



STATEMENT OF AGRICULTURAL NEED

On behalf of: Mr & Mrs B King

Site: Manor Farm, Collingbourne Kingston, Wiltshire SN8 3SD

Proposal: Removal of existing caravan and erection of agriculturally tied farm managers dwelling - with associated access, parking, landscaping and private amenity space.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement of Agricultural Need has been prepared by Fowler Architecture and Planning Ltd on behalf of Mr & Mrs B King in support of the submission of a Full Planning Application for: *'Removal of existing caravan and erection of agriculturally tied farm managers dwelling - with associated access, parking, landscaping and private amenity space'* at Manor Farm, Collingbourne Kingston.
- 1.2 Manor Farm is a holding extending to approximately 485 acres.
- 1.3 The Applicants gained planning permission for the creation of a dairy enterprise at Manor Farm back in 2021. The dairy unit has now been completed and is in operation.
- 1.4 The farming business extends to approximately 915 acres. The additional 430 acres is rented for silage, arable production and grazing. One Farm Business Tenancy (FBT) agreement runs for 15 years, extending to 365 acres. The remaining land is rented on grazing agreements and short term FBTs.
- 1.5 As part of the temporary dwelling application, the approved farming system has now been fully implemented along with significant investments in new infrastructure in the region of £750,000.
- 1.6 The total livestock number fluctuates throughout the year due to births, deaths and sales but currently the holding comprises approximately 500 dairy cows, 120 spring born weaned calves and 70 autumn born calves, with an additional 300 dairy replacement and beef animals grazed away.
- 1.7 Daily on-site activities to maintain high animal welfare comprise:

(1) Milking

The dairy herd are milked twice a day, 365 days a year. The milk produced is of high butterfat, cell counts and bactoscans are low, reflecting the high levels of stockmanship and management.

(2) Oestrus Detection

As with all dairy farms Manor Farm aims to have a 305-lactation day/year so that they are able to achieve a calving index of 1, this is the optimum balance between herd health and production. If the herdsman has failed to identify which animals are on heat the calving index will slip to more than 1 which will result in a deduction in milk production.

With the use of Artificial Insemination (AI) successful heat detection and timing of AI is important to ensure that the cows become in-calf at the appropriate time.

Manor Farm uses artificial insemination (AI) to ensure that the best dairy genetics are used to improve future herd yields, health and fertility.

Heat detection is one of the most important jobs to be completed during the night shift as the stockman needs to identify which animals are on heat, If the stockman fails to identify which animals are on heat the farm could lose up to £100 head/month in lost milk revenue as a dairy cow is only on heat for approximate 48 hours each month.

(3) Calving

All cows which are due to calve are observed every 2 hours regardless of the time of day. If a difficulty is detected and assistance required, then for the health and wellbeing of both the cow and calf this needs to be completed immediately by an experienced person on site.

- 1.8 The need for a farmhouse is to ensure the farm is compliant with the highest animal health and welfare standards and to ensure there is 24hrs supervision for the dairy herd as per government and welfare guidelines.

2. Site Description

- 2.1 The application site ('the site') is located out the outskirts of Collingbourne Kingston – sited to the west of the built-up village. The site comprises a new dairy unit which was granted planning permission in June 2021.
- 2.2 The site is located approximately 900m to the west of Collingbourne Kingston, 4 miles north of Tidworth and 4.8 miles south-east of Pewsey.
- 2.3 The site is surrounded by agricultural land within the applicant's ownership.
- 2.4 The site is accessed via an unnamed road off the A338, which runs through the village, with access tracks leading into the dairy unit site. This unnamed road is also a designated Public Right of Way footpath – reference: CKIN10.
- 2.5 The site is located within fluvial Flood Zone 1, with low chance of surface water flooding, and within the North Wessex Downs National Landscape (formally the AONB). The site is not known to be subject to any other particular constraints.

3. Proposed Development

- 3.1 This application seeks planning permission for: Removal of existing caravan and erection of agriculturally tied farm managers dwelling - with associated access, parking, landscaping and private amenity space.
- 3.2 The proposed development comprises:
- Removal of the existing temporary herdsman caravan – approved under 21/01218/FUL;
 - Erection of 1 no. agriculturally tied farm managers dwelling;
 - Creation of new access drive to serve the new dwelling;
 - Associated 3 no. parking spaces; and
 - Private amenity space for the new dwelling with appropriate landscaping measures.
- 3.3 The new dwelling is proposed to serve the new dairy unit at Manor Farm, Collingbourne Kingston – replacing the existing caravan, and allowing the farm manager to be on site to manage the herd. The proposed dwelling will be located to the south of the dairy unit – sited in an east/west orientation, with the principal elevation facing west.
- 3.4 The layout of the proposed dwellings is shown on the submitted Site / Block Plan.
- 3.5 The new agricultural workers dwelling will replace the existing mobile home, which is vital to ensure the farm is compliant with the highest animal health and welfare standards and to ensure there is 24-hour supervision for the dairy herd, as per government and welfare guidelines.

4. Statement of Agricultural Need

- 4.1 Currently, the applicants live at Manor Farm, Collingbourne Kingston, as the established dairy unit has no available house. Manor Farm is located around 1.5km away from the farmstead. The consequences of this are that during the 9-week period when cows are calving, it is impossible for the contractor to provide the level of care and supervision that they would wish for, as required by the farm Assurance Standards.
- 4.2 An outcome of this is an increased risk of both cow and calf health and ultimately mortality.
- 4.3 Although there is an existing mobile home/caravan on site, this is not a realistic long-term and a permanent dwellinghouse is required to serve the farm.

Farm Assurance Animal Welfare Standards

- 4.4 In line with most dairy farms, the male calves are sold as soon as possible as this reduces the risk of disease and ill health. Standards require that all calves are kept alive until weaning which normally occurs at the age of 8 weeks of age and in the case of organised farms – 12 weeks of age. However, due to occasions restrictions in place on the movement of livestock due to the presence of Bovine TB, dairy farmers are forced to rear all calves which places additional pressure on the stockmanship due to increased numbers and the greater risk of disease such as scours or pneumonia.

Staff Welfare / Lone Working

- 4.5 The current situation means that during calving and other busy times of the year when the stockpersons are having to be in attendance outside the normal working hours, there is a serious risk of injury. This risk is compounded by the fact that there is no one else available near the dairy unit.
- 4.6 Provision of staff accommodation close to the dairy unit will reduce the risks associated with the handling of cattle that may themselves be stressed and confused.

Functional Test

4.7 The National Planning Policy Framework (the 'Framework') adopted in December 2023 is a material consideration to this proposed development.

4.8 Paragraph 84(a) of the Framework states:

'Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply...(a) there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside'.

4.9 In this case, the provision of a new dwelling in this location, close to the established dairy unit, will allow continued supervision of the unit, along with providing financial benefits to the business and the safety of the site.

Full Time Worker

4.10 In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, permission for a new rural dwelling needs to relate to a full-time worker on one who is primarily employed by agriculture.

4.11 The dairy enterprise at Manor Farm is dependent on a small number of highly skilled persons who are highly attuned to both animal welfare and able to spot the first sign of ill health, but also able to carry out any of the duties from milking to moving the parlour and allocated the correct amount of grazing for the herd.

Existing dwellings in Collingbourne Kingston

4.12 In addition to the above, there the sales market for new dwellings in Collingbourne Kingston has been slow over the last 5 years. There was a peak of sales in 2022, following the coronavirus pandemic, but it has now returned to its normal levels.

4.13 The average house in the village sells for £518,000.

- 4.14 Unfortunately, for the average farm holding and essential workers, this average price is not sustainable. It is considered that a permanent dwelling on site is the most sustainable option for Manor Farm, and will promote the day-to-day operations of the dairy unit.

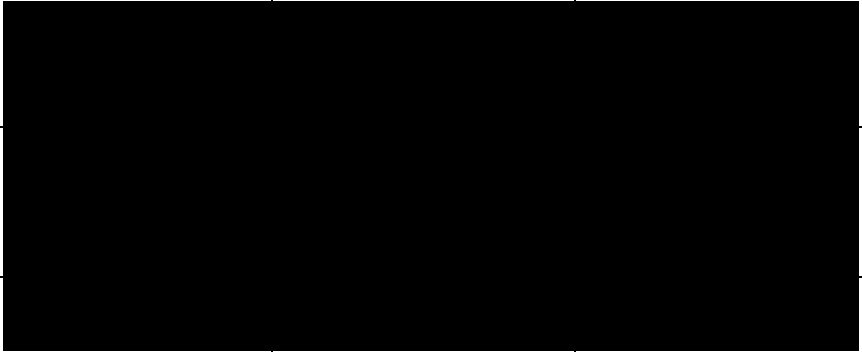
Financials

- 4.15 Manor Farm, Collingbourne Kingston has been successfully growing since it was established in 2021. The summary of the accounts for Manor Farm is included at **Appendix A.**

- 4.16 The below table shows the sales results for the dairy enterprise, and demonstrates an average yearly total sales of £[REDACTED]

	2022	2023	2024
Milk Sales	[REDACTED]		
Heifer Rearing			
Cattle Sales			
Miscellaneous income			
Total:			

- 4.17 When taking into account direct expenses and overheads, the total profit figures are as follows:

	2022	2023	2024
Total Sales			
Expenses and overheads			
Net Profit:			

- 4.18 The accounts for Manor Farm dairy enterprise show that the business has been making strong and consistent growth since it was established in 2021.
- 4.19 Due to the nature of the business and the raising costs of sales over the last three years, it is considered that there is a requirement for a farm manager dwelling on site to meet the expanding needs of the unit.

5. Summary

- 5.1 The dairy enterprise has a clear functional need for staff to live close to the main buildings on the farm, as this will enable them to improve animal welfare and become more efficient.
- 5.2 Additional income for the farm will arise from reduced mortality and the opportunity to rear all the beef calves, which the current lack of accommodation does not enable, demonstrating that the new farm managers dwelling is compliant with the National Planning Policy.

Appendix A - Manor Farm, Collingbourne Kingston – Financial Information

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

