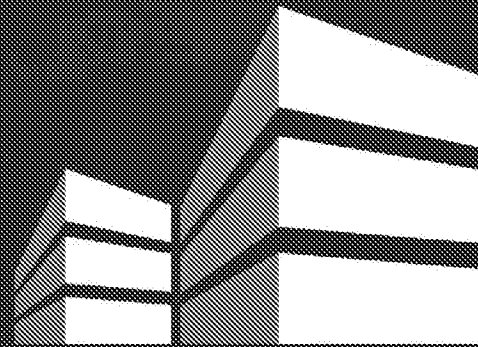




NEXT PHASE

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

Planning Application

Arun District Council

**For planning permission to remove the agricultural tie attached to Springfields,
Chichester Road, Bognor Regis, West Sussex, PO21 5EE**

On behalf of Mr C. Thorne

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

October 2018



RICS

0520/02

Springfields –Supporting Statement

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Chichester Road, Bognor Regis, West Sussex, PO21 5EE**

On behalf of Mr C. Thorne

October 2018

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CONTENTS

Item	Description
1.0	Introduction
2.0	Site History
3.0	Planning Policy Statement
4.0	Conclusion

**THIS DOCUMENT IS TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE ACCOMPANYING
DOCUMENTATION AND PLANS SUBMITTED AS PART OF THIS APPLICATION.**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This supporting statement is written on behalf of Mr C. Thorne (the applicant) under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to Arun District Council under consideration to remove the agricultural tie (condition 2) at the property known as Springfields, Chichester Road, Bognor Regis, West Sussex, PO21 5EE. This application is made on behalf of Mr C. Thorne who seeks full planning permission for the proposal.
- 1.2 The application site is located within Arun District, in the south-east of West Sussex. The site is located to the north-west of Bognor Regis along Chichester Road and is situated outside of the built-up area boundary of North Bersted. Springfields lies 0.3miles (0.5km) from the beginning of North Bersted and the settlement boundary and is located along the A259 providing access to the Chichester by-pass (A27) to the north west and the Bognor by-pass and Bognor Regis to the south-east; providing access to the wider road network.
- 1.3 The applicant purchased the property in 2015 from the Cobham family. The Cobham family have been in ownership of the property since was granted permission in 1962. The Cobham family at the time owned the neighbouring farm, Elbridge Farm, where Mr Boxhall the original occupant of Springfields previously worked as farm manager before his retirement in 1986.
- 1.4 The landholding at Springfield consists of that within the immediate curtilage and land to the west of the site of approximately 0.1381 hectares. This parcel of land has recently been granted planning permission for the erection of a dwelling. The Case Officer in his decision making advised that whilst the classification of the land is Grade 2, due to the very small area of the land, it would be very unusual in modern agricultural and arable farming for this land to be viable for the purposes of growing crops.

- 1.5 The objective of the application is to demonstrate that there is no longer a requirement for a property with an agricultural tie at this location. The following Statement reviews the sites history, from when permission was granted through to the sites current use and how the ownership and land surrounding the site has influenced the need for the agricultural dwelling since it was first permitted in 1962.

2.0 Site History

2.1 Planning applications

- 2.2 The agricultural bungalow was first permitted in 1962 (BE/19/51/C) in connection with the farming activities at Elbridge Farm, Chichester Road, Bognor Regis, PO21 5EF. Condition 2 of the permission stated that *“The occupation of the dwelling shall be limited to persons employed, or last employed, locally in agriculture as defined in section 199 (1) of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1947, or in forestry, and the dependants of such persons.”* The applicant is seeking permission for this condition to be removed.
- 2.3 Most recently the applicant has submitted two applications to remove the agricultural tie, both of which have been withdrawn on the advice of the Case Officer in the 2015 application, that a certificate of lawfulness application should be lodged and in 2016, in response to the submitted certificate of lawfulness application that additional information is required to justify the removal of the agricultural tie.
- 2.4 In 2015, the applicant submitted an application to remove the condition but was informed by Simon Davis of Arun District Council, that the best procedure going forward would be to withdraw the application and submit a certificate of lawfulness, to demonstrate that the condition had been breached for a continuous 10-year period.
- 2.5 The applicants took into consideration the council’s advice and submitted a Certificate of Lawfulness application. On the 27th July 2016 the application for the lawful development certificate for the existing land to be used as residential was withdrawn on the recommendation of the council’s solicitor that the evidence provided was contradictory and advised that a certificate of lawfulness could not be granted as it could not be demonstrated that the condition had been breached for a 10-year period.

- 2.6 The applicants have submitted no further applications at the site to remove the agricultural tie. However, planning permission has been granted for the erection of a new dwelling on land west to Springfields. This dwelling has been granted permission without an agricultural tie.
- 2.7 Occupant History
- 2.8 The certificate of lawfulness application submitted in 2016 was not granted under the advice of the council's solicitor, who raised concerns regarding the occupancy of the property, regarding when it was occupied and details of who occupied the property. The solicitor was under the impression that given the evidence provided in support of the Certificate of Lawfulness application that before the applicant purchased the property in 2015 the property had been vacant for 15 years, as such there is no evidence to show that the condition had been breached before the existing occupants (the applicant) purchased the property in 2015. However, the applicant had presented information that provided a timeframe of who occupied the property from the permission being granted in 1962 to the sale of the property in 2015.
- 2.9 Mr Cobham the previous owner of Springfield sold the estate at Elbridge Farm but retained the dwelling at Springfield. The property was retained in Mr Cobham's ownership where Mr Boxhall lived out his retirement until his death in 2012, which is when his son (Ian Boxhall) then occupied the property with his family.
- 2.10 While it is understood that the dwellings intentional need was to serve an agricultural worker employed at the adjacent farm, since Mr Boxhall's death and the Cobham family selling the estate, the occupants of the property have had very limited ties with any agricultural activities. Since the construction of the property in 1964, the property has only been occupied by one person employed in a farming practice. When the Cobham family

- sold the farm land and not the property at Springfields, this further weakened the properties tie to local agricultural practices.
- 2.11 Planning Reference BE/19/51/C
- 2.12 The purpose of the application is to demonstrate that the agricultural tie and the dwellings need to be positioned in this location to support the districts farming practices is no longer required. The application was first granted in 1962 by Chichester Council, and was completed and occupied by Mr Fred Boxhall, who at the time was the farm manager at Babsham and Elbridge Farms. Mr Boxhall did not own the land he farmed, the land was owned by Sir Alan Cobham. It is understood that Elbridge Farm is no longer a traditional working farm, since it was sold to The Church Land commission in 1986 the former agricultural buildings on the site at Elbridge Farm have been granted permission for alternative commercial uses as the farming practices associated with Elbridge Farm have decreased. Permission was granted in 2006 under reference BE/56/06 for Change of use and assorted works of agricultural building to B1/B2 industrial and B8. In 2008, Alternative internal layout and position of external wall openings & change of use of B8 part of building to B8/B1/B2 use and 2010 under reference BE/55/10 for the change of use of the cowshed from agriculture to B1/B2/B3 use. The first application shown on the council's archive for change of use from redundant farm buildings to use as craft workshop for the design making and hand polishing of individual furniture was granted in 1990.
- 2.13 The dwelling at Springfield was originally required by the farm manager to support the farming activities as residential development surrounding Elbridge Farm was sparse, the property at Springfield is located 300m east of Elbridge Farm, providing a convenient and accessible location for the farm manager.
- 2.14 Mr Boxhall occupied the property at Springfields during his retirement and until his death in 2002 when Mr Boxhall's son (Ian), moved into the property. It is understood that Mr Ian
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Boxhall does not work in agriculture. Mr Ian Boxhall vacated the property in 2014. The property was then put on to the market for sale and Mr Thorne purchased the property from the Cobham family.

2.15 There are dwellings located to the east and the recently permitted dwelling to the west which all have no agricultural ties. It has been demonstrated in the permitted application for the new dwelling that Springfield is not located in a remote position and is highly accessible to a variety of local amenities. The removal of the agricultural tie would allow for the provision of a market house into the Districts housing supply in an accessible and sustainable location.

2.16 The application has identified the need for the dwelling in the first instance and demonstrated that in the original application permission was granted for a dwelling in this location for the occupation of the farm manager of Elbridge Farm. The fields farmed under the landholding of Elbridge Farm were sold off separately to the dwelling, and the farming practices at Elbridge have decreased and diversified to commercial B1 uses. This demonstrates that there is little need for the property at Springfields to be available for the sole occupant associated with an agricultural tie, as the adjacent farm that the house was originally built to occupy the farming manager of has diversified from traditional farming practices.

2.17 Planning Policy

2.18 Arun Local Plan 2011- 2031

2.19 Policy H DM3 of the local plan, advises on rural workers dwellings, and that these are most commonly granted outside of the built-up area. The policy outlines the criteria that an application for a worker dwelling needs to meet. It is considered that the need for an

- agricultural dwelling in this location is redundant and that a functional need cannot be demonstrated for an agricultural dwelling at this location.
- 2.20 The policy requests that a need must be demonstrated as to why workers need to be readily accessible. Springfields is located 300m east of Elbridge Farm and was ideally located for Mr Boxhall when he was employed as farm manager at Elbridge. The need to be within close proximity of Elbridge Farm has now decreased as the farming practices have decreased at the site and diversified to offer a variety of commercial units. Since the farming practices at Elbridge Farm have diversified and nobody has occupied the property that has worked on the farm since 1986, this shows there is alternative housing for people employed at the farm. Furthermore, since 1986 as no planning applications have been submitted for an agricultural dwelling with a tie to Elbridge Farm, this further demonstrates that there has not been a requirement for employees of the farm to be within a readily-accessible location.
- 2.21 With regards to point F, Springfields has a stronger relationship with the surrounding residential development, than any of the farm buildings at Elbridge Farm. As such Springfield does not physically have a strong relationship with a farmstead.
- 2.22 Point H of the policy advises that the condition will only be removed whereby it can be demonstrated that the dwelling is no longer required in agriculture. Taking into consideration the criteria which is needed to be met for a worker dwelling to be permitted, it is not considered that the land at Springfields if submitted today would be supported by the council, for an agricultural worker dwelling, as no need can be demonstrated as to why the dwelling needs to be positioned at this location. The parcel of land has no ties with an agricultural farm, and the farm that the dwelling originally formed the landholding of has since decreased its farming activities from when the original dwelling was granted. Since the application was granted only one occupant has been

employed in agriculture. The dwelling is positioned a relative distance from the farm buildings and has a stronger relationship with its surrounding residential built development. While the parcel of land is outside of the defined settlement boundary, it is located within a cluster of residential development as to not appear out of character and has been identified as located within close proximity to daily services and amenities, demonstrating the parcel of land is not isolated but positioned in a sustainable location whereby occupants are not reliant on the use of a private vehicle.

- 2.23 While it is acknowledged that the application site is detached from the development boundary, in the recently granted planning permission adjacent to Springfields, the site has been highlighted as located in a sustainable area. As such the removal of the agricultural tie, would not result in a development located in a rural area that did not adhere to housing development policies in the local plan.

3.0 CONCLUSION

- 3.1 It is understood that Springfield's was granted permission in 1962. The dwelling was assigned an agricultural tie as the property was to be occupied by the farm manager at Elbridge Farm. Elbridge Farm is located 300m west of Springfields and was ideally located for the farm manager to be within close proximity of the farm.
- 3.2 In 1986 the owners of Elbridge Farm, sold the estate but did not include Springfield in the sale.
- 3.3 Since the Cobham's sold the farm, there has been a shift in modern day farming activities. Since 1990 a number of the former farm buildings on the site are no longer associated with farming activities and have been converted to B uses.
- 3.4 It is considered that when assessed against the need for the property in 1962, this need has reduced when taking into consideration that the tie between the property and farming activities has decreased since the sale of property from the adjacent farming practices, and that the land does not sit in isolation and would not promote sustainable development.
- 3.5 As such it is respectfully respected that the council uplift the agricultural tie associated with the property at Springfields, Chichester Road.

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