



Bourne Valley Associates Ltd

Planning Statement

For

**A new agricultural farm office building under an
Application for Prior Notification of proposals under
Schedule 2, Part 6**

of

**The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted
Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)**

At

**Crofton Farm, Crofton, Marlborough,
Wiltshire, SN8 3DW**

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Project: Crofton Farm – Prior Notification
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1. Introduction

This statement accompanies and supports an application made to Wiltshire Council seeking prior approval for a new agricultural farm office building to be undertaken under Permitted Development rights. The application relates to a proposed new agricultural building at Crofton Farm, Crofton. The application is submitted by Bourne Valley Associates, acting as agent on behalf of Mawley Hall LLP who owns the farm and its associated agricultural land which is managed by Mr Andrew Speed.

The proposal is considered, by the applicants and ourselves, to be permitted development under The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015¹ (GPDO). Under Schedule 2, Part 6 of that Order¹, the details of the proposals need to be set out to the local planning authority, which then has 28 days in which to let the applicant know of its decision whether a full application is required or to inform the applicant of its decision to allow or refuse permission. Under modifications to the GPDO, enacted in 2024, the maximum footprint of agricultural development that can take place, subject to limitations and conditions, under permitted development rights, is 1,500m². The new building is proposed to cover 324m².

In this statement, we review only those aspects that are covered by the Order, including those that can be influenced by the local planning authority. Accordingly, we have not provided a full review of the development against policy that we would normally do in respect of planning applications. We thus principally consider whether the proposal complies with the terms and conditions as set out in Class A of Part 6, Schedule of the GPDO: whether the siting, design and external appearance of the proposed development is acceptable and whether we have provided enough information to enable the local planning authority to assess the proposed development against the criterion within the GPDO.

¹ Hereafter referred to as the GPDO.



2. Site Context

2.1. Agricultural holding and site location

Crofton Farm is located in Crofton within a countryside location. Figure 1 shows the application site's geographical context. The location plan is formally submitted as Drawing 05540-00-C, Sheet 01.

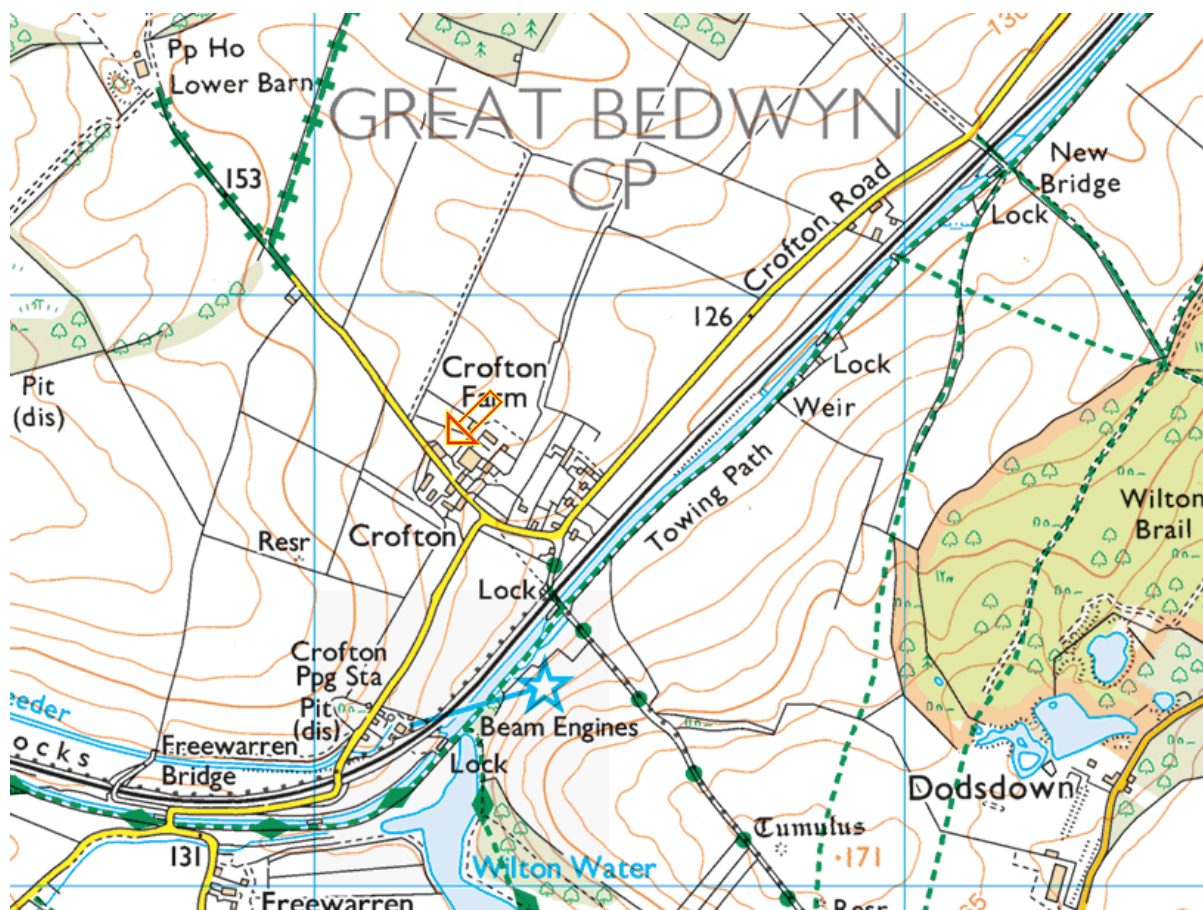


Figure 1 – Proposed Building Location

The farming estate to which East Farm is part of consists of 500 acres. This land is actively farmed in use for agriculture (as defined within D1 of Part 6 of the GPDO Interpretation of Classes A-C) as 'land in use for agriculture and which is so used for the purpose of a trade or business'. The Location Plan shows that all the surrounding land is owned and used as the agricultural unit shown in Blue, which is well over the required 5ha, as required within the GDPO for the erection of new agricultural buildings. The proposed building is not located on a separate parcel of land smaller than 1ha. (Again defined within D1 of Part 6 of the GPDO Interpretation of Classes A-C) as 'agricultural land which is occupied as a unit for the purposes of agriculture, including –

(a) any dwelling or other building on that land occupied for the purpose of farming the land by the person who occupies the unit, or

(b) any dwelling on that land occupied by a farmworker;

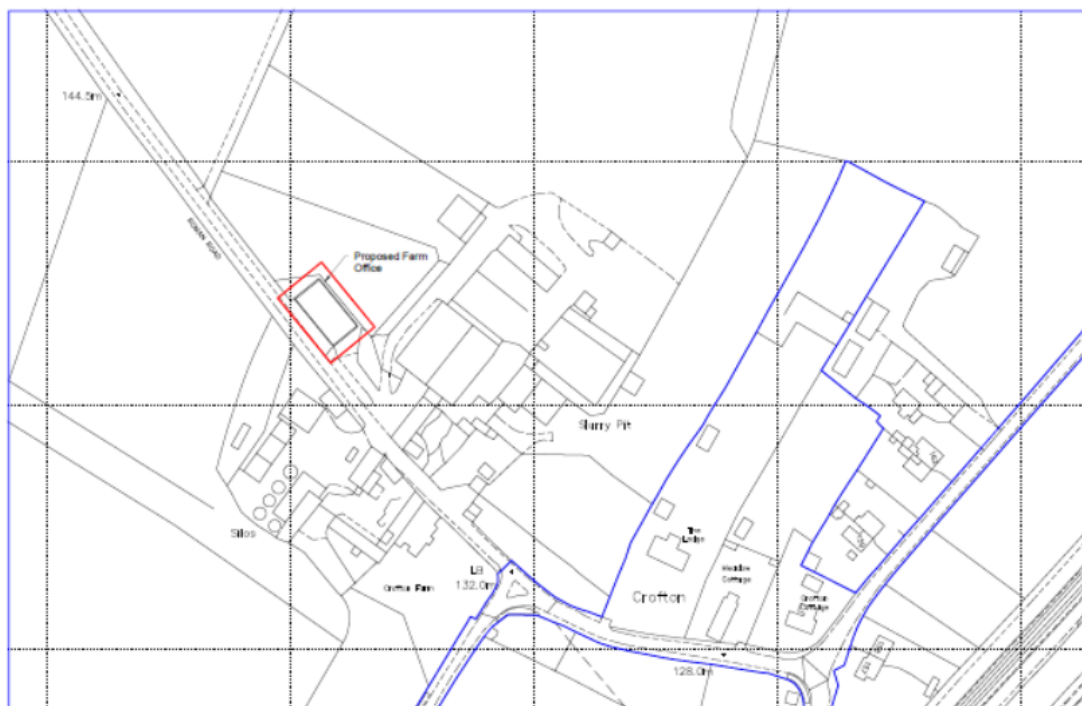


Figure 2 - Agricultural Holding/Site Location

Figure 2 above, is a clip of the Location Plan showing the land owned by the applicant in blue. The estate ownership is wider than the plan allows for, and amounts to approximately 500 acres. This plan has also been submitted as a separate document to support the application. Figure 3 below, is an aerial photograph of the site, showing its relationship with the surrounding agricultural land.

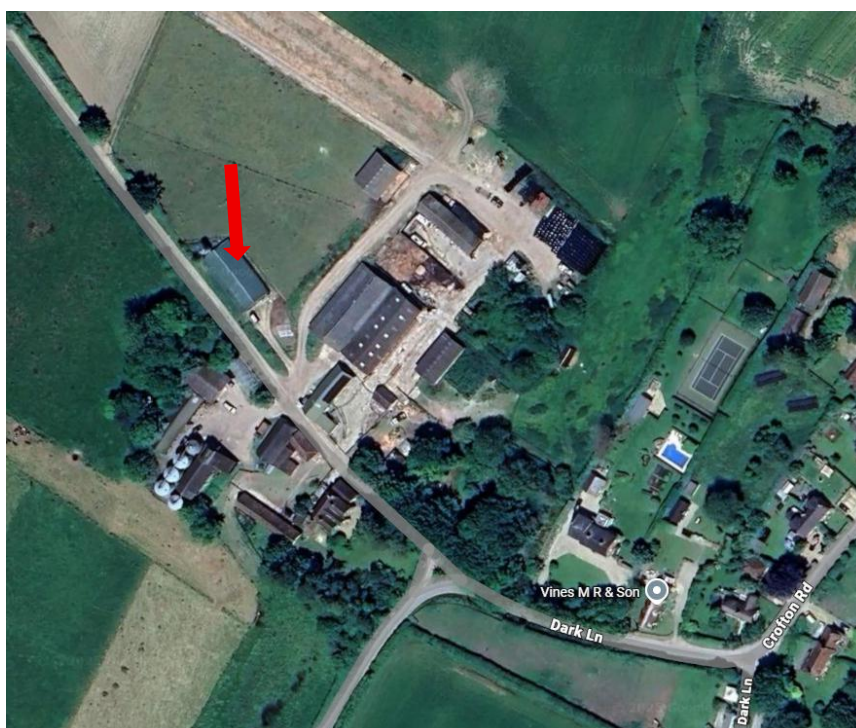


Figure 3 - Aerial photograph of the proposed site



2.2. Agricultural justification: “reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture”

The requirement for this new building is for an agricultural farm office, there is an existing building within the same footprint, however this building is in disrepair and no longer fit for purpose. The proposed building is a replacement like-for-like in floor area.

The application site forms part of a substantial agricultural estate of approximately 500 acres (c.202 hectares). The scale and nature of the agricultural unit necessitates an appropriate level of on-site operational infrastructure to ensure the holding can be farmed efficiently, safely and in compliance with the increasingly detailed regulatory and assurance requirements that apply to modern agricultural businesses. The proposed building (341sqm gross floor area) provides essential support accommodation for the day-to-day management and functioning of the agricultural enterprise, and is proportionate and well-related to the scale of the holding.

Part 6 agricultural permitted development rights are predicated on the land being in agricultural use for the purposes of a trade or business and on the proposed development being reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture on the unit.

In this context, the “reasonably necessary” test is a core test: the proposal must be demonstrably needed to support the agricultural activity in operation and must be well-related to the scale and nature of that activity and the area of land available, with a clear justification of the size and design of the building against the farming operation.

2.3. Operational need for the proposed accommodation

Farm office / administration (ancillary to agriculture)

The holding requires a secure, dry and functional base for the administration and management that is inherently linked to agricultural operations, including: cropping and livestock planning, staff and contractor coordination, maintenance schedules, agricultural assurance/audit preparation, record keeping, mapping and field records, and the storage and management of compliance documentation. On an estate of this scale, routine operational decision-making and coordination is necessarily site-based. The proposed office accommodation is not a standalone commercial “office use”; it is integral, ancillary space required to operate the agricultural business effectively and to manage the unit’s day-to-day farming activities.

Farm workers’ welfare facilities (integral to a working agricultural unit)

The provision of welfare facilities is an operational requirement where staff and agricultural contractors are regularly on-site, particularly on a large holding with intensive seasonal peaks. Suitable welfare accommodation supports safe working practices (handwashing, changing/drying space, rest breaks) and reduces risks associated with inadequate facilities in yard/workshop environments. This is functional support space that is directly connected to the farming operation, reflecting ordinary and reasonable practice on a working agricultural unit.



Meeting / briefing room (farm operations and safety management)

The meeting room is required for agricultural operational management purposes, including routine briefings, health and safety toolbox talks, inductions, contractor coordination, and meetings with professional agricultural advisers (e.g. agronomists, vets, nutritionists, land agents) where these relate directly to the management and operation of the holding. It is not proposed as a venue or customer-facing facility; rather, it supports the safe and efficient organisation of agricultural work across a large estate with dispersed land parcels and multiple concurrent operations.

Kennels (working dogs associated with agricultural operations)

The kennels are required for the management and welfare of working farm dogs used as part of the agricultural enterprise (for example, in livestock handling and routine land management tasks). Secure on-site kennelling supports operational efficiency and animal welfare, ensures controlled management of working dogs during active yard operations, and avoids inappropriate informal arrangements in buildings not designed for that purpose.

Conclusion

In summary, the proposed development is reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture on a substantial agricultural unit and is well-related to the scale and operational needs of the holding. The building provides essential ancillary accommodation (farm management/administration, staff welfare, operational briefing space and working dog facilities) required to support the efficient and safe functioning of the agricultural enterprise. Its design, materials and overall form are agricultural and consistent with the established character of buildings on the unit. The proposal therefore satisfies the core “reasonably necessary” test by demonstrating clear operational need, proportionate scale, and an agricultural design response.

2.4. Planning History

K/31844	The erection of a dutch barn, salvaged from Manor Farm, Great Bedwyn.	Approved 1995
K/43680	Erection of new cattle building.	Approved 2002
K/55157/F	Erection of new youngstock/dry cow building	Approved 2006
16/10145/APD	Construction of metal demountable tank for storing biofertilizer	Approved 2016
PL/2025/09538	Agricultural storage building	Prior Approval not required

There is recent planning history for an agricultural storage building approved in 2025 within 90 metres of the proposed development, meaning the Class A cumulative size position must be considered. Taking the approved building at 408 sq. m together with the current proposal at 341 sq. m, the combined floorspace is 749 sq. m, which remains comfortably below the 1,500 sq. m Class A size threshold (as amended in 2024). The proposal is therefore not disqualified on cumulative size grounds even when the 90m aggregation is applied.



3. Siting, Design & External Appearance

3.1. Design

The dimensions of the proposed agricultural building are shown in the Floor Plan and the Proposed Elevations Drawing 05540-09-A Sheet 01. The building will be a steel profile sheeted barn with a steel profile roof. The barn will be placed within the central position within the farmstead and thus will not be prominent in the landscape. The agricultural building will have a footprint of 341m². The building will be placed on existing hardstanding, replacing an existing building.

The proposed building will comprise a simple rectangular structure is 24.4m long and 13.25m wide. The eaves would be 4m high with height to the ridge being 5.8m.

3.2. Scale and proportionality of the building (341sqm)

The proposed 341sqm floorspace is proportionate in the context of a c.202ha agricultural unit and reflects a consolidated, efficient approach: bringing together farm management, welfare and working infrastructure in a single agricultural building avoids piecemeal ancillary structures and allows a practical operational hub aligned with the day-to-day needs of the enterprise. The internal accommodation is designed specifically to support agricultural operations and staff welfare, rather than to create an independent non-agricultural use.

3.3. External appearance

The proposal is expressly designed and scaled to appear as a typical agricultural building. It will be constructed with steel profiled cladding (olive green) and steel profile roof sheets (anthracite), matching the palette and character of existing farm buildings on the unit. The external appearance is therefore agricultural in form and materials, ensuring it reads as part of the established farmstead and wider working landscape.

While the building incorporates a greater degree of glazing than some traditional barns, this is driven by the functional need for natural light and acceptable internal conditions in the office and welfare areas. Window proportions and placement will be controlled to retain an agricultural character and avoid domestic or commercial “office” cues. In doing so, the building remains clearly “designed for the purposes of agriculture”, which is a key distinction between acceptable agricultural development and proposals that would properly require full planning permission.

3.4. Siting

The proposed layout for the agricultural building can be seen in the proposed Location plan, see Drawing 05540-00-C and in Figure 2 above. It shows the position of the proposed building sited sensitively in close proximity to the other built form within the site for screening. There is an existing building to which this proposed building will replace.

The land in which the new building is proposed has no designations such as Conservation Area/Nature Conservation/Tree Preservation orders however it is within the AONB/National Landscape.



There are 'protected buildings' (permanent buildings which is normally occupied by people or would so be occupied, if it were in use for purposes for which it is designed) within 400m of the proposed building, however this building is not proposed to be for livestock nor storage of slurry or sewage sludge.



Figure 4 - Proposed Plans

3.5. Landscape impact

No additional landscape mitigation measures will be required with this development.

The siting of the proposed new agricultural building has been sensitively located within the existing farmstead, within the footprint of the existing building it is to replace so the landscape impact is minimised.

The existing landscaping on site is to remain and will be unaffected by the development.

4. Access

4.1. Site Access

The existing farm access tracks will continue to be used and will not require modification.

4.2. Traffic movements

There will be no additional traffic generation as a result of this development.

5. Lighting

There is no lighting required for the proposed building.



6. Drainage

The drainage at the site will not be altered from the existing situation. The application site lies in Flood Zone 1 and is thus not subject to a flood risk assessment because the proposed works are below the threshold for assessment, and the site is well away from rivers or streams. The underlying geology is chalk, which provides excellent soakaway drainage.

7. Planning Policy

It is our usual practice to review all planning applications against the development plan, given that development should be “plan-led”. However, consideration of proposals under the Prior Notification procedures do not need to be assessed against policy, but rather against the limitations and conditions set out in the GDPO. That is, they are considered, in effect, against criteria. In order to summarise our interpretation of the accordance of the proposals with these criteria, Appendix A is set out in a simple table.

There are no conflicts with the criteria. The works are clearly “reasonably necessary” for agriculture, and they relate to the activities at Crofton Farm only.

8. Conclusion

We believe this proposal does indeed meet all the requirements for Part 6 of the GPDO. This application represents a necessary addition to farming needs, whilst taking care to preserve the surrounding area by locating the building discreetly within the existing farmstead. It would fall within the limits of agricultural permitted development rights and relate to the land owned and used as an agricultural unit for Crofton Farm only. The impact on the environment is likely to be negligible.

We therefore request that this prior notification is approved at the earliest opportunity.



Appendix A – Summary of compliance with GPDO, Part 6, Class A

Is the farm unit over 5ha in area?	<i>YES – over 500 acres</i>
Is the building reasonably necessary for agriculture?	<i>YES, see rationale in statement for agricultural storage</i>
Is the proposal on a separate parcel of less than 1 ha?	<i>NO the proposed land to which the new building relates is centrally located within the agricultural holding</i>
Does the building satisfy agricultural needs for this unit only?	<i>YES. essential facility for farm workers</i>
Would the development consist of the erection or extension of any agricultural building on an established agricultural unit (as defined in paragraph X of Part 3 of this Schedule) where development under Class Q or S of Part 3 (changes of use) of this Schedule has been carried out within a period of 10 years ending with the date on which development under Class A(a) begins?	<i>NO</i>
<i>Have other works taken place in the last 2 years within 90m of the proposed development that exceed 1500m²?</i>	<i>NO, building previously approved 408m² so total is 749m²</i>
Do the works relate to a dwelling or non-agricultural use?	<i>NO</i>
Would any works or structure for accommodating livestock or any plant or machinery arising from engineering operations; or any building erected or extended or altered by virtue of Class A exceed 1500 square metres?	<i>NO</i>
Is there an aerodrome within 3Km?	<i>NO</i>
Is the height of the building over 12m?	<i>NO</i>
Is the development within 25m of a trunk or classified road?	<i>NO</i>
Would the building be used to accommodate livestock, or for the storage of sewage or slurry and within 400m of a protected building?	<i>NO</i>
Is the proposal associated with fish farming?	<i>NO</i>
Would the building be associated with biomass production/storage or for anaerobic digestion	<i>NO</i>