

PLANNING STATEMENT OF MR. K. ASHBURNER

FOR AN AGRICULTURAL BARN

SHEEPWASH FARM,
CHURCH ROAD, ALDINGBOURNE, PO20 3TT

Symonds
& Sampson

ESTABLISHED 1858

Current Situation

Sheepwash Farm is a small but thriving mixed farm extending to 10 hectares (24.5 acres) and in addition a further 10.2 hectares of grazing/conservation land is taken at Barnham and a further 2.84 hectares (7 acres) is taken for grazing conservation at Woodgate.

The farm has developed over a number of years and now supports a mixed enterprise comprising 45 breeding ewes which produce lambs; a calf rearing business where young calves are brought in at approximately a week old and reared to approximately 16 weeks old, although some of these calves will be retained for the grazing land; there is also a pig enterprise comprising 3 sows and these will be bred to produce piglets to be sold either as weaners or at a later stage.

Future Intentions

It is the intention of the Applicant to increase the calf rearing enterprise so that he is rearing 200-250 calves per year. The sheep enterprise will increase to 100 ewes, the pig enterprise will increase to 5 sows and, in addition, the Applicant will have some chickens and turkeys.

The existing buildings on site comprise one fully enclosed agricultural barn which is used for storage of machinery and equipment. This is not suitable for providing accommodation for livestock and therefore if this proposal is to be properly implemented a building that is suitable for housing livestock must be provided.

There are other more modest temporary livestock pens used for the sheep and pig enterprises but there is no building that allows the calf enterprise to be properly managed and secured therefore a building is required in order to ensure that the calf enterprise can be properly implemented and that the welfare of the calves can be properly provided for.

Planning Policy

The planning policy that relates to agricultural buildings is one of the saved Policies of the Aldingbourne Local Plan and is DEV6. This is a Permissive Policy that states that *"planning permission will be permitted provided that two criteria are fulfilled". Firstly, the scale, siting, design and materials minimise the visual impact on the landscape and that secondly, the new building is grouped with any existing buildings in order to minimise the impact on the landscape* further going on to say *"that buildings will only be permitted where their location is essential to the agricultural activity being undertaken in a prominent location"*.

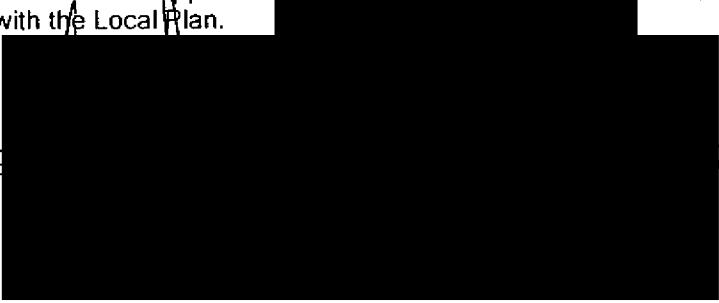
At Sheepwash Farm there is already an existing fully enclosed barn in existence therefore this is not a new building in an isolated position. The proposed building is of mono pitch design and will be positioned immediately adjacent to the existing barn therefore it is considered that the building will sit comfortably with the existing building on site. It is to provide a proper livestock building divided into 4 pens in which the calves can be reared and the other livestock can be housed when required therefore the proposal is in conformity with the local plan in particular in regard to the specific Policy dealing with agricultural buildings.

Turning now to the general Policies that have been retained. GEN3 indicates that *"the countryside will be safeguarded for its own sake and that development will not be permitted unless it is either for the diversification of the rural economy or is in accordance with Policies in Section 2 and 3 of the Plan referring to specific use or type of development"*. Clearly this proposal is for a specific use or type of development in that it is in accordance with DEV6 and therefore it is considered that DEV6 takes precedence over this Policy.

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We consider that this is in conformity with Local Plan Policies. In addition, Government Guidance at PPS7, when dealing with development for agriculture, is quite clear in saying that the "*Government recognises the important varied role of agriculture including in the maintenance management of the countryside*" and says that "*local planning authorities should be supportive in enabling farmers to become more competitive, sustainable and environmentally friendly and to adapt to new and challenging markets*". This building provides this opportunity to the Applicant. Therefore this proposal is also in conformity with the Local Plan.



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