



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Planning Committee

23 December 2020



S20/1400

Proposal: Erection of a replacement free range egg laying unit with associated infrastructure, including feed silos, hardstanding areas and attenuation drainage pond.

Location: Home Farm, Corby Road, Grimsthorpe, PE10 0ND

Applicant: Mr Tim Bradley, Home Farm, Corby Road, Grimsthorpe, PE10 0ND

Agent: Mr Sam Harrison, Ian Pick Associates, 38 Beverley Road, Driffield, YO25 8RZ

Application Type: Full Planning Permission (Major)

Reason for Referral to Committee: Major application

Key Issues: Impact on the character of the area
Impact on neighbouring amenity

Technical Documents: Design and Access Statement
Manure Management
Ammonia Modelling

Report Author

Chris Brown, Principal Planning Officer

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Corporate Priority:

Growth

Decision type:

Regulatory

Wards:

Castle

Reviewed by:

Phil Jordan, Principal Planning Officer

8 December 2020

Recommendation (s) to the decision maker (s)

That the application is approved conditionally

1 Description of Site

- 1.1 The site is located to the north of Grimsthorpe and west of Elsthorpe, with access to the site north from the A151. The site is in open countryside with open fields in each direction around the site and an area of woodland (Breache's Wood) to the east of the site.
- 1.2 The site is dispersed, with 7 poultry buildings spaced either side of a central access road and a central group of buildings including a mix of agricultural buildings and the farmhouse. The farmhouse (Home Farm) is Grade II listed and a further two cottages (Farm Cottages) are located to the south of the existing central core of buildings along the access road from the A151.
- 1.3 The site is bounded by Breache's Wood to the east, with open fields to the west of the site and further woodland beyond. To the north and south of the site are a mix of large and smaller open fields with hedgerow boundaries.

2 Description of Proposal

- 2.1 The proposal is for the demolition of six existing poultry buildings and erection of one single replacement building, associated feed bins and including an egg packing room.
- 2.2 The existing poultry buildings to be demolished are outdated and are to be replaced by a single bespoke replacement modern poultry building. The replacement poultry building will be sited to the eastern boundary of the site, east of the central core of buildings on the site and adjacent to Breache's Wood. The proposed building will be 170.40m in length, 15.0m in width and 4.50m in height to the ridge and 2.50m to the eaves. A total of four feed bins are proposed to be sited centrally to the proposed building at approx. 9.00m in height.
- 2.3 The building will house 32,000 free range laying hens for egg production, all to be moved from the existing buildings that are to be demolished. This proposal will not increase the number of birds on site, instead solely improving the existing buildings to house the birds through demolition of the existing buildings and replacement with a single modern building. The building will be split internally to form two large bird areas with a central egg packing store. The bird areas will include a scratch area, perchery and nest boxes together with associated conveyor belts for egg collection and manure removal. The proposed building provides access to an external range area for the birds.
- 2.4 The building will be of steel frame construction with juniper green profile sheeting. The proposed building includes automatic ventilation together 14hrs per day internal lighting.

3 Relevant History

- 3.1 S16/0122 Erection of a single storey agricultural building. Details not required (PD) 12.04.16

4 Policy Considerations

4.1 SKDC Local Plan 2011 - 2036

Policy SP5 – Development in the Open Countryside
Policy E7 – Rural Economy
Policy EN2 – Protecting Biodiversity and Geodiversity
Policy EN4 – Pollution Control
Policy EN5 – Water Environment and Flood Risk Management
Policy EN6 – The Historic Environment
Policy ID2 – Transport and Strategic Transport Infrastructure
Policy DE1 – Promoting Good Quality Design

4.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Section 6 – Building a strong, competitive economy
Section 9 – Promoting sustainable transport
Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places

5 Representations Received

5.1 Environmental Protection Services (SKDC)

5.1.1 Environmental Protection has reviewed the documents in respect of the above application and has no further comment to make.

5.2 LCC Highways & SuDS Support

5.2.1 No objection to the proposal.

5.3 Environment Agency

5.3.1 We have reviewed the submitted details and have no objection to the application.

5.4 Welland & Deepings Internal Drainage Board

5.4.1 The site falls outside of my Boards area but falls within our extended area.

5.4.2 Upon viewing the drawings there does not appear to be any water courses being altered, culverted etc. I therefore have no comments to make.

5.5 Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust

5.5.1 No comments received.

5.6 Historic England

5.6.1 On the basis of the information available to date, we do not wish to offer any comments.

5.7 Natural England

5.7.1 Based on the plans submitted, Natural England considers that the proposed development will not have significant adverse impacts on designated sites and has no objection.

5.8 **Woodland Trust**

- 5.8.1 The Trust objects to planning application S20/1400 on the basis of damage and detrimental impact to Breache's wood, a Plantation on Ancient Woodland Site designated on Natural England's Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI).
- 5.8.2 There is no wholly exceptional reason for the development in this location and as such this development should be refused on the grounds it does not comply with national planning policy.
- 5.8.3 The council should also have regard for Policy EN2 (Protecting Biodiversity and Geodiversity) of the South Kesteven Local Plan (2020) in relation to the protection of ancient woodland.
- 5.8.4 This application is for the construction of a replacement free range egg laying unit with associated infrastructure within very close proximity to an area of ancient woodland. Natural England has identified the impacts of development on ancient woodland or veteran trees within their standing advice.
- 5.8.5 We are specifically concerned about the following impacts to the ancient woodland:
- Noise, light and dust pollution occurring from adjacent development, during both construction and operational phases.
 - Where the wood edge overhangs public areas, trees can become safety issues and be indiscriminately lopped/felled, resulting in a reduction of the woodland canopy and threatening the long-term retention of such trees.
 - Adverse hydrological impacts can occur where the introduction of hard-standing areas and water run-offs affect the quality and quantity of surface and ground water. This can result in the introduction of harmful pollutants/contaminants into the woodland.
- 5.8.6 We also note that an arboricultural survey has not been completed for the proposed development, and therefore we request that until such time as a report is submitted the application is delayed or refused due to lack of information.
- 5.8.7 The Trust objects to this planning application unless the applicant is able to provide the adjacent ancient woodland with a 30m buffer zone in line with Natural England's Standing Advice.

5.9 **Gardens Trust**

- 5.9.1 Thank you for consulting the Gardens Trust in its role as Statutory Consultee on the above application which affects Grimsthorpe Castle, an historic designed landscape of national importance which is included by Historic England on the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest at Grade I.
- 5.9.2 We have considered the information provided in support of the application and liaised with our colleagues in Lincolnshire Gardens Trust. On the basis of this we confirm we do not wish to comment on the proposals at this stage. We would however emphasise that this does not in any way signify either our approval or disapproval of the proposals.

5.10 **Forestry Commission**

5.10.1 On reviewing the Planning Application details I found that the proposed Free Range Egg Laying Unit is within approximately five metres of Breache's Wood, which is Plantation on an Ancient Woodland Site (PAWS). Ancient woodlands are irreplaceable. They have great value because they have a long history of woodland cover, with many features remaining undisturbed. This applies equally to Ancient Semi Natural Woodland (ASNW) and Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS). The submitted Design and Access Statement addresses the issue of dust but given the very close proximity to the woodland, ammonia emissions from ventilation and particularly from the manure as it is removed will have a negative impact on the woodland. As a Non Ministerial Government Department we provide no opinion supporting or objecting to an application. Rather we are including information on the potential impact that the proposed development would have on the ancient woodland. It is Government policy to refuse development that will result in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats including ancient woodland, unless "there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists" (National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 175).

5.10.2 It is noted that the Planning Proposal includes a Tree Planting Plan. That current Plan shows tree planting north and south of the proposed Egg Unit. Given the importance of a buffer zone the Commission would recommend that some of the proposed planting is used to create a buffer zone of at least 15 metres between the Egg Unit and the perimeter of the existing ancient woodland.

5.11 **Edenham Parish Council**

5.11.1 This application for a replacement chicken building seems generally acceptable. The location, adjacent to established woodland, will reduce its landscape impact and the removal of the existing chicken buildings will, in landscape terms be beneficial.

5.11.2 The four feed silos shown on the plan are not mentioned in the Design and Access Statement but, being taller than the building itself, will be prominent. The plan shows these coloured green and it would be as well if their proposed colour was confirmed to ensure that it is satisfactory. Their height is not shown on the plan or mentioned in the DAS although they may be 5.6m high (one of the two different building ridge heights given in the DAS). Again, this should be confirmed. No details are given for the tree planting scheme but a specification should be requested to ensure that it provides sufficient visual screening.

6 Representations as a Result of Publicity

6.1 This application has been advertised in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement and no letters of representation have been received.

7 Evaluation

7.1 Principle of Development

7.1.1 Policy SP5: Development in the Open Countryside sets out a framework for development in the open countryside and the policy provides that development would be restricted

unless the proposal falls within specified categories. The specified categories of development that will be supported in open countryside locations includes development for agriculture (a.). The proposal is for the demolition of existing poultry buildings and erection of a single replacement poultry building on the same site and on an established agricultural unit, the principle of development is therefore considered acceptable and in compliance with Policy SP5.

- 7.1.2 Policy E7: Rural Economy states that proposals for small business schemes in rural areas will be supported for proposals farming businesses. Such proposals must meet the following criteria:
- a) be of a scale appropriate to the rural location;
 - b) be for a use(s) which is(are) appropriate or necessary in a rural location, providing local employment opportunities which make a positive contribution to supporting the rural economy;
 - c) the use / development respects the character and appearance of the local landscape, having particular regard to the Landscape Character Assessment, and will not negatively impact on existing neighbouring uses through noise, traffic, light and pollution impacts; and
 - d) avoid harm to areas, features or species which are important for wildlife, biodiversity, natural, cultural or historic assets, including their wider settings.
- 7.1.3 The proposal for a replacement poultry building is considered to be acceptable, with no increase in the business use of the site (no increase in the number of chickens), instead with the proposal to demolish six outdated poultry buildings and replace with one modern and more efficient building. The proposed building is of similar appearance to the existing buildings on site to be demolished, however sited more conspicuously and longer in length than the existing buildings for a more efficient set up on site.
- 7.1.4 The principle of development is therefore considered to be acceptable, with the proposal in compliance with Policies SP5 and E7.
- 7.2 **Impact on the Character of the Area and Heritage impact**
- 7.2.1 Policy DE1 seeks to ensure development is appropriate for its context. Further, paragraph 127 of the NPPF provides that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.
- 7.2.2 The proposal is for one replacement poultry building, replacing a series of six poultry buildings spread across the existing site. The existing six poultry buildings to be demolished are spread approx. 460m from north to south at the furthest points and dotted east and west of the central access road through the site. This proposal is considered to be seen in the context of the existing permission on the site and the existing buildings on the site, with a further (seventh) poultry building remaining to the north west of the site.
- 7.2.3 The proposed building will be 4.50m to the ridge with eaves of 2.50m in height and clad in juniper green profile sheeting. The building will be sited to the east of existing agricultural

(non poultry) buildings on site and adjacent to Breache's Wood. The proposed building will be sited a further approx. 240m further back (north) within the site from the current most southerly poultry building, resulting in a building that will have very limited visibility from the A151 to the south, and considerably less visual impact than the existing site set up, with three of the more southern existing buildings currently able to be seen in wider views from the A151 and now to be demolished.

- 7.2.4 In addition to the further distance from public viewpoints, the applicant has submitted a tree planting plan that proposes wide areas of tree and shrub planting to the north and south of the proposed building. Whilst full details of the planting are not specified and will be conditioned, the proposed planting will further screen any wider views to the proposed building.
- 7.2.5 There are no public rights of way within proximity of the site, with any public views limited to be looking north from the A151. As the proposed building will be low in height, set against a backdrop of woodland and considerably further away (c.240m) from the existing buildings to be demolished the proposal is therefore not considered to negatively impact on the landscape.
- 7.2.6 There is a listed building on the site (Home Farm – Grade II) and the site is located approx. 1.65km from Grimsthorpe Castle (Grade I) and approx. 1.37km from the associated listed buildings to the north of Grimsthorpe Castle.
- 7.2.7 The farm house (Home Farm) is described within the listing description as:
'Farmhouse. 1837, incorporating some re-used C17 material, with some late C19 alterations and additions. Coursed limestone rubble with ashlar quoins and dressings, plain tiled roofs, one with raised stone coped gable and finial. Single ridge and gable red brick stacks. L-plan. 2 storeys with garret, 3 bay front, the right hand 2 bays advanced and lower'.
- 7.2.8 In addition to the listed Home Farm is a Grade II listed pump adjacent to the farm building and a Grade II listed milestone located on the A151 approx. 90m to the west of the access to the site.
- 7.2.9 Both Historic England and the Gardens Trust have been consulted and neither statutory consultee have any objections to the proposal, with no identified harm to heritage assets.
- 7.2.10 The proposed building, whilst large in scale at 170m in length, will replace six existing poultry buildings spread across the wider site. All of the existing poultry buildings are outdated and are not of modern appearance or condition. Each building spread over the site has its own feed bin. The proposed replacement building, modern in construction and juniper green in appearance, would provide an enhancement to the appearance of the site. Wider views to the site would be improved through the demolition of the existing buildings, with views of the proposed building considered to be minimal from any public viewpoint whilst additional tree planting on site is proposed.
- 7.2.11 The proposed new poultry building will be sited approx. 170m to the east of listed Home Farm. Within the line of sight from Home Farm are the existing central core of agricultural

buildings (non-poultry) on the site, and with the proposed building to be sited against the backdrop of Breache's Wood.

7.2.12 By virtue of its siting, appearance and scale, the proposal is considered to be in keeping with the surrounding rural context in accordance with Policy DE1 of the Local Plan and Section 12 of the NPPF. Through its siting and appearance the proposed building is not considered to result in harm to the setting of nearby and wider heritage assets, in accordance with Policy EN6 of the Local Plan and Section 16 of the NPPF.

7.3 **Impact on Residential Amenity**

7.3.1 Taking into account the scale and nature of the proposal, and its location within open countryside there is not considered to be an unacceptable adverse impact on any residential amenity, with the nearest property being approximately 370m to the south west of the proposed building and associated to the running of the business (Home Farm Cottages). Outside of these, the next nearest residential dwelling is a further approx. 240m to the south of Home Farm Cottages (Oak Cottages). The poultry building would replace the existing six buildings on the site, in the same wider location, and located further away from the nearest residential dwelling from the existing buildings. The buildings are low in profile and not considered to impact on visual amenity, with limited views to the buildings from neighbouring dwellings and public viewpoints.

7.3.2 With regards to odour emissions, there is considered to be a significant improvement compared to the existing scenario with use of the existing poultry units. The existing buildings to be demolished operate on a deep litter system of manure removal, with manure removal only taking place at the change of each flock of birds, approx. every 60 weeks. The new modern building will incorporate manure belts within the building which shall be emptied on a twice weekly basis. Manure removal will therefore take place 120 times more often than the existing site set up.

7.3.3 In terms of dust impact the proposed building will operate as a free range unit, with a wide area (16ha) of open space adjoining the building for use by the birds. This significantly reduces the levels of dust in the atmosphere and is assisted by the twice weekly removal of manure from the building compared to the existing deep litter set up. The improvement in the set up and use of manure belts will also decrease the likelihood of flies, with no pest control required.

7.3.4 Noise would be kept to a minimum as all deliveries and collections on site would be between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday and 8am-1pm on Saturdays only, with all cleaning works on the site undertaken also within these hours. Whilst ridge mounted fans will be used for ventilation, their efficiency together with the distances to neighbouring dwellings is not considered to result in any detrimental noise impact.

7.3.5 For ammonia emissions, the replacement of the six existing buildings with a modern replacement is again considered to result in an overall improvement in ammonia emissions.

7.3.6 The site is located approx. 3.7km from the nearest SSSI (The Hermitage and Grimsthorpe Park), with the proposal considered to significantly decrease ammonia and nitrogen production from the site compared to the existing situation.

7.3.7 In summary, the proposal is considered to comply with Policies EN2, EN4 and DE1 of the Local Plan, with the proposal resulting in a significant betterment in terms of odour, air quality and ammonia deposition compared to the existing situation.

7.4 **Highway Issues**

7.4.1 The Highway Authority do not raise any objections to the proposal. Access to the site and highway safety would not be adversely affected, nor would parking and turning facilities available on the site. Access is provided from the existing entrance on the A151 and the proposal will not result in any intensification of use on the site, with the same number of birds on the site as currently. As such the proposal is considered to comply with Policy ID2 and Section 9 of the NPPF.

7.5 **Drainage**

7.5.1 The applicants have submitted details of flood risk and surface water management within the design and access statement. The site is located within Flood Zone 1, with less than 1 in 1000yr probability of flooding.

7.5.2 The proposed drainage strategy for surface water run off (rainfall) proposes the use of an attenuation pond to be located to the south of the proposed building. The attenuation pond would have capacity for a 1 in 100yr rainfall event plus a 30% allowance for climate change with controlled discharge to the existing ditch that runs to the immediate east of the building along the line of Breache's Wood

7.5.3 All water from cleaning the poultry sheds (dirty water) will be collected within a sealed dirty water tank. This would be emptied via a vacuum tanker following each washout of the buildings. This is as per the current arrangements on site, with no contamination of the nearby watercourse.

7.5.4 The proposal is considered to comply with Local Plan Policy EN5.

7.6 **Impact on woodland**

7.6.1 The Woodland Trust have objected to the proposal stating that the proposed building would negatively impact upon Breache's Wood. Breache's Wood is a plantation on an ancient woodland site and located to the immediate east of the proposed building.

7.6.2 The proposed building is considered to result in a significant decrease in ammonia deposition and nitrogen emissions, together with improvements in odour emissions compared to the existing site of six poultry buildings spread across the wider site. Furthermore, there is not considered to be any detrimental impact on the woodland through site drainage, with all dirty water stored in a tank on site and surface water run off

(rainfall) temporarily stored in an attenuation pond prior to a controlled release into an existing drain.

- 7.6.3 The proximity of the building to the woodland is noted, and the impact of the proposed woodland on root protection of woodland trees was raised with the applicant. The applicant has undertaken a root protection zone calculation to BS:5837, the appropriate standard / methodology.
- 7.6.4 The area on the plan labelled as 'existing woodland' also includes an existing boundary hedgerow. The proposed building is 8m from the hedgerow, with an additional 8m from the hedgerow to the nearest tree within Breache's Wood. Therefore, the nearest tree within Breache's Wood to the nearest point of the building is 16m. The nearest tree measures 91cm in circumference at 1.5m above ground level. The BS:5837 root protection calculator has calculated that the tree therefore requires a root protection zone of 3.48m. The proposed distance of 16m is therefore considered to be well above the root protection distance required.
- 7.6.5 It is noted that the distance of 16m from the building to the nearest tree within Breache's Wood is less than the 30m buffer distance as proposed by the Woodland Trust. However, the existing site consists of six poultry buildings spread over a wide area, with considerably higher ammonia and nitrogen emissions than the proposed single building and is above the 15m buffer as requested by the Forestry Commission.
- 7.6.6 No objections have been received from Natural England, the Environment Agency or the Forestry Commission, and as the proposed building would result in a significant decrease in ammonia and nitrogen emissions compared to the existing situation on site, and with the proposed building sited in such a location to minimise any landscape harm and harm to nearby heritage assets, the proposal is considered to be acceptable and in accordance with Local Plan Policy EN2.

8 Crime and Disorder

- 8.1 It is considered that the proposal would not result in any significant crime and disorder implications.

9 Human Rights Implications

- 9.1 Articles 6 (Rights to fair decision making) and Article 8 (Right to private family life and home) of the Human Rights Act have been taken into account in making this recommendation. It is considered that no relevant Article of that act will be breached.

10 Conclusion and Planning Balance

- 10.1 The proposal is in accordance with Policies SP5, E7, EN2, EN5, EN6, DE1 and ID2 of the Local Plan and Sections 9, 12 and 16 of the NPPF and there are no material considerations that indicate otherwise, as such the proposal is therefore acceptable.

10.2 **RECOMMENDATION: that the development is Approved subject to the following conditions**

Time Limit for Commencement

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be commenced before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In order that the development is commenced in a timely manner, as set out in Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

Approved Plans

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following list of approved plans:
 - i. Location Plan (received by the Council on 19th August 2020)
 - ii. Proposed Site Plan (received by the Council on 19th August 2020)
 - iii. Proposed Elevations and Floor Plan (received by the Council on 19th August 2020)

Unless otherwise required by another condition of this permission.

Reason: To define the permission and for the avoidance of doubt.

Pre-commencement

Landscaping

- 3 Before any construction work above ground is commenced, details of any soft landscaping works shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details shall include:
 - i) planting plans;
 - ii) written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment); and
 - iii) schedules of plants, noting species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate.

The submitted landscaping details shall be in broad accordance with the submitted Tree Planting Plan (received by the Council on 19th August 2020).

Reason: Soft landscaping and tree planting make an important contribution to the development and its assimilation with its surroundings and in accordance with Policies DE1, EN3 and OS1 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

During Building Works

Drainage implementation

- 4 Before any part of the development hereby permitted is occupied/brought into use, the works to provide the surface and foul water drainage shall have been completed in accordance with the approved details within the Design and Access Statement and Proposed Site Plan.

Reason: To ensure the provision of satisfactory surface and foul water drainage is provided in accordance with Policy EN5 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Prior to occupation

Landscaping implementation

- 5 Before the end of the first planting/seeding season following the occupation of any part of the development hereby permitted, all soft landscape works shall have been carried out in accordance with the approved soft landscaping details.

Reason: Soft landscaping and tree planting make an important contribution to the development and its assimilation with its surroundings and in accordance with Local Plan Policy DE1.

Ongoing conditions

Materials

- 6 Before any part of the development hereby permitted is occupied/brought into use, the external elevations shall have been completed using only the materials stated in the planning application forms and approved plans unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development and in accordance with Policy DE1 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Landscaping retention

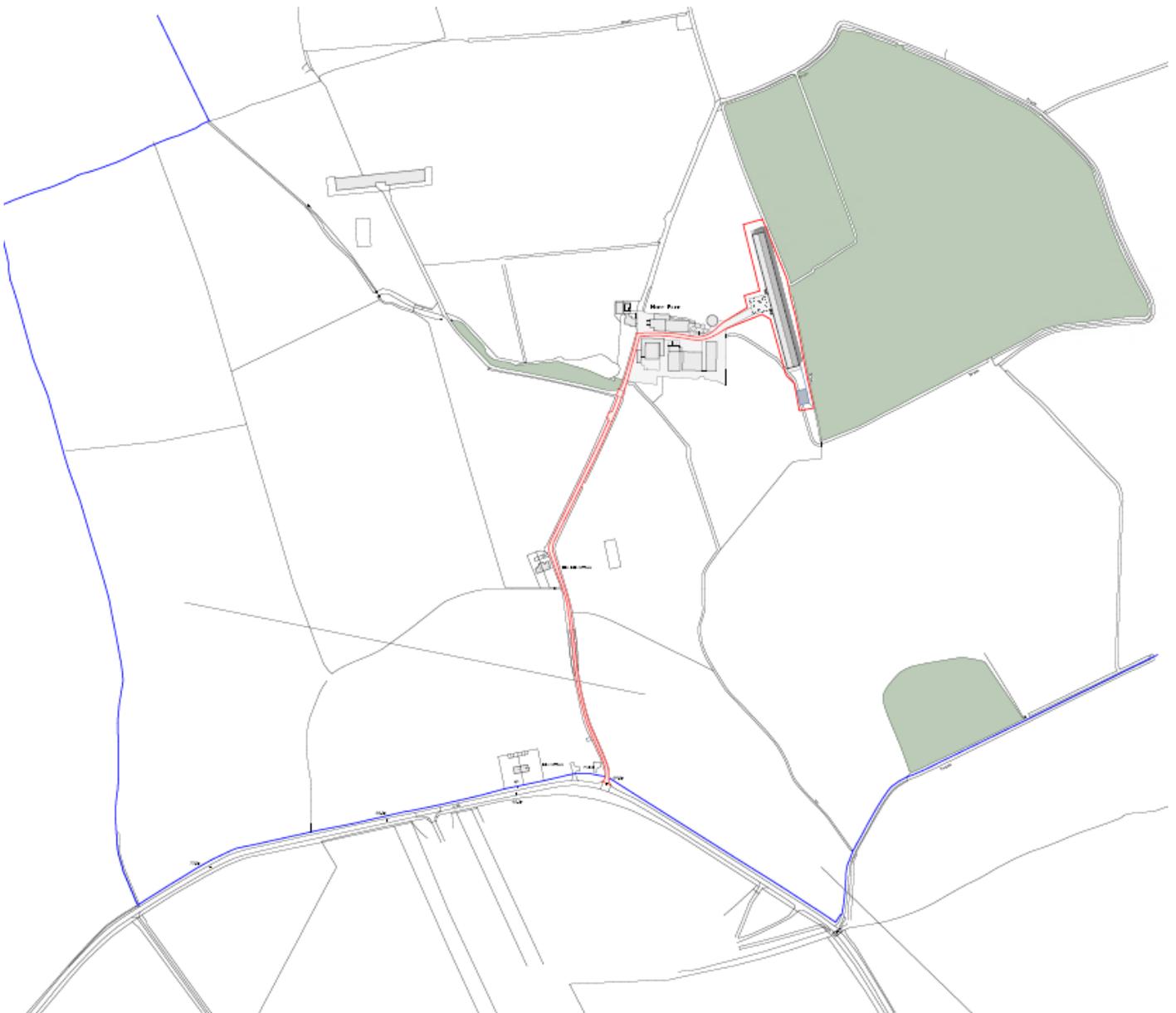
- 7 Within a period of five years from the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, any trees or plants provided as part of the approved soft landscaping scheme, die or become, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, seriously damaged or defective, shall be replaced in the first planting season following any such loss with a specimen of the same size and species as was approved in condition above unless otherwise agreed by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the provision, establishment and maintenance of a reasonable standard of landscape in accordance with the approved designs.

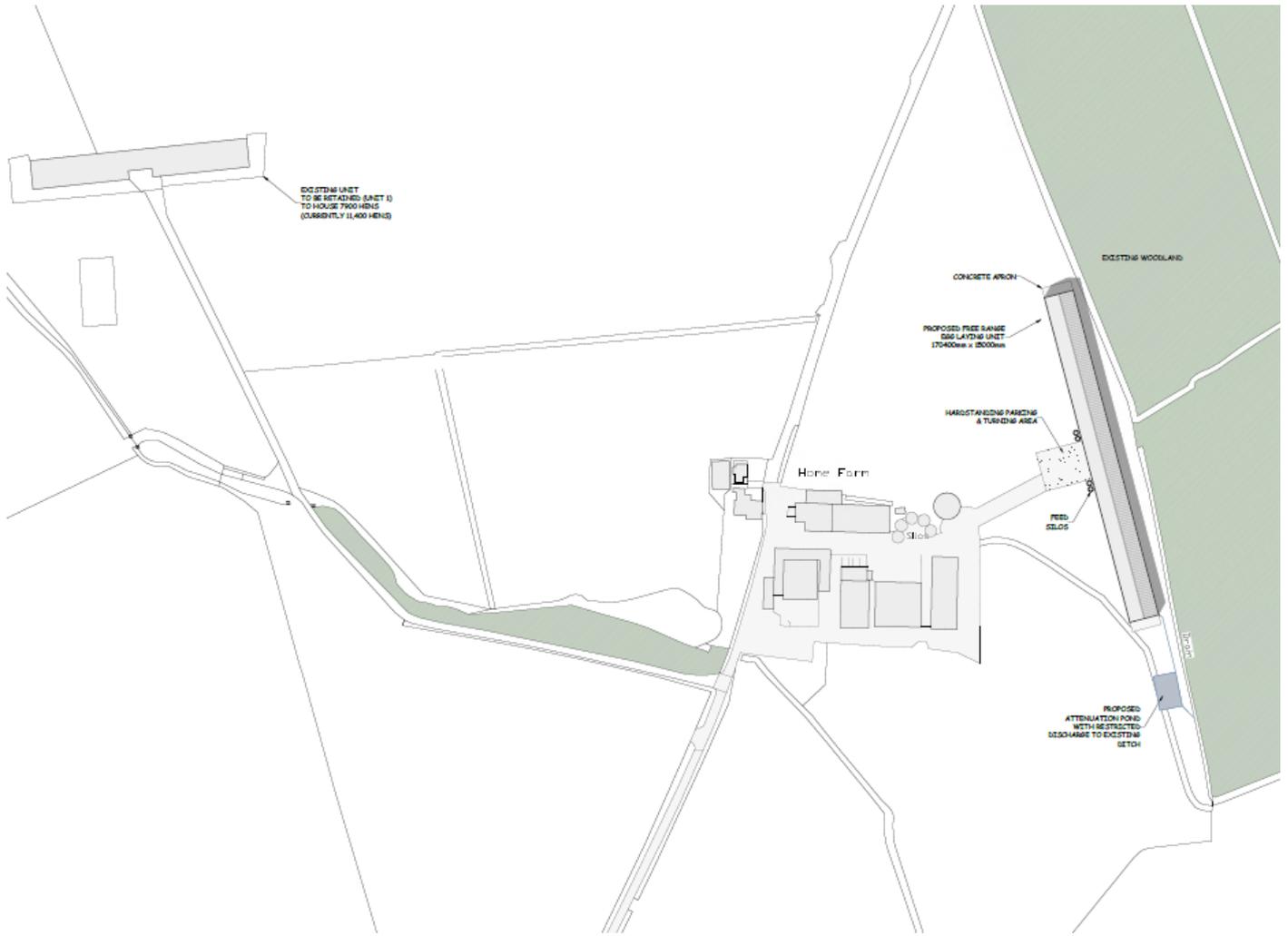
Standard Note(s) to Applicant:

- 1 In reaching the decision the Council has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner by determining the application without undue delay. As such it is considered that the decision is in accordance with paras 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

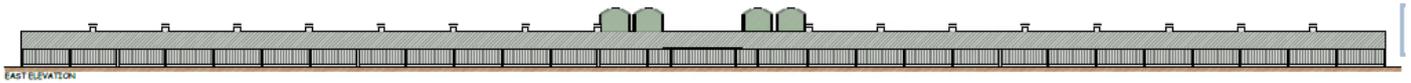
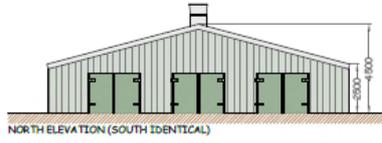
Location Plan



Site Plan



Elevations and floorplans



Tree Planting Plan

