

Date of this document 15/05/2023

APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION - DC/23/02158

Proposal: Full Planning Application - Change of Use of agricultural land to form additional parking and siting refrigeration equipment including container associated with farm shop (retention of).

Location: Alder Carr Farm, St Marys Road, Creeting St Mary, Ipswich Suffolk IP6 8LX

INTRODUCTION

This statement has been prepared to assist with the understanding of the proposals for the above site which are currently submitted to Mid Suffolk District Council for determination.

This document should be read in conjunction with the other supporting documentation submitted with the original planning application and plans and documents sent on 13/05/2023

BACKGROUND

Alder Carr Farm was established in 1981 growing fruit and vegetables for local consumption and wholesale. It has established a farm shop, rental units, a cafe and ice cream business over the years and while the nature of the farming has changed it continues to develop with the addition in 2021 of a butchery. During the Covid pandemic it came into its own as a safe place to purchase food and we have expanded the spaces where people can sit out of doors. It is on the Gipping Valley footpath and the site is regularly used by walkers as well as being convenient for cyclists. We have a nature trail and play area for the public.

THE PROPOSAL

The retention of 3 cooling units, a refrigerated container and change of use of agricultural land for extra parking

Cooling units three cooling units have been installed on the exterior wall of the farm shop. They are located outside for purposes of thermal efficiency. The first was installed in 2000 to supply air conditioning; the second in about 2015 to service a new dairy deck in the farm shop and a third when we added the butchery in 2021.

Butchery refrigeration container

As part of the on-going development of the site in order to make it possible to sell meat produced on the farm (cattle and sheep) and locally we added a butchery to the farm shop. As there was not room in the building for storage of meat this was located 5m away across the track past the buildings, leaving ample room for vehicles to pass.

Change of use of agricultural land to extra parking

This increased footfall has led to the need for more parking. Customer numbers to the farm shop vary through the week and seasonally and there is a need for extra parking.

The Environment Agency flood map for the site confirms that 'you may need to do a flood risk assessment if your site is any of the following:

o Bigger than 1 hectare

o In an area with critical drainage problems as notified by the Environment Agency (this is actually unknown)

o Identified as being at increased flood risk in future by the local authority's strategic flood risk assessment

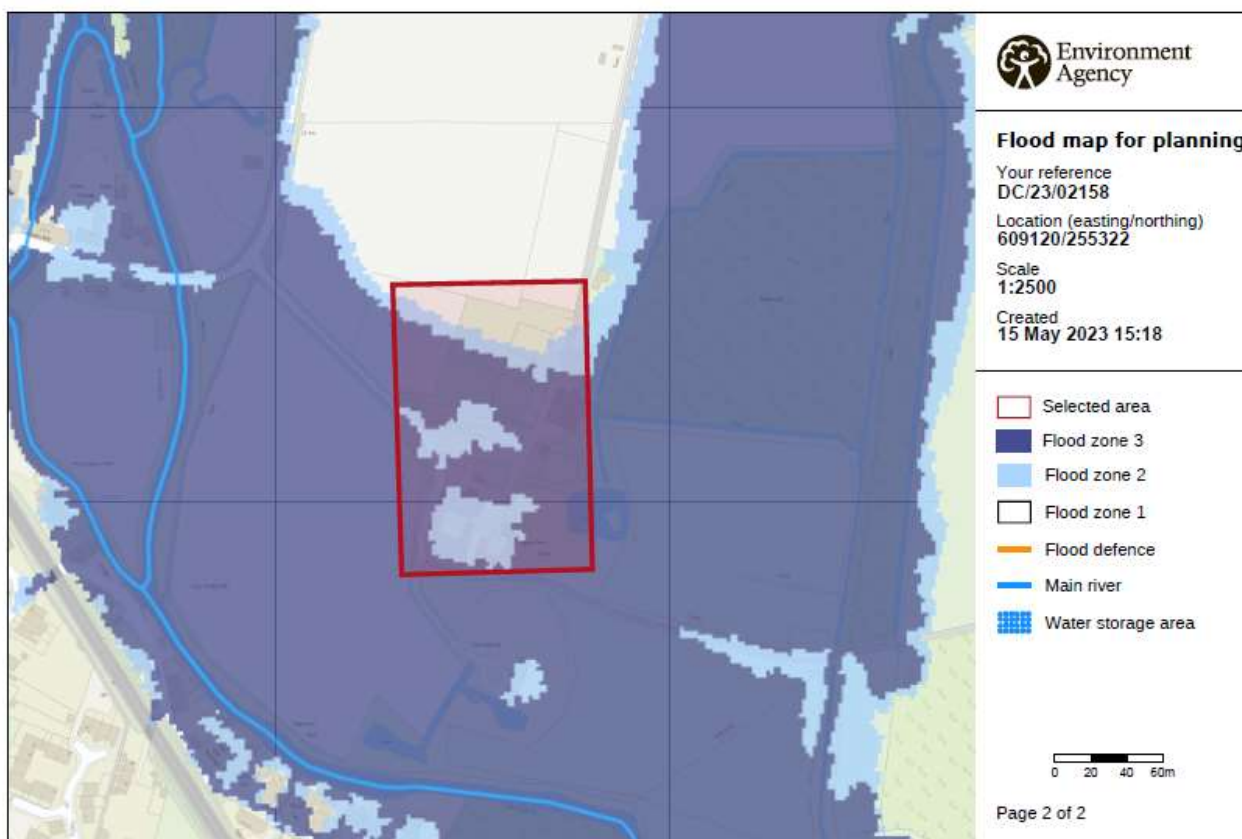
o at risk from other sources of flooding (such as surface water or reservoirs) and its development would increase the vulnerability of its use (such as constructing an office on an undeveloped site or converting a shop to a dwelling.'

The proposal does not fall into all of these except we have not been able to get any information about any critical drainage problems from the Environment Agency.

FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT

Flood risk map from <https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk>

The red line encompasses the whole area – the car parking area, the container and the cooling units.



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THE SITE

All the existing buildings rain water is discharged via a soak-a-way which has been in existence for many years and has operated with no adverse or detrimental effects. Other rain or flood water quickly drains back to the river or into the soil which is sand over gravel.

The car park is on a slight elevation compared with the rest of the site and would be last to flood; any floodwater would drain quickly towards the river or through the soil which is mainly sand over gravel. We have retained the grassland and it is not surfaced so could be returned to agricultural use immediately.

The electricity supply for the cooling units is inside the buildings and the supply for the container is 3ft. off the ground above any possible flood water and the container itself is raised on sleepers.

CONCLUSION

While the site in question is within Flood Zones 2 and 3, so is the rest of the business which has functioned there for 42 years so is in the same situation. Water from the river has never entered the buildings and we are equipped with sandbags in case of that eventuality - we are well aware of where the water approaches the buildings and are confident we can protect them.

The units do not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere and the container is never occupied for long so there is no danger to life. The proposals do not increase the amount of impervious run-off or enhance flood risks elsewhere.

Most importantly the business could not actually continue to function without this equipment.