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Arun Civic Centre
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BN17 5LF

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Access and Design Statement

Site: Lower Farm, Yapton Lane, Walberton, Arundel BN18 0AS.

Description: Glasshouse, Reservoir, Services & Parking Area.

It is proposed to build a new horticultural nursery on land at Lower Farm, Yapton Lane, Walberton, Arundel, BN18 0AS to grow strawberries.

This paper contains the key points of the proposal and should be read in conjunction with:

- The Full Planning Application
- Location Plan
- Site Plan
- Layout & Elevation Drawings
- Ecology Report
- Transport Assessment & Travel Plan
- Flood Risk Assessment, Drainage & SuDS
- Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment
- Archaeology Assessment

1.0 Background

Agricultural Investments Ltd. and Binsted Farms Ltd. plan to erect 5Ha of glasshouses at Lower Farm, Walberton to grow long season strawberries. A similar nursery is currently being built at Wicks Farm, Ford Lane, Ford, Arundel with 6Ha of glasshouses to grow strawberries.

2.0 Proposed Development

It is planned to erect the glasshouse under one roof with an overall footprint of 225m x 222m = 50,000m². The height to the roof gutters will be 6.0m and to the ridges 6.8m.

The main structure will comprise galvanised steel lattice beams supported by galvanised posts spaced at 8.0m x 5.0m. The structure will be clad in horticultural glass, supported in aluminium glazing bars and gutters.

Plans and Elevations for this Application have been produced by Curtis Leeves Technical.

The glasshouse will be constructed to high-tech design standards and growing structures will be installed to grow strawberry crops using state of the art vertical farming systems.

Rain water falling on the glasshouse roof will be harvested, stored in the reservoir and used for irrigating the strawberry crops. Irrigation of crops will take place in a closed system so that no water or fertilisers run to waste. The irrigation system will be controlled by an irrigation computer; monitoring: natural light levels, water uptake, PH, conductivity and nutrient levels.

The environment within the glasshouse will be controlled through the use of an environmental control computer; including temperature, humidity and CO² levels.

Bumble bees will be introduced to pollinate the strawberry crops and beneficial insects will be introduced to control pests such as aphids, red spiders and whitefly.

If crop lighting is required in the future, automatic black out screens will be used to prevent artificial light spilling out into the night sky.

This development will make a significant contribution towards increasing and extending the growing season of home-grown strawberries and reducing imports. It will also reduce food miles and help move food production towards the target of net zero carbon.

3.0 Site Location, Levels and Layout

The proposed glasshouse site is bounded to the North and East by cultivated agricultural fields and to the South by Lower Farm grain store, buildings and cottages. The western boundary runs alongside Yapton Lane (B2132).

It is proposed to build the reservoir immediately to the South of Lower Farm. Rain water will be harvested from the glasshouse roof and piped under the farm driveway to the reservoir. An underground pipe will be installed to carry overflow water from the reservoir to the existing ditch at the southern end of the field. The existing solar farm will border the reservoir on the East side, Yapton Lane (B2132) to the West and the railway line to the southern end of the reservoir field.

The land is currently being farmed with rotational arable field crops.

The area of land proposed for the glasshouse requires minimal levelling. The land required for the reservoir will require levelling and grading in accordance with the Topographical Survey carried out by Geodime and the reservoir design by Andrew Hawes Associates – Reservoir Designers.

4.0 Access

Access to the site will be through the existing private farm entrance off Yapton Lane (B2132).

5.0 Flora & Fauna

The site has been under long term agricultural cultivation use. There are no known protected species of native flora or fauna on the proposed site.

An Ecological Survey and Assessment has been carried out by The Ecology Partnership as part of this Application.

6.0 Noise & Odour

There will be no odour emanating from the Nursery and the only noise will be that of vehicles loading and unloading for very short periods of time.

7.0 Landscape and Visual Impact

A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, including a Planting Plan, has been carried out by Lizard Landscapes as part of this Application.

8.0 Transport Assessment & Travel Plan

A Transport Assessment and Travel Plan for this project has been produced by the Civil Engineering Partnership.

9.0 Archaeology Survey

An Archaeology Survey has been carried out by Archaeology Development Services, and dependent on findings, further investigative trenching will follow ahead of any ground works or construction work on site.

10.0 Flood Risk, Drainage & SuDs

A Flood Risk, Drainage & SuDs Assessment has been produced by the Civil Engineering Partnership.

11.0 Planning Context & Considerations

- 11.1** This completed Nursery development project will make a major contribution towards food security and will help towards reducing food miles and imports.
- 11.2** The proposed nursery development site lies on cultivated agricultural land and adjoins the existing farming operations at Lower Farm. Immediately to the West and adjacent to this proposed glasshouse development are many existing substantial horticultural sites.
- 11.3** Rain water harvesting from the glasshouse roof is included in the design of the development to enable water to be stored in a reservoir to be used year-round for crop irrigation.
- 11.4** Irrigation drainage water from the crops will be collected in small underground tanks, recycled and blended with fresh water to irrigate the crop. This system ensures that no irrigation water or fertilisers run to waste.
- 11.5** 15 new full-time jobs will be created; many of them high value.

12.0 Arun District Council (ADC) – Local Plan – Relevant Policies

(i) ADC states that it will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will work proactively with applicants to jointly find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible and to secure development that will contribute to the social, economic and environmental conditions South of the National Park through to the coast and throughout its settlements.

(ii) Planning applications that help to achieve the central aim of this Local Plan, which is to increase employment density and which accord with the Plan policies and/or adopted Neighbourhood Development Plan will be approved, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

12.1 Policy DEV3 Horticulture

New glasshouse development will usually be permitted provided that:

- (i) there is no adverse impact on the surrounding environment and landscape;*
- (ii) long views across substantially open land are retained;*
- (iii) adequate water resources are available; and*
- (iv) adequate surface water drainage capacity exists or can be provided as part of the development.*

John Hall Consulting Ltd. – 30th September 2020