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MINOR DEVELOPMENT PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT REF. NO. F/13/73716

DESCRIPTION/ ADDRESS	Erection of agricultural building with associated access track (amended description) Land adjacent Whitehaven Brook Lane Botley Southampton SO30 2ER

SITE VISIT DATE	12/12/2013			
ARE PLANS ACCURATE?	x	Yes		No. If not why not…….
HAVE ALL NECESSARY NEIGHBOURS BEEN CONSULTED?	x	Yes		No. If not why not…….

THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF APPLICATION	The application is for the erection of an agricultural building and extension of driveway into the site with turning area located to the rear of the barn. The building will be 12.2m wide by 18.3m long with an eaves height of 4.3m rising to a ridge line of 5.5m. The building will be set back 42m from the edge of the road and is set behind an existing fence of 2m in height. The building is proposed to be constructed of corrugated fibre cement (grey) and clad with dark stained horizontally hung, rough cut shiplap cladding with the exception of the roller shutter door which will face south west towards the rear of the site. The open lean to element of the building would provide an area for heavier items of machinery and less valuable items of smaller equipment. Specifically the equipment proposed to be stored within or in the lean to of the building are as follows: two tractors, trailer, disc harrow, loader bucket, hedge cutter, mower, rotorvator, bale grab, roller, plough, wood chippers. Whilst the applicant has full time employment not related to the use currently proposed within the application, it is the applicant's intention to grow the business through the acquisition of grassland lets to an extent where it can support his full time self employment. The applicant has identified that the proposed use will generate 582 vehicle movements a year and that at present the number of vehicle movements is 594. The supporting information notes the purpose of the building is to provide a base for the applicant's developing agricultural enterprise which consists of the farming of various parcels of grassland totally 15.03 acres. The 15.03 acres includes the site and land to the north of the site and the remainder at Sherecroft Farm and land adjoining Greenaway Lane, Warash. Of the farmed sites the application site is owned by the applicant. The remaining sites are let to the applicant on

THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

	a rolling annual basis. The lets do not include access to buildings on the farm land. The 15.03 acres of grassland is estimated to produce 60 tonnes of hay per annum which the applicant estimates equivalent to 3000 conventional bales of hay. The applicant estimates that 3000 bales of hay equates to 500m3. The applicant also states that in common with typical practice to retain on site a proportion of the seasons crop on site, a further 100m3 is required which represents 20% of the hay or 600 bales. The building, not including roof space, has a volume of 720m3. The hay is delivered to customers and sales are carried out telephoncially. In other words the agent confirms there will be no retail use carried out on site.					
SITE AREA	0.8 acres or 0.32ha					
RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT DENSITY (NET)	n/a					
TOPOGRAPHY		Level		Sloping …..	x	The land falls gently in an easterly and south easterly direction towards the rear boundary.
TREES		No	x	Yes, There are several trees dotted along the rear boundary and side (north west) boundary.		
BOUNDARY TREATMENT		The north east (front) boundary comprises a mature hedgerow of varying height with some mature trees. The side (north west) boundary has no boundary treatment however. The side (south east) boundary to Whitehaven comprises a 2m wooden fence and the rear boundary (south west) boundary comprise a number of mature trees with a ditch beyond.				
SITE CHARACTERISTICS	The site is located within the countryside and on land with an agricultural use. The site is generally level with a very gentle slope down towards the rear boundary. The site currently comprises a small poly tunnel structure on site, machinery, portacabin and a 2m fence. There are clear views into the site through the gate with further views above the hedge line which runs along the front boundary.					
CHARACTER OF LOCALITY	The area is semi rural in nature comprises a mixture of clusters of residential properties (detached two storey dwellings principally) and farmland. Brook Lane is a narrow single width lane with low levels of traffic and the area is quite and has a peaceful character. To the north west of the					

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	site is a field with agricultural buildings associated with Mistral Farm and dwellings beyond. To the north east, opposite the site, are detached and semi detached dwellings including the Old Rectory & The Little House, which are grade II listed buildings. Immediately south east of the site is Whitehaven, a detached chalet bungalow and to the west and south west is land associated with Manor Farm Country Park which is designated as historic park and garden.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION	DECISION
Burgessland Field Brook Lane Botley		
P/13/72409	Prior notification of intent to erect an agricultural barn for the storage of hay and machinery (28 days for determination)	PRIOR APPROVAL IS NOT REQUIRED 23/05/2013
Land At 'Mistral' Brook Lane Botley Hants		
Z/33457/000/00	CONSTRUCTION OF AGRICULTURAL BUILDING COMPRISING COLDSTORE, PARKING SHED AND TOILET.	Permitted 21/11/1994

REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

SOURCE	SUMMARY OF CONTENT
None received	

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

CONSULTEE	SUMMARY OF RESPONSE
BOT	Object 1. The Parish Council questions the claim that the purpose of the building is for agricultural use because the site of itself is not large enough to support an agricultural business that would require a such a substantial building. 2. If the intention is to use the site as a storage base for equipment and materials used elsewhere this will generate additional movements of heavy machinery on Brook Lane but the applicant has given no indication of the potential number of additional vehicle movements. 3. The site appears to be in use already as a storage depot for maintenance vehicles and HGVs. 4. There has been an encroachment of buildings onto the site during the last five years which has been hidden by an earth mound and fencing and permitting a large scale storage building would consolidate the industrialisation of a site within the countryside. 5. The Parish Council objects to the establishment of what amounts to a machinery depot within a rural part of the community and objects to the the increased HGV traffic which would be assoicated with this application.

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CONSULTATION RESPONSES

CONSULTEE	SUMMARY OF RESPONSE
	6. The Council considers this application to constitue inappropriate development within the countryside and requests that this application should be referred to the HEWEB LAC for decision.
ENG	No objection
HPP	Objection – pitch of roof and materials for roof.
ENV	No comments received

POLICY CONTEXT

DESIGNATION APPLICABLE TO SITE
Outside Built-up Area Boundary Affects Setting of Listed Building Affects Setting of Conservation Area Special Protection Area-recreational disturbance zone The south eastern tip of the site falls within an 8m main river buffer Adjacent to Manor Farm Country Park Within area 12 of the Landscape Character Appraisal for Eastleigh Borough

DEVELOPMENT PLAN SAVED POLICIES, EMERGING LOCAL PLAN POLICIES AND SPD'S

Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Review 2001-2011 saved policies:
1.CO, 18.CO, 43.ES, 59.BE, 171.LB, 175.LB
Revised Draft Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2011-2029
S1, S9, DM1, DM10, DM14
Landscape Character Appraisal for Eastleigh Borough

CHARACTER APPRAISAL AREA

n/a

SPECIAL POLICY AREA

n/a

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE

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NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE

National Planning Policy Framework
Paragraph 9 states:
"Pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life, including (but not limited to): … replacing poor design with better design".
Paragraph 14 notes a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
Paragraph 17 states that planning should take account of the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and encourages the re-use of previously developed land.
Paragraph 28 supports economic growth in rural areas where they would create jobs and prosperity and notes this can be done through both conversion of existing buildings and well designed new buildings.

POLICY COMMENTARY

The above policies and guidance combine to form the criteria against which this application will be assessed with particular regard to impact upon the countryside, highway matters, trees, impact upon flooding, residential amenity and impact upon setting of Botley/Winchester Road Conservation Area and listed buildings.

COMMENT ON CONSULTATION RESPONSES

	See below		No comments

COMMENT ON REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

	See below		No comments

PLANNING OBLIGATION/CONSIDERATIONS

In accordance with the provisions of Circular 05/05 saved policies 101.T, 147.OS and 191.IN of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Review 2001-2011 and supplementary planning document. Planning obligation contributions are sought to offset the impact of the development on local infrastructure. For this development there would be no increase in traffic movements and as such no contributions are sought.

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Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states:-

"If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Review 2001-2011
Saved policies:
1.CO – Protection of the countryside Seeks to protect the countryside from development of non agricultural, forestry, horticultural or outdoor recreational use, and which increases urbanisation.
18.CO – Landscape character
Restricts development that would have an adverse impact upon the intrinsic character of the landscape.

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43.ES – Development in Flood Risk Areas
Development is only permitted where it can be shown the development is adequately defended from flooding and a flood risk assessment is submitted which shows measures that prevent life being endangered or damage to property.
59.BE – General Design Criteria
Seeks to promote good design.
171.LB – Setting of buildings in a Conservation Area
Applications for development which affect important townscape or landscape features in Conservation Areas will only be permitted where the qualities of those features are retained.
175.LB – Setting of buildings of local importance
Development is not permitted where it would harm the setting of a building of local importance.

Eastleigh Borough Council Local Plan Pre Submission (2011 - 2029)
The emerging Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2011-2029 is currently at pre submission stage. The following policies are of particular relevance:
S1 – Sustainable Development:
Sets out what elements are required to make development sustainable and includes a requirement to:
iii. Maintain and help to grow a high-performing local economy that benefits the borough, south Hampshire and the wider economy, without adverse impact on south Hampshire's city centres, the quality of the local environment or local transport networks;
iv. Have regard to the potential impacts of climate change, and the need to limit greenhouse gas emissions by promoting measures to design buildings and spaces which are adaptable to predicted climate change, minimize energy use and encourage the generation of renewable energy, and by minimising emissions from motorised transport, industrial activity and domestic uses;
v. Minimise the need to travel and where travel is necessary, provide access to more sustainable forms of transport and alternatives to car use;
S9 – Countryside and countryside gaps:
Planning permission will only be granted provided it is related to provision of employment through agricultural development (see DM14). In permitting new development in the countryside the Council will wherever possible seek to avoid adverse impact upon the intrinsic character of the area;
Policy DM1 of the Eastleigh Borough Council Local Plan Pre Submission (2011 - 2029) states:
"i. All new development should (as relevant): not have an unacceptable impact on, and where possible should enhance:
a. residential amenities;
b. the character and appearance of urban areas, the countryside and the coast;
DM10 – Heritage Assets
Development should not harm or detract from the special interest of the assets and sustains and enhances its special character and qualities. Development should achieve a high quality of design which respects and compliments the character and qualities of the heritage asset.
DM14 – Agricultural development:
New buildings are permitted for agricultural purposes in the countryside provided they are essential to efficient working and long term commercial viability of an agricultural enterprise and the use can not be accommodated in existing buildings. Any proposal for development should not be visually intrusive or have an unacceptable impact upon the local road network and should include measures to enhance landscape and biodiversity.

The proposal is considered to conflict with the relevant Development Plan

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policies as set out below:

MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

In this case policy issues for consideration include:
The impact of the barn upon the character of the countryside, highway issues, impact upon trees, impact in respect of flooding, impact upon residential amenity, impact upon setting of Botley Road Conservation Area and listed buildings.

Background

The proposed barn will allow the storage of hay on site that is harvested and baled off site. The supporting information states that 3000 conventional bales will be delivered to site per year based on two harvests per year, the second harvest producing approximately one third of the bales the first harvest yields. The existing use of the site is agricultural and the proposed barn and associated activity remains an agricultural use. The agent has advised that the applicant's business of harvesting hay off site has occurred for several years. With the erection of a barn on site this will allow dry storage of hay on site with deliveries of hay to the site rather than what currently happens which is delivery of the hay straight from the field where it is harvested to the customer. Therefore the change arising from the proposal will comprise the erection of the barn for the dry storage of hay/equipment associated with harvesting and deliveries of hay from the farms to the site for storage. The site currently has equipment associated with the harvesting of hay on site however this would be permitted as falling within an agricultural use. There are already vehicle movements to and from the site in respect of taking appropriate vehicles to the respective farmed land for cultivating land and harvesting. Furthermore the vehicles on site, used in connection with the agricultural business, are maintained on site. This is to be expected as ancillary to an agricultural use. The applicant has identified that as a result of the erection of the hay barn there will be a reduction of 12 vehicle movements a year. Vehicle movements are discussed in more detail below.

Principle

The site is located within the countryside and saved policy 1.CO of the Local Plan permits development where it is necessary for the purpose of agriculture provided it meets criteria of other relevant policies within the local plan. The development is therefore acceptable in principle.

The impact upon the character of the countryside:

The application is not for the use of the site as this falls with the authorized agricultural use of the site and therefore the only issue that can be considered here is the impact of the erection of the barn.

The barn is fairly large with a shallow pitch roof and dark stained shiplap cladding. The cladding will assist in lending a rustic feel to the building however its size, mass and height is such that the building will be clearly seen from Brook Lane despite its set back of 42m and shallow pitch of the roof will give the building an 'industrial' feel which is considered out of keeping with and harmful to the character of the area and moreover its overall design does not take opportunities to improve the character of the area which is encouraged by paragraph 9 of the NPPF and policy DM1 of the revised draft Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2011-2029.

Although the building backs onto Manor Farm Country Park the mature and dense trees within the park restrict views from the park into the site and as such the proposed barn is not considered to harm the character or setting of the country park. The site is not specifically referred to within the Landscape Character Appraisal however the visual sensitivity is noted as derived from the

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high visibility of larger more open fields mainly located within the centre of the character area. The appraisal notes key issues in this character area include pressure from development. It is considered that the erection of the barn at this point will not undermine the visibility of large open fields and therefore the development would not undermine special characteristics of the Landscape Character Area at this point.

The proposal includes the extension of the driveway to the barn with a turning area to the rear of the barn where its roller shutter door is located. It is considered the extended driveway which comprises loose gravel will add to the urbanisation of the site harmful to the character and appearance of the countryside.

It is noted that at the time of assessing this application a barn is in the process of being erected at Burgessland Field Brook Lane which is slightly north of the site on the other side of the road. This was determined under prior approval procedure. In comparison to the barn currently under consideration, the barn at Burgessland is set back slightly further from the road, is slightly smaller in footprint, is slightly lower at eaves level and has a more steeply pitched roof and noting its location adjacent to a line of trees it was determined that prior approval was not required. That barn cannot therefore be directly compared to that currently under consideration which is considered to have a materially greater impact upon the character of the area.

Policy DM14 of the revised draft Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2011-2029 requires that information be provided to show that the use cannot be accommodated within an existing building. There are no other buildings on site that can be used and limited information has been submitted by the client to show no other buildings are available to be used on sites let by the applicant. No evidence has been submitted to support the applicants statement that this issue has been properly been explored. The unique business model of this activity where sites farmed are let on an annual rolling basis means that there is no guarantee that sites farmed currently will remain available the following year. It is reasonable that the applicant locate the barn on land which he owns so that this investment is secure. Nevertheless no information has been submitted to show the availability or otherwise of sites for sale with existing barns which are served by a better road network. Purchase of an alternative site with an existing building for use should be explored in order to meet the requirements of policy DM14 of revised draft Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2011-2029.

It is also relevant to consider whether the size of the barn is necessary for existing use. In this instance the volume of the barn is considered to be in excess of that necessary based on the amount of grassland harvested. This is calculated using guidance contained within the 'Agricultural Budgeting and Costing Book'. The applicant's calculations are based both on the book and actual average yields produced for the various sites they harvest. There is a Discrepancy between the applicant's figures and the Council's figures in this respect. Looking at this in more detail the applicant notes that 15.03 acres of grassland will produce 60 tonnes of hay (45 tonnes first cut and 15 tonnes second cut). The applicant therefore estimates that the land will yield 3000 conventional bales of hay which the agent advises equates to 500m^3 of storage space needed. The applicant states it is common practice that additional space is required for up to 20% of previous years crop which equates to 600 bales or 100m^3. This leaves 120m^3 for storage of equipment. Taken on its own the 'Agricultural Budgeting and Costing Book' states that a conventional bale of hay will need between 6m^3 to 7m^3 per tonne of storage space and that 1 ha

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will yield 7 tonnes of hay. For the purposes of this calculation the 7m^3 size bale is assumed which gives the application the largest space per conventional bale. The 15.03 acres of land or 6.08ha will therefore yield 42.6 tonnes of hay in the first harvest and approximately a third of this amount within the second harvest which is 14.2 tonnes of hay. The resultant 56.8 tonnes of hay will therefore need a storage space of 397.6m^3. An additional 20% of the crop would be 11.36 tonnes making a total space requirement for the hay of 477.12m^3. This is 20% less space for hay storage than identified by the applicant and the discrepancy is too great justify the size of the barn proposed without detailed information which clearly shows the higher yields produced over several years. Whilst this information has been requested, only average information has been received with no evidence to back up the data.

Highway issues:
The site has an existing vehicular access and the application proposes the driveway is extended to the rear of the barn. The application is supported by a Traffic Analysis report which sets out that the existing vehicular movements to and from the site are 594 per annum and that as a consequence of the barn the vehicle movements will drop to 582 per annum. This appears to be as a consequence of a drop in routine inspection and vehicle maintenance a year.
Noting that the business is currently run from the site, there will not be a significant change in the level of activity on site in terms of vehicle movements. The agent notes that the hay is delivered to site using a tractor towing a flatbed trailer. 24 vehicle movements are associated with haymaking which includes the movement of hay from the fields to the site. This remains unchanged from existing as the agent notes that 'whether the trailer is laden with Hay or not, the trailer will always be brought back to site so traffic movements into the site will not change.' The hay is delivered to customers and sales are carried out telephoncially. In other words the agent confirms there will be no retail use carried out on site.

The Highways officers have considered both the traffic movements existing and proposed, the type of vehicles used as part of the business and the road network and have no objection to the application.

Impact upon trees
The proposed development will not result in the loss of any trees or be within the RPA of trees. As such there are no objections to the application in this respect.

Impact in respect of flooding
The building is located outside of the 8m main river buffer zone and is not located within a flood zone. As such the development will not cause flood water displacement and the development will be in accordance with policy 43.ES of the Local Plan (2001-2011)

Impact upon residential amenity
The closest residential properties to the site are Churchbrook House, The Little House and the Old Rectory, which are opposite the application site, and Whitehaven which is south of the application site. In considering the impact of the erection of the barn on neighbouring amenity is it noted that information supporting the application suggests that the vehicle movements will reduce as a result of the development. Our highway officers do not consider the information provided by the applicant is incorrect in this respect. Based on the Traffic Analysis there will be less than an average of 2 vehicle movements a day. Therefore noise and disturbance associated with the

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activity on site is likely to be slightly less than existing. The barn will be used for storage of machinery and equipment associated with the harvesting of hay along with the storage of hay. The activity will remain within the existing authorised agricultural use. As such, it is considered that the erection of the barn will not result in harm to neighbouring residential amenity in terms of noise and disturbance.

The barn will be located 27m at its closest point to the rear elevation of Whitehaven and 15m from its side boundary. There will be clear views of the building as proposed as viewed from the rear garden of Whitehaven however the bulk of building will not be so large, or close as to be visually overbearing when viewed from the property or garden at Whitehaven or harmful to its outlook. It is considered these distances are sufficient to ensure the residential amenities of that property are protected.

In terms of general maintenance of vehicles and machinery, this is also an activity which can be expected as a normal part of an agricultural use and cannot be controlled as the current application is for the barn only. The proposed use will result in some of the machinery being stored inside the barn which will assist in tidying the appearance of the site somewhat.

Impact upon setting of Botley Conservation Area and listed buildings
Botley conservation area is located on the other side of Brook lane to the site and includes residential properties are Churchbrook House, The Little House and the Old Rectory. The site is located within character area 7 of the conservation area which is described as 'an area of gently sloping agricultural
land with small fields enclosed by hedgerows and oak trees.' The Old Rectory and the Little House are both grade II listed buildings. The barn is located 42 from the front boundary of the site. The Conservation Officer has raised concerns that the barn in terms of materials and size will harm the setting of the conservation area and the listed buildings however noting that the conservation area and the listed buildings are located on the other side of the road to the application site, the barn will not be viewed in context of those special designations and are not considered to harm their recognised qualities or their setting. The proposed development is therefore in keeping with policies 171.LB and 175.LB of the Local Plan (2001).

OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Also of relevance is the Revised Draft Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2011-2029. While not yet adopted it does carry weight by virtue of being intended as the current local plan's replacement. With regards to this application, the new policies essentially echo those of the current plan and are not considered to affect the recommendation put forward.

CONCLUSIONS

The recommendation is to refuse

The proposed development is considered to result a building that is in excess of that currently required and therefore is not considered necessary at the size proposed for the purpose for which it is required. In addition the size and design of the barn is considered to harm the character and appearance of the countryside at this point. The proposed development is therefore considered to be contrary to saved policies 1.CO and 59.BE of the Local Plan (2001) and policies DM1 and DM14 of the revised draft Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2011-2029.

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