

Design and Access Statement Incorporating Assessment of Planning Policy

Full Application for the Change of use of agricultural land to caravan storage for up to 20 caravans at
Linton Farm, Merrylees Road, Thornton, Coalville Leicestershire, LE67 1AN

9th April 2026 – Andrew Large

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DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT INCORPERATING ASSESSMENT AGAINST PLANNING POLICY

1.0 Introduction

This statement has been prepared by Andrew Large Surveyors Ltd on behalf of Mr A. Pickup in support of a Full Application for the Change of use of agricultural land to caravan storage for up to 20 caravans at Linton Farm, Merrylees Road, Thornton, Coalville Leicestershire, LE67 1AN.

The application site forms part of Linton Farm which is a farm with equestrian and commercial uses operated from the buildings as part of previously approved farm diversification schemes. Located within a rural area, the application site is bound by an existing caravan storage area to the south and south west and open countryside to the remaining boundaries. Bound by open fields the site lies within a rural area although there are clear views of the Merrylees Industrial Estate located to the west of the application site.

This report sets out the site context, planning history, relevant national and local planning policy, and the design and access considerations underpinning the proposal.

2.0 Planning History

Planning Applications:

02/00269/FUL - Erection of steel portal framed agricultural building. Planning Permission granted in 28.03.2002

07/00022/COU- Retrospective application for the siting of agricultural workers caravan, engineering works to create external storage areas and exercise areas for animals, and change of use of land and buildings to a mixed use of agriculture and equestrian. Planning Permission in 06.06.2007

07/00023/COU - Change of use of land and buildings to a mixed use of agriculture and equestrian. Planning Permission in 06.06.2007

07/01205/FUL - Erection of agricultural building. Planning Permission in 05.12.2007

09/00177/FUL- Erection of general purpose agricultural building. Planning Permission in 29.04.2009

11/00070/FUL - Erection of agricultural building Planning Permission in 28.04.2011

12/00608/FUL - Erection of agricultural building. Planning Permission in 07.09.2012

14/00832/CMBGDO - Proposed change of use of agricultural building to two dwellings. Prior Approval Granted in 21.10.2014

19/01174/FUL - Erection of a pig rearing and finishing unit (building 1 of 2). Planning Permission in 11.12.2019
19/01175/FUL - Erection of a pig rearing and finishing unit (building 2 of 2). Planning Permission in 11.12.2019

20/00505/CLE - Certificate of (existing) lawful development relating to use of buildings as workshops (Use Class B1(c): Light Industrial), along with use of the hardstanding area for the parking of fleet vehicles. Certificate Granted in 21.07.2020

20/01389/FUL- Change of use of land from agricultural to caravan storage (Use Class B8) (retrospective). Permission granted in 22.03.2021.

21/01261/FUL Change of use of agricultural land to caravan storage for up to 50 caravans and erection of earth bund and hard standing (part retrospective). Permission Granted in 30.03.2022

3.0 Application Background

The equestrian and commercial elements supplement the main income stream of the property which is agriculture. The applicant has diversified the farming business to become more sustainable and provide a future and job prospects for his family within the existing farming business.

Following earlier approvals for caravan storage the existing facility is at full capacity with demand for more spaces at the site to serve local residents. The applicant currently has a waiting list for additional spaces as they become available.

4.0 Site Appraisal

4.1 Physical & Environmental Context and Planning History

The application site is located to the north west of the existing caravan storage facility and would represent a logical expansion into a small area of land bounded by hedgerows to the north and south and with the opportunity to provide enhancements as part of BNG proposals to the west.

The proposal site is not within any designated landscape area, conservation area, or flood risk zone. It is within Flood Zone 1.

4.2 Social and Economic Context

The extension to the existing caravan storage facility will allow a farming business to continue to grow through a diversified income stream whilst meeting a local demand for caravan storage.

5.0 Design Component

5.1 Use

The proposed site would be used for B8 Storage restricted to caravans only. The use will be small-scale, appropriate to its setting, and compatible with neighbouring land uses.

5.2 Layout

The new storage area would read as continuation of 20/01389/FUL

5.3 Amount

1689.35 sq m

5.4 Scale

Not applicable

5.5 Appearance

The storage facility would comprise tarmac planings over a hardcore base

5.6 Landscaping

Existing vegetation along the site's boundaries will be retained. The proposal will include BNH enhancement measures as per the accompanying documents

5.7 Biodiversity

. The submitted Biodiversity NET gain metric demonstrates the proposed development will result in a biodiversity NET gain of 13% in excess of the statutory minimum.

6.0 Access Component

6.1 Relevant Planning history

20/01389/FUL | Change of use of land from agricultural to caravan storage (Use Class B8) (retrospective) Granted consent: Mon 22 Mar 2021

21/01261/FUL | Change of use of agricultural land to caravan storage for up to 50 caravans and erection of earth bund and hard standing (part retrospective). Granted consent: Wed 30 Mar 2022

19/01174/FUL - Erection of a pig rearing and finishing unit (building 1 of 2) at Linton Farm Merrylees Road Thornton Coalville Leicestershire LE67 1AN. The LHA advised approval with conditions relating to highway matters on 12 November 2019. The Local Planning Authority (LPA) subsequently granted permission on 11 December 2019. The application is currently extant.

The applicant made a material start to this development in the form of installation of the attenuation pond, ground re-modelling involving cut and fill to create a level base and the laying of crushed stone over the term.

19/01175/FUL - Erection of a pig rearing and finishing unit (building 2 of 2) | Linton Farm Merrylees Road Thornton Coalville Leicestershire LE67 1AN. The LHA advised approval with conditions relating to highway matters on 12 November 2019. The LPA subsequently granted permission on 11 December 2019. The application is currently extant as per comments on 19/01174/FUL which equally apply.

6.2 Site Access

The proposal seeks to utilise the existing access onto Merrylees Road, Thornton which is classified C road subject to a 60 mph speed limit. The access visibility splays are substandard and not in accordance with the Leicestershire Highway Design Guide (LHDG).

However, considering it is an existing access and given the proposals would likely represent fewer trips than the currently extant permissions granted under 19/01174/FUL and 19/01175/FUL, in these site-specific circumstances it is not considered that the development proposal would lead to a severe or unacceptable highway impact in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021 and as such the LHA would not seek to resist this application. This is detailed further within the 'Trip Generation' section below.

6.3 Baseline Trip Generation

Previously submitted Supporting information provided by the Applicant provides expected trips associated with the extant, permitted use:

- Straw – 400 round bales = 28 tractor and trailer loads into the site = 56 movements;
- Muck removal – 1 trailer every other day excluding clean out weeks = 175 loads = 350 movements; Piglet delivery – 2000 piglets (4 articulated lorries x 2 per year) = 16 movements;
- Finished pig collection – 1 x 8 wheel lorry, twice a week for 6 weeks = 48 movements;
- Dirty water tank emptying – 8 times per year = 16 movements;
- Feed Lorries – 1 lorry per week excluding clean out weeks = 50 loads = 100 movements; and
- Pig health team visits- bi-weekly excluding clean out weeks = 50 movements

Total traffic movements associated with the pig rearing business = 636 movements.

Proposed Trip Generation

It is considered the previously approved pig rearing unit remain extent and is a material consideration in the assessment of highways movements at this site.

Since the approval of the pig rearing unit the applicant has obtained consent for the storage of 70 caravans. This proposal would increase the number of caravans stored by 20 to a total of 90.

The applicants provides the following commentary of frequency of access observed by the existing 70 caravans:

User of the site can be broken down into three types:

1. 1/3 of user visit the facility 6 times per annum
2. 1/3 of users visit the facility 3 times per annum
3. 1/3 of users visit the facility once per annum

This is equivalent to 3.33 visits (6.66 tow way movements per annum)

20 additional caravans = 133 two movements

Total caravan movements = 599.4 movements

6.4 Highway Safety

The applicant has reviewed personal injury collision data for the previous seven years. There have been no recorded collisions at this access within the last 7 years. It is therefore considered the proposed development should not exacerbate the existing highway safety situation.

6.5 Highway Summary

Manual for Streets 2 Guidance promotes an evidence based approach to development proposals and their effects on the highways networks. Taking into account the local circumstance and extant planning consents it is considered there can not be considered a cumulative harm arising to preclude against what is a comparatively modest rural development.

7.0 Assessment against Planning Policy

7.1 National Planning Policy Framework 2024

- The proposed development has been assessed and evaluated against the following listed policies as well as other relevant design criteria associated with the Hinckley and Bosworth Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD (SADMP).
- Sustainable development is the crux of the National Planning Policy Framework, with the intent that all development should be sustainable and appropriate whilst minimising its adverse impact.

Making effective use of land

Para 124. *Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or 'brownfield' land.*

The majority of users of the existing caravan storage facility at Linton Farm live within a five mile radius thus meeting a local need.

Building a strong, competitive economy

Para 85. *Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. This is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation, and in areas with high levels of productivity, which should be able to capitalise on their performance and potential.*

Paragraph 85 supports the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of businesses in rural areas, both through the conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings. The NPPF recognises that sites to meet local business needs may exist beyond existing settlements, and planning decisions should enable the development of such rural enterprises.

NPPF paragraph 85 states the support for planning which enables the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprises in rural areas along with encouraging development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses. The caravan storage provides an alternative income stream to the farming business at Linton Farm and provides stability for the growing family.

Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Para 187. *Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:*

- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);*
- b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;*
- c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;*
- d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and*

incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs;

e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and

f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

This proposal would read as continuation of the existing caravan storage facility utilising existing internal access. The site is bounded by hedgerow and trees a supplemental hedge would be planted to the southern end of the site as part of BNG enhancements.

7.2 Hinckley and Bosworth – Site Allocation and Development Management Policies DPD (SADMP)

Policy DM1 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development

Planning applications that accord with the policies in the Local Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Borough Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise, taking into account whether:

a) Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or

b) Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.

The proposal accords with the development plan and the NPPF; it represents sustainable rural development allowing an existing farming business to diversify and grow.

DM4 - Safeguarding the Countryside and Settlement Separation

To protect its intrinsic value, beauty, open character and landscape character, the countryside will first and foremost be safeguarded from unsustainable development. Development in the countryside will be considered sustainable where:

...

...

b) The proposal involves the change of use, re-use or extension of existing buildings which lead to the enhancement of the immediate setting; or

c) It significantly contributes to economic growth, job creation and/or diversification of rural businesses; or ...

i) It does not have a significant adverse effect on the intrinsic value, beauty, open character and landscape character of the countryside; and

ii) It does not undermine the physical and perceived separation and open character between settlements; and

iii) It does not create or exacerbate ribbon development;

iv) If within a Green Wedge, it protects its role and function in line with Core Strategy Policies 6 and 9; and

v) If within the National Forest, it contributes to the delivery of the National Forest Strategy in line with Core Strategy Policy 21

Development in the countryside is supported where it reuses or replaces existing buildings, enhances the setting, or contributes to rural employment. The proposed extension to the existing caravan storage facility would be effectively screen and meet and identified local need.

Policy DM6 – Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geological interest

Development proposals must demonstrate how they conserve and enhance features of nature conservation and geological value including proposals for their long term future management.

Existing vegetation is retained and reinforced. The proposal offers the opportunity for new native planting to strengthen the site's boundaries.

Policy DM7 – Preventing Pollution and flooding

Adverse impacts from pollution and flooding will be prevented by ensuring that development proposals demonstrate that: drainage function of water bodies in the borough; provided;

a) It will not adversely impact the water quality, ecological value or

b) Appropriate containment solutions for oils, fuels and chemicals are

c) All reasonable steps are taken through design, siting and technological solutions to ensure the abatement of obtrusive light to avoid sky glow, glare and light intrusion;

d) It would not cause noise or vibrations of a level which would disturb areas that are valued for their tranquillity in terms of recreation or amenity;

e) Appropriate remediation of contaminated land in line with minimum national standards is undertaken;

f) It will not contribute to poor air quality; unstable land; and

g) It will not result in land instability or further intensify existing

h) The development doesn't create or exacerbate flooding by being located away from areas of flood risk unless adequately mitigated against in line with national policy.

The site is located in Flood Zone 1 according to the online flood map, and therefore, has a low probability of flooding from rivers and the sea.

Policy DM10 – Development and Design Developments will be permitted providing that the following requirements are met:

- a) It would not have a significant adverse effect on the privacy and amenity of nearby residents and occupiers of adjacent buildings, including matters of lighting, air quality (including odour), noise, vibration and visual intrusion; be adversely affected by activities in the vicinity of the site;*
- b) The amenity of occupiers of the proposed development would not be adversely affected by activities in the vicinity of the site;*
- c) It complements or enhances the character of the surrounding area with regard to scale, layout, density, mass, design, materials and architectural features;*
- d) The use and application of building materials respects the materials of existing, adjoining / neighbouring buildings and the local area generally;*
- e) It incorporates a high standard of landscaping where this would add to the quality of the design and siting;*
- f) It maximises opportunities for the conservation of energy and resources through design, layout, orientation and construction in line with Core Strategy Policy 24;*
- g) Where parking is to be provided charging points for electric or low emission vehicles are included where feasible;*
- h) An appropriate Sustainable Drainage Scheme is submitted to and approved by the relevant Authority. Schemes should incorporate wildlife areas, ponds, swales and permeable paving where appropriate;*
- j) It maximises natural surveillance and incorporates the principles of Secured by Design and has considered the incorporation of fire safety measures.*

The proposed storage area would be effectively screen and exist within the context of the existing storage areas.

Policy DM17 - Highways and Transportation Development proposals will be supported where they:

- a) Seek to make the best use of existing public transport services and, where appropriate, provide opportunities for improving and sustaining the viability of those services;*
- b) Seek to ensure that there is convenient and safe access for walking and cycling to services and facilities;*

c) Demonstrate that there is not a significant adverse impact upon highway safety; and in the case of development that generates significant movement;

d) That the development is located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised;

e) Where it can be demonstrated that the residual cumulative impacts of development on the transport network are not severe. Where appropriate, improvements will be required to be undertaken to the highways and transportation network to limit any significant impacts arising from the development (taking into account cost effectiveness). All proposals for new development and changes of use should reflect the highway design standards that are set out in the most up to date guidance adopted by the relevant highways authority

The existing access will be retained. The scale of use will not materially increase traffic generation. See section 6.0 for further clarity.

DM18 Vehicle Parking Standards

All proposals for new development will be required to provide an appropriate level of parking provision justified by an assessment of the site location, type of housing, other modes of transport available (e.g. public transport and cycle provision) and appropriate design. Any development will be expected to provide disabled parking provision. Developments within Hinckley Town Centre should demonstrate that they would not exacerbate existing problems in the vicinity with increased on-street parking.

Not applicable

7.3 Bagworth, Thornton and Stanton Under Bardon Neighbourhood Plan

This has not been adopted so is given only limited weight

Broadly the Neighbourhood Plan includes the following aspects:

Support for Rural Employment: The plan aims to facilitate appropriate employment opportunities and supports "purposeful and desirable development" that protects the countryside while encouraging local economic growth.

Design Standards for Commercial Proposals: Policy H5 (or Policy H7 in some draft versions) states that commercial proposals, including those in rural areas, will be supported where they meet specific building design principles, such as respecting the character of the villages.

Protection of Open Countryside: Land outside the defined Settlement Boundaries (Policy H3) is classified as open countryside, where development is restricted to those categories identified in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the local plan. This typically includes rural diversification, agriculture, and appropriate tourism developments, provided they are sustainable.

It is considered the development proposal for an extension of the existing caravan storage facility to meet a local need could be supported at this location given the opportunity for effective screening and supporting a local farming business

8.0 Conclusion

This Design and Access Statement demonstrates that the proposed change of use of agricultural land to caravan storage for up to 20 caravans at Linton Farm, Merrylees Road, Thornton is a modest and logical extension to the existing lawful caravan storage operation. The proposal would make effective use of land within an established farm diversification setting and would respond to an identified local demand for additional caravan storage spaces.

The development would support the continued viability of the wider farming business by providing an additional and sustainable income stream, consistent with national policy support for rural enterprise and diversification. It would utilise the existing site access and operate in the context of existing commercial and storage uses already established at Linton Farm. On this basis, the proposal represents sustainable rural development.

In visual and environmental terms, the site is well related to the existing storage area, enclosed by existing hedgerows, and capable of further enhancement through additional planting and biodiversity measures. The proposal would not result in any significant harm to the character or appearance of the countryside, nor would it give rise to unacceptable impacts in relation to residential amenity, flood risk, ecology, or drainage.

In highway terms, the proposal would use the existing access arrangement and, having regard to the extant permissions and trip generation evidence set out in this statement, would not result in a severe or unacceptable impact on highway safety or the local road network.

Overall, the proposal accords with the relevant provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework, the Hinckley and Bosworth Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD, and the general aims of emerging neighbourhood planning policy. The development is therefore considered to be a justified, proportionate and sustainable form of rural diversification for which planning permission should be granted.

Signed *Andrew Large*

Andrew J Large MRICS FAAV

Dated: 9th April 2026