

Roundstone Farm Shop
Roundstone Farm, Angmering

Planning, Design and Access Statement

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Background

Roundstone Farm Shop was originally used solely for agricultural purposes. It became redundant for agricultural purposes in 1988 planning permission was granted for the conversion of the buildings to a Farm Shop. The use was subject to a planning condition and a Section 52 agreement that it could only be used for the sale of farm produce.

In 2014 planning permission was granted for the use of one of the buildings for a café.

With the subsequent development of large supermarkets on the opposite side of the A29 the shop was closed due to lack of viability. The applicants were however keen to keep the shop going and so in 2017 they applied for planning permission to remove the farm shop sales condition and S.52 agreement. The application was approved and the shop was re-opened.

Since then, the shop and café struggled to remain viable. They have now closed and are unoccupied. The applicants are now looking to revert the building back to their original agricultural use and Arun District Council has advised them that this requires full planning permission for change of use.

Proposal

The proposal is to return the building to agricultural use, with the added flexibility of using the building for any of the following Use Class E activities

a) for the display or retail sale of goods, other than hot food, principally to visiting members of the public,

b) for the sale of food and drink principally to visiting members of the public where consumption of that food and drink is mostly undertaken on the premises,

c) for -

(i) financial services,

(ii) professional services (other than health or medical services), or

(iii) any other services which it is appropriate to provide in a commercial, business or service locality,

e) for the provision of medical or health services, principally to visiting members of the public, except the use of premises attached to the residence of the consultant or practitioner,

f) for a creche, day nursery or day centre, not including a residential use, principally to visiting members of the public,

g) for—

(i) an office to carry out any operational or administrative functions,

(ii) the research and development of products or processes,

without the need to re-apply for planning permission.

The applicants would advise the Local Planning Authority and Rates office prior to making any changes of use from agriculture.

The proposal does **not** involve any external or internal changes to the buildings.

Planning policy

Agriculture is infrequently used in planning policy despite its importance to ecology, the landscape and the economy. However, proposals for agricultural developments are supported, particularly where they make use of existing buildings.

The change of use of agricultural buildings to commercial uses is generally supported.

National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (the Framework)

The framework actively supports a healthy rural economy.

Paragraph 88 states:

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;

Paragraph 125 states:

Planning policies and decisions should:
promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings,

Arun Local Plan 2011-2031

Policy C SP1 states that development will be permitted in the countryside where it is :

- a. for the operational needs of agriculture, horticulture, forestry, the extraction of minerals or the management of waste as part of a waste site allocation within the West Sussex Waste Local Plan;

Policy SO DM1 states:

Unless designated by this Plan or a Neighbourhood Development Plan, the use of Grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification for any form of development not associated with agriculture, horticulture or forestry will not be permitted unless need for the development outweighs the need to protect such land in the long term.

The site is also within a local gap where new built development is restricted.

Notwithstanding this the re-use of existing buildings for commercial uses is supported where associated with farm diversification schemes, or as set out in the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development (England) Order.

Policy ENV DM5 seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity.

Planning merits

Economic Development Statement

Agriculture is one of the few activities encouraged in rural areas, along with making full use of existing buildings for agricultural and commercial purposes. The application buildings were constructed as farm buildings and were used in association with the farm until recently. They are now redundant and vacant. The shop and associated café use simply could not compete with the supermarkets on the opposite side of the A259.

Roundstone Farm includes some of the best and most versatile farmland in the district. By making use of existing buildings, it will help reduce the need for new farm buildings.

As stated above the buildings are agricultural buildings and they were simply used for a diversification scheme that has recently ceased. It makes common sense for them to revert to agricultural use, with the flexibility to resume a commercial diversification use in the future should the need arise. That way the buildings can be continuously used to support the farm business.

In conclusion, the proposed reversion to agricultural use is fully in accordance with National and Local Planning Policies and is the optimum use for a former agricultural building. The possible future use for the stated Class E uses would comply with local and national policies and could help ensure the long-term viability of the farm enterprise.

Character and appearance

The proposal does not involve any changes to the buildings either inside or externally. The proposed agricultural use will generate far less traffic than the former farm shop and associated café use. Also, by having inside storage will reduce the need for outside storage on the farm.

Traffic

The proposed agricultural use will reduce traffic when compared to the farm shop/cafe use. The possible future Class E uses have very similar parking requirements to the current shop and café use.

Ecology & BNG

No changes to the buildings are proposed and no additional hard surfacing is proposed. The proposed agricultural use would however generate considerably less traffic than the former shop and café and this will benefit wildlife. Any return to Class E uses would be highly unlikely to generate more traffic than the former commercial uses, which also involved a pick your own farm enterprises which has also ceased.

The scheme does not introduce any new buildings or hard surfaces and is exempt from BNG.

Landscape Strategy

No physical changes are proposed to the site.

Dark Skies

The farm shop and associated café involved considerable internal and external lighting which will simply not be required for an agricultural use.

Surface water and foul drainage statement

No changes are proposed.

Flood Risk Assessment

The site is not located in an area at risk of flooding and the proposal will not increase the risk of flooding either on or off the site.

Conclusion

For these reasons the proposal complies with the National and Local planning policies set out in this statement.