

AGRICULTURAL ASSESSMENT OF PLANNING APPLICATION.

1.0	REFERENCE	APA/002/0275
1.1	Proposed Development	"...New beef unit comprising a livestock building (a second agricultural storage building is being submitted concurrently as a prior approval application), and temporary siting of mobile home for use as an agricultural worker's dwelling together with associated works"
1.2	Planning Authority	Wiltshire Council Development Control Central
1.3	Planning Application No.	PL/2025/09651
1.4	Applicant	Mr James Bodman, Bodman Livestock Ltd, Windsmere Farm, Worton
1.5	Site Address	Whyr Farm, Worton Road, Potterne SN10 5PU

2.0 DESCRIPTION

Location

- 2.1 The application site falls within the applicant's larger landholding at Whyr Farm. Whyr Farm lies in open countryside at the southern end of Worton Road, immediately north east and east of the junction with the eastern end of Worton High Street.

Land Area and tenure

- 2.1 The applicant's freehold extends to approximately 26ha (64 acres) in a ring fence at Whyr Farm. In addition to the freehold land at Whyr Farm the wider farming business includes freehold land at buildings at Windsmere Farm, Worton and South Park Farm at Shoddesden. In the context of the proposed business at Whyr Farm the applicant also has the use of land and buildings at Crookwood Farm, Potterne Wick under a leasehold arrangement. I understand that in total some 121ha (300 acres) are farmed, the majority of which is owned freehold within the wider business.

Soil Type and Characteristics

- 2.2 The soil at the application site is classified in the Denchworth association which is described as slowly permeable, seasonally waterlogged clay over clay loam.

3.0 AGRICULTURAL PRACTICE

Existing

- 3.1 The current and proposed farming practice for the unit is the production of beef cattle. Cattle are produced from a retained herd of suckler cows, together with the purchase and rearing of calves. Reared animals are sold either as finished at approximately 24 months or as yearling or forward stores.
- 3.2 The enterprise is currently based at Crookwood Farm, which is occupied under a leasehold arrangement. The suckler herd is 50 breeding cows. The cows are calved across the year. There are approximately 100 head of youngstock, which is split 50/50 between 0-12 months and 12 to 24 months.
- 3.3 The land at Whyr Farm is in a mixture of arable and grass and will be converted to grass subject to the relocation of the cattle business to the site.

Proposed

- 3.4 The proposal is to centre the beef enterprise in a new set of farm buildings at the application site. The cattle will be housed in the proposed livestock building over the winter and grazed during the summer. Cows will be brought into the building to calve and unweaned calves will be reared indoors.
- 3.5 The suckler herd will be expanded to 100 head and the yearlings and 12-24 month cattle will be expanded. A calf rearing enterprise will also be introduced. Approximately 120 calves will be purchased across the year at up to two weeks old in batches of 20 head every eight to 10 weeks. The calves will be weaned and taken through to finished animals, subject to cashflow.
- 3.6 The proposal, alongside the temporary dwelling, is to construct a new farmstead. A covered yard and a storage building will be constructed, along with a concrete yard area. I understand the cattle will be bedded on straw. The resultant farmyard manure will be spread on land in the wider control of the applicant's family or other parties' land under a dung for straw arrangement.

Comments

- 3.7 The applicant's family's wider business includes Windsmere Farm, which is an intensive piggery. The applicant advises that he has no intention or proposals to operate Whyr Farm as an intensive livestock unit.

Buildings

- 3.8 There are no buildings on site. The proposal is to erect a new farmstead.

4.0 EXISTING ACCOMMODATION

Dwellings owned by applicant

- 4.1 There is no dwelling in the applicant's occupation or control at Whyr Farm.

5.0 LABOUR REQUIREMENTS

Existing

- 5.1 One unit part time

Anticipated if Proposals Undertaken

- 5.2 The proposed business will generate a labour requirement in excess of one full time unit. I understand James Bodman will work on the holding full time with part time assistance from family labour.

6.0 REQUIREMENT FOR PROPOSED BUILDING

- 6.1 The planning application proposes the stationing of a temporary dwelling and the construction of a new farmstead. The Council has requested an assessment of essential need and the proposed business plan and those aspects are covered in my paper ref 02/0275 dated 4th February 2026. This section of my report assesses the proposals for the new livestock building. The storage building is part of a separate notification for Prior Approval under Permitted Development. It follows from the above that only the building for which planning permission is sought can be used to accommodate the proposed livestock.
- 6.2 The submitted plans show the livestock building with a steel portal frame extending to 14 bays. The building is shown with profile sheet to the roof, spaced timber boarding to the upper elevations on the south, east and west elevations and pre-formed concrete panels to the lower elevations on the west and south elevations. The north elevation is shown open and the east elevation is open aside from spaced boarding to the high

level gable end. The overall dimensions of the building are shown as 64m x 32.5m and I have scaled the eaves height as 5.8m. The building thus has a floor area of approximately 2,100m².

6.3 In determining whether a building is suitable for the proposed enterprise I would suggest it is appropriate to consider the proposed external materials and the overall size of the building. The materials described above are, in my view, appropriate for the intended function of accommodating beef cattle. The spaced boarding will allow a natural flow of ventilation. The lower elevations will retain accumulated dung over the winter. The eaves height will accommodate the likely depth of accumulated dung as well as allowing the use of modern machinery.

6.4 The nature of the farmed land is such that the cattle will be housed in the proposed building during the winter period (October to March). It is my view that such a management practice is wholly appropriate for animal welfare. Whilst the building will be used year-round for calving and calf rearing it is clearly the winter period where stocking will be at its maximum and the building should therefore be sized accordingly.

6.5 Based on the farming practice identified above the following animals will require accommodation over the winter:

50 suckler cows.

50 suckler cows with calves (based on the identified year round calving and allowing for six months).

60 rearing calves (three batches of rearing calves @ 20/head).

60 rearing calves at 6 – 12 months (three retained batches of rearing calves.

50 rearing calves at 6-12 months (the balance of the calves from the suckler herd.

50 youngstock 12-24 months (the previous season's calves from the sucklers, allowing for 50% sale).

60 youngstock 12- 24 months (the yearling animals from the calf rearing, allowing for 50% sale).

6.6 Below I tabulate the space requirement from the above:

Livestock	Number	Space Requirement m ² /animal	Total m ²
Suckler cows	50	8	400
Suckler cows with calves at foot	50	10	500
Rearing calves 0-6 months	60	2	120
Rearing calves 6-12 months	60	3.5	210
Rearing calves 6-12 months	50	3.5	175
Youngstock 12-24 months	50	5	250
Youngstock 12-24 months	60	5	300
Space requirement			1,955

6.7 The space allowances used above are from farm management data. The overall total suggests the building is of an appropriate overall size for the enterprises proposed.

6.8 It follows from the above that it is my view that the proposed building is of an appropriate size and design for the proposed enterprise.

7.0 CONCLUSION AND OPINION

The proposed livestock building is of an appropriate size and design for its intended function.

I trust the above provides you with the information required. If you require any further information, or clarification on the any aspect of the above, please do not hesitate to contact the writer.

Note: *This Report has been prepared on information provided by the Applicant and or the Applicant's Agent.*

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