

**ERECTION OF THREE
AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS
AT
FAIRSPEAR HILL FARM,
LEAFIELD OX29 9NY**

**REVISED LAYOUT:
SUPPORTING STATEMENT**

September 2021





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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This is the third application for agricultural buildings at Fairspear Hill Farm. This application follows the withdrawal of the previous application and is for an amended position which moves the buildings further to the west.
- 1.2 The case officer, Kim Smith, has been consulted on this amendment and has put in writing that the amended scheme, if also supported by a landscaping scheme, will be acceptable to officers. Obviously that is not binding on the decision of the Council.
- 1.3 In short the application seeks the same buildings as before. The two cattle sheds have been combined into a single building and the gap between the cattle shed and the straw barn has been reduced. This has been achieved by moving all the buildings westwards, so that the level yard for loading and unloading straw etc remains to the east.
- 1.4 The proposal is shown in sketch form below. The red buildings were the previous application, the green lines represent the revised proposals.

Insert 1: The Revised Proposals Compared



- 1.5 As the need for and principles of the development have already been considered, this application report focuses on the landscape considerations and changes and only provides a brief summary of the other issues.
- 1.6 As all applications must, however, be considered on their own merits the other considerations are dealt with by appending the earlier reports and are referenced as necessary.
- 1.7 This report is therefore structured as follows:
- (i) section 2 describes the consultation leading to the revised proposals;
 - (ii) with section 3 describing the proposals;
 - (iii) section 4 sets out the landscaping considerations;
 - (iv) and section 5 summarises the other key issues;
 - (v) with a summary and conclusions in section 6.

2 CONSULTATION LEADING TO THE REVISED PROPOSALS

- 2.1 A planning application was submitted in August 2020 for three agricultural buildings. Following officer recommendations to withdraw and undertake pre-application consultation, these were withdrawn in December 2020.
- 2.2 Pre-application consultation then took place, with a Zoom conference call taking place in early February 2021. The upshot of the consultation was that the proposals were acceptable, subject to landscape impact considerations. The landscape consultee was asked to comment, but no comments were received.
- 2.3 In view of the urgency to get buildings provided for the farm, the applications were resubmitted in March 2021. The buildings were the same and the position within the farm was the same.
- 2.4 Following a change of planning officer, Kim Smith has been very helpful in looking at the proposals. She has reviewed an alternative site that we have considered and has reviewed the alternative arrangements that we have considered.
- 2.5 The layout now submitted follows this consultation and site visit process.
- 2.6 To move the buildings as proposed necessitates a new planning application because it takes the buildings out of the red line of the previous applications, such that they cannot be considered as an amendment.
- 2.7 The officer advice is:
- (i) **“subject to appropriate tree and shrub planting along the western, eastern and northern boundaries and a levels condition I could recommend the proposal for approval”;**
 - (ii) **“In order to ensure that any landscaping serving the site can be controlled through a planning condition in terms of securing implementation and long term maintenance I would suggest that one application is submitted for all buildings with the red edged application site area containing the land upon which the additional planting is to take place”;**
 - (iii) **“I would suggest that your landscape consultant provides details up front of the proposed species and planting plan with the application. This will give greater certainty at the point of decision that the impact of the buildings within the AONB can be adequately mitigated”.**

2.8 Subject to the above, the advice is that she would anticipate being in a position to recommend the application favourably. This is, of course, an officer opinion and is not binding on the Uplands Area Planning Sub-Committee.

3 THE REVISED PROPOSALS

- 3.1 The straw and machinery storage barn remains as previously designed. However it is moved approximately 30 metres to the west and will be built just west of the existing yard area.
- 3.2 In terms of design and orientation, and use, it will be unchanged from the previous proposals.
- 3.3 Because the working yard for loading and unloading the straw, hay etc is retained in its current position, there is scope to reduce the gap between the front of the cattle sheds and the straw barn. Feeder wagons can operate a circular flow and straw can be carried round to the ends. Hence the gap between the buildings has been reduced to 10 metres from 15 metres.
- 3.4 The proposals as applied for are slightly different from the pre-application consultation, because we have realised that we need room to get a tractor into and out of the end elevations, where there are large gates, for bedding out and cleaning out of the buildings. The buildings are not repositioned, but the hardstanding is extended and landscaping close to the northern end of the building is avoided.
- 3.5 A landscape assessment is included with this application and a landscaping proposal is being prepared that follows the recommendations of the landscape assessment.
- 3.6 The revised proposals are shown on the application plans.

4 LANDSCAPE CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 The amendments have been driven by landscape impact considerations.

4.2 The site is largely level to the east and then starts to slope away gently to the west. This can be seen in the following photograph.

Photo 1: The Site Viewed from the South



4.3 The existing yard area, visible in this photograph, is level. This will be retained, although additional landscaping will be added on the roadside (eastern) boundary.

4.4 The straw barn will be able to be cut into the slope slightly, as shown on the plans. It will be in the position approximately marked by the people in the above photograph (which is where the cattle sheds were previously proposed).

4.5 The cattle and poultry building will then be on slightly lower ground to the west.

4.6 A landscaping scheme is being prepared and will be submitted for consideration as part of this application.

4.7 As described in the "Landscape and Visual Appraisal" by LDA Design, July 2021, the proposed buildings can only really be seen from close up as you pass the site, or for those travelling southeast along Leafield Road.

4.8 The revised siting allows the buildings to be lowered down the slope and allows for more landscaping. It has been considered, at officer level, to be acceptable in the AONB.

5 OTHER KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 As other matters have been considered already they are included for completeness, mostly by way of cross reference.
- 5.2 The farm enterprises and the existing farmyard are described in **Appendix KCC1**. That is the text from the Supporting Statement from March 2021. That report provides information as follows:
- (i) a description of the existing farmyard and enterprises in section 2;
 - (ii) an explanation of the difficulties requiring new buildings in section 3;
 - (iii) a description of the proposals in section 4;
 - (iv) the relevant planning policy in section 5;
 - (v) an analysis in section 6. This section refers to the previous layout, so the position of the buildings is now incorrect but the narrative remains relevant.
- 5.3 A plan showing the owned and rented land is provided in **Appendix KCC2**.
- 5.4 A building needs assessment, previously supplied to the Council in December 2020, is set out in **Appendix KCC3**.
- 5.5 There have been other letters addressing the lack of space in the existing farmyard, but as that has been accepted by the Council those letters are not appended.
- 5.6 In respect of environmental considerations:
- (i) **biodiversity**. The site is improved grassland of limited ecological interest;
 - (ii) **flooding**. The site is on a slope in flood zone 1. The Applicants will collect water for use on the farm via tanks, with the overflows going to a soakaway system under the field;
 - (iii) **highways**. There has been no objection from highways. The visibility on exit is good, provided that roadside brambles are kept cut;
 - (iv) **amenity**. The buildings are further from the neighbours than the previous proposals, to which there was no objection, so amenity issues should not arise;
 - (v) **contamination**. The site is grassland and there is no known contamination risk.
- 5.7 **Landscape Considerations** are separately addressed, as set out earlier.

6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 Following consultation with officers of the Council, this report supports a revised layout.
- 6.2 The buildings are moved further to the west, so that they are down the slope slightly. The two cattle sheds are made into a single building.
- 6.3 Officers have indicated that they would support the revisions, subject to a landscaping scheme.
- 6.4 The revised location raises no other environmental issues.

APPENDIX KCC1
Text from Supporting Statement of
March 2021

**FARM BUILDINGS
AT
FAIRSPEAR HILL FARM,
LEAFIELD OX29 9NY**

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- 1 Introduction
- 2 The Farm, Enterprises and Farmyard
- 3 The Issues
- 4 The Proposals
- 5 Planning Policy of Relevance
- 6 Farm Buildings
- 7 Summary and Conclusions

Appendices

- KCC1 KCC Letter and Plan of 6th November 2020 (confidential information redacted)
- KCC2 KCC Letter of 15th December 2020 (including Building Needs Assessment)
- KCC3 Landscape Assessment

1 INTRODUCTION

These Applications

- 1.1 Three planning applications are made for farm buildings at Fairspear Hill Farm. The applications are made following the withdrawal of three applications in 2020, on the advice of the then planning officer, to allow for pre-application consultation. That pre-application consultation took place in February 2021, with a positive response and advice from the case officer.
- 1.2 The three applications seek planning consent for:
- (i) a cattle shed of 25m by 13m;
 - (ii) a mixed cattle shed with poultry shed on the western side, also 25m by 13m;
 - (iii) a straw storage barn of 40m by 15m.
- 1.3 Three applications, rather than one, are made because of the application fee structure for farm buildings.

Pre-application Feedback

- 1.4 In pre-application feedback the case officer confirmed that the Council was, at officer level, satisfied that the layout and spread of the buildings was reasonably necessary for agriculture, following the submission of vehicle tracking plans, and further analysis of the available space (or lack of) in the existing farmyard.
- 1.5 Additional landscaping details may need to be provided with the application, as advised in the pre-application meeting, and we await feedback from the Council's landscaping officer.

Fairspear Hill Farm and Building Needs

- 1.6 Fairspear Hill Farm is a substantial and established farm unit of about 107 ha (265 acres) plus about 400 ha of rented land. It operates livestock enterprises which include:
- 40 suckler cows and offspring;
 - 700 breeding ewes plus offspring;
 - 600 reared-on ewe replacements;
 - 400 rearing turkeys and geese;
 - hay and straw enterprises.
- 1.7 As set out in this appraisal, the farmyard has completely outgrown its site on the east side of the road. There is no land next to the buildings for expansion, and the buildings are close to neighbouring dwellings. In these circumstances there is no alternative for

expanding the farm other than to develop onto a new site, erecting additional farm buildings.

- 1.8 Following a review of the farm business, the layout and potential farmyard sites, it is proposed to erect new cattle sheds and turkey/geese rearing sheds directly over the road from the existing farm, together with new straw storage facilities.

This Report

- 1.9 This report:
- (i) describes the farm, the enterprises and the farmyard in section 2;
 - (ii) explains the constraints and need for new buildings in section 3;
 - (iii) describes the proposals to enable expansion in section 4;
 - (iv) summarises relevant planning policy in section 5;
 - (v) and assesses the buildings against that policy in section 6;
 - (vi) ending with a summary and conclusions in section 7.

The Author

- 1.10 This report has been written by Tony Kernon. I am a Chartered Surveyor and a Fellow of the British Institute of Agricultural Consultants. I have specialised in agricultural building and dwelling assessments for in excess of 30 years, acting widely across the country for local planning authorities and applicants alike.

Applications

- 1.11 The proposals are divided into three planning applications. This is purely due to the planning application fee structure on agricultural buildings. The application fee for three planning applications works out at a saving of £3,900 compared to making a single application.
- 1.12 This report addresses all three applications and it is intended that all three be considered as one proposal. As these are buildings, and as discussed in the pre-application meeting, a landscaping condition for a comprehensive scheme can be applied by condition to each approval which would be triggered by commencement of any of the applications. Hence they are capable of being considered and determined separately.
- 1.13 As advised at the pre-application meeting, a dwelling which was previously proposed is not included in this application. It was advised that a dwelling could not be considered by the Council until buildings had been approved.

2 THE FARM, ENTERPRISES AND FARMYARD

The Holding

- 2.1 The farm is owned by the Adams family. They started as tenants of the County Council on a smaller Farm at the Judds Grave Farm crossroads. Over time they bought and rented more land locally, then bought the farm when the Council offered it for sale in 1992.
- 2.2 The farm expanded next as follows:
- in 1993 57 ha (140 acres) was purchased at Fairspear Hill Farm;
 - in 1994 an additional 21 ha (52 acres) was purchased adjacent, and the holding renamed Fairspear Hill Farm;
 - with the farmhouse built in 1996.
- 2.3 The former Fairspear Farm is now a small hamlet with, in total, 7 dwellings. The house at the farm is one of those. The farm is now Fairspear Hill Farm
- 2.4 The owned holding extends to about 120 ha and is indicated approximately on the following Google Earth image. In addition approximately 400 ha is rented locally, mostly on gentlemen's or short-term arrangements, plus 600 ha of straw is baled.

Insert 1: The Farm Boundary



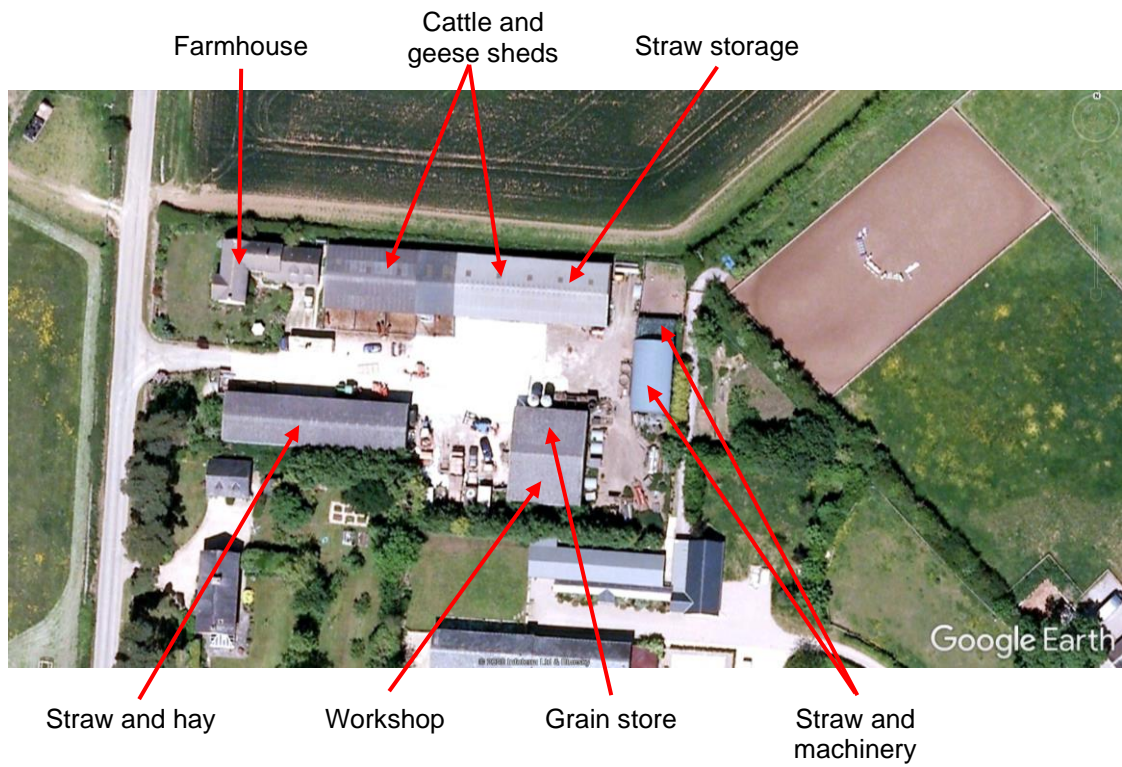
The Enterprises

- 2.5 The farm runs the following principal enterprises:
- a breeding herd of cattle, selling most offspring as yearlings due to a lack of building space;
 - a breeding flock of sheep, mostly lambing outside in the spring, and finishing as high a proportion of lambs as possible;
 - the rearing of geese and turkeys, mostly for the Christmas market;
 - the making of high-quality hay for the racehorse industry;
 - the making of high-quality straw bales to sell to Welsh farmers;
 - and arable cropping.
- 2.6 The livestock enterprises are most relevant to this assessment.
- 2.7 **Suckler Herd.** The farm runs 40 beef-breed suckler cows. These are run with two different bulls, with about half the herd based at Fairspear Hill Farm and half on rented land. The herd calves all year round but with a March to May peak. The offspring are generally sold as yearlings due to a shortage of building space.
- 2.8 **Breeding Sheep.** The farm currently runs about 700 breeding ewes. These lamb mostly outdoors owing to a lack of building space. The objective is to rear all lambs from grass outside by late autumn. In addition the farm rears 600 dry sheep, being ewe lambs that are then sold as tuppings theaves.
- 2.9 **Geese and Turkeys.** The farm fattens 200 geese and 200 turkeys every year. Geese are reared from May to December, turkeys from July to December. These are sold as dressed birds, with a farm shop operating in December.

The Farm Buildings

- 2.10 The farmyard is fully built-out and is highly constrained. The buildings are shown on the Google Earth image below and then in the photographs that follow. This has been considered and officers have confirmed that they accept that there is no space to develop these buildings in and around the existing yard.

Insert 2: The Farm Buildings



2.11 These are shown in the following photographs.

Photos 1 – 4: The Farm Buildings



Farmhouse



Grain store and workshop



Cattle, geese and straw



Straw/hay store

Labour

- 2.12 The farm is run by Nigel and Edward Adams with help from their spouses. Nigel lives in the farmhouse. He is now 65 years old.
- 2.13 Ed and his wife Charlotte rent a cottage a few miles away, with a small cattle yard associated with it. The building is rented on a gentleman's agreement and, as set out in our letter of 6th November (a redacted copy of which is reproduced at **Appendix KCC1**), the use of this building is expected to end soon.
- 2.14 There are two employees who work on a self-employed basis in addition to Ed.

3 THE ISSUES

- 3.1 There are two key issues that are driving the need to invest in buildings:
- (i) more building space is needed for the existing and proposed enterprises;
 - (ii) buildings are needed with direct access to the land, not across a road as at present.
- 3.2 I explain the issues in the following order:
- (i) current operational problems;
 - (ii) why they cannot be rectified by buildings on the existing farmyard;
 - (iii) the solutions in brief;
 - (iv) other options considered.

Current Operational Problems

- 3.3 The farm does not have enough cattle housing for the enterprises already being operated. As a result, some cattle are housed in rented buildings and all offspring are sold as yearlings rather than being taken on to finishing age (at about 2 years old) as there is no space to house them.
- 3.4 The geese and turkeys need access to grazing land every day and shutting up at night. At present the turkeys are housed in mobile units on the grassland, shown below, but the geese are walked across the road twice a day between the farmyard where they are shut up at night, and the grazing fields. Crossing the road with 200 geese twice a day is a challenge and carries an element of risk.

Photo 5: Turkey Housing (winter housing)



- 3.5 The turkeys are at a very big risk of theft in this arrangement, because they remain in a location away from the dwelling at night and so could be easily stolen without detection. Geese can be herded more easily and so are walked back to the farm each night. However, as noted, the moving of geese across the road is still difficult and dangerous.

- 3.6 There is very limited space for lambing sheep in poor weather, so a bigger shed, or a space where straw was kept early winter, is needed.
- 3.7 It is also necessary to rent buildings 2 miles away to store the most expensive machinery, because the farm has insufficient space, which creates difficulties in collecting the machines when they are required.
- 3.8 The rented cattle sheds are not expected to be available to the farm for autumn 2021. New buildings are therefore needed for autumn 2021.
- 3.9 Consequently the farm needs:
- (i) more cattle housing; and
 - (ii) turkey and geese sheds on the north side of the road where the buildings are connected to the land.

Why They Cannot Be Provided Within the Existing Yard

- 3.10 The existing yard cannot provide for these needs because of both physical and locational reasons.
- 3.11 Physically there is no room. All of the yard is built up with buildings and the farmers do not own the surrounding land so cannot expand.
- 3.12 The farmyard is shown below.

Photo 6: The Farmyard



- 3.13 As can be seen in the aerial photograph at Insert 2, the farmyard is fully used.
- 3.14 There is a small space in the northeast corner of the yard without a building, but a building could not be erected there without moving the three phase electricity cable that crosses

the yard, visible in photo 6 above and in the photo below. Hence that is not a suitable position for a building.

Photo 7: The Northeast Corner



- 3.15 Access to the southeast corner is restricted, and this area is in any event fully used for storing machinery, as shown in the aerial photograph and below. Additionally this backs onto a neighbouring dwelling, and so is not a suitable location for livestock housing.

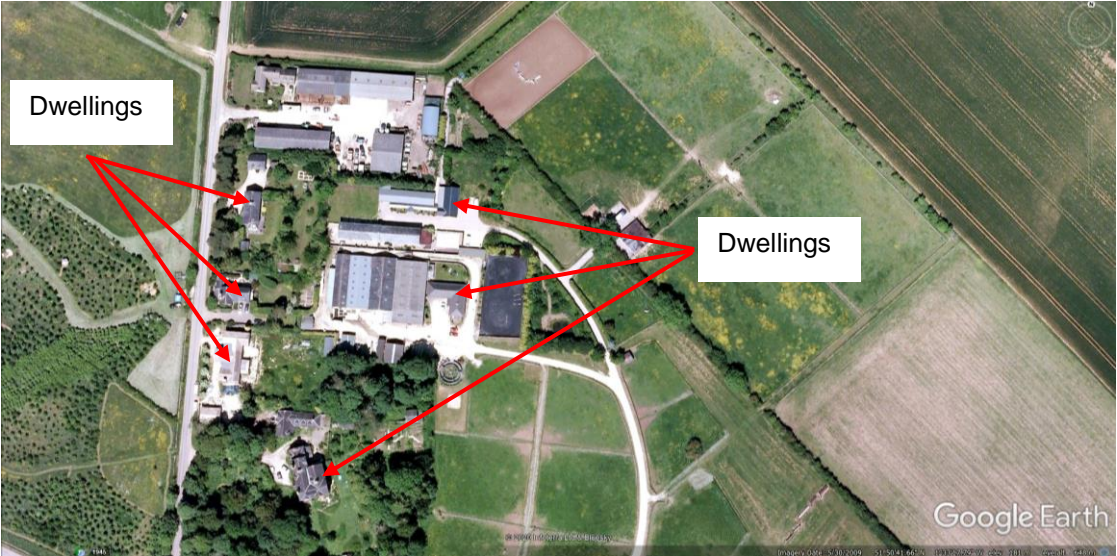
Photo 8: The Southeast Corner



- 3.16 Physically there is no space left within the yard to erect buildings.
- 3.17 The Adams own none of the land on the side of the road adjacent to the buildings, and so cannot expand the yard onto surrounding land.

3.18 Locationally there are numerous other dwellings nearby as identified below. These mean that locating livestock sheds in the two small gaps left in the farmyard would likely result in nuisance to the neighbours.

Insert 3: Other Dwellings



3.19 Consequently the farmers need to be sensitive to potential noise and other problems were they to expand the cattle and livestock rearing.

3.20 This was explained in further detail as part of the pre-application consultation dated 15th December 2020, which is set out in **Appendix KCC2**. Reference is made to guidance not to store straw within 20 metres of another dwelling. The letter includes a detailed building needs analysis.

The Solutions in Brief

3.21 In brief the proposal is to continue to use the existing farmyard fully, but with new buildings to the closest land available, which is directly across the road. The turkeys and geese currently reared in these buildings would move to the new buildings. With the resultant freeing up of shed space, the existing cattle sheds will be used for the rearing of finishing cattle, which the farm cannot currently rear.

- 3.22 On the opposite side of the road new farm buildings are proposed. These comprise:
- (i) cattle sheds for the suckler herd and calves, allowing an expansion to 50 cows;
 - (ii) secure housing with access to grassland for the geese and turkey enterprises, which will be expanded;
 - (iii) a machinery and straw storage barn to service these livestock sheds, which can also be used for some lambing space.

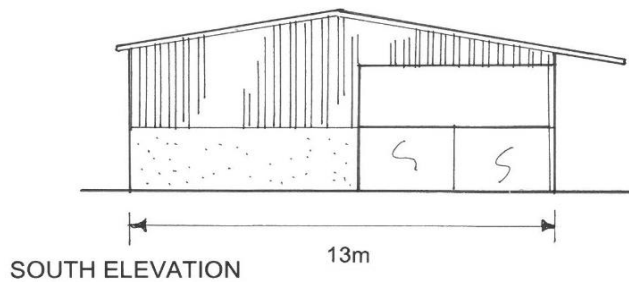
Alternatives Considered

- 3.23 There is no potential to provide for more space at the existing farmyard, as discussed above.
- 3.24 Consideration has been given to other sites across the farm. There are other places where buildings could be erected, including a yard to the northwest. However that has no services.
- 3.25 The proposed site is particularly beneficial because:
- (i) it is adjacent to the existing farmyard, so machinery etc is easily shared;
 - (ii) services are already available.
- 3.26 In the pre-application meeting it was confirmed that the Council accepts the logic of this site being used.
- 3.27 Therefore I turn to describe the proposals.

4 THE PROPOSALS

- 4.1 It is proposed to erect three buildings.
- 4.2 Each is described as follows.
- 4.3 A more detailed space allowance assessment and calculation is set out in **Attachment A** of the letter included in **Appendix KCC2**.
- 4.4 **Goose and Cattle Shed.** This building will measure 13m wide by 25m long, plus a 2m overhang at the front. The rear of the building will provide up to 5 pens (based on 5m bay widths) for the housing of turkeys and geese. The building will allow them to be kept secure and under heat when young, and to be given access to grassland once old enough. It will stop the need to cross the road daily with geese.
- 4.5 The front of the building will be for cattle. This will provide a strawed area with a feeding face and will be capable of being divided to provide individual calving pens/isolation boxes, and an area for smaller groups of cattle such as those cows with suckling calves at foot. The overhang will reduce rain penetration into the building and reduce wastage of food and bedding.
- 4.6 The poultry part of the building will open straight out into grazing paddock areas for the geese and turkeys.
- 4.7 **Cattle Shed.** This building will be a similar size, 13m wide by 25m long. It will provide space for cows in a single group or, by the use of internal gates, into smaller groups, with a feed passage along the front and bedded areas at the rear.
- 4.8 Both buildings will be typical agricultural buildings, with concrete block lower walls and wooden boarding above. An example of a cattle building is shown below next to one of the application drawings (in this case the south elevation of the cattle/turkey building).

Inserts 4 and 5: Example Cattle Building and Application Plan



- 4.9 **Straw and Machinery.** The straw and machinery building needs to be accessible with a big open yard available for loading and unloading the building, and taking straw from the trailers arriving during harvest. It is proposed to erect a building accessible from the end, as that layout allows a good-sized working yard on the southern end and enables the yard space between the straw shed and the cattle sheds to be reduced, keeping the overall footprint of the farmyard narrower east to west.
- 4.10 The design will allow straw to be stacked high along the length of most of the building. The northern end is open on the end two bays, with one stanchion removed so that tractors and machinery can swing into the building easily to park or to unload straw.
- 4.11 The building will have concrete panel lower walls, so that these will protect the walls from damage when straw is being loaded, and also will prevent thieves from cutting holes in the panels to get in (even though the end walls will be open). Internally the building will probably be lined with timber to stop damage, as per the photograph below (which is of the straw shed at Fairspear Hill Farm).
- 4.12 A dark green colour is proposed for the walls, similar to the walls of the existing straw shed, shown below.

Photos 9 and 10: Proposed Straw Shed Walls (external and internal)



- 4.13 Access is proposed around the rear of the straw shed to provide space for maintenance of both the building and the planting of the bund.
- 4.14 The farm lambs large numbers of sheep in the spring. By that time the amount of straw in storage will have been significantly depleted, so part of the straw shed will then be used for lambing sheep.
- 4.15 **Layout and Yard Space.** In our letter of 3rd December 2020, in response to questions about the spread and spacing of the buildings, we provided vehicle flow diagrams for loading and unloading the straw barn, feeding and bedding out the cattle. At the pre-application meeting the case officer confirmed that she was satisfied that the spread and distribution of the buildings was required for agricultural purposes.
- 4.16 **Landscaping.** Along the east side of the application site there is an earth bund and this will be planted with shrubs and some small trees, with the mix to be agreed with the Council. These will provide screening for the buildings fairly rapidly.
- 4.17 A hedge was planted last winter between the field and the land to the south, which operates as a green burial site.
- 4.18 The farmyard would be laid out as shown above, and over the yard area shown below
Photo 11: The Yard Area



- 4.19 Further information is given in **Appendix KCC2** in terms of building sizes, with a landscape assessment in **Appendix KCC3**.

4.20 At the pre-application meeting landscaping was discussed. The officer said that she would take the views from the Council's landscape officer. Once those views are known we will seek to agree a landscaping plan so that it can be dealt with and approved, rather than becoming a pre-commencement condition.

5 PLANNING POLICY OF RELEVANCE

National Policy

- 5.1 At a national level the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) sets out that “**planning policies and decisions should enable: b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses**” (paragraph 83).
- 5.2 The farm lies wholly within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Paragraph 172 notes that “**great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty**” in such areas.

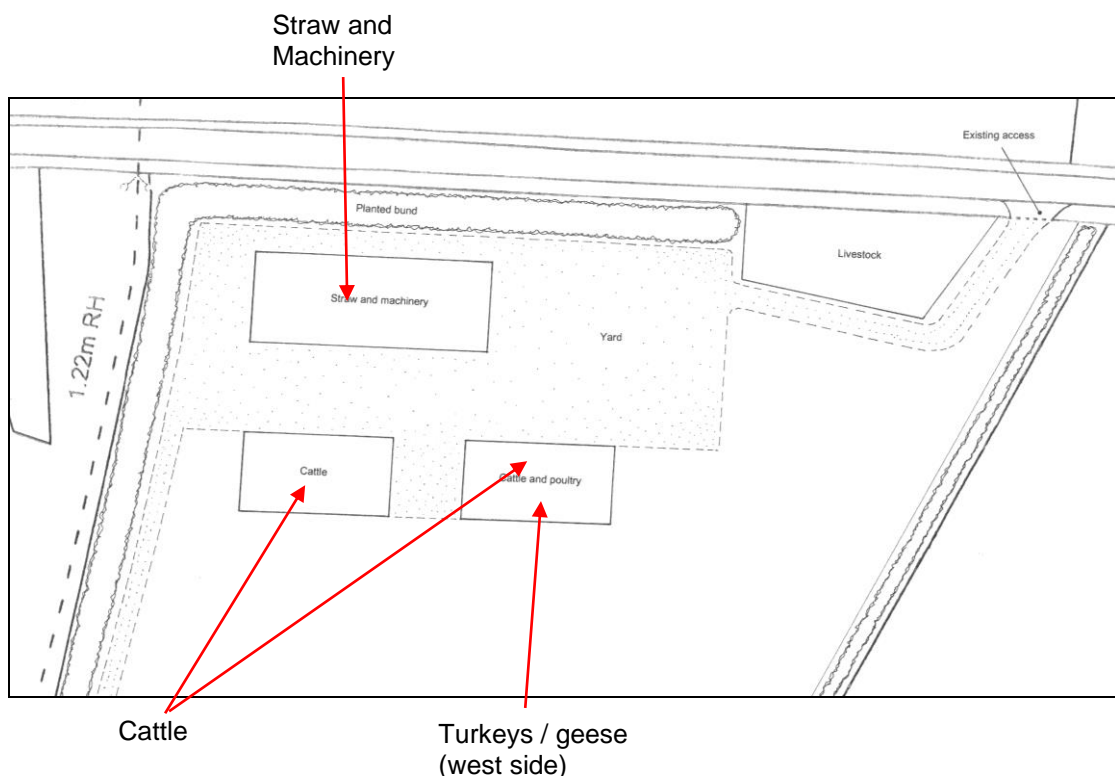
Local Policy

- 5.3 The West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 (2018) policy E2 supports agricultural development. It states that “**development proposals which are necessary for agricultural production**” are supported where they:
- operate as part of a viable core farm business;
 - remain compatible and consistent in scale with the farm and the location;
 - and reuse existing buildings where feasible.
- 5.4 “**Any new building(s) must be suitably located for the scale and type of the proposed use**”, the policy advises.

6 FARM BUILDINGS

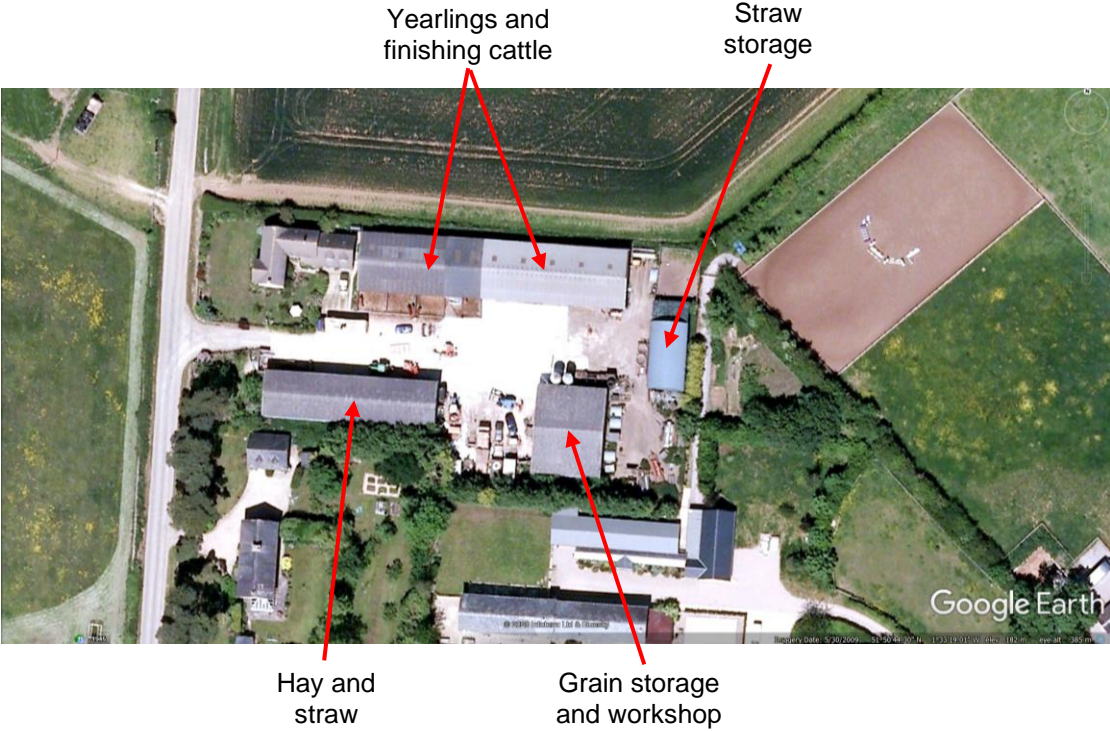
- 6.1 This is a viable farm business.
- 6.2 In terms of need for the buildings, an analysis is set out in **Appendix KCC1**. This evaluates the existing buildings, their limitations and the need for new buildings.
- 6.3 Policy in the NPPF (2019) requires planning decisions to enable farm development. The local plan policy E2 supports farm development where it is necessary, is suitably located and is compatible and consistent with the farming operations.
- 6.4 The proposals for the buildings overcome current shortfalls and allow for modest expansion of about 20% of the cattle breeding herd. They will also enable the farm to keep all cattle in one location (ie at Fairspear Hill Farm), and to rear cattle on to finished weights (currently, due to the shortage of space, they must sell the cattle as yearlings).
- 6.5 The proposals will also enable the farm to stop the current practice of walking 200 geese across the road twice daily.
- 6.6 The use of the new buildings will be as follows.

Insert 6: Use of New Buildings



6.7 The use of the existing buildings will remain agricultural, and they will continue to be fully used, as follows:

Insert 7: Use of Existing Buildings



- 6.8 Accordingly the proposed new buildings:
- are needed for, and will operate as part of, a viable agricultural business;
 - and are compatible and consistent in scale with the farming operations.

6.9 As discussed earlier, it is not possible to expand the existing farmyard. Even if it was, however, the landscape impact would be similar.

6.10 The site slopes away from the road, as shown below (albeit it is hard to see in this photo). The buildings would extend as far as the person (marked)

Photo 12: View from the Road



- 6.11 The proposed buildings therefore run along the length of the road, so that they do not require much cut and fill.
- 6.12 A more detailed landscape assessment is set out in **Appendix KCC3**.
- 6.13 When seen from the road to the west, the buildings will extend the complex of buildings that comprises Fairspear, but they will be seen in an agricultural landscape next to agricultural buildings.

Photo 13: View from the West



- 6.14 The buildings will, from this section of the road, be on the skyline but so would any expansion of the farmyard even if land north of the lane was owned.
- 6.15 The buildings will also be visible from the lane approaching the farm from the north, as shown below. Again this view shows that the new buildings will be seen in the context of existing buildings. The bund will be planted, but the straw shed will be visible behind the planting.

Photo 14: The Site from the Lane



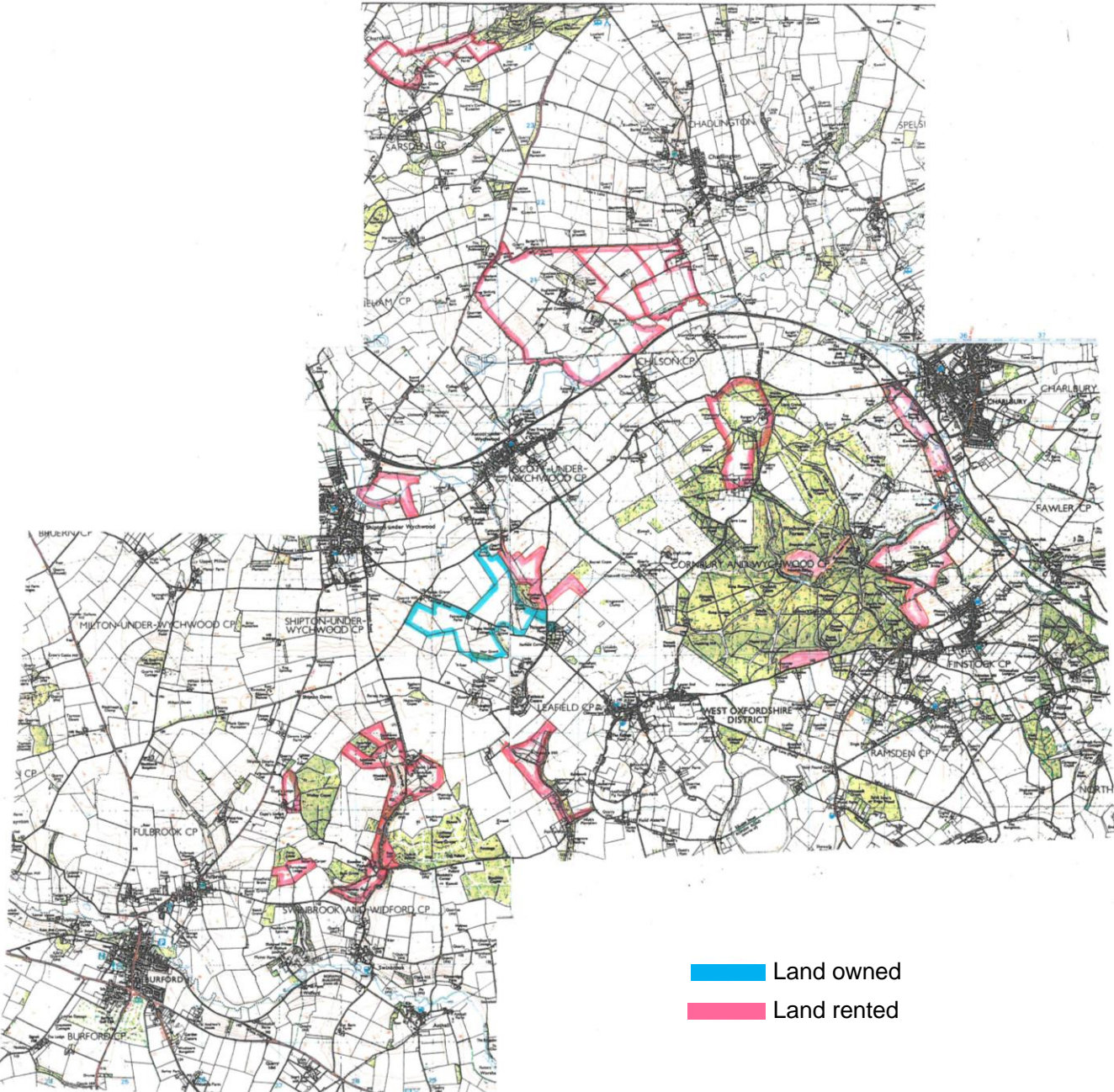
- 6.16 This view is likely to be softened by the proposed planting of trees, to be agreed once we receive feedback from the Council's landscape officer.
- 6.17 Overall, the farm buildings are required for agricultural purposes and these will fit within the landscape in an acceptable manner. They therefore comply with policy.

7 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 Fairspear Hill Farm's farmyard is fully developed. The farm needs additional buildings to allow for modest expansion, to allow cattle to be reared on to finishing, and because geese are being walked twice daily across the road.
- 7.2 There are no options to expand within the existing farmyard, or on the east side of the road. Therefore buildings need to be erected elsewhere on the farm.
- 7.3 Accordingly it is proposed to erect farm buildings on the west side of the road, as shown on the application plans.
- 7.4 There is a need for the buildings. They are designed for agriculture.
- 7.5 Pre-application consultation has taken place. All issues are understood to be overcome.

APPENDIX KCC2
Owned and Rented Land

Owned and Rented Land

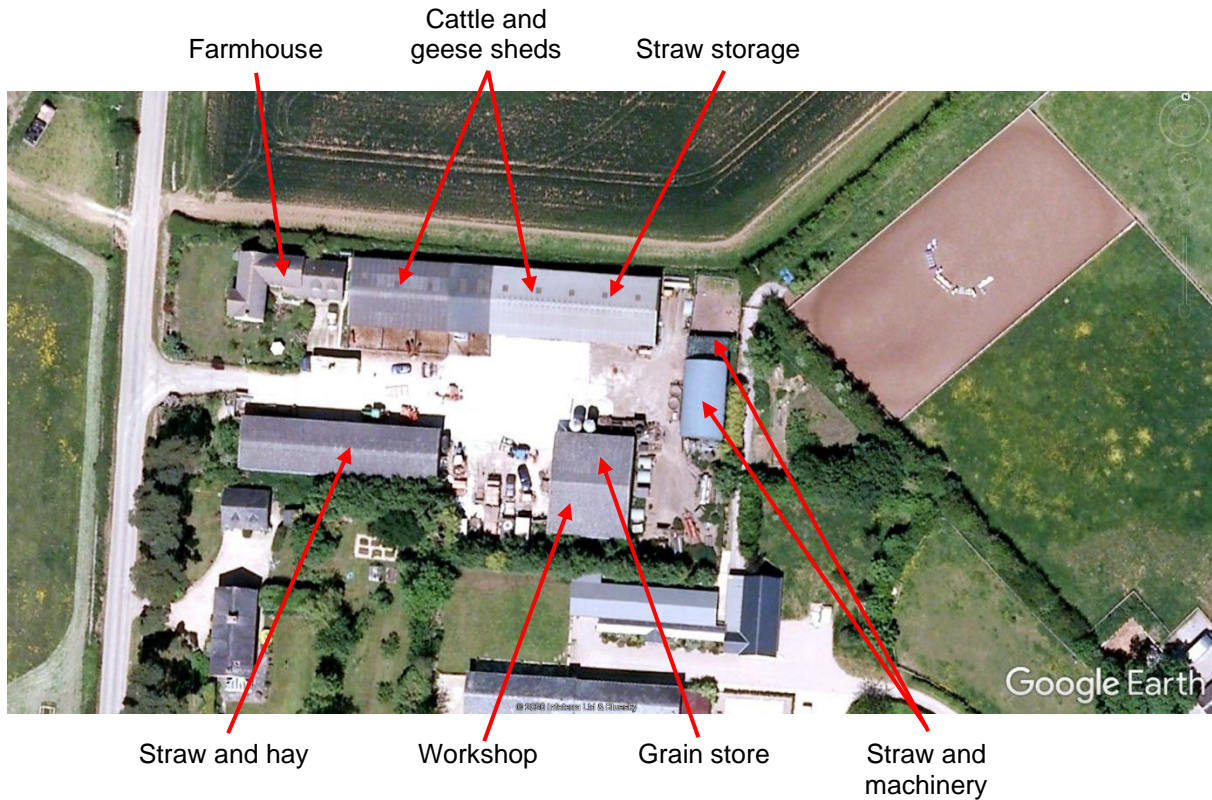


APPENDIX KCC3
Building Needs Assessment

**FAIRSPEAR FARM
BUILDING NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

Existing Buildings

The existing buildings are as follows:



Cattle and Goose Housing. The cattle shed includes an outside yard, as shown below. The building measures in total 55 metres by 12 metres, excluding outside yards. The cattle shed last winter is shown below.



The building can be used flexibly, in that up to 7 bays can be used for cattle housing, providing a total area of about 510 sqm.

One of these bays is used currently for housing geese, reducing the potential area for cattle to about 440 sqm. The geese in 2019/2020 are housed in the pen shown below.



Straw Storage. Straw is stored in a number of bays adjacent to the cattle. In addition there is a secure storage building within the yard. Collectively these two bays (120 sqm) plus building (320 sqm) provide about 450 sqm of straw and hay storage space.

In addition a small Dutch barn provides approximately a further 110 sqm of straw storage space.

The larger straw storage shed and the older Dutch barn are shown below.



The farm produces racehorse hay, and so the lockable modern store is prioritised for hay storage. This building is used short-term for storage of grain, and is partially then cleared for the processing of the Christmas poultry.

Grain Storage. The grain store is now considered very low for modern farm machinery. It is shown below, with the other half of the building providing machinery storage, fertiliser storage, workshop space etc.



The grain store provides of the order of 135 sqm of space, as does the machinery shed. Grain must be emptied out of the building at harvest time because part of this building is used for processing the Christmas turkeys.

Analysis and Proposed Buildings

To be able to accommodate the cattle – calving cows, some with calves at foot, yearlings and finishing animals, a minimum space of 700 sqm is needed, as below.

Animal	Current Needs			Expanded Needs		
	No	Sqm/head	Sqm	No	Sqm/head	Sqm
Suckler cows	40	8	320	50	8	400
Calves at foot (at any one time)	5 – 15	2	10 – 30	10 – 20	2	20 – 40
Yearlings	30 – 40	4	120 - 160	40 – 50	4	160 – 200
Finishing animals	40	5	200	50	5	250
Bull pens	2	10	20	2	10	20
Total cattle			670 – 730			850 - 910

In reality a greater space is required, because buildings are built and used in modular blocks. A bay of a building with gates cannot be subdivided, so the inevitable consequence is that buildings need to be larger to be able to meet these needs.

Outside yard areas are not recommended. They result in rain falling into dung, which then washes off. Consequently the proposals do not include any outside yard areas.

The existing farm buildings provide about 440 sqm gross. Therefore they are capable of accommodation all the yearlings and finishing cattle.

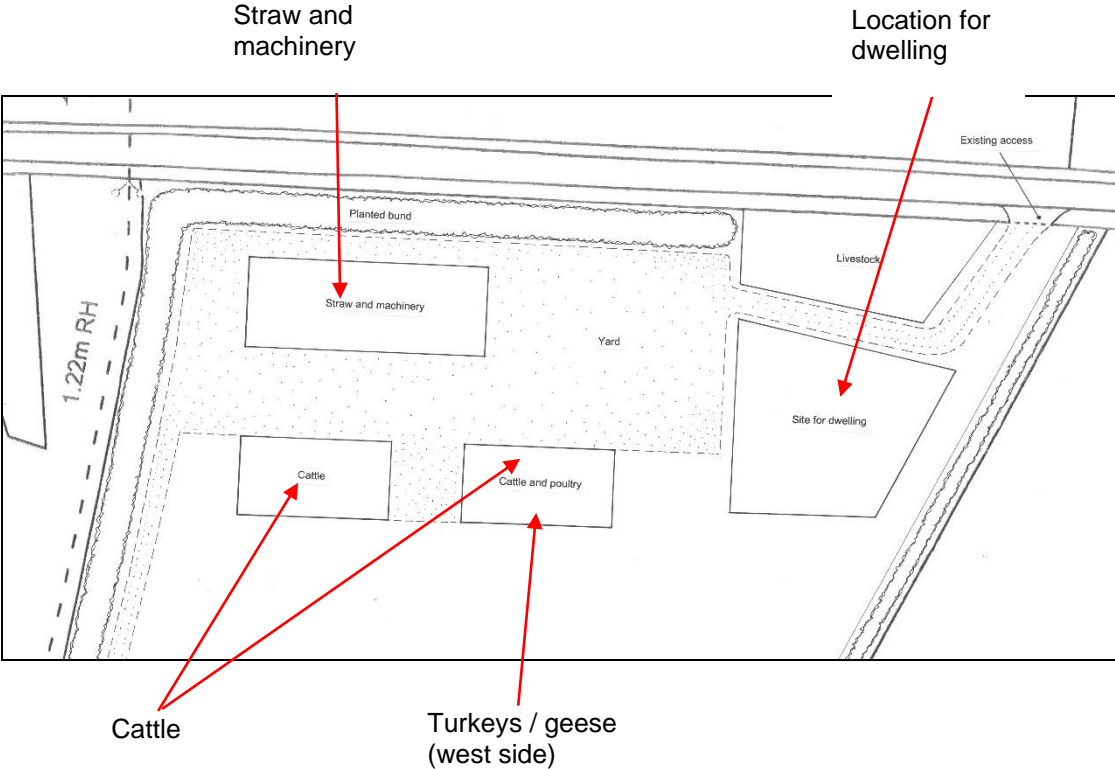
Accordingly the proposals include for 470 – 500 sqm of cattle housing space, to allow for suckler cows and some calves, plus for some pens into which cows ready to calve can be moved so that they can calve and rear the calf for a few days away from the risk of being trodden on by other animals.

The proposals allow for the rearing of turkeys and geese. The space allowance will enable the young birds (notably geese) to be reared initially under heat in brooder rings, and then to have access to the outside once they are old enough.

A straw storage barn is proposed that would accommodate all the straw needed over the winter for the cattle, together with space to park the loader tractor, and a feed wagon. Parts of the two northern bays will be capable of being used for tipping concentrates/fodder for the cattle.

The Proposals

The proposals are as follows.



These provide:

- 300 - 400 sqm straw storage and seasonal lambing space;
- 100 - 200 sqm machinery and seasonal lambing space;
- 100 sqm in two bays for fodder storage;
- 325 sqm of cattle housing on the east, with a feed passage along the front;
- 200 sqm of calving pens and cattle housing for smaller groups (eg cows with calves at foot) on the western building;
- 5 no. bays, each 25 sqm, for housing turkeys and geese with direct access to the west to paddocks;
- a hardstanding pad for storing silage bales.

The yard has safe road access and can be secured. Access to the dwelling is direct from the road. The dwelling will have visibility down the central gap between the cattle sheds, and over the entrance, as well as views over the paddocks where the geese and turkeys are grazed in the day.



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