

## **Planning Statement and Design and Access Statement**



Full Planning Application  
for

Erection of a livestock building and handling area, straw shed,  
silage clamp and associated farmyard

at

Lyeheath Farm, Southwick PO17 6ES

## PROPOSAL

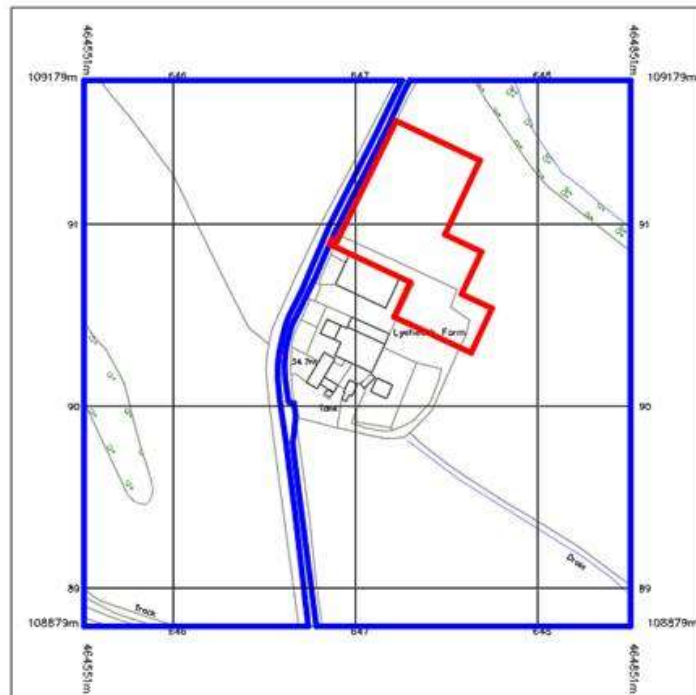
The proposal is for the erection of:

- Steel portal framed agricultural building for the housing of livestock,
- Steel portal framed agricultural building for the handling of livestock,
- Open fronted steel framed agricultural building for the storage of straw and hay,
- Silage clamp

associated with the farm's native suckler Sussex beef herd.

## LYEHEATH FARM

- 1.1. Lyeheath Farm forms part of the Southwick Estate, which is situated to the north of Fareham and Portsmouth and centered around the village of Southwick.
- 1.2. The farm has an area of about 31.418 hectares (77.633 acres) and is an arable and livestock farm, forming part of the wider Southwick Estate which extends to 932.41 hectares (2,304.09 acres) of in-hand farmland.



- 1.3. Until relatively recently, the farm has been tenanted and farmed independently of the Estate. However, the tenancy has been relinquished and, as part of the Estate's ongoing policy of bringing farms back under direct control, it has been returned to the control of the Estate.
- 1.4. The Southwick Estate strategy is to consolidate the livestock operations to the three sites; Lyeheath, Wanstead and Comphouse Farms. The Estate has invested heavily in the upgrade of the livestock housing at Wanstead Farm and is looking to invest in Lyeheath Farm to improve efficiency, sustainability and viability as well as reduce the overall impact on the environment.
- 1.5. Part of the overall strategy is the Estate's move to 'regenerative farming' methods, which brings among other benefits, reduction/reversal of climate change by rebuilding soil organic matter and restoring degraded soil biodiversity. This results in Carbon drawdown and improvement of the water cycle. The livestock enterprise forms an important role in the cycle by providing organic matter for incorporation into the soil, improving soil health and structure.

- 1.6. The Estate is expanding the beef herd to Lyeheath Farm, which, in addition to the primary object of meat production (forming part of the Estate's diversification plans) will provide the means for natural fertilization methods to be achieved. Lyeheath will be the central farmyard for the calving cows and the proposed building has been designed to ensure the breeding animals receive the highest level of care.
- 1.7. The yard at Lyeheath is well-suited to support the livestock operations as it is close to the existing livestock hubs at Wanstead and Comthouse Farms and is a flat and level site with existing on-site accommodation to house the Stockman.
- 1.8. The existing buildings on the site are not suitable for housing calving cows and are not capable of being adapted in line with modern farming practices. The grain store has a functional use for the storage of grain, harvested from the arable land at Lyeheath, to be processed for cattle feed and used on site. The lean-to building adjacent to the grain store will be used for housing the Sussex stock bulls, separate to the calving cows. The lower lean-to will continue to be used for storage of machinery as required.
- 1.9. The proposal is to construct a new state of the art livestock building which houses all the necessary accommodation and facilities required for the calving cows. The new buildings will ensure the highest standards of animal health and welfare and will improve staff wellbeing, efficiency and health and safety. The straw shed and silage clamp will provide storage for the feed required on the unit and will reduce the traffic movements to and from the site, further improving sustainability. The stock handling building will provide an area to safely administer medication, check the stock in close quarters and carry out any health testing required.

## PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1. The site is subject to a current planning permission (ref. 22/00398/FUL) for '*Erection of 3.no Agricultural Buildings comprising livestock building, straw shed, silage clamp and associated farmyard*' (Granted 23 May 2022). However, when the groundworks started on site, the conditions were not suitable for the proposed development and so an alternative has been found to allow the approved development to progress. This subsequent application is for a similar development, with a reduced gross floor area, including the addition of a livestock handling building. This application is submitted in support of the alternative layout.
- 2.2. Prior to the past year, the farm has been tenanted and not subject to any significant investment. The historic applications are:
  - 79/01179/OLD – Erection of barn and extension to silage clamp (Approved 1st May 1979)
  - 13/01318/APN – Erection of livestock accommodation building (Approved 15th July 2013)
- 2.3. The buildings approved under the two applications above have not been developed and the applications have since lapsed.

## PLANNING CONTEXT

- 3.1. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are to be applied.
- 3.2. The guidance sets out three objectives in terms of achieving sustainable development: -
  - 3.2.1 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*

- 3.2.2 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 well-designed beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and*
- 3.2.3 An environmental objective – *to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment, including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.*
- 3.3. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 3.4. In terms of delivering a prosperous rural economy, the NPPF states that 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.
- 3.5. At local level, the proposed site is within the countryside and covered by policy MTRA 4, Development in the Countryside, which states:-

*‘In the countryside, defined as land outside the built-up areas of Winchester, Whiteley and Waterlooville and the settlements covered by MTRA 2 and 3 above, the Local Planning Authority will only permit the following types of development:*

*Development which has an operational need for a countryside location, such as for agriculture, horticulture or forestry; or*

*Proposals for the reuse of existing rural buildings for employment, tourist accommodation, community use or affordable housing (to meet demonstrable local housing needs). Buildings should be of permanent construction and capable of use without major reconstruction; or*

*Expansion or redevelopment of existing buildings to facilitate the expansion onsite of established businesses or to meet an operational need, provided development is proportionate to the nature and scale of the site, its setting and countryside location; or*

*Small scale sites for low key tourist accommodation appropriate to the site, location and the setting.*

*Development proposed in accordance with this policy should not cause harm to the character and landscape of the area or neighbouring uses or create inappropriate noise/ light and traffic generation.’*

## **BUSINESS JUSTIFICATION**

- 4.1. The proposal is for the erection of a steel framed livestock building, stock handling building, straw shed and silage clamp within the site of an established farmyard.
- 4.2. The building will be built as shown on the application drawings and is similar in style and design to the other modern farm buildings that have been erected on the nearby Comhouse and Wanstead Farms, as shown in the accompanying photographic schedule.

## DESIGN AND ACCESS

- 5.1. The proposal is for the erection of the agricultural buildings as detailed in Section 1, creating livestock housing, straw storage, safe livestock handling, and a silage clamp within the site of an established farmyard.
- 5.2. The buildings are to be designed and built as shown on the application drawings and represent the most practical form and layout for the proposed use as a livestock unit. The siting of the buildings allows for the housing and feeding of cattle, efficient use of machinery to operate the unit and safe management of the animals and farm staff.
- 5.3. The buildings will be constructed of steel portal frames with the roof covered in corrugated fibre cement sheeting incorporating profiled translucent roof lights to optimise natural light.
- 5.4. The walls will be part pre-cast concrete panels to lower levels and part timber clad (Castle Boarded) to upper levels. The design is well established and used universally in the agricultural industry.
- 5.5. The proposal is largely sited on an area of existing yard space, with the proposed livestock building sited on an area of land previously prepared for a different building that has never been constructed. The proposed buildings will square off the existing farmyard and create an efficient livestock unit.
- 5.6. The site is situated adjacent to Pigeon House Lane and is accessible directly from the public highway. The existing farmyard is visible from the highway and forms part of the rural character of the landscape. The impact of the new buildings will be minimal given their location to the rear of the site in an existing developed area, as well as their agricultural appearance, and use being compatible with the countryside location.
- 5.7. The farmyard forms part of a cluster of farm sites within the locality and the proposed development will ensure the site has a viable purpose long term.
- 5.8. The Farmhouse is situated to the south of the site and will house the Stockman responsible for overseeing the day-to-day management of the cattle and carrying out the feeding and bedding up.
- 5.9. The provision of the straw shed and silage clamp on site will ensure the proposal will not generate any additional vehicular movements to and from the site. The existing highway access will be utilised and there is no proposal to alter any highway access.

## SUMMARY

- 6.1. The proposed development is required for agricultural purposes and comprises a sustainable form of development, supporting the rural economy. The proposal will support existing jobs in the countryside as well as creating new jobs in the future through employment of additional stock-people and ensuring the viability of the Estate's beef supply chain and beef box scheme.
- 6.2. The proposed buildings will be designed and built to the highest standards of construction and will create a state-of-the-art livestock unit to support the wider farming operations on the Estate. It will demonstrate high levels of animal health and welfare, staff safety and staff wellbeing.
- 6.3. The development meets with the objectives of NPPF and complies with the policy of the Local Development plan.