

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council,
Planning Department,
Hinckley Hub,
Rugby Road,
Hinckley,
LE10 0FR

Our ref: 1465202.2.BM
Your ref: PP-12663853

14th December 2023

Dear Planning,

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)

Application for the erection of an agricultural building (for the storage of hay and straw bales) at Woodview Farm, Ashby Road, Stapleton, LE9 8JD

Introduction

1. We write on behalf of our client, Mr Max Marshall ('the applicant'), and can confirm submission of the above application electronically via the Planning Portal today (ref: PP-12663853). This letter, acting as a Planning, Design and Access Statement, should be read in conjunction with the following drawings, prepared by Marrons:
 - Location Plan
 - Existing Site Plan, drawing no. A-E10-002
 - Proposed Plan, drawing no. A-P10-001
 - Proposed Floorplans and Elevations, drawing no. A-P11-001
2. This Statement sets out the planning background of relevance to this application, provides a description of the site and the surrounding area and of the proposed development. The planning policy context against which the proposals will be assessed is then identified, before setting forth our conclusions that demonstrate why planning permission should be granted for the proposed development.
3. This planning application has been submitted alongside a BACS payment for the sum of £4,046.00 plus the £64.00 admin fee, the correct fee for an application of this type.

Description of Site and Surrounding Area

4. Woodview Farm is located in the open countryside approximately 800m north of the edge of Stapleton. Dobbies Garden Centre is located approximately 300m to the north of the farmyard. The site is located to the west of Ashby Road from which the site is accessed via a hard surfaced access track.
5. The site comprises a range of modern agricultural buildings within the central farmyard which is accessed via an agricultural track to the north of the existing access. Woodview Farmhouse lies to the east of the main yard with Woodview Farm Bungalow located on the southern side of the access drive.

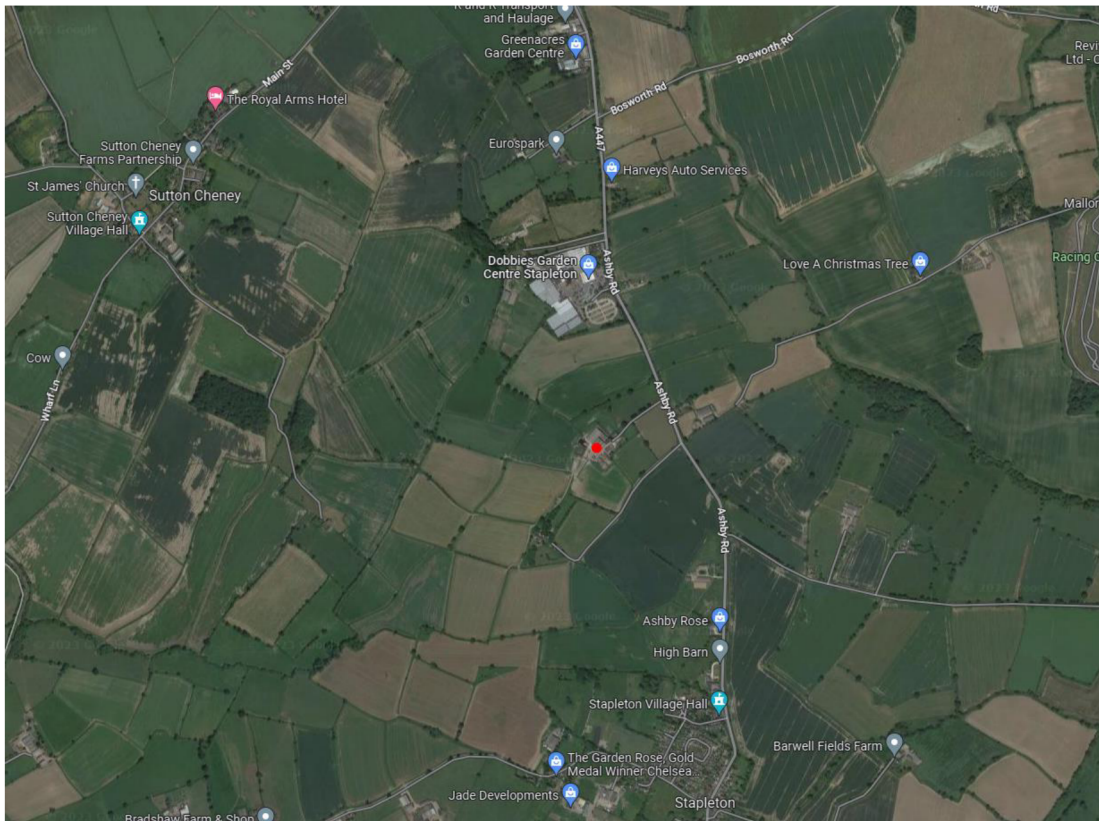


Figure 1. Site location (red dot)

6. There are no designated heritage assets (Listed Buildings or Conservation Areas) in the immediate area. The farmyard and dwellings falls within Flood Zone 1, at extremely low risk of flooding (Fig.2) and the site is not within an area of Green Belt.

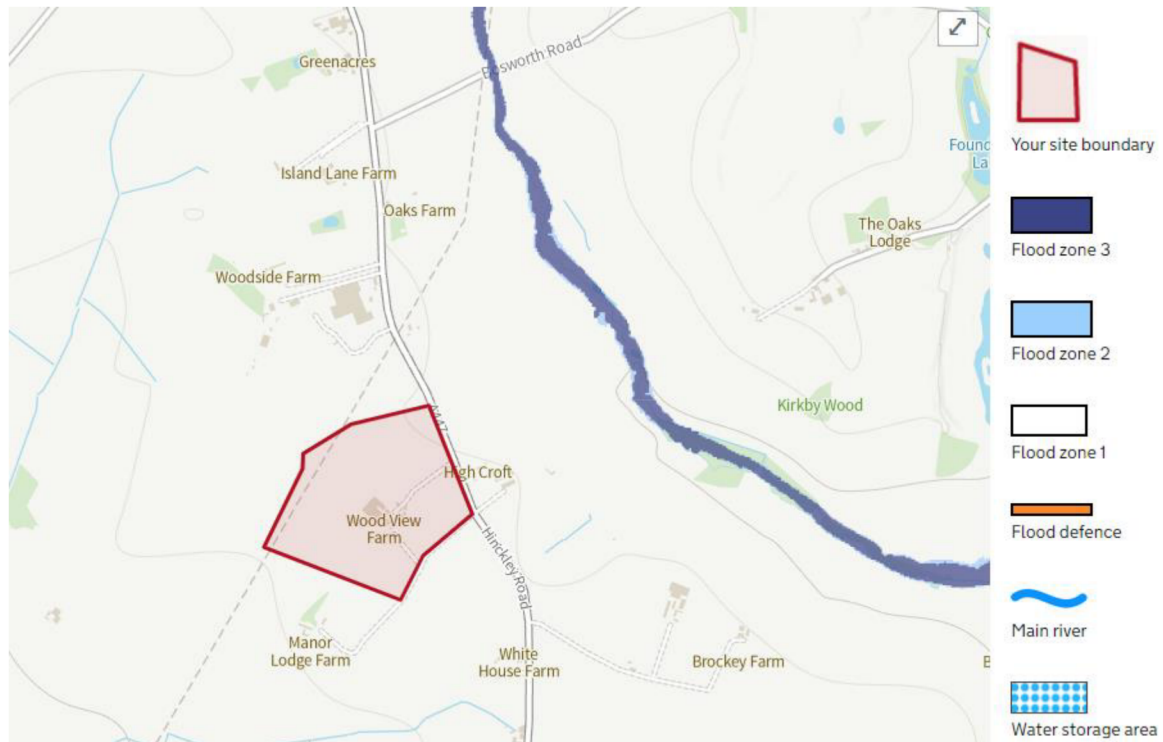


Figure 2. Environment Agency Flood Map

i. Planning History

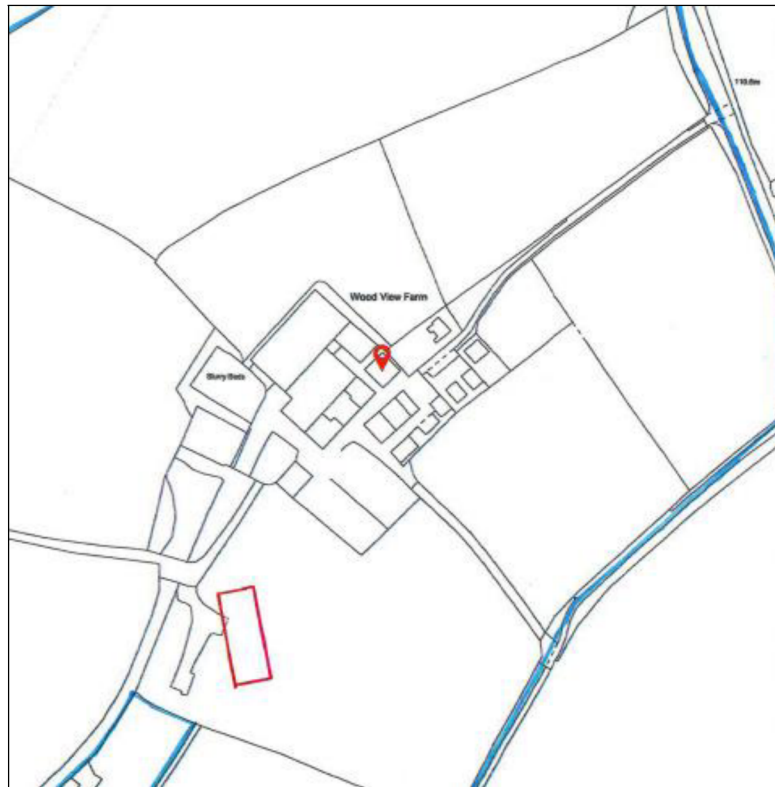
7. The planning history of the application site is summarised in Table 1 below.

Planning Application No.	Description	Date of Decision	Decision	LPA Link
21/00485/AGDO	Agricultural grain store	16 th June 2021	Prior Approval Not Required	21/00485/AGDO Agricultural Grain Store Woodview Farm Ashby Road Stapleton Leicester Leicestershire LE9 8JD (hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk)
20/01268/CLE	Certificate of Lawful Existing Use for single dwelling	11 th June 2021	Permitted	20/01268/CLE Certificate of Lawful Existing Use for single dwelling Woodview Farm Bungalow Ashby Road Stapleton Leicester Leicestershire

				LE9 8JD (hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk)
20/00365/TGDO	Installation of fixed line broadband electronic communications apparatus	19th June 2020	Prior Approval Not Required	20/00365/TGDO Installation of fixed line broadband electronic communications apparatus Woodview Farm Ashby Road Stapleton Leicester Leicestershire LE9 8JD (hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk)
06/00334/FUL	Erection of two agricultural buildings	21st June 2006	Permitted	06/00334/FUL ERECTION OF TWO AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS Woodview Farm Ashby Road Stapleton Leicester LE9 8JD (hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk)
89/01011/4	Stationing of mobile home	20th February 1990	Refused	89/01011/4 STATIONING OF MOBILE HOME Woodview Farm Ashby Road Stapleton Leicester Leicestershire LE9 8JD (hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk)

Table 1 – Planning history of the application site, as available on the Council’s public access page.

8. The applicant has previously implemented planning permission ref: 21/00485/AGDO for the erection of a grain store in the location shown via the red rectangle in the screenshot below:



The Proposed Development

9. Permission is sought for the erection of an agricultural barn measuring 48.9m x 19m, with a total G.I.A of 872 sq.m. The height of the barn to the eaves is 9.5m. The barn is to be sited to the east of the existing grain store, and will be bordered by established hedgerow to the south. The barn will be accessible by machinery through the open-sided east elevation. The barn is proposed to be clad in pressed steel to the walls and roof, powder coated in 'Merlin Grey' to ensure assimilation of the barn with the surrounding natural environment and the existing adjacent agricultural grain store.
10. The proposed barn will be used for the storage of hay and straw, produced on the wider Farmstead and on the neighbouring Farm (also under the ownership of the Applicant). The barn will be accessed via the existing access from Ashby Road via a hard surfaced track.

i. The Requirement for the Agricultural Barn

11. The agricultural barn for which permission is sought is required for business and security purposes. The barn is required to provide secure, dry storage for hay and straw bales.
12. There are approximately 140 acres of arable land at Wood View Farm (the application site) and a further 40 acres at the neighbouring unit owned by the Applicant, Brockey Farm. Each acre of arable land can produce 7no. bales of straw. In addition, there is approximately 80 acres of grassland from which hay can be cropped, at a rate of 12no. bales per acre (from two cuts). The Applicant produces '6 string bales' on both farming units, with the proposed barn intended to provide secure storage for bales produced on both units. A '6 string bale'

measures 2400mm in length by 1200mm in width and 900mm in height, producing a volume of 2.59m³ per bale.

13. With the above in mind, the land available has the potential to produce the following:

- 180 acres of arable land, at 7 straw bales per acre: 180 x 7 = 1,260 straw bales
 - 80 acres of grassland, at 12 hay bales per acre: 80 x 12 = 960 hay bales
-

1,260 straw bales + 960 hay bales = **2,220 bales.**

14. The proposed barn has an internal volume to eaves height of 6,477m³. Within the internal volume available, a maximum of 2,500 bales could therefore be stored. Due to the risk of self-combusting however, the bales should not be stored with no circulation space around them as ventilation is important in reducing this risk. The Applicant has advised that only around 2,000 bales could be stored safely in the proposed barn at any one time.
15. With the above in mind, the agricultural barn proposed is evidently of a scale appropriate to the Applicant's agricultural requirements.

Relevant Planning Policies

16. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Section 38(6)) requires that applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
17. The Development Plan for the application site consists of the relevant policies of the Hinckley & Bosworth Core Strategy (adopted December 2009) and the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD ("SADMP DPD") (adopted July 2016). The National Planning Policy Framework (September 2023) will also be a material consideration.
18. The Core Strategy adoption predates all versions of the Framework, whilst the adoption of the SADMP DPD predates the latest four revisions. In accordance with Annex 1, paragraph 219 of the Framework, due weight will be given to the policies contained within the Development Plan according to their degree of consistency with the Framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).

i. Core Strategy (adopted December 2009)

19. There are no policies of direct relevance to the development proposals within the Core Strategy.

ii. Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD (adopted July 2016)

20. The following policies from the Site Allocations and Policies DPD are considered to be relevant to this application:

- Policy DM1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- Policy DM4 – Safeguarding the Countryside and Settlement Separation
- Policy DM6 – Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geological Interest
- Policy DM7 – Preventing Pollution and Flooding
- Policy DM10 – Development and Design
- Policy DM17 – Highways and Transportation

iii. National Planning Policy Framework (September 2023)

21. The following sections of the Framework are considered to be relevant to this application:
- Chapter 2 – Achieving sustainable development
 - Chapter 6 – Building a strong, competitive economy
 - Chapter 12 – Achieving well-designed places
 - Chapter 14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
 - Chapter 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
22. The relevant extracts from the above policies are discussed and referred to in the Assessment section below.

Planning Policy Assessment

i. Principle

23. Policy DM1 of the SADMP DPD and section 2 of the Framework are both concerned with achieving sustainable development. Paragraph 8 of the Framework elaborates upon the definition of sustainable development, and states that the planning system has three overarching objectives:
- a) *an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*
 - b) *a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and*
 - c) *an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and*

pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

24. At paragraph 11 sub-point (d) of the Framework, it is stated that:

“where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
- ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole”.*

25. The Development Plan for the Borough is considered aged, and there are no specific policies within the adopted documents relating to the erection of new agricultural buildings. The proposals therefore fall to be considered principally against the policies contained within the Framework.

26. The application site is located within the open countryside, where agriculture is a clear acceptable use that is supported within sections 2 and 6 of the Framework. Within the supporting text for Policy DM4 of the SADMP at paragraph 13.8, it is stated that *“in recognition of the need to support rural communities and in line with national policy, proposals which assist the diversification of the rural economy without detriment to the environment will be supported in principle. Rural enterprise can entail a variety of activities which can all contribute to job creation and economic growth, including but not exclusively, uses related to agriculture, tourism, business and community uses”*. The proposed development will meet the ‘agricultural’ aspect by allowing for the Applicant to protect their existing agricultural business through the provision of secure and weather-proof storage.

27. Paragraph 84 of the Framework reads as follows:

“Planning policies and decisions should enable:

- a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;*
- b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;*
- c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and*
- d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship”.*

28. As indicated by the Proposed Site Plan, the agricultural barn will be located adjacent to an existing agricultural barn, with an extensive, established hedgerow to the southern boundary. The hedgerow will provide extensive screening qualities, which coupled with the flat topography of the land and the proposed siting away from the highway and adjacent to the existing barn, will ensure that the agricultural barn is not viewable from within the public realm. The proposed development is therefore wholly considered to accord with all relevant criterion of paragraph 84.

iii. Design

29. In terms of the design of the agricultural barn, pressed steel cladding to the walls and roof in 'Merlin Grey' is proposed to ensure successful assimilation of the development with the existing adjacent agricultural barn. The proposed siting of the barn has been carefully considered, with the barn proposed in proximity to the existing barn whilst allowing for ample manoeuvring space for large agricultural machinery. The wider field parcel is enclosed via established hedgerow to three boundaries, which together will assist with screening the proposed barn from view from within the public realm.
30. It has been demonstrated throughout the 'The Requirement for the Agricultural Barn' section of this Statement that the proposed scale is appropriate for the intended use. The proposed development is therefore considered to accord with Policy DM10 of the SADMP DPD and section 12 of the Framework.
31. The proposed building would be sited (at its closest point) approximately 320 metres from the closest highway (Ashby Road) and given the site's topography and intervening established hedgerow vegetation, the proposal will not introduce an unduly prominent feature when viewed from the highway or introduce an alien feature within the surrounding rural landscape. The proposals are therefore also considered to accord with section 15 of the Framework.
32. From a residential amenity perspective, Policy DM10(b) of the SADMP DPD states that development will be permitted providing that it would not have a significant adverse effect on the privacy and amenity of nearby residents and occupiers of adjacent buildings, including matters of light, air quality (including odour), noise, vibration and visual intrusion. There are two dwellings on the Farmstead itself approx. 200m north of the application site. However, the nature of the proposals as storage for hay and straw bales entails that there would be no adverse affects arising as a result of the proposals.

iv. Other Matters

a) Highway Considerations

33. Policy DM17 of the SADMP DPD relates to highways and transportation. Policy DM17 states development proposals will be supported where they seek to make the best use of existing public transport services and, where appropriate, provide opportunities for

improving and sustaining such services, as well as developments which seek to ensure that there is convenient and safe access for walking. Given the location of the application site there is little opportunity to use public transport, improve public transport or provide walking and cycling routes. Policy DM17 goes on to state that developments should demonstrate that there is not a significant adverse impact upon highway safety; and in the case of development that generates significant movement that the development is located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised.

34. The site benefits from an established point of access and a hard surfaced agricultural access track, in the location shown via the red line on the accompanying Location Plan. The proposed development would not generate any additional vehicle movements, as the barn would service existing activities. The use of the agricultural access track separates farm traffic from domestic traffic, ensuring the safety of all users in accordance with the aims of Policy DM17 of the SADMP DPD and section 9 of the Framework.

b) Landscape Considerations

35. The site lies in the Stoke Golding Rolling Farmland Landscape Character Area as set out in the HBBC 2017 Landscape Character Assessment. The Landscape Sensitivity Assessment deduced that the area has an overall medium-high sensitivity to residential and commercial development due to the rural and relatively tranquil character of the area and the inter-visibility with the wider countryside. The Landscape Sensitivity Assessment states that new development should maintain the rural character of the landscape, successfully integrate in to the landscape through sensitive design, siting and including landscape mitigation. New agricultural buildings should be sensitively located, preferably in close proximity to existing buildings to reduce visual impact.
36. As demonstrated throughout this 'Planning Policy Assessment' section of this Statement, the proposals are evidently in accordance with the Landscape Character Area objectives discussed above.

c) Ecology/Green Infrastructure

37. Policy DM6 of the SADMP outlines that development proposals must demonstrate how they conserve and enhance features of nature conservation, and that on site features should be retained, buffered and managed favourably to maintain their ecological value. The existing hedgerow to the south of the application site will be retained and unaffected by the proposals, as the nearest corner of the barn will be 15.5m north of the edge of the hedge to ensure no encroachment upon its RPA.
38. There are no known ecological constraints on the site, with the site predominately comprising an area of managed agricultural land and existing hardstanding. The proposals therefore do not conflict with the objectives of section 15 of the Framework.

d) Flood Risk

39. Policy DM7 requires developments proposals to demonstrate that it does not create or exacerbate flooding by being located away from area of flood risk unless adequately mitigated against. As shown in Figure 3 the site lies within Flood Zone 1, at extremely low risk of flooding.
40. There are no other material considerations that should prevent planning permission for the proposed development from being granted.

Conclusions

41. The proposed agricultural barn will secure the continued operation of the Farmstead as a rural enterprise. The barn has been designed to limit visual impact by way of its discrete siting, on a Farmstead where there is a demonstrated requirement for the Applicant to store hay and straw bales in a secure space, protected from theft and inclement weather.
42. It has been demonstrated that the proposed development will not give rise to adverse impacts by way of its location, siting, or scale. It is respectfully suggested that the proposed development wholly accords with the relevant policies of the Development Plan and that there are no material considerations to indicate that planning permission should not be granted for the proposed development.
43. We look forward to hearing that the application has been validated and working with the Council's Planning Officer. Please do not hesitate to contact either Brian Mullin, Charlotte El Hakiem or Megan Simpson at this office to discuss any details of the proposal.

Yours sincerely,

