



PLANNING STATEMENT

Site: Sheepy House Farm, Main Road, Sheepy Magna

Proposal: Retrospective application for the regularisation of the use of the existing building and associated yard area as a sui generis forestry and arboricultural depot

Client: Mr and Mrs Garland

Prepared by: LB Planning

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. On behalf of Mr and Mrs Garland, ('the Applicants'), LB Planning confirms the submission of a retrospective planning application for the use of the existing building and associated yard area at Sheepy House Farm, Main Road, Sheepy Magna, as a sui generis forestry and arboricultural depot.
- 1.2. The proposal comprises the use of the existing building for the storage of plant, machinery and equipment associated with the forestry and arboricultural business. The associated yard area is used for the parking and storage of operational vehicles, staff parking, and the storage of timber and woodchip. The use also involves associated vehicle movements linked to forestry and arboricultural works undertaken off site.
- 1.3. The application has been submitted following engagement with the Local Planning Authority in respect of the existing unauthorised use. The purpose of the submission is therefore to regularise the ongoing operations at the site, supported by the accompanying Transport Statement.
- 1.4. The proposal relates to a defined building and associated yard area within the wider Sheepy House Farm site. The application should therefore be assessed on the basis of the specific forestry and arboricultural use now before the Council, together with the operational information and mitigation set out within the accompanying Transport Statement.
- 1.5. A key consideration in this case is that the use is closely comparable to the type of agricultural activity that could reasonably and lawfully take place from an existing agricultural building and associated yard without the need for a separate planning application. The building and yard could be used for agricultural storage, machinery, plant, tractors, trailers, materials and associated movements, including early morning, evening and seasonal activity. The forestry and arboricultural operation now before the Council is not materially different to that baseline. It is a rural operation, using an existing rural building and yard for purposes closely related to countryside management.
- 1.6. The proposal is therefore not comparable to an unrestricted industrial or commercial depot use. It is a specific operation, with clear similarities to agricultural storage and operational activity, and capable of being controlled by condition.

- 1.7. The application provides the opportunity for the Local Planning Authority to move from an unauthorised position to one where the specific use is properly understood, assessed and controlled through the planning system. This is a material benefit, as it allows the use to be clearly defined, assessed and managed through proportionate planning controls.

2. SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

- 2.1. Sheepy House Farm is located within the open countryside to the south of Sheepy Magna. The wider site comprises an established rural holding with agricultural land, existing buildings, hardstanding, access arrangements and a history of operational rural activity.
- 2.2. The application site relates to an existing building and associated yard area within the wider farm complex. The building forms part of a cluster of existing rural buildings and is not an isolated structure in an otherwise undeveloped field.
- 2.3. The surrounding area is rural in character, comprising agricultural land, farmsteads, rural buildings and sporadic residential development. The site lies outside any defined settlement boundary and is therefore subject to countryside policies. However, the site is not an undeveloped or sensitive greenfield location. It forms part of an established farmstead where buildings, vehicle movements, storage and operational activity already form part of the character of the site.
- 2.4. Access to the site is taken from Main Road via the established access track serving the wider farm complex. The Transport Statement confirms that Main Road is approximately 6m in width and subject to a 40mph speed limit. The existing access benefits from gates set back from the highway, allowing vehicles to wait clear of Main Road while accessing the site.
- 2.5. The access track has recently been levelled and tarmacked. This is a material improvement when compared to the previous unmade surface, as it allows vehicles to enter and leave the site more smoothly and materially reduces the noise previously associated with vehicles travelling over the rough track surface.
- 2.6. The site is therefore a suitable rural location for a forestry and arboricultural depot, subject to appropriate controls over the specific use, its operational area and its vehicle movements.

3. PLANNING HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

- 3.1. Sheepy House Farm is an established rural holding with a history of agricultural and operational activity. The wider site includes a number of existing buildings and associated hardstanding areas, which have historically supported the rural function of the farmstead.
- 3.2. The current application has arisen following enforcement involvement in respect of the existing forestry and arboricultural operation. It is acknowledged that the use is taking place without the benefit of planning permission. However, retrospective planning applications are a legitimate part of the planning system and must be assessed on their planning merits.
- 3.3. The existence of enforcement involvement does not alter the statutory requirement to determine the application in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 3.4. In this case, the application represents a constructive response to the current position. It allows the forestry and arboricultural use to be regularised, rather than remaining unmanaged. It also allows the Council to impose conditions to ensure that the use operates within a defined and enforceable framework.
- 3.5. The application must therefore be assessed on the basis of the specific forestry and arboricultural use now before the Council, together with its defined operational area, access arrangements and proposed controls.

4. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1. The proposal seeks retrospective planning permission for the use of the existing building and associated yard area as a sui generis forestry and arboricultural depot.
- 4.2. The building is used for the storage of plant, machinery and equipment associated with the business. No substantive operational activity takes place inside the building beyond storage. It is not used for manufacturing or general industrial processes.
- 4.3. The associated yard area is used for the parking and storage of vehicles, staff parking, and the external storage of timber and woodchip arising from the operation of the business. The external storage is directly related to the forestry use and is a normal and expected component of this type of operation.

- 4.4. The operator's fleet includes a range of vehicles and equipment used for forestry and arboricultural work. This includes pick-up trucks, light commercial vehicles, tractors, a Unimog, and two larger goods vehicles. The larger vehicles are used for operational purposes, including carrying machinery and equipment to job sites and returning timber and woodchip to the depot.
- 4.5. The Transport Statement identifies the operational fleet as comprising 20 light goods vehicles, 2 heavy goods vehicles and 3 tractor units. The site also accommodates approximately 20 staff, although staff attendance is staggered and not all staff are on site at the same time.
- 4.6. In practical terms, the site operates as a depot. Staff attend the site, collect the relevant vehicle, plant or equipment, and then leave to undertake forestry or arboricultural works elsewhere. Some staff vehicles remain on site during working hours, typically resulting in around 5 to 10 cars being parked at the site at any one time, depending on shift patterns and operational requirements.
- 4.7. The business operates on varied shift patterns. Some work is undertaken during the daytime, while other work takes place during the evening or overnight. This reflects the nature of forestry and arboricultural work, including highway-related or verge works that may need to be undertaken outside normal daytime hours for safety or operational reasons.
- 4.8. The applicant's operational pattern varies depending on the nature and location of the work being undertaken. Some vehicles leave the site during the evening, typically around 18:00 to 19:00, and return in the early morning, around 03:00 to 04:00. This is consistent with the Transport Statement, which identifies daytime shifts typically between 08:00 and 17:00, with a night-time shift commencing at 19:00 where required.
- 4.9. Vehicle movements are therefore not concentrated into a single peak period. The staggered nature of the business means that vehicle movements are spread across the day, evening, night and week, depending on the work being undertaken.
- 4.10. The proposal is also comparable in character and effect to agricultural activity that could lawfully take place from the building and yard. An agricultural building and associated yard could be used for the storage of tractors, trailers, machinery, plant, materials and produce, with associated vehicle movements, including at early

morning, evening and seasonal periods. The forestry and arboricultural use involves a similar operational pattern and a similar relationship with the rural economy.

- 4.11. The Transport Statement identifies a series of proportionate operational measures, including a 10mph speed limit on the access road, signage on entry, a no high-beam policy and CCTV monitoring.
- 4.12. The applicant would also be willing to accept a personal permission, restricting the authorised use to the current operator. This would ensure that the permission could not be used by a different occupier for a materially different or more intensive operation without further planning consideration.

5. PLANNING POLICY

- 5.1. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications are determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.2. In this instance, the Development Plan comprises the Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan and the Sheepy Parish Neighbourhood Plan Review. In addition, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a key material consideration and sets out the Government's overarching planning policies for England.
- 5.3. The following section identifies and assesses the policies most relevant to the determination of this application.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 5.4. The NPPF places clear emphasis on supporting a prosperous rural economy. Paragraph 90 supports the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through the conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings. It also supports the development and diversification of agricultural and other rural businesses.
- 5.5. The current proposal aligns closely with these objectives. It relates to an existing rural building, supports a forestry business, and enables the continued use of an existing farmstead for a rural economic purpose.
- 5.6. The NPPF also requires transport matters to be considered carefully. Paragraph 115 requires safe and suitable access for all users and requires transport impacts to be

addressed. Paragraph 116 confirms that development should only be refused on highways grounds where there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or where the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

- 5.7. The accompanying Transport Statement concludes that the development can be accommodated without unacceptable highway safety impacts and without severe residual cumulative impacts on the highway network. It also identifies a series of access and operational improvements to assist in managing the use going forward.

Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan (Core Strategy 2009 and Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD 2016)

- 5.8. The Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan comprises the Core Strategy and the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document. These documents provide the statutory framework for decision-making and must be considered as a whole.

Core Strategy Policy 3: Rural Areas

- 5.9. Core Strategy Policy 3 supports development within rural areas where it contributes to the diversification of the rural economy and supports sustainable communities.
- 5.10. The proposal accords with this policy by enabling an existing rural building and associated yard area to remain in active economic use, supporting a forestry and arboricultural business. The use is closely related to rural activity, countryside management and the wider rural economy, and represents an appropriate form of rural economic activity within an established farmstead.

Core Strategy Policy 16: Transport Infrastructure

- 5.11. Policy 16 seeks to ensure that development is accessible and does not result in unacceptable transport impacts, whilst promoting safe and efficient movement within the highway network.
- 5.12. The accompanying Transport Statement demonstrates that the development can be safely accommodated on the local highway network. It confirms that the existing access arrangements, together with the resurfaced access track and proposed

operational measures, are capable of supporting the use without unacceptable highway safety impacts. The proposal is therefore consistent with Policy 16.

Policy DM4: Safeguarding the Countryside and Settlement Separation

- 5.13. Policy DM4 seeks to protect the countryside from inappropriate development, whilst recognising that certain forms of development may be acceptable where they are justified and appropriately located.
- 5.14. The proposal is contained within an existing farmstead and relates to the use of an existing building and associated yard area. It does not introduce new built form into the countryside and does not extend the operational area into the wider landscape. The forestry and arboricultural use is rural in character, and is closely comparable to the type of agricultural and land management activity that could reasonably take place from the building and yard. The proposal is therefore consistent with the aims of Policy DM4.

Policy DM10: Development and Design

- 5.15. Policy DM10 seeks to ensure that development complements or enhances the character of the surrounding area, has regard to the local context, and does not result in unacceptable adverse impacts.
- 5.16. In this case, the proposal relates to the continued use of an existing building and yard within an established rural complex. The visual and operational character of the use is consistent with a working rural environment, including the storage of vehicles, plant, machinery, timber and woodchip associated with forestry and arboricultural operations. The use remains contained within the existing operational envelope of the site and can be controlled by condition where necessary. The proposal is therefore consistent with Policy DM10.

Policy DM17: Transport and Access

- 5.17. Policy DM17 requires that development proposals provide safe and suitable access and do not adversely affect highway safety or the operation of the local road network.

5.18. The Transport Statement confirms that the use can be accommodated safely, with staff and operational parking contained within the site and no overspill onto Main Road or the access track. The access track has been levelled and tarmacked, improving the practical operation of the route and reducing noise associated with vehicle movements. The Transport Statement also identifies operational measures, including a site speed limit, signage, a no high-beam policy, CCTV and a dedicated complaints mechanism. The proposal is therefore compliant with Policy DM17.

Policy DM18: Vehicle Parking Standards

5.19. Policy DM18 requires development to provide appropriate parking provision having regard to the nature and scale of the use.

5.20. The proposal provides sufficient space within the application site for operational vehicles, staff parking, loading, unloading and manoeuvring. The Transport Statement confirms that all staff and vehicle parking is contained within the site boundary, with no reliance on parking on the public highway. The proposal is therefore consistent with Policy DM18.

Sheepy Neighbourhood Development Plan Review

5.21. The Sheepy Neighbourhood Development Plan Review forms part of the statutory Development Plan and provides locally specific planning policies aimed at protecting the character of the parish while supporting appropriate development.

5.22. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to balance the protection of rural character with the need to support local businesses and ensure the continued vitality of the rural economy.

Rural Character and Local Economy

5.23. The proposal supports the continued operation of an established rural business and makes effective use of an existing building and yard within a working farmstead. The use is contained within the existing rural complex and does not extend into the wider countryside.

5.24. The forestry and arboricultural use supports local employment and contributes to the rural economy, while remaining capable of being managed through proportionate planning controls.

5.25. As such, the proposal is consistent with the overall objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Leicestershire Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3) (2011-2026)

5.26. The LTP3 sets out the County Council's transport strategy, including objectives relating to accessibility and road safety.

Accessibility and Road Safety

5.27. LTP3 seeks to improve access to employment opportunities, particularly in rural areas, and to enhance road safety for all users.

5.28. The proposal supports these objectives by facilitating rural employment and incorporating measures to ensure that the use operates safely. The accompanying Transport Statement confirms that the use can be accommodated without unacceptable highway safety impacts and identifies operational measures to assist with the management of vehicle movements.

Summary of Policy Compliance

5.29. The Development Plan does not seek to prevent development within rural areas, but rather to ensure that such development is justified, appropriately located and acceptable in its impacts.

5.30. The proposal represents a policy-supported form of rural economic activity. It makes effective use of an existing building and associated yard area, supports a forestry and arboricultural business, and is closely comparable to agricultural and land management activity that could reasonably take place from the site.

5.31. There are no policies within the Development Plan that indicate that the development should be refused in principle. Furthermore, the Transport Statement confirms that the impacts of the use do not reach the threshold required to justify refusal under the NPPF.

- 5.32. In this context, the proposal is considered to be compliant with the Development Plan, and there are no material considerations that indicate that planning permission should be refused.

6. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development

- 6.1. The principle of the development should be assessed having regard to the site's countryside location, the existing rural character of Sheepy House Farm, the nature of the forestry and arboricultural use, and the policy support for rural businesses and rural diversification.
- 6.2. The proposal does not involve the construction of a new commercial building in an undeveloped countryside location. It relates to the continued use of an existing building and associated yard area within an established farmstead.
- 6.3. Forestry and arboricultural activities are inherently rural in nature. The depot function supports works that take place off site. The storage of machinery, plant, timber, woodchip and associated vehicles is a normal operational requirement of this type of business.
- 6.4. The use is therefore materially different from an unrestricted industrial or storage use. It has a functional relationship with forestry and arboricultural work, and its location within an existing rural holding is appropriate in principle.
- 6.5. National and local planning policy support rural economic development and the reuse of existing rural buildings. The principle of the development is therefore acceptable, subject to the detailed assessment of impacts.

Comparable Agricultural Use

- 6.6. Significant weight should be given to the fact that the proposed forestry and arboricultural use is closely comparable to the type of agricultural activity that could take place from the existing building and yard.
- 6.7. The building is an existing rural building within a working farmstead context. Its use for the storage of plant, machinery and equipment is not materially different in character from the storage of agricultural machinery, tractors, trailers, tools,

materials or produce that could reasonably occur as part of an agricultural operation.

- 6.8. Similarly, the use of the yard for vehicle parking, manoeuvring, loading, unloading and the storage of timber and woodchip is comparable to yard activity commonly associated with agriculture, forestry and land management. Such activity is functional, practical and rural in character.
- 6.9. Agricultural use of the building and yard could also generate vehicle movements, including movements by tractors, trailers, machinery and larger vehicles. These movements may occur early in the morning, later in the evening or on a seasonal basis, depending on operational requirements. Such activity is a normal feature of rural working environments.
- 6.10. It is therefore a material consideration that the character and effects of the use are not materially different from the lawful rural baseline of the site. The established and lawful rural operational character of the farmstead, including the type of agricultural activity that could occur from the building and yard, is therefore key in the assessment. On that basis, the forestry and arboricultural use is acceptable in principle.

Rural Diversification and Economic Benefits

- 6.11. The proposal supports an established rural business and contributes to the local rural economy. The forestry and arboricultural operation provides employment for approximately 20 staff, with staggered shift patterns that reflect the operational needs of the business.
- 6.12. The business requires a rural depot from which vehicles, plant, machinery and materials can be stored and deployed. The use of an existing building at Sheepy House Farm is a practical and efficient way of meeting that operational requirement.
- 6.13. The proposal also ensures that an existing rural building remains in productive economic use. This is preferable to the building becoming vacant or underused, and accords with the policy objective of making effective use of existing rural buildings.
- 6.14. The economic benefits of the proposal should be afforded significant weight. The business provides rural employment, supports forestry and land management work, and contributes to the wider rural economy.

Character and Appearance

- 6.15. The use sits comfortably within the established rural and operational character of Sheepy House Farm. The application site forms part of an existing farmstead, where buildings, yard areas, access arrangements, storage and vehicle movements are already part of the character and function of the site.
- 6.16. The proposal does not introduce new built form into the countryside. It relates to the continued use of an existing building and associated yard area, within the existing farm complex. The operational activity, vehicle parking and external storage associated with the forestry and arboricultural use are contained within this established context.
- 6.17. The presence of forestry vehicles, plant, machinery, timber and woodchip is consistent with the practical requirements of a rural operation. These elements are functional in nature and are not out of keeping with the appearance of a working rural yard.
- 6.18. The use has a direct relationship with forestry, arboricultural and countryside management. Its visual character is therefore materially different from an unrestricted commercial or industrial use and should be assessed in that context.
- 6.19. Any visual effects are localised and contained within the existing built and operational envelope of the farmstead. Subject to appropriate controls over the extent of the authorised use and the areas used for external storage, the proposal would preserve the rural character of the area and would not result in unacceptable harm to the character or appearance of the countryside.

Residential Amenity

- 6.20. Residential amenity has been considered in the context of the specific forestry and arboricultural use now before the Council, together with the current access arrangements and the mitigation proposed. The position has materially changed following the resurfacing of the access track, which now provides a smoother and quieter route into the site and directly assists in managing the relationship between operational vehicle movements and nearby residential properties.
- 6.21. The site has historically been served by a rural access track associated with agricultural activity, where vehicle movements can occur at varied times, including

early morning, evening and seasonal periods. The forestry and arboricultural use should therefore be assessed within that rural operational context.

- 6.22. The recent resurfacing of the access track is also material. The tarmacked surface provides a smoother route into the site and materially reduces the potential for clattering, vibration and noise previously associated with vehicles travelling over the unmade track.
- 6.23. This improvement should be afforded significant weight. The amenity position now being assessed is materially different from the position that existed when the access track was unmade, as one of the main sources of disturbance previously associated with the access route has been directly addressed.
- 6.24. As outlined previously, the Transport Statement identifies a series of proportionate operational measures to manage the use going forward. These include a 10mph speed limit on the access track, signage requiring low-speed movements, a no high-beam policy where practicable along the access route, CCTV monitoring, and a dedicated complaints email address so that any issues can be logged and reviewed.
- 6.25. The nature of the business means that some evening and early morning movements are necessary. Such movements are not unusual for forestry, arboricultural, highway-related works and other rural operations, particularly where work must be undertaken outside peak daytime periods for operational or safety reasons.
- 6.26. On this basis, the proposal would not result in unacceptable harm to residential amenity, subject to appropriate and enforceable operational controls.

Highway Safety, Access and Parking

- 6.27. The application is supported by a Transport Statement prepared by Tutum Consulting. The Transport Statement assesses the existing access arrangements, local highway network, parking provision, operational fleet and vehicle trip generation.
- 6.28. The Transport Statement confirms that Main Road is approximately 6m in width and subject to a 40mph speed limit. It also confirms that the site access benefits from gates set back from the highway, allowing vehicles to wait clear of the carriageway.

- 6.29. The access track has recently been levelled and tarmacked. This improves the practical operation of the site and reduces noise associated with vehicles moving along the track.
- 6.30. The Transport Statement identifies that the operational fleet comprises 20 light goods vehicles, 2 heavy goods vehicles and 3 tractor units. It also confirms that approximately 20 staff are associated with the business, but that they attend on a staggered basis.
- 6.31. Vehicle movements are distributed across the day and week. The Transport Statement identifies an average of 40 two-way movements per day and 200 two-way movements per week, relating solely to the forestry operation.
- 6.32. The Transport Statement also confirms that staff and vehicle parking is contained within the site boundary, with no overspill onto Main Road or the access track.
- 6.33. Personal Injury Collision data has also been reviewed as part of the Transport Statement. This identified a single slight injury incident within the study area over the relevant five-year period, with no recorded collisions involving pedestrians or cyclists and no recurring highway safety pattern.
- 6.34. The Transport Statement concludes that refusal on transport grounds would be unwarranted. Having regard to the NPPF test, there is no evidence that the proposal would result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety or that the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 6.35. The proposal is therefore acceptable in highway terms.

Sustainability

- 6.36. The site is located in a rural area and opportunities for walking, cycling and public transport are reflective of that rural context. This must be considered in the context of the use proposed.
- 6.37. A forestry and arboricultural depot is not a use that can realistically operate from a town centre or highly accessible urban location. The business requires space for vehicles, plant, machinery and materials, and it has a functional relationship with rural operations.

- 6.38. The NPPF recognises that planning decisions should support rural businesses and that sustainable transport opportunities will vary between urban and rural areas. In this context, the limited public transport accessibility of the site is not determinative.
- 6.39. The proposal makes use of an existing rural building and associated yard area, supports rural employment, and avoids the need for a new depot to be developed elsewhere. These are positive sustainability benefits.
- 6.40. The proposal is therefore sustainable when considered in the context of its rural location, operational requirements and policy support for rural businesses.

Personal Permission

- 6.41. It is proposed that any permission granted is given on the basis of a personal permission, restricting the use to the current operator.
- 6.42. This would be appropriate in the circumstances of this case because the acceptability of the proposal is closely linked to the specific nature of the existing forestry and arboricultural business, its operational pattern, its fleet, its staffing arrangements and the mitigation measures proposed.
- 6.43. A personal permission would ensure that the authorised use could not simply be taken over by another operator with a materially different or more intensive pattern of activity. It would provide the Local Planning Authority with an additional degree of control and would directly address any concern that the permission could otherwise create an unrestricted commercial depot use in the countryside.
- 6.44. The use could therefore be controlled so that it remains tied to the existing forestry and arboricultural operation. If that operator were to leave the site, any new occupier or materially different operation would require further planning consideration.
- 6.45. This approach is proportionate and reasonable. It recognises the specific planning merits of the current proposal, while giving the Council and local residents reassurance that the permission would not authorise an open-ended or unrestricted use of the site.

Planning Balance

- 6.46. The proposal represents a reasonable and policy-supported form of rural economic development. It uses an existing building and yard within an established farmstead, supports a rural business, and is comparable in character to agricultural activity that could reasonably take place from the site.
- 6.47. The use is not materially different from the lawful rural baseline of the site. The building and yard could be used for agricultural storage, machinery, materials, vehicles and associated operational movements. The forestry and arboricultural use is closely aligned with that functional rural character.
- 6.48. The proposal involves a pattern of vehicle movements that reflects the operational requirements of forestry and arboricultural work, including some evening and early morning activity where required. That pattern is not unusual in a rural working environment.
- 6.49. The resurfacing of the access track materially improves the amenity position by reducing noise from vehicles travelling over the former unmade surface. This should be afforded significant weight.
- 6.50. The proposal for a personal permission further reduces planning risk and provides a direct mechanism to ensure that the use remains tied to the specific operation now before the Council.
- 6.51. As such, the benefits of regularising and controlling the existing forestry and arboricultural use clearly outweigh any limited localised impacts. The proposal accords with the Development Plan when read as a whole and is supported by the NPPF.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1. This Planning Statement supports a retrospective application for the regularisation of the use of an existing building and associated yard area at Sheepy House Farm as a sui generis forestry and arboricultural depot. The application has been submitted following engagement with HBBC Enforcement.
- 7.2. The proposal supports an established rural business, provides rural employment, and makes effective use of an existing building within an established farmstead. It

accords with national and local policy support for rural economic development and the reuse of existing rural buildings.

- 7.3. A key material consideration is that the use is closely comparable to the type of agricultural activity that could reasonably occur from the building and yard. The storage of plant, machinery, vehicles, materials, timber and woodchip, together with associated rural operational movements, is not materially different from the character of a working farmstead.
- 7.4. The application is supported by a Transport Statement, which demonstrates that the use can be accommodated safely, that parking is contained within the site, and that the level of vehicle movements does not result in unacceptable highway safety impacts or severe residual cumulative impacts on the road network.
- 7.5. The recent tarmacking of the access track has materially improved the position in respect of vehicle noise, and the applicant is happy to accept proportionate operational controls to manage the use going forward.
- 7.6. It is proposed that any permission granted is personal to the existing operator. This would ensure that the permission remains tied to the specific forestry and arboricultural operation now being assessed and would prevent the permission being relied upon for a materially different or more intensive operation in the future.
- 7.7. The granting of planning permission would therefore allow the Local Planning Authority to move from an unauthorised position to a controlled and enforceable planning framework. This is a material benefit.
- 7.8. For the reasons set out above, the proposal accords with the Development Plan when read as a whole, is supported by the NPPF, and should be granted planning permission subject to appropriate conditions.