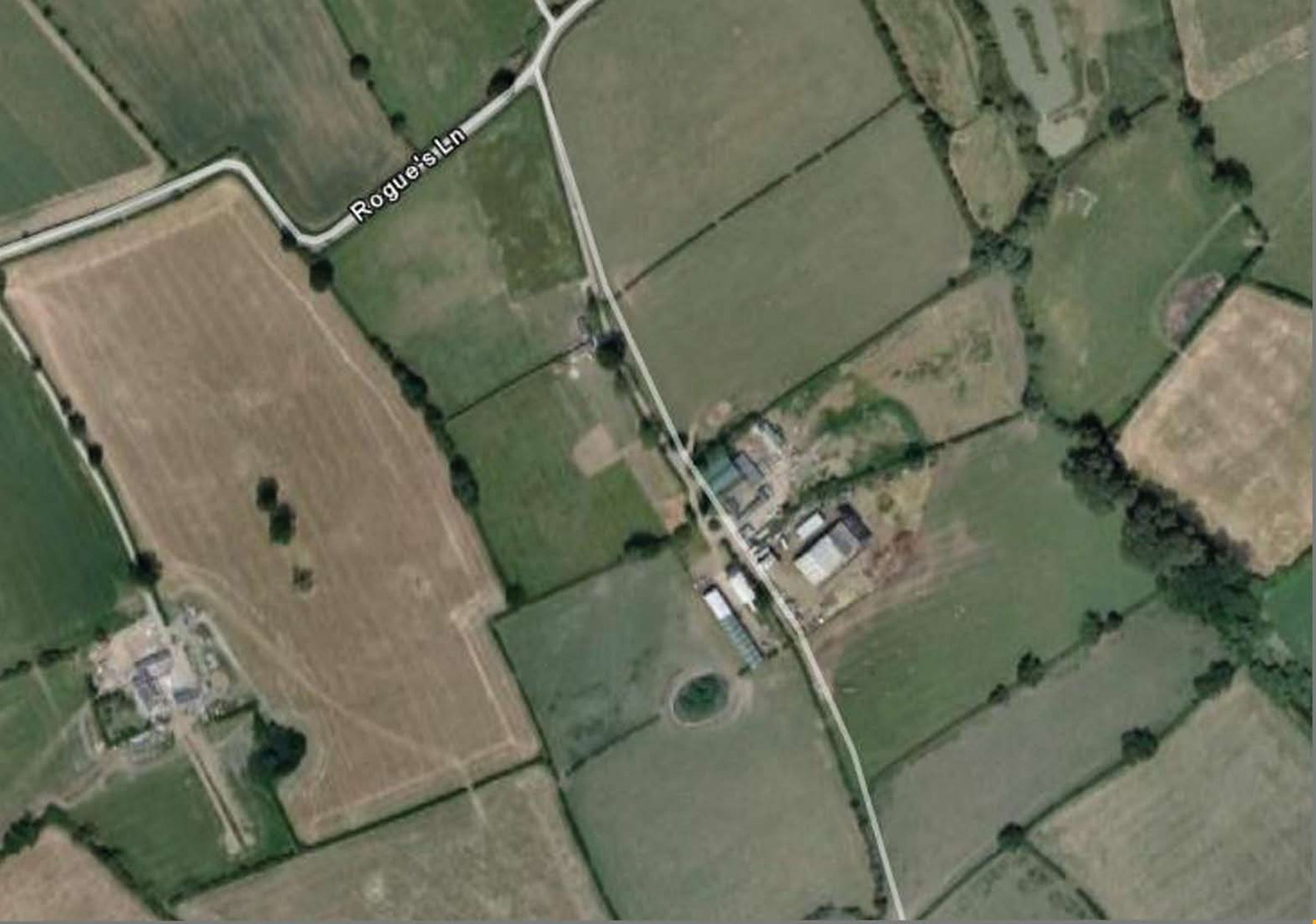

Photo Document - Aerial Photo


CS
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
The
Barn
Comfort Farm



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9

Design and Access Statement

CORPORATE ARCHITECTURE Ltd

1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this statement is to set out the context for, and to explain the design principles behind an application for the erection of an agricultural and industrial building for storage purposes at Cold Comfort Farm, Hinckley.

This statement is based on the frameworks set out in **PPS1 (2005)**, where design is considered to be an important theme within the planning system; and the **DETR & CABE** publication **By Design (2000)**, which aims to raise standards of urban design. Good design, it states, is central to good planning.

It is important to note that the DCLG **Circular 01/06 Guidance on Changes to the Development Control System** explains that the request for the access component of the statement relates only to access to the development and not to the internal aspects of individual buildings.

2. Physical Context

2a Location

The site is located off Rogues Lane, 900 metres to the north of Hinckley. It is accessed via a shared lane that leads to two farm complexes. Beyond the farmyard areas, the surrounding area is agricultural, with sizable fields separated by hedgerows.



Fig 1 : Site in Context

2b Local Built Character

The farmyards incorporate a mix of traditional brick built buildings and more modern corrugated metal barns. There provide an array of buildings between the two farmyards that have a variety of styles and heights. The main complex buildings of Cold Comfort Farm form single and two storey buildings set around a small central courtyard. Additional barns and outbuildings to the north-east and north-west create a second courtyard area. This includes a large Dutch barn. The whole site is generally in a very dilapidated condition.

The adjacent farm buildings, beyond the control of the applicant, typically form much larger structures that have less connectivity between the buildings. These buildings incorporate a number of long, narrow structures and one tall,

sizable structure with a multi-pitched roof. These buildings are separated by a hedgerow.

2c Site Description

The site forms a small parcel of land adjacent to the farmyards, accessible from the existing hardstanding areas. The land is separated from the rest of the field by a grassy bund, that extends around the north-eastern and north-western sides; a hedgerow with a select number of trees runs along the south-eastern edge. The land itself forms currently provides no visual benefit to the area or positive use to the operation of the farm.

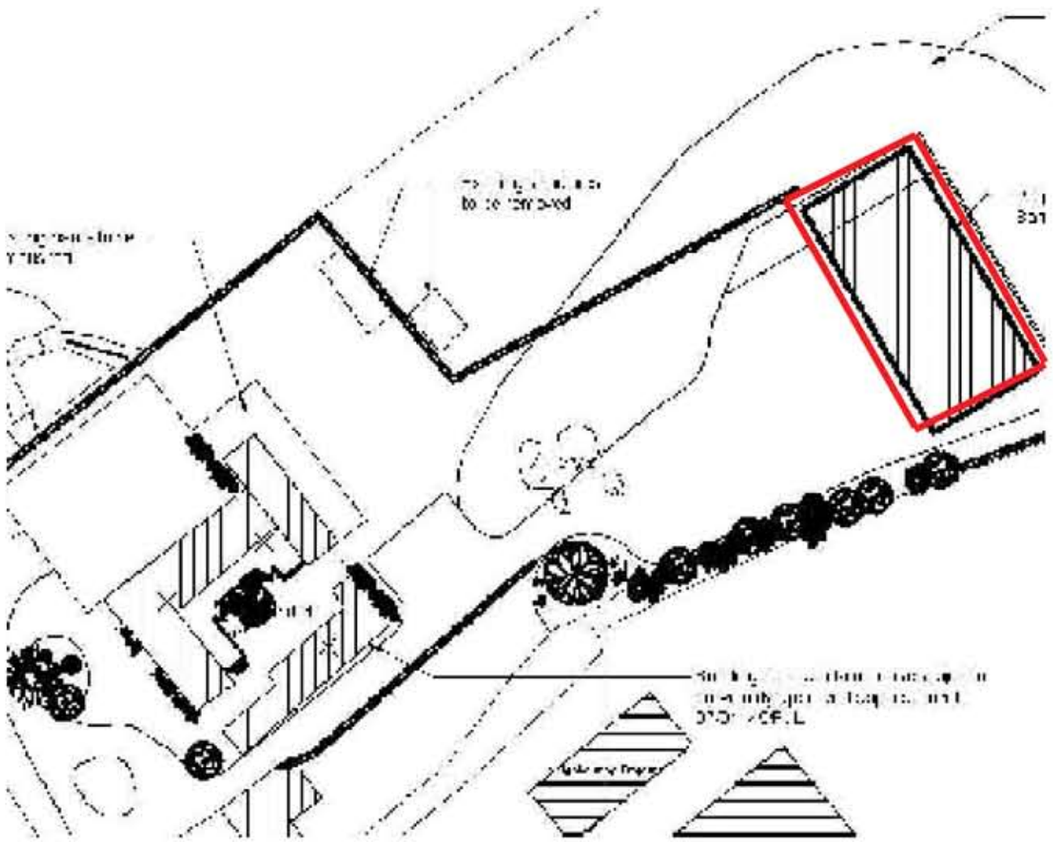

Fig 2 : Proposed Site Plan

3.0 National Planning Policy Guidance (PPG)/Planning Policy Statements (PPS)

Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (2005) sets out the overarching planning policies necessary to deliver sustainable development through the planning system. PPS1 makes it quite clear that sustainable development is the core principle underpinning planning (para. 3).

Good design should contribute positively towards making better places for people and improve the character and quality of an area (para. 34).

The design of new developments should optimise the potential of the site, whilst providing a visually attractive development that creates a safe and accessible environment (para. 36).

PPS 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas (2004) indicates that new buildings in the open countryside should be strictly controlled. The countryside should be provided for the sake of its intrinsic character and beauty. All development in rural areas should be well designed and inclusive, in keeping and in scale with its location (para. 1).

The Government is supportive of replacement, suitably located, existing buildings of permanent design and construction in the countryside for economic development purposes. This should be considered acceptable where it would result in a more

acceptable and sustainable development that that which would occur through conversion (para. 19).

4.0 Development Plan Policies

The Development Plan for this site consists of the Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands (RSS 8), the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Structure Plan and the City of Leicester Local Plan.

4a RSS 8: Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands (adopted March 2005)

- Policy 6: Regional Priorities for Development in Rural Areas.

4b Draft RSS 8 (published July 2008)

This draft version covers the period up to 2026. The Secretary of State and seeks to retain the relevant policies indicated below with only minor modifications.

- Policy 3: Concentrating Development in the Urban Areas.

4c Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Structure Plan 1996–2016 (Approved March 2005)

It is only 'saved policies' of the Structure Plan that still form part of the Development Plan. There are no saved policies that are relevant to this proposal.

4d Leicester City Local Plan (adopted January 2006)

The Proposal Map identifies the application site as being within the countryside. The following policies are relevant to this proposal:

- Policy BE1: Design and Siting of Development.
- Policy NE5: Development in the Countryside.

5.0 Relevant Site History

Approval was granted for the refurbishment, alteration and extension to the farmhouse and some ancillary storage buildings to create two dwellings set around a central courtyard (appli 07/01145/FUL – approved 26 November 2008). This approval incorporates the most of the barns/outbuildings either through conversion or necessary demolition.

An application in March 2008 sought the erection of an agricultural storage unit. This was refused on 7 may 2008 for the following reasons:

1. In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority the proposed building and associated driveway will by virtue of its size, design and siting have an adverse effect on the appearance and character of the open countryside and fails to safeguard and enhance the existing environment, therefore conflicting with Policies BE1 and NE5 of the adopted Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan, as adopted and Planning Policy Statement 7. The proposed building does not achieve a close or well integrated relationship with the existing development, as required by Policy NE5.

2. In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority the proposed building by virtue of its size and scale is an unwarranted intrusion into the countryside, not sustainable and not essential for the agricultural use of the land, therefore conflicting with Policies BE1 and NE5 of the adopted Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan and Planning Policy Statement 7.

6.0 Design Principles

- To create an attractive agricultural building suitable for storage of an array of materials and machinery.
- To minimise the intrusion of the development on the open countryside and the adjacent residential dwellings.
- To enhance the appearance of the site through the removal of a number of unsightly agricultural buildings/barns and replacement with a single structure.
- To enhance the access to the site to the benefit of all highway users.

7.0 Description of the Proposal

The proposal seeks to locate a rectangular storage building to the east of the existing farmyard. It is intended that the building will be used for storage of agricultural equipment and machinery and overflow storage of materials for the applicants fencing business.

The building will be nestled within the existing bund, with minor alterations to its position. The bund itself will be enhanced in scale, whilst further planting will also be undertaken.

The building will provide an external footprint of 14 by 30 metres, with a ridge height of 7.3 metres. The internal area will be 403 sq.m. The building will have a pitched roof, with a slope of 10 degrees. It will be clad in profiled metal sheeting, with a brick/concrete plinth. Two vehicular access points are proposed on the south-western elevation, with access on foot from both the front and rear. Velux windows set within the roof plane will provide natural light to the internal area of the building.

The hardstanding area will be extended to this building, enabling safe access and manoeuvring for vehicles.

In order to enhance the access to the site, it is proposed as part of this application, that the site access onto Rouges Lane is repositioned further to the east. The repositioning of the access, along with the realignment of the hedge will enable the access and associated visibility splays to comply with current guidance.

8.0 Planning Justification

8a Use

The existing barn and storage buildings are currently in a very poor state of repair and provide an unattractive appearance. Their replacement with a modern barn, capable of meeting both the agricultural and non-agricultural needs of the owner should be viewed as a positive element to supporting the agricultural use of the land.

The 2007 application for residential conversion of some of the farm buildings results in the loss of a number of brick buildings to residential use, whilst the larger barns, which are dilapidated, need to be removed in order to provide a suitable residential environment due to their position. The replacement by a modern barn on adjacent land will therefore protect the amenity of the residential properties without creating an isolated building in the countryside.

As the proposed use will incorporate supplementary storage for the site owner's fencing business as well as agricultural use, the limited number of vehicles visiting the site should be considered acceptable for this countryside location. Its proximity to the Hinckley Urban Area also results in only short journeys into the countryside being required. The proposed mixed agricultural and non-agricultural storage use of this building should therefore be considered acceptable and generally in line with **PPS 7** and **Policy NE5** of the Local Plan.

8b Layout

The proposal seeks to position a new barn within close proximity of the rest of the buildings on both this and the adjacent farm complexes. Its location just 41 metres from the building in the adjacent field ensures that it is not viewed in isolation. It has been positioned so that it does not impact detrimentally on either the amenity of the surrounding properties or the countryside. The relationship between the buildings on the site created through this proposal replicates that present on the adjacent complex 'The Barn'. When viewed together, the position of the new building should be considered acceptable. It is also not encroaching on to any land actually in use for agriculture.

In this location, it nestles within the confines of the existing bund area. This minimises its visibility, whilst it will also be screened from public views by the surrounding hedgerows.

Access to the barn is principally from the farmyard side, containing all activity within the farmyard area of the site. The bund will also restrict views of any activities within the enclosed area, further protecting the countryside appearance.

The new building itself will provide an open plan layout, ensuring that a variety of materials can be stored within it to meet the on going needs and adaptation of agriculture and the fencing business. The layout of the site should be considered acceptable. The layout of the land should therefore be considered in line with **Policies BE1** and **NE5** of the Local Plan.

8c Scale

Taking on board the comments in the previous application's reasons for refusal, the scale of the barn has been substantially reduced. The floor area has been reduced from 506 sq.m. to just 403 sq.m., a 20% reduction. The current scheme also represents a 35% reduction in footprint compared to the current barns/outbuildings that will be demolished, actually reducing the impact of the buildings on the countryside.

This proposal has incorporated redefining be building's shape, to create a more traditional rectangular barn. This enables it to relate more effectively with the other nearby barns.

As part of the reduction in the building's footprint, the ridge height has also been reduced. The height of the proposed barn at 7.3 metres is commensurate to the other barns around the farmyards, and will therefore compliment this complex. This is further enhanced by the use of facing materials present on adjoining buildings.

The scale of this building should therefore be considered to comply with **Policies BE1** and **NE5** of the Local Plan.

8d Appearance

The building will provide the appearance of a modern agricultural storage building. Its cladding in sheet metal is typical for such buildings, and will complement the existing barn structures immediately adjoining the proposed barn. All doors and openings will continue this typical agricultural appearance.

The insertion of velux windows into the roof to illuminate the inside will result in a more useable building without detracting from the external appearance, as they will be concealed within the plane of the roof.

Its design, whilst not outstanding, creates a typical agricultural barn, clearly identifying its intended use and complementing the surrounding agricultural buildings. It should therefore be considered in line with **Policies BE1** and **NE5** of the Local Plan.

9e Landscaping

To enhance the screening of the area, the bund will be substantially upgraded. This will incorporate additional planting along the north-western and south-eastern sides of the site with native shrubs and trees. A formal landscaping scheme will be agreed with the Council following approval.

The hedgerow adjacent to the highway will be replanted as shown on the plans. This will protect the appearance of the area adjacent to the highway, and retain a natural habitat for wildlife.

The new access point will have a wearing course of tarmacadam. This will provide a suitable surface for vehicles to enter and egress the site. The additional courtyard area to be created in front of the barn will be laid to concrete as this provides the most cost effective and long lasting surface on which to manoeuvre heavy machinery.

The soft landscaping will enhance the natural appearance of the area, whilst retaining an agricultural appearance. The hard surfacing will be largely screened from public views and thus will protect the appearance of the countryside. The landscaping therefore complies with **Policies BE1** and **NE5** of the Local Plan.

8f Access & Parking

The proposed alterations to the highway access will substantially enhance the visibility of the junction, to the benefit of all road users. This includes all movements for the residential properties and the adjacent farmstead as well as the new barn.

This proposal will generate very limited movements above those already undertaken, and will thus significantly enhance highway safety, with visibility splays in line with Leicestershire County Council's Highways, Transportation and Development. It will also provide sufficient width to comply with the access conditions imposed on application 07/01145/FUL, relating to the residential conversion of certain structures on this site.

The location of the new barn ensures that access and parking to the residential units approved will not be undermined. Sufficient parking/turning area is provided in front of the new building, ensuring that vehicles can egress in a forward gear towards both the highway and the adjacent field.

Access and parking should therefore be considered acceptable.

9.0 Conclusion

This proposal is seeking to erect a modestly sized barn for agricultural and non-agricultural use by the landowner. Its scale, position and design has been refined to be more in

keeping with the area and its use as an agricultural building. It will also provide connectivity between the buildings, enabling the new barn to be viewed as part of the farm complex.

The position of the building, coupled with supporting landscaping will ensure that the proposal has minimal impact on the surrounding countryside and long views of the site from public vistas.

The enhancements proposed to the access will significantly improve vehicular safety relating to this junction, to the benefit of all users.

The proposal has addressed the previous reasons for refusal and should now be considered in line with planning policy.