



Foxes
Rural

PLANNING STATEMENT

Construction of B2/B8 – Flexible commercial use building

Pond Farm

Hall Road,

Great Bromley

CO7 7TP



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PARTICULARS

Document Title	Planning Statement
Proposal	Construction of B2 / B8 flexible commercial use building.
Applicant Details	TND Drilling Mr T Frary
Site Details	Pond Farm Hall Road, Great Bromley CO7 7TP
Prepared by	Melanie Bingham-Wallis Planning Director
Agent details	Foxes Rural Ltd Bullbanks Farm Halstead Road Eight Ash Green Colchester Essex CO6 3PT



INTRODUCTION

The application is for the Construction of a commercial B2/B8 flexible commercial use building at Pond Farm, Hall Road, Great Bromley CO7 7TP. The application is made by Mr T Frary on behalf of TND Drilling ('the applicant').

ENCLOSURES

The following documents are enclosed with this application.

Reference	Description
Floor and elevation plans	Refer to plans for scale
Location plan	Scale 1:35,000
Site plan	Scale 1:1,250
Block plan	Scale 1:500
Planning Statement incl. Design and Access	
Planning Forms	Submitted via Planning Portal

THE PROPOSAL

The proposal is for the construction of a new commercial building for B2 and or B8 storage use at Pond Farm. The building will be similar to the approved commercial buildings on site.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

There is extensive planning history at the site but the most relevant relate to

- 21/00582/FUL Proposed construction of a building for B8 commercial use at Pond Barns. Approved 24.06.2021
- 21/01277/FUL Proposed erection of an agricultural hay and machinery storage building. Approved 17.09.2021
- 21/01568/DISCON Discharge of conditions 3 (Construction Management Plan) and 4 (Vehicles Turning Facility) of application 21/00582/FUL. Approved 04.10.2021
- 22/01555/FUL Proposed change of use from agricultural to B2 commercial including enclosing of open fronted elevation with the insertion of 4 rolled shutters doors and 4 personnel doors. Approved 18.01.2022

REASONS FOR THE PROPOSAL

The applicants have tenants within the existing building who wish to expand their operations. The new building will provide space for these current tenants to expand their operations as well as offering space to new users. There are very few commercial units for rent within the Tendring District and there are none which are directly comparable. Indeed, the applicant regularly receives enquiries for vacant units as there are such limited facilities available within the district. The current tenants wish to remain on site due to ideal location to employees, ideal location for users of services offered by tenant as well as the high standard of the units, which have insulated cladding and roofing, the provision of underfloor heating as well as toilet and kitchenette facilities.

A comparable property search accompanies this application which evidences a significant shortfall of modern commercial units to rent located away from business parks and urban industrial estates.

The construction of a new commercial unit will boost the local economy, by allowing the growth and expansion of small businesses and startups within a rural location thereby supporting local employment and the local economy.



EMPLOYMENT

Tendring Local Plan – *“Objective 2 To create the conditions for economic growth and employment opportunities across a range of economic sectors including established business sectors and those sectors projected to grow in the future such as renewable energy and care and assisted living. To provide for the development of employment land on a variety of sites to support a diversity of employment opportunities and to achieve a better balance between the location of jobs and housing, which will reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable growth up to the period of 2033. “*

Employment opportunities are a key requirement to support local business and potential expansion. The strength of the local economy or rural economy relies on business growth and expansion. The LPA needs to ensure there is adequate opportunity to allow for continued business success and investment in the District. It is noted within the Local plan that the District faces *“major challenges including unemployment, coastal erosion and the need to provide space for future developments, to meet the employment and housing needs of current and future generations.”*

The wider site at Pond Farm has historic commercial consent with small scale businesses operating on site. There are over ten small businesses operating on site and on average there are at least 1.5 – 2 employees offering local employment opportunities. The proposal will allow the expansion of some of these businesses whilst giving other small businesses in the area an opportunity to expand and increase employment numbers.

Existing Tenant 1 – Air Rescue UK

This is a specialised business which is concerned with helicopter winch training. They are expanding as a business and the applicant has been told that if there is no opportunity to expand their presence on site, they will be forced to look for a new premises. However, the company wishes to remain on site as the location is ideal for their business and well located for their staff. Should there be a requirement to move, it would result in extended commutes for the staff and some of the locally based winch operators who work within the local wind turbine industry and use this business for regular training updates. As there are such limited comparable commercial properties available, it may result in the company relocating out of the district which will impact the distances commuted and local employment. It is important that this business which serves the local wind turbine industry, remain within Tendring District.

This business provides Hoist Operations training which is used for Search & Rescue, HEMS, Law Enforcement & Commercial Air Transport. The business provides training for 3-4 hoist operators across one week. The unit is internally divided into classroom/training areas and uses a state-of-the-art winch/hoist rescue VR simulator. The training is tailored to the trainees needs depending on sector.

Additionally, this business provides essential training to service and maintenance engineers who work on the local wind turbines - a nationally significant infrastructure project. They provide training in compliance with operators required to complete competence certification including safety which needs to be updated every 6 months. There are two local units connected with the maintenance and upkeep of the Gunfleet Sands offshore wind farm which operate from Brightlingsea and Harwich. The location of the units at Pond Farm is ideal being 7 miles and 13 miles away respectively.

In terms of traffic movements, this business generates a low level of traffic movements, there is currently one instructor but the ability to expand would allow for the employment of further instructors, which would benefit and support the local economy. All other movements would be that of the trainees which usually total either 3 or 4 per week. These would be commuter in character – one movement in and out per day per trainee. Furthermore, some of these trainees come together if they live locally.



Tenant 2 – Bentley's Dog Food

Bentleys Dog Food "is a small UK based, family business, with a passion for dogs." The business is concerned with the supply of a premium dry dog food. They process dry food / treats which is then bagged. The company wishes to expand its operations for further storage for dispatching. With the ability to process more orders, further employees will be needed to support the operations. The company currently runs a small team, with two office workers, two to process the food and two to complete the orders. However, should the business be able to expand the premises, it is expected that initially 2 additional workers would be required for processing and packing with a further potential for additional office support.

The movements in association with this business are of a low level as illustrated by the table below:

Type of movement	Commuter movements	Deliveries of materials	Deliveries out to customers
Number of movements - weekly	6 daily commuter	X2-3 weekly	x1 daily
Average Monthly totals	monthly	8 -12 monthly	20

Above:

Potential tenants

These tenants already operate from Pond Farm and wish to expand their business whilst maintaining the location. The applicant receives frequent (weekly) enquiries for rental availability, and the accompanying alternative property search provides evidence to the fact that there are no directly comparable units available within 10 miles of the application search. Further analysis of these properties will be undertaken later in this document.

DESIGN, SITING AND EXTERNAL APPEARANCE

External Appearance

The external appearance of the building is in keeping with the character of the existing buildings on the site and typical for a rural location. It is clad on the walls and roof with insulated composite cladding. This will be Olive green insulated composite cladding with 4 roller shutter doors and 4 personnel doors on the north and south elevations. The low pitch and the ridge height of the building at 6.6 metres at its highest point means that the building will not project beyond the existing built form, nor appear out of character in a rural area. It is set adjacent to the existing building cluster of commercial units but away from the residential house on the eastern side of the site. The rural character of the area is preserved and there will be no visual harm or wider landscape harm as a result of the development.

Table 2 – Design of building

Building Size	20m x 40m totalling 800m.sq
Walls	Height 5.0m Olive green insulated composite cladding
Roof	Insulated composite roof
Eaves Height	5m
Roof Pitch	7.5°
Ridge Height	6.6m
Doors	4 roller shutter doors and 4 personnel doors on the north elevation 4 roller shutter doors and 4 personnel doors on the south elevation
Floor	Power floated concrete floor



TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAYS

Both businesses wishing to expand are already operating on site, the expansion of the current businesses would generate up to 10 additional movements. There are existing movements from other commercial businesses on site. There are minimal movements in association with these business – that of the daily commutes for the employees totalling 5 or 6 per day.

Currently there are approximately 10-15 deliveries per week to site – approximately 2 or 3 daily. The expansion of the Air rescue business would not increase delivery order numbers. At such a low intensity of movements a week, it is considered the local highway network has the capacity and capability to withstand the traffic movements generated. It is also considered that there would be no impact on the highway safety of other network users as a result.

ACCESS AND VEHICLE PARKING

Existing access serves the wider site from the B1029, the design of which was approved under 21/01568/DISCON. All vehicles can access and egress the site in forward gear. Appropriate parking is proposed on site. The number, design and layout of vehicle parking places proposed is appropriate for the location, with regard to the criteria set out in Essex Parking Standards Guidance. The total number of spaces required is calculated according to the criteria for B2 use is set out in the table below.

Use	Vehicle requirement	Cycle	PTW	Disabled
B2 use	1 space per 50 m2	2 spaces per 200 m2	1 space + 1 per 20 car spaces	5% of total capacity, whichever is greater
	16	4	1	2

A parking plan accompanies this proposal. The vehicle parking shall not be used for any purpose other than the parking of vehicles that are related to the use of the development. There is the provision of 2 electric car charging points in line with Tendring Climate Emergency Action Plan.

NOISE

The building has insulated cladding and roofing materials, therefore any sounds arising are kept within the building. No works are to be carried out outside of the building. However, due to the small scale of works involved and number of employees, any noise generation would be restricted in frequency and duration. The nearest third-party residential properties are located to the northwest approximately 175m away from the building. It is considered that there would be minimal noise impact on these properties.

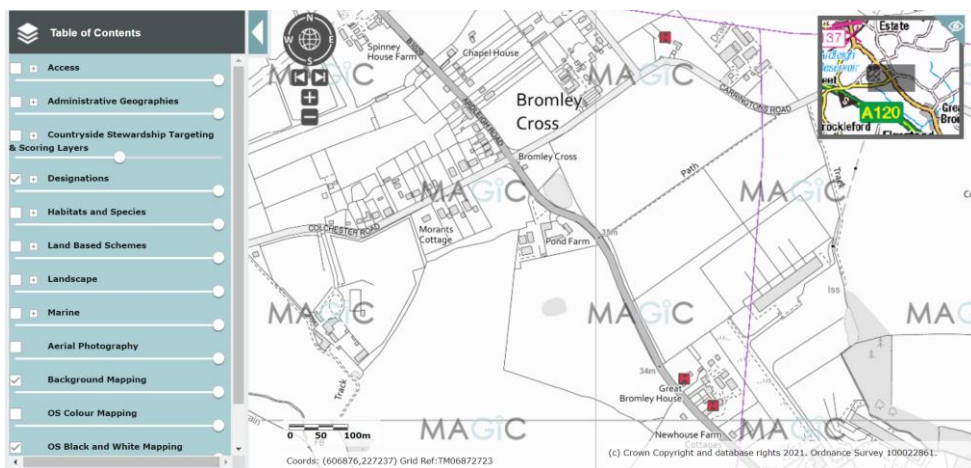
SUSTAINABLE ENERGY

The applicant is mindful of the requirement for a shift in energy sourcing to sustainable energy provision. The proposed building will benefit from the existing sustainable energy infrastructure currently on site. There is ground source heat pumping infrastructure which provides underfloor heating There is also an existing solar panel system on site which produces 64,000kw of energy annually. The proposed building will connect to the sustainable energy sources to power the underfloor heating and electric car charging points.



ECOLOGY

The site has no statutory or historic statutory designations. Neither are there any non-statutory designations. The site is not near any designated sites or priority habitats or species.



Source: magic.defra.gov.uk

The scheme incorporates additional native hedge planting to provide biodiversity net gain across the site. These hedges provide for a green network and infrastructure for small mammals insects and birds as well as shelter and feeding opportunities. The details of the proposed landscaping are set out within the accompanying landscaping plan.

The siting of the building adjacent to an existing building but will take in a degree of poor-quality grazed land. It will not result in the loss of significant or unique habitat, nor the loss of land cropped for cereals.

HERITAGE AND LISTING

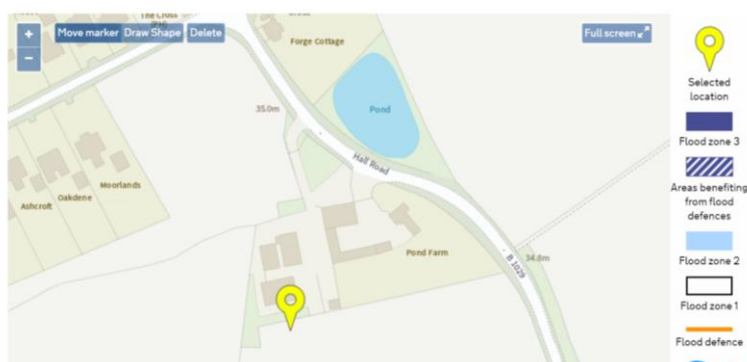
There are no listed buildings within the vicinity of the proposal site, the nearest is over 300m to the south, as evidenced in the map above. It is presented that there is no impact on the setting of the heritage asset due the separation involved.

Impact on Residential Amenity

The nearest third-party residents are over 175 m away and as such there will be no impact on their amenities. Given the distances involved, the proposed building will not result in impact of noise, odour pollution on neighbouring properties and it is considered that neighbourhood amenity is protected.

FLOODING

The Site is located within Flood Zone 1 and is within an area of Very Low risk of surface water flooding, according to the data held on the 'gov.uk' flood risk information pages.



Source: Flood map for planning service

Hours of Operation

Operations associated with the units including vehicles entering or leaving the site, shall be carried out during the following times:

08:00 to 18:00 hours Monday to Friday; and

08:00 to 13:00 hours Saturday

No operations shall take place on Sundays or Bank or Public Holidays.

Lighting

There will be no requirement for overnight lighting or floodlighting, although the buildings may be lit with entrance lights to facilitate entry/exit in the dark months up to the time of closing. The type of any lighting will be designed to reduce any spread of light out of the site. The type of lighting should not cause any detrimental impact on nocturnal creatures and would only be used during operational hours.

MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The principle of development

The Local Plan's strategic objective for Employment/Commercial is "To provide for the development of employment land on a variety of sites to support a diversity of employment opportunities and to achieve a better balance between the location of jobs and housing, which will reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable growth up to the period of 2033."

It is acknowledged that there are several large-scale housing developments allocated within the Local Plan and more under construction locally. However, the provision of commercial property does not match housing provision in terms of ratio or proportion. With new housing comes, people who own and run small businesses, and their need is not being met by new or additional commercial provision locally. By providing commercial properties locally, it will reduce the need to travel, promote sustainable growth and keep businesses within the district and provide a better balance between housing and commercial delivery.

The National Planning Policy Framework requires local planning authorities to adopt a positive approach toward development proposals that will contribute toward building a strong, responsive and competitive economy in their area and to ensure that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation.

In terms of the relevant development plan policies, at a strategic level policy SP5 identifies a need to provide between 12 and 20ha of employment land in Tendering over the plan period and the Local Plan Section 2 provides further details as to how this will be achieved, including a commitment that the Council will work alongside other



local authorities and businesses to identify barriers to local economic growth and to stimulate a prosperous economic future for the District.

The proposal will generate significant economic benefits, including direct and indirect construction-related employment, permanent employment in relation to the B2/ B8 use, sustained revenue through business rates and wage growth which will be spent in the local area.

This aligns with Objective 2, which aims to foster growth across various economic sectors, and Policy SP5, which promotes a strong, diverse, and sustainable economy in North Essex.

Additionally, the proposal aligns with the objectives of diversifying a current rural enterprise, a strategy that is expressly endorsed by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as well as local planning policy PP13. This diversification not only offers a pragmatic solution to the array of challenges facing agricultural businesses, as previously discussed, but also ensures that the enterprise is more resilient and adaptable to market changes. Therefore, the proposed changes stand not only to benefit the business itself but also to align with broader planning and economic development goals.

The application is in accordance with the policies on the NPPF and Local Plan and is therefore acceptable in principle.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework –

The NPPF sets out core planning policies which should underpin the planning decision making process. There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and is central to the policy approach in the framework. It emphasises the need to plan positively for appropriate new development. The core principles that are pertinent to this case is that planning should:

- *contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*

- *Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different 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.*



The NPPF places a strong emphasis on the need to deliver development and for that development to be sustainable. With regard to decision-taking, paragraph 9 states that local circumstances should be taken into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.

Furthermore, it is clear that councils should work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions whereby proposals can be approved wherever possible and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.

This application would deliver a development which makes gains across the three overarching objectives as set out above. It offers the space for entrepreneurial and start up and existing businesses to grow and establish as well as supporting existing business to expand into new and larger premises. Both will create the conditions for further innovation and productivity which results in job security/ employment opportunities which will support the local and rural economies. The right jobs in the right places offer employment security therefore social stability and security.

NPPF –Section 6 - Building a strong, competitive economy

Para 81. Sets out that 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, considering both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.

It is reiterated that the proposal is partly in reaction to the requirement of existing tenants needing to expand their premises in order to grow their business. This aligns with this above paragraph which adds that significant weight should be given to the need to support growth and productivity.

Supporting a prosperous rural economy

84. 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;”

85. Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.

The NPPF recognises that not all business can be located within settlement boundaries, indeed sites outside of these boundaries and away from designated industrial parks are places in which small businesses develop and grow, benefitting from lower rents and ratings. This is particularly true of the tenants on site who wish to expand. It is more often than not in these locations and businesses which employ local people and support the rural economy. Some small businesses would only continue to expand and develop in these locations as many of the large industrial parks attract large scale business and are prohibitively expensive to rent.

Section 9 - Promoting sustainable transport

Paragraph 110 states that “In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that:

- a) appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up, given the type of development and its location.
- b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users.



c) the design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code 46; and
d) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.

111. Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

It is presented that the low level of movements that the development will attract, there would be no unacceptable impact on highway safety or cumulative impact on the network. It is also presented that the vast majority of the movements to and from site would be commuter in character rather than frequent and intensive deliveries to site daily throughout working hours. The car parking design meets with the Essex Parking Design Standards and there is suitable disabled parking provision on site for users.

Paragraph 112 e) of the Framework states that applications for development should be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.

The proposal includes facilities for plug in electric charging points within the designated parking area.

14. Meeting the challenge of climate change

Paragraph 152 states: "The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure."

The building benefits from the sustainable low carbon energy sourcing infrastructure on site, the council should recognise that proposal will contribute to reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

Tendering Local Plan 2013 – 2033 Section 2 (2022)

A number of sub-objectives have been identified to underpin the purpose of the Local Plan policies in Section 2. Of particular relevance to this application is the Local Plan's Strategic Objective for Employment delivery.

Objective 2

To create the conditions for economic growth and employment opportunities across a range of economic sectors including established business sectors and those sectors projected to grow in the future such as renewable energy and care and assisted living.

To provide for the development of employment land on a variety of sites to support a diversity of employment opportunities and to achieve a better balance between the location of jobs and housing, which will reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable growth up to the period of 2033.

B2 & B8 facilities serve as a critical backbone to various industries, from retail and construction to renewable energy, by offering space for materials, equipment, and goods. In this way, the proposal not only supports established business sectors but also potentially facilitates growth in emerging sectors like renewable energy.

The policies of Section 2 of the Tendering District Local Plan that are relevant to this planning application comprise:

Policy SPL 2 Settlement development boundaries notes that settlement boundaries have been produced for each settlement and that there will be a general presumption in favour of development within these defined areas, subject to other policies in the plan. Outside of Settlement Development Boundaries, the Council will consider any planning



application in relation to the pattern and scales of growth promoted through the Settlement Hierarchy in Policy SPL1 and any other relevant policies in this plan.

Given that the proposal aims to diversify the rural economy, which is encouraged in the Local Plan, and contribute to sustainable development, it should be seen favourably in the context of Policy SPL 2.

SPL3 requires all new development to make a positive contribution to the quality of the local environment and protect or enhance local character. It must meet practical requirements and should be compatible with surrounding uses and minimise any adverse environmental impacts. The policy lists a number of criteria that all new development must meet to achieve these requirements.

Part A: Design

- a. new buildings, alterations and structures are well designed and maintain or enhance local character and distinctiveness.*
- b. the development relates well to its site and surroundings particularly in relation to its siting, height, scale, massing, form, design and materials.*
- c. the development respects or enhances local landscape character, views, skylines, landmarks, existing street patterns, open spaces and other locally important features.*
- d. the design and layout of the development maintains or enhances important existing site features of landscape, ecological, heritage or amenity value; and*
- e. boundary treatments and hard and soft landscaping are designed as an integral part of the development reflecting the function and character of the development and its surroundings. The Council will encourage the use of locally distinctive materials and/or locally occurring and characteristic hedge species.*

The new building would be identical in size, scale and form to buildings already on site to maintain and align with existing development. The building uses the same materials which are commonly used on agricultural buildings within the district – that of insulated steel box profile cladding – olive green in colour. The development is respectful in terms that it is located away from 3rd party residential properties and reflects the character and appearance existing on site. There is no loss of valuable vegetation, hedges or trees. The site is currently a grassland field but directly adjacent to a building. There is no loss of prime agricultural or cropped land.

Landscaping has been designed to increase biodiversity net gain on site through the planting of native hedge species which will give opportunities for habitat and feeding and shelter for insects, small mammals and birds.

Part B: Practical Requirements. *New development (including changes of use) must meet practical requirements. The following criteria must be met:*

- a. access to the site is practicable and the highway network will, following any required mitigation, be able to safely accommodate the additional traffic the proposal will generate and not lead to severe traffic impact.*
- b. the design and layout of the development maintains and/or provides safe and convenient access for people with mobility impairments.*
- d. the applicant/developer can demonstrate how the proposal will minimise the production of greenhouse gases and impact on climate change as per the Building Regulations prevailing at the time and policies and requirements in this plan.*
- e. buildings and structures are designed and orientated to ensure adequate daylight, outlook and privacy for future and existing residents.*

The building will benefit from existing access arrangements. Existing access serves the wider site from the B1029, the design of which was approved under 21/00582/FUL and 21/01568/DISCON. All vehicles can exit and egress the site in forward gear. The low level of expected movements can be accommodated and will not



significantly impact the highway network nor the safety of other highway users. The layout is simple and there is provision for safe and convenient access for people with mobility impairments and designated disabled parking.

The wider site has ground source heating pump infrastructure in place and solar panels that can produce up to 64KW of energy. The proposed building will connect to the sustainable energy sources to power the underfloor heating and electric car charging points.

The orientation and location of the building is isolated away from any 3rd party residential property, as such there will be no loss of privacy light and outlook.

Part C: Impacts and Compatibility. *New development (including changes of use) should be compatible with surrounding uses and minimise any adverse environmental impacts. The following criteria must be met:*

- a. the development will not have a materially damaging impact on the privacy, daylight or other amenities of occupiers of nearby properties.*
- b. the development, including any additional road traffic arising, will not have unacceptable levels of pollution on air, land, water (including ground water), amenity, health or safety through noise, smell, dust, light, heat, vibration, fumes or other forms of pollution or nuisance.*
- c. the health, safety or amenity of any occupants or users of the proposed development will not be materially harmed by any pollution from an existing or committed use; and*
- d. all new development should have regard to the most up to date adopted Essex Mineral Local Plan; and*
- e. during the construction phase, developers must comply with a 'considerate constructors' scheme' which employs reasonable measures and techniques to minimise and mitigate impacts and disturbance to neighbours and the existing wider community and any damage to public and private property.*
- f. All new development (including changes of use), should incorporate climate change adaptation measures and technology from the outset including reduction of emissions, renewable and low carbon energy production, passive design, and through green infrastructure techniques, where appropriate.*

The development will not have a materially damaging impact on the privacy, daylight or other amenities of occupiers of nearby properties due to the distances involved, the nearest being over 150m away. The development will not give rise to the production of pollutants, two of the existing tenants wish to expand their premises and no issues of pollution generation have been recorded. Due to the minimal transport movements, there will be no significant impact on the highway network. There is no generation of pollutants such as dust noise vibration etc. The development's commitment to high-quality architectural design, as evidenced by the planned use of steel box profiles and a carefully selected materials palette, demonstrates an effort to elevate the aesthetic quality of the area. These use of these materials including steel portal frame result in a rapid construction process. Climate change adaptation measures will be used by connecting to the existing sustainable energy infrastructure on site.

PP13 The Rural Economy

To support growth in the rural economy, the Council may grant planning permission for the following types of development in the countryside outside of defined Settlement Development Boundaries, subject to detailed consideration, including against other policy requirements in this Local Plan:

The Council will permit sustainable development proposals for farm and other land-based diversification schemes that benefit the rural area.

Proposals for re-use or redevelopment of rural buildings for employment purposes will be considered against the following criteria unless the economic benefits outweigh these criteria:

- f. the proposed use (including any proposed alteration or extensions to the building), its associated operational area, the provision of any services, and/or any amenity space or outbuildings, would not harm its appearance as a rural building or adversely affect the rural setting of the building in the locality; g. the proposed use would not create significant levels of traffic, particularly lorries, on rural roads (proposals for employment uses will be required*



to provide a sustainability assessment which may include a Travel Plan designed to maximise the opportunities to reduce the need to travel by private car); h. proposals which would create a significant number of jobs should be readily accessible by public transport; and i. it will not lead to unacceptable levels or types of traffic or problems of road safety or amenity and will not require highway improvements which will harm the character of rural roads in the area.

The proposed shift from an agricultural setting to a B2/B8 commercial facility is well-aligned with Policy PP13, which focuses on supporting growth in the rural economy. The development would represent a form of land-based diversification that would benefit the rural area, supporting small businesses and rural employment. The design and appearance would reflect buildings existing on site in terms of scale and appearance and design. As such it is presented that the proposed building would merge into the tapestry of built form without negatively affecting the rural setting. The proposal would not result in the generation of significant levels of traffic particularly as some of the potential occupiers are already existing tenants wishing to expand. It is presented that the character of the traffic movements would be mainly vans and trucks and limited numbers of Luton lorry sized vehicles.

PPL3 The Rural Landscape states that the Council will protect the rural landscape and refuse planning permission for any proposed development which would cause overriding harm to its character or appearance, including to:

- a. estuaries, rivers and undeveloped coast.
- b. skylines and prominent views including ridge-tops and plateau edges.
- c. traditional buildings and settlement settings.
- d. native hedgerows, trees and woodlands; protected lanes, other rural lanes, bridleways and footpaths; and
- f. designated and non-designated heritage assets and historic landscapes including registered parks and gardens.
- g. New development within the rural landscape should minimise the impact of light pollution on the site and its surroundings, in order to protect rural amenity and biodiversity.

The proposal is designed to minimise harm to the rural landscape's character and appearance: The plan involves the construction of a building similar in scale and appearance to that already existing on site, therefore it will not appear incongruous to existing development. It will not cause any harm to rivers estuaries or coastline as there are none locally. All hedges on site will be retained and new hedging planted. No protected lanes, footpaths or bridleways will be impacted by the proposal. There are no designated or non-designated assets within the immediate vicinity – the nearest grade II listed building being over 300m to the south. The proposed landscaping scheme includes hedgerow and tree planting, which would not only soften the visual impact of the development but also contribute positively to the rural landscape. The only external lighting planned is for doorway access to be used. This will only be used during arrival and departure times in the winter months only and should not interfere with wildlife. No floodlighting will be used. Further lighting details can be secured by a condition.

PPL 10 Renewable energy generation and energy efficiency measures states that development proposals should demonstrate how renewable energy solution, appropriate to the buildings site and location have been included in the scheme and for new buildings be designed to facilitate the retrofitting of renewable energy installations.

Renewable Energy Paragraph 7.9.3 of the Section 2 Local Plan highlights that in 2019 the Council declared a climate emergency, committing it to the preparation of an action plan with the aim of making its own activities carbon neutral by 2030, and acting as a community leader to encourage communities and developers to reduce carbon emissions and tackling climate change.

The wider site contains sustainable energy infrastructure – ground source heating as well as solar panels capable of generating 64Kw of power. The building will connect to the current infrastructure. The proposals also focus on using low-carbon materials and innovative construction methods demonstrates an underlying commitment to sustainability in accordance with Policy PPL 10. The building will benefit from ground source heating and the proposal includes 2 electric charging points.



CP2 Improving the transport network states that proposals for new development which contribute to the provision of a safe and efficient transport network that offers a range of sustainable transport choices will be supported. Proposals will not be granted planning permission if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impact on the road network would be severe.

The expected traffic movements have been set out within this document. The proposed development considers the need for a safe and efficient transport network and makes a concerted effort to minimise its impact on highway safety and the overall road network. Therefore, it appears to be in alignment with the objectives of Policy CP2.

Parking

Commentary within the Local Plan notes that parking must be provided to meet the requirements for access and parking which are contained in the latest version of the Essex County Council Development Management Policies and Parking Standards. Appropriate parking is proposed on site. The number, design and layout of vehicle parking places proposed is appropriate for the location, with regard to the criteria set out in Essex Parking Standards Guidance. The total number of spaces required is calculated according to the criteria for B2 use. 16 car parking spaces, 2 disabled spaces and designated spaces for cycles and p.t.w. parking have been provided. It should be noted that this includes 2 electric car charging points.

Alternative Premises Search - A Material Consideration

An alternative premises search accompanies this application. It is presented that the search parameters were set at 10 miles of postcode for light industrial warehouse and storage uses. The unit size was set at 100m.sq as this is the size on the individual units proposed within the building. The search returned 15 properties including container storage which has been discounted within this analysis. It is presented that there is significant limited availability of modern and high specification units for modern business within the District the nearest in design specifications was located in a different council area. Modern business especially that within light industry or B2 use requires suitable and commensurate accommodation in which to grow and invest. Business also requires good access to highway infrastructure; the proposal site is within 3.5 miles of the main highway A120 which connects Colchester to Harwich.

CONCLUSION

It is considered that this proposal meets the criteria of both National and Local Planning Policy, to support a prosperous rural economy and generate sustained growth and employment within Tendring District.

The proposal is relatively modest in scale and is considered to be appropriate in this location, which has existing commercial uses directly adjacent and is within easy access to the local primary network routes. The proposal is that of commercial units within an existing small-scale development located. The design would reflect those of existing rural buildings found both on site and in the district and would create little visual impact, being setback to rear of the site away from the road.

The proposal is to develop a commercial B2/B8 unit within an existing small-scale commercial development. It is expected that there will be a low impact in traffic volume or traffic movement frequency. The re-use would support a local small business, to continue to grow and expand.

The maintenance and protection of the natural assets surrounding the site are a high priority as well as taking opportunities to improve the biodiversity of the site.

This proposal for commercial units at complies with both Local Policy and National Planning Policy and should be supported.



Melanie Bingham-Wallis

**PLANNING DIRECTOR
FOR AND ON BEHALF OF FOXES RURAL LIMITED**

Date – 03.11.23